

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: James F. Battin Federal Building (Courthouse & Federal Office Building)Other names/site number: Stillwater Building, 24YL2459

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. LocationStreet & number: 316 North 26th StreetCity or town: Billings State: MT County: YellowstoneNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B X C D**MT State Historic Preservation Officer**

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☐
Public – Local ☒
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒
District ☐
Site ☐
Structure ☐
Object ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/government office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/government office (municipal)

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Formalism¹

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE; STONE; GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The James F. Battin Federal Building (hereinafter referred to as the “Battin Building”) is located in the center of Billings (in the original Billings townsite), north of what is referred to as the courthouse district. Occupying the full half of a city block, the site comprises 0.967 acres. The Battin Building’s long entry façade faces northeast towards North 26th Street and is bound by 4th Avenue North at the northwest and 3rd Avenue North on the southeast. For ease and clarity, hereinafter the building orientation is defined along the east, north, and south directions, respectively. Construction on the building began in 1963 and completed in 1965. The building’s five-story regularly shaped mass of sparkling white precast concrete appears to hover over the dark recess of the ground floor. The north, east, and south entries are demarcated with gently curved thin concrete canopies, the longest at the main east entry. Billings’ architectural firm of J.G. Link & Company proved facile in the design of this first Modern Formalism statement in

¹ This stylistic nomenclature is as established in the GSA publication *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s* (U.S. General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect, reprinted 2005).

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Billings and Montana. The symmetry of the precast window panels in the top four floors is unbroken and elegant. Materials are distinguished by their textures: the smooth glass and aluminum of the windows, the granular marble aggregate-rich precast of the concrete, and the gloss of the black granite walls at the ground floor.

Originally built for the General Services Administration (GSA) and the federal courts, the building was released and vacated by GSA and sold to a private developer in 2013. In 2016 the building sold again, to a developer who completed asbestos abatement in the building, as well as removal of interior partitions and the courtrooms. The originally designed movable walls were removed, leaving only core spaces: mechanical and electrical rooms, stairways, elevators, and elevator lobbies. This latter developer built out half of the third floor for county offices and provided them with a third-floor access walkway to his newly constructed six-level parking garage across 26th Street. The exterior of the building remains largely intact with the exception of the skywalk that penetrates two window bays of the east facade.

In 2021, the City of Billings purchased the Battin Building to house municipal offices and courts, returning the building to a government use appropriate for a building of this stature. This revisited use contributes an understanding of the building's design and use over time. The building exterior retains its location, setting, massing, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, thus holds a sufficient degree of integrity to convey its original exterior appearance. Moderate-to-low integrity characterizes the building's interior as it retains only the structural bones and core spaces.

Narrative Description

SETTING AND SITE

The Battin Building occupies the full half of a city block in downtown Billings, Montana. The building is oriented to the east, facing North 26th Street. Fourth (4th) and 3rd avenues North run east-west north and south of the property, respectively. A full-block long alley bifurcates the block, running parallel to North 27th Street on the west and North 26th Street on the east. The west half of the block supports the following from north to south: an automotive detail shop, a parking lot, and the 1910 masonry Billings Commercial Club (Chamber of Commerce) building. A healthy mix of commercial and government buildings provides an urbane context for the Battin Building. To the north, the Billings Gazette building yields its news making ability, the Yellowstone Art Museum supports the cultural base, the Big Five Motel houses visitors, and Child and Family Services provides for families in need. To the east, the newer parking garage is sandwiched between the Billings Federal Credit Union on the north and the erstwhile Security Federal Savings Bank (now County Sheriff's Offices) on the south. The majority of the blocks south of the Battin Building are now allocated for the new federal building that replaced the Battin Building in 2012 and its associated surface parking lots.² To the southwest, the 1958 Yellowstone County Courthouse remains impressive with its eight stories of smooth granite and large expanses of windows, as a counterpart to the 1939-1940 City Hall building to its west.

² The new federal building was named the James F. Battin Federal Building in homage to James F. Battin. It is referred to herein as the "new federal building" to avoid confusion.

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Typical downtown hotels, restaurants, and businesses of the central business district line the streets southwest of the Battin Building. A few commercial buildings to the east give way to small scale residential neighborhoods.

The building contains a perimeter walk within the ground level recess accessible to the public – at the north, east, and south sides of the building. The alley side varies from this, with an exception at the southwest bay that contains an opaque granite-clad loading dock accessed from an overhead door recessed within the south façade. The bays north of the loading dock are dedicated to the drive and ramp down to the basement level parking garage. The length of the east side features a wide pedestrian area primarily of concrete, forming borders around two rectangular grass swards. Simple concrete benches and elevated granite planters invite pedestrians. The official aluminum flagpole between the entry canopy and the benches rises 50’.

The north side of the building features narrow strips of grass between the public sidewalks and the perimeter walk of the building, broken only by a gentle concrete ramp that leads to the entry doors. The south side is fully paved, with concrete sidewalk and no grass. Large square concrete planters and benches flank the central entry.

JAMES F. BATTIN FEDERAL BUILDING EXTERIOR

The James F. Battin Building is a five-story regularly shaped mass of sparkling white precast concrete that appears to hover over the dark recess of the ground floor. Completed in 1965, it portrays the standard hallmarks of the Formalism style promoted by its original owner, the General Services Administration. The upper four stories present a regular pattern of single tall aluminum windows within the elegantly beveled frame of each precast panel. This façade system conceals the regular spacing of concrete-clad columns that reveal themselves only at the ground level. The windows of the second through fifth floors were originally glazed with clear plate glass later replaced with reflective glass at an unknown date.

The ground level columns that support the upper floors (2-5) are accentuated by the three-foot recess behind it. The recess is clad with black granite at the base and aluminum storefront above. Modern terminology at the time named these columns “piloti,” a characteristic feature of Modern architecture. This treatment presents as half-hearted in its narrowness at the Battin Building, perhaps due to space constraints, i.e., the need for more office space on the ground level.

The simple massing stems from the 68’- 8½” tall extension of the rectangular footprint up to the clean level line of the coping. The parapet conceals the flat roof, cooling tower, elevator penthouse, and upper portion of the original District Courtroom. The building’s total area of 214,899 square feet includes a basement and sub-basement. The building fills the east half of the full city block.

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The materials and textures range in subtle contrast from the granular³ marble aggregate-rich precast concrete to the smooth silky planes of clear finish aluminum windows⁴ to the gloss of the polished black granite walls and reflective glazing at grade level. These latter walls reinforce the bay pattern established by the piloti before them: black granite-clad mullions, columns, and panels share the available area equally with large fixed glass panes set in aluminum.

The wall rhythm is a direct expression of the steel frame of the building, delineating five bays of the 25'-0" column spacing of the short elevations and nine bays of the 30'-0" column spacing of the long facades. The sophisticated concealment of the structure within the walls of the top four floors was rare at the time of construction. Most Formalist style buildings revealed both columns and floor plates in their exterior treatments. Within each bay, five and six precast concrete panels nearly 5' wide, further articulate each façade. The panels range in height to accommodate the terminal expression of the building; from 13'-5½" (at the 3rd and 4th floors) to 14'-9" (at the 2nd floor, lengthened to include the beltcourse) to 15'-8" (at the fifth floor, lengthened to include the coping). The glazed area is consistent for each panel, measuring 6'-6½" high by 2'-10" wide. The consistent treatment and visibility of the elevations is broken by a distinctive entry canopy at each street exposure and service entries at the alley side. The longest entry canopy demarcates the main entry on the east side of the building.

The entrance canopies stand out as exceptions to the strict symmetry of the upper elevations of the building. While the south canopy is centered as single-bay feature, the east canopy extends a second-bay length to north of center and the north canopy is located one bay off center. The free-standing canopies represent distinctive sculptural features that soften the entries. While the precast concrete finish matches the building panels, the forms are distinctly different. Each single column, elliptical in plan, supports outspread concrete shells with the profile of the butterfly swim stroke; the greater length stretches toward the street. In between the columns, the wings meet to form gentle barrel vaults. The three-inch thick concrete of these forms appears to defy gravity, providing a marked distinction to the solid grounding of the building.

Façade – East Façade

The east façade contains the main entry that faces North 26th Street and the tall parking garage directly across the street. The 30'-0" bays each contain six 5'-wide window panels in floors two through five. Each panel features four bevels, creating - as a whole - a regular, insistent, series of flat planes and half-diamonds in both plan and elevation. This subtle pattern meets at a flat diagonal face at the building corners, easing the transition to the next elevation. This shaft of wall terminates at the first-floor soffit and the parapet with the equivalent of a precast beltcourse/coping. The parapet has since been extended with a sheet metal coping that diminishes the clarity of line. The first, ground level, floor's perimeter wall is recessed from the external columnar support. These columns, faced to appear as though diamond-shaped in plan, are subsumed into the precast walls above. (These column faces now protrude slightly on the

³ This coarse texture was an intentional design feature, in its depiction in the original construction document details. See Sheets 5-4 and 5-7 for examples.

⁴ The excellent condition of the aluminum indicates the finish was likely a transparent anodic coating.

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inside face of the perimeter walls, whereas they were originally flush with the face of the unit heater cabinets.)

Articulated and detailed as the other elevations are, the primary distinction of the east façade is the long series of undulating canopies announcing the entry and the penetration of the skybridge in two window bays of the third floor above the entry lobby. The entry aligns with the three north canopies while providing shelter before entering the vestibule of the main lobby. The canopies are supported by columns within elliptically shaped precast column covers, in stark contrast to the diamond-shape created by the covers of the perimeter columns. The entry recess is marked with an aluminum structural grid that wraps around the canopy columns at ceiling height and extends to the header above the entry transoms. This grid originally supported an aluminum grille.

The entry walls, recessed beyond the perimeter column line, exhibit cladding with black granite which is countered with the lightness of the three pairs of entry doors. This juxtaposition continues through the remainder of the recessed walls of the ground level.

An engraved plaque on the south wall of the recessed entry designates the original ownership by the U.S. Government and specifically GSA. The plaque reads:

United States of America
John F Kennedy
President
General Services Administration
Bernard L Boutin
Administrator
1963

South and North (End) Elevations

The south and north elevations continue the structural, rhythmic, and fenestration system established by the east façade. The narrower 25'-0" bays each hold five 5'-wide window panels in floors two through five. The first, ground level, floor's perimeter wall is also recessed from the external columnar support. The column and precast window system is identical to that of the east facade. The south and north entry storefronts are recessed approximately 1'-6" from the main wall plane. The entry recesses are marked with an aluminum structural grid that wraps around the canopy columns at ceiling height and extends to the header above the entry transoms. These grids originally supported aluminum grilles that have since been removed.

West (Alley) Elevation

The upper floors of the alley elevation continue the previous architectural expression, yet the ground floor treatment breaks from the established pattern. A deeper full-bay recess accommodates a granite-clad housing for the loading dock in the building's southwest corner and the ramp down to the parking level below grade. The recessed wall here follows the standard treatment of black granite and fixed glazing. Fencing between the outer columns blocks access

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from the alley to the sloping ramp. An original parking area at the two north bays of the recess is now fenced off and used as an employee lounge/smoking area.

Roof

The flat roof behind the low parapet walls is not visible from grade, nor are the components raised above roof level. At the north end of the roof, the upper part of the original fifth floor courtroom remains, adjacent to the elevator/stair tower. Both structures are clad with plain precast concrete panels. South of the penthouse, a more distinctive precast concrete-gridded armature hides the cooling towers. The current screening system is not the original system which was composed of a much tighter grid (1'x1') than the existing, which is similar in scale to the building's window panels.⁵ The date of this modification is unknown. Ample openings in the precast allow for ventilation and cooling. This whole screening is held 1'-3" above the roof level, promoting an appearance of floating.

Skybridge

The skybridge was constructed in 2018 to connect the third floor of the Battin Building to the six-story parking garage across North 26th Street. The steel trusses of this rectilinear structure are apparent through the large glazed openings cut into the corrugated metal siding. This structure is not part of the Battin Building as a different entity owns the skybridge and the parking garage.

Summary of Contributing Features - Exterior

The above descriptions convey the significance of several features that contribute to the design integrity of the building. They are listed here for clarity: the building massing and flat roof; precast-clad columns and pilotis; precast concrete canopies and associated metal frames for non-extant grilles; precast concrete panels and aluminum windows contained therein; granite walls and aluminum storefronts above; granite-clad walls of the recessed east entry and vestibule; Pomeroy metal sculpture; engraved building plaque at east entry.

JAMES F. BATTIN FEDERAL BUILDING INTERIOR

The James F. Battin Building interior is comprised of public spaces, office spaces on the third floor, and support/system spaces. The public space allocations on the first floor establish the treatment for the floors above, except for the entries. Three entry vestibules provide public access from the street level into the building. The north and south entry vestibules are identical in size – 15'-wide by 10'-deep – accommodating a center pair of doors flanked by single doors. The exterior storefront entrance repeats at the interior face of the vestibule. The vestibules originally opened directly into the building's perimeter corridor system. The original space between the vestibule and the associated stair tower has since been enclosed as a lobby with an access door to the east and west portions of the building. The primary entry vestibule, recessed 12'-6" in from the east exterior wall, also measures 10' deep, yet 28' wide to accommodate three pairs of doors. This vestibule opens directly into the elevator lobby. The south wall of the elevator lobby originally featured cladding with multi-colored mosaic tile. A field of white one-inch square ceramic tile was accented with one-inch by two-inch colored tile of vertical and

⁵ Historic photograph (#0003) and Sheets 4-1 and 5-5 of the original construction drawings clearly show, and dimension, the tighter grid of the original screening.

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horizontal orientation supported by one-inch square tile of light blue, yellow, black, and red. This tile wall was removed circa 2017-2018 and replaced with one-foot by two-foot variegated dark porcelain tile set in a running bond.

The bank of three elevators and adjacent stairway access the floors above and the basement. This service wall, on the south side of the lobby, faces the long mural that covers the north wall. This 9'-6"-high mural combines the images of five 8'-8"-wide sections into a chronological sequence depicting the evolution of the Big Sky region. This sculptural mural, of fabricated and found welded steel, was described by its creator, Billings' sculptor Lyndon Fayne Pomeroy, as follows:

The overriding theme of the mural is this region. The development of the region was broken into five segments to give a visual fragmentation to the sequence of events. The background surface was the first consideration, as it was essential to develop the thematic statement. In the center panel the sunburst radiates across the Big Sky over the time sequences. Below these rays are the textural forms to suggest the organic vegetable growth. Beneath these forms are the textures to suggest the earth and the water in the earth. The latter texture began its life as 16-penny nails.⁶

The perimeter corridors originate in this main lobby and act as a double-loaded circulation path around the interior floorplate. The corridor, three enclosed stairs, three elevators and associated elevator lobby, large fan room, and electrical/telephone closets are stacked for all occupied levels of the building. The original restrooms, located adjacent to the north and south stairways, were removed circa 2016-2017. New restrooms have been constructed at the third and fourth floors and accessed directly from the north side of the elevator lobby.

The interior of the Battin Building has been reduced to the core components noted above and the original structural system. All the original (moveable) partitions were removed circa 2016-2017. The regular array of steel columns clad with gypsum board remain visible at the perimeter walls and the floor plate of each floor, stressing the 30'-0" spacing north-south and the 25'-0" spacing east-west. The structure conveys less clearly at the southern six bays of the third floor, built out in 2018 for Yellowstone County offices. Corridors wrap around the east and south sides of the existing core. The larger county offices that contain file drawers of records and internal circulation abut the west walls of the core spaces.

Basement

The basement is a utilitarian space primarily dedicated to parking. A tall sub-basement contains the large components of the heating and cooling system.

Summary of Contributing Features - Interior

The above descriptions convey the significance of several features that contribute to the design integrity of the building. They are listed here for clarity: the building structure (columns

⁶ Lyndon Fayne Pomeroy, "Structural Details," September 20, 1966.

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primarily), the bank of elevators and associated lobbies, the three stair halls, the terrazzo flooring at the first and fifth floors, the windows above the fan coil cabinets.

INTEGRITY

The James F. Battin Building retains a sufficient degree of integrity to convey its original exterior appearance. The location, setting, massing, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association are all retained from the original construction. The original precast concrete panels and aluminum windows remain, as do the granite panels and storefront windows at the recessed exterior portion of the grade level. The skybridge's insensitive interruption of the primary east façade is unfortunate yet obscures only a small portion of the east facade.

The interior of the building retains a moderate-to-low degree of integrity. While the interior spaces and corridors have been removed, the configuration was originally intended to be flexible; the partitions were movable. The three entry vestibules, related stair enclosures (and finishes), elevators and elevator lobbies with enclosed stair (and finishes), fan rooms, and electrical/telephone closets remain. The original terrazzo floor of the fifth-floor elevator lobby remains and appears to remain beneath the vinyl tile of the first floor elevator lobby.

In total, the building retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association:

1. Location: The Battin Building is in its original location.
2. Setting: The Battin Building retains its original setting. The governmental buildings remain to the south and west, with commercial and cultural buildings to the north. The parking garage east of the site replaced a surface parking lot, thus is of the same, albeit expanded, purpose. The bank building to the immediate southeast remains, under different use. The largest alteration has been the 2012 construction of the large new James F. Battin Federal Building on the block southeast from the original building. The landscaping remains minimal, dedicated primarily to pedestrians, with sidewalks and benches.
3. Design, Materials, and Workmanship: The design of the building retains a high degree of integrity, supported by retention of the original materials and the high level of workmanship contained therein. The original precast concrete panels and windows remain, as do the original precast-faced columns. The original design intent remains inherently clear, with the restrained patterns and overall symmetry of the Formalism style.⁷ The workmanship of the primary components – the precast concrete, aluminum windows, granite wall cladding – are evident still in their precise lines and in good condition.

⁷ All documentation of the Battin Building, originating with the GEM Assessment for GSA in 2007, have classified the building style as "Formalism," in keeping with the Modern era styles highlighted in the 2003 GSA publication *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*.

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The stance of the building atop diamond-shaped pilotis, the recessed wall plane at first floor level, and the further recess into the entry vestibules is consistent and well maintained. The signature precast concrete canopy at each of the three entries is the highlight and joy of the building. This playful contrast with the rigid wall planes remains as welcoming as the day the canopies were placed.

4. Feeling. The original materials, façade design, massing, entries, and intact configuration of the exterior and public spaces expresses the original construction of the building.
5. Association. The Battin Building remained in use as a federal office and courts building until GSA's departure in 2012. The future use of the building for municipal offices and courts is in keeping with the building's original purpose.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1965-1972

Significant Dates

1965

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

J.G. Link & Company/architect

Hegeman-Harris Company/contractor

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The James F. Battin Building's significance stems from fulfilling two National Register criteria: Criterion A – Politics/Government and Community Planning and Development – and Criterion C. The building is significant at the local and statewide level. Under Criterion A, the building is significant for its embodiment and furthering the goals of the “Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture” program initiated by President Kennedy in June 1962 and for the influence that Billings businessmen had on locating the building within downtown Billings. The building's robust association with these two events reflects a meaningful contribution to the broad patterns of both national and local history. The guiding principles directed the designers to incorporate the finest in contemporary architectural thought while avoiding an official style, after first strongly considering site selection. The businessmen in the Billings' Chamber of Commerce insisted that the new federal building be located near the existing local government facilities. This prescient stance was intended to increase trade at the downtown businesses. More than 800 federal employees would easily satisfy this eager market.

The building is also significant under Criterion C – Architecture - as an early and fine, well-crafted example of the Formalist style of Modern architecture in Billings and Montana. The physical presence of the building portrays the solidity demanded of the federal government and the efficient and economical construction mandated by the Guiding Principles, as made possible by the use of a steel frame and precast concrete wall panels. The reduction of the building's façade to simple and necessary forms promotes the exclusion of elaborate ornamentation and conceals much of the building's structure. The distinctive Formalist features of the building remain today: flat roofline, smooth wall surface, high quality materials, columnar supports, strict symmetry (the offset of the entry canopies serves to further emphasize this trait), and beveled panels accentuated by the clean white marble aggregate.

The Battin Building was designed by one of Montana's premier architectural firms, J.G. Link & Company. It stands out among a body of well-designed buildings the company produced during its long tenure from 1896 to 1985.

The Period of Significance begins in 1965 with the completion of the building and its initial occupancy by federal employees. Although the building continued in its governmental role until 2012, the end date for the period of significance is 1972, in concurrence with the National Park Service's fifty-year closing date. Significant dates include 1965, the year the building's construction ended and the building put into use.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)⁸

CRITERION A: GOVERNMENT/POLITICS

Upon completion of the James F. Battin Federal Building, previously disparate federal agencies scattered throughout 11 sites in Billings were provided centralized office space. The plan of the Battin Building addressed the government's objective of eliminating inefficient and wasteful use of space, which was often the result of leasing space in expensive privately-owned buildings. The design of the Battin Building conveyed "dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American Government,"⁹ while eschewing extravagance, and was based upon the efficient and economical construction made possible by a steel frame and precast concrete wall panels. Overcrowding was corrected in this 130,000 square-foot facility; lighting was evenly distributed and sufficient; and operable windows, along with a state-of-the-art mechanical (air conditioning and heating) system, provided fresh air. In 1968 and 1969, the building's efficient operation was recognized by the top officials of GSA. GSA's National Building Management first-place award was presented by GSA's PBS building commissioner (William Schmidt of D.C.) in the Battin Building's crowded federal courtroom.¹⁰

GSA promoted three architectural policies as part of their "Guiding Principles" for the design of federal buildings. The first two principles were specific to the architectural design, while the third policy related to site selection, as the first step in the design process. The first two policies are addressed in Criterion C: Architecture. In the case of the Battin Building, selection of a site in downtown Billings proved a key factor in local acceptance of this federal building in Billings.

The third guiding principle stated that "...buildings should be located so as to permit a generous development of landscape."¹¹ The Battin Building's siting – as a public place in downtown Billings – proved to be prescient of the later understanding of the importance of preserving historic downtowns. Billings' administrators helped approve the site, in support of GSA's preference for a site in the general area. The Chamber of Commerce's insistence on a downtown location aimed at benefiting the downtown merchants with the economic stimulation that would accompany the influx of the 800-plus federal employees. This location would reinforce the adjacent business district, as opposed to the current multiple locations, many of which were far from downtown. This counteracted the popular support for locating new construction in malls outside of the downtown business district.¹² The Battin Building was located adjacent to the

⁸ Much of the significance and history of the property is a compilation of research and writings by the author in other forms of documentation: the 2007 GSA Eligibility Assessment report, the 2009 HABS Documentation, and the Montana Historic Property Record form completed June 8, 2022. Additional research and analysis is inserted as appropriate.

⁹ GSA, *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s* (U.S. General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect, reprinted December 2005), page 44.

¹⁰ "GSA Chiefs Laud Billings," *Billings Gazette*, 5 September 1969, page 7. Award brochure in MSU Special Collections Collection 2403, Folder 3:6.

¹¹ GSA, page 45.

¹² *U.S. News & World Report*, 28 August 1961, page 89-90. Billings Gazette articles from 1961-1969, previously in the Special Collections of the Billings Public Library.

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intersection that housed Billings' other primary government buildings: City Hall & Fire Department, and the Yellowstone County Court House, both predating the Battin Building.¹³

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

The Battin Federal Building is representative of the modern era during which the federal government took an active role in the design of federal buildings. In June 1962, President Kennedy initiated the "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture" for government buildings under the auspices of the General Services Administration (GSA). While selection of the architect in April 1961 and development of initial design concepts in November 1961 predated establishment of GSA's guiding principles, the design strongly aligned with them. Correspondence between GSA and the architect has yet to be discovered; it is conceivable that GSA shared the principles in their nascent form with the architect.

This building design reflected two of the Public Buildings Service's (GSA's construction and development arm) primary architectural goals, as follows:

1. Incorporate the finest in contemporary architectural thought.
 - a. A large piece of sculptural mural art by a local, living artist was integrated into the - main entrance lobby. This large piece reflected the history of Montana, from the Reptilian Age, through the time of the Indian, the Homesteader, and to "Tomorrow."¹⁴
 - b. The building entry was accessible to the handicapped.
 - c. The building was constructed of economical and durable materials.
 - d. The overall design of the building did not, however, reflect local or regional influences, as encouraged.¹⁵
2. Avoid an official style: "The government should be willing to pay more to avoid excessive uniformity of design for Federal buildings."¹⁶
 - a. This building was part of a sizable building campaign launched by the government, hence, was designed at the same time as several other federal buildings. A majority of these buildings appear to share similar construction techniques, resulting in what could be construed as design uniformity. Within the design palette of formalistic modern architecture, however, the federal buildings produced during this time period exhibit compositional treatments unique to their designers.
 - b. The design of the Battin Building proved unique at the time in that the precast panels concealed the structure above the first floor. The subtle and creative use of the

¹³ The Art Deco style City Hall was constructed in the late 1930s. A sizeable addition to the County Courthouse was built immediately southwest of the federal building site in 1958 (a bronze plaque in the courthouse identifies the architect as Chandler C. Cohagen).

¹⁴ This work was designed and executed by sculptor Lyndon Fayne Pomeroy of Billings, Montana and installed on September 20, 1966.

¹⁵ In fact, representatives of the Billings' business community opined that 130,000 square feet would result in a glut of 100,000 square feet of office space. "City Gets a Federal Building – But Does it Want One?" *U.S. News & World Report*, 28 August 1961, page 88.

¹⁶ GSA, page 44.

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beveled panels obviated the need for spandrels and created a sharp angular pattern that characterized all elevations.

EXPANDED CRITERION A DISCUSSION – CONTEXT FOR THE “GUIDING PRINCIPLES”

The National Register Nomination for the Federal HUD Building in DC succinctly summarizes the impact of GSA’s path to the Guiding Principles:

A milestone development in the design and construction of Federal buildings occurred in 1961 with the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space. The Committee was created at the suggestion of President John F. Kennedy, who expressed dissatisfaction with the Federal government’s approach to the provision of public buildings in the District of Columbia and across the country and concern about the declining caliber of Federal construction. Although the Public Buildings Act of 1959 was passed to progress the issue, Kennedy requested that the problem be revisited. Thus, the Ad Hoc Committee was formed to advise the administration on immediate and long-term building needs and to make recommendations for improvements. The Committee ultimately expanded its inquiries to consider the decrepit condition of Pennsylvania Avenue and the “increasingly perceived mediocrity of Federal building design.” In June 1962, the Committee presented its findings, *The Report to the President* by the Ad hoc Committee on Federal Office Space, which contained the “Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture,” penned by the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The report identified numerous problems with government owned and leased buildings, and recommended both the elimination of temporary and obsolete building and new construction. The goals of the “Guiding Principles” were summarized as follows:

1. The policy shall be to provide requisite and adequate faculties in an architectural style and form that will reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the Federal government. Major emphasis should be placed on the choice of designs that embody the finest contemporary American architectural thought. Where appropriate, fine art should be incorporated in the building design, with emphasis on the work of living American artists. Buildings should be economical to construct, operate, and maintain and should be accessible.
2. The development of an official type must be avoided. The government should avoid excessive uniformity in the design of Federal building and seek the advice of distinguished architects prior to the award of important design contracts.
3. The choice and development of the building site should be considered as the first step of the design process and should be made in cooperation with local agencies. Special attention should be given to the assemblage of streets and public places and to the development of landscape.¹⁷

¹⁷ Judith H. Robinson and Daria A. Gasparini, *National Register Nomination for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*, 23 April 2008, page 8-7 and 8-8, and GSA, page 44-45.

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Thus, while J.G. Link & Company began and finalized their design for the Battin Building prior to the establishment of GSA's "Guiding Principles" in June 1962, GSA and the President were clearly on track towards their development. The concepts were likely conveyed directly to J. G. Link & Company, as they followed the tenets closely in their building design.

While the Battin Building embodied the goals of the Guiding Principles, it was apparently not considered an exceptional or seminal example.¹⁸ The design closely reflected the most modern concepts of what a federal building should be and what it should look like. While a clear connection exists between the building and the government's programs, as stated above, the design was not in the vanguard; it was, however, distinctive in the way the treatment of the elevations above grade level. Precast concrete panels only just became part of the standard architectural vocabulary, giving J.G. Link & Company an opportunity to use them in creating a faceted jewel box of a building. The angular design was akin to that of the aluminum skinned modern buildings – particularly the 1959 Porter Building in Pittsburgh, by the well-renowned firm of Harrison & Abramovitz – and demonstrated the plasticity of concrete.

The preliminary drawings for the Battin Building were completed by June 1961 just two years after completion of the Porter Building in Pittsburgh and of the Hilton Hotel in Denver, designed by I.M. Pei.¹⁹ The latter building - Pei's Hilton - represents one of the earliest significant uses of window wall precast concrete panels fixed to a structural frame. The use of precast concrete panels of this size (some as tall as 15') and thickness (as thin as 2½"-3") only became feasible in the late 1950s and early 1960s, due to the introduction of mobile cranes and other handling equipment, improved production techniques, and economically achieved finishes.²⁰ This introduction of large precast concrete components and panelized wall systems played an important aesthetic role in modern architecture.²¹ The popularity of the aluminum skin predated that of the precast concrete skin, thus, the use of the aluminum skin as a design inspiration for the Battin Building proved insightful and fitting.

As a stand-alone building, the Battin Building stands as a successful example of the Formalism style of the Modern era. The following features represent the hallmarks of the style:

- Flat projecting rooflines (The Battin Building's roofline is flat but does not project. This lack of projection is not uncommon in buildings of the Formalism style.)
- Smooth wall surfaces
- High quality materials columnar supports
- Strict symmetry (enhanced by the shifted location of two of the three entry canopies)
- Concave surfaces at the beveled window openings

¹⁸ Exhaustive research in the *Architectural Forum* and the *Architectural Record*, architectural journals popular during this time period, reveal no coverage of the Battin Building.

¹⁹ "GSA Building Plans Ready," *Billings Gazette*, 3 June 1961.

²⁰ Sidney Freedman, "Architectural Precast Concrete," page 110, by Thomas C. Jester, ed. *Twentieth-Century Building Materials: History and Conservation* (McGraw-Hill Companies, 1995).

²¹ William H. Jordy, *The Impact of European Modernism in the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), page 147.

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- White, simple facades

Analysis of J. G. Link & Company's detailed construction drawings, and the condition of the building, indicate that the architect researched the new materials and construction techniques to provide a well-constructed, durable, and economical building. Workmanship and concomitant quality control appear of the highest order. The buildings designed in this style combined a variety of strong, hard materials intended to present a strong, progressive image. The Battin Building does this by submitting to an insistent regularity, no applied ornament, and its simple mass that takes up the entire half-block of the city. The one concession to exterior decoration is in the three graceful precast concrete canopies that mark the three entries. The gently curving barrel vaults are winglike and inviting. They are brought further down to the pedestrian scale with the introduction of horizontal aluminum grilles 10' above the sidewalk. These grilles used to engage the central columns of the canopies, effectively tying down the soaring elements (removal of the grills occurred likely circa 2016-2017). The use of the hallmark pilotis with recessed first floor wall plane is also intended as an invitational feature. On the Battin Building, however, this feature falls short of the portico so effectively created on other buildings of this era – such as GSA's HUD building in D.C. – where the exterior perimeter space comprises a full (or nearly full) structural bay. The Battin Building's recess of less than 3' – albeit accentuated by the dark granite bulkhead of the wall beyond – relegates this feature to a nod, rather than a successful commitment, to the true pilotis of the structurally-savvy modern era. Perhaps in response to the Montana climate, the Battin Building design also lacks the courtyard or plaza expected of this style.

BUILDING HISTORY

The federal government began eying Billings for a new federal building in 1960, as part of a large \$8 billion federal funding bill.²² Soon after, in January 1961, GSA identified the area between 1st and 4th avenues and 24th and 27th streets as a preferred area to locate the building. Montana senator Lee Metcalf supported the urgency for this project, hoping for completion of the design work within a year.²³ GSA engaged architecture firm J.G. Link in April 1961, and design commenced. Yet the process was not without controversy, as Billings business owners accustomed to leasing office space to federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs and US Fish and Wildlife, worried about potential lost income. One such building owner, Willard E. Fraser, who leased more than 20,000 square feet of office space to the government, was incensed and vocal about his opposition to the project. He believed that the proposed building would fail to hold business downtown and that with the centrally located building "...will come a government employees mercantile cooperative which will supply items that they now purchase from Billings businessmen." He projected reduced prices would drive Billings' businesses out of town.²⁴ This argument was countered by others concerned that the government would move their business out of town entirely and that Great Falls seemed a likely contender to happily receive the several hundred federal employees associated with the agencies and courts in the proposed

²² William F. Arbogast, "Federal Buildings at Billings, Sweetgrass in Appropriations Bill," *The Montana Standard* (Butte, MT), 15 April 1960.

²³ "GSA Orders 'Buy Site'," *Billings Gazette*, 19 January 1961.

²⁴ Willard E. Fraser, "New Federal Building Hit," *Billings Gazette*, 8 February 1961.

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building. This would negatively impact the businesses and all of Billings, where it would be a “terrible blow.”²⁵

These arguments represented the two groups that divided Billings on the subject, the division controversial enough to serve as the focus of an article in the August 28, 1961 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*. The title, “City Gets a Federal Building – But Does it Want One?” highlighted the issue dividing the city in half, summarizing it succinctly: “The chamber of commerce and downtown businesses have been joined by local labor leaders in surging full speed ahead on the proposed building. The fight against the building is led by a ‘liberal’ Democrat.” The article references a July survey taken by the opposition that found 100,000 square feet of vacant office space in Billings existed, whereas the federal government planned to add 130,000 square feet. The opposition party still hoped to block the project yet faced the standard response that if Billings didn’t take it, another city (Great Falls) would. A mall owner accused the Chamber of Commerce of reaching for a “big bunch of captive customers.” Indeed, downtown businesses viewed it as an opportunity to stimulate lagging business, much of which had left for a west side mall. *US News & World Report* noted that most believed that the empty space would be filled by the time the federal building was completed in 1965 – that the economic growth of Billings would support this.²⁶

The *US News & World Report* article also dove into the genesis of the project, stating that, in viewing GSA’s project files, it was revealed that an early 1957 survey concluded that the federal building was needed in Billings. “The project lay dormant until early 1960 when it was approved by Congress...After office-building owners in Billings protested, a resurvey was made in September 1960. It concluded the need still existed.”²⁷

As intended, GSA marched forward with gaining the appropriations necessary to proceed with purchasing the site, hiring the architect, and paying for construction. J. G. Link submitted plans for a \$6m building to GSA for review in June 1961.²⁸ After completion of soil boring tests in November 1961, the design was finalized. Secure funding did not occur, however, until January 1962, with the project’s inclusion in President Kennedy’s budget. Political pressure by Montana’s senators Mansfield and Metcalf and representative James F. Battin was required to retain the project in the budget, a goal gained in August 1962. This enabled GSA to bid the project. In December 1962, 13 general contractors – from New York to Washington state – submitted costs for a base bid project and two add alternates. The base bids ranged from the successful low bid of \$3,863,000 to the highest at \$4,300,000. Low bidder Hegeman-Harris Company from New York, NY attained the contract. Both alternates were accepted.²⁹

²⁵ A.J. Peters, “Keep Federal Workers in Billings,” *Billings Gazette*, 15 March 1961.

²⁶ “City Gets a Federal Building – But Does it Want One?” *U.S. News & World Report*, 28 August 1961.

²⁷ “City Gets a Federal Building – But Does it Want One?” *U.S. News & World Report*, 28 August 1961.

²⁸ “GSA Building Plans Ready,” *Billings Gazette*, 03 June 1961.

²⁹ “Abstract of Bids for Construction of Courthouse & Federal Office Building, Billings, Montana (Bids opened 12-18-62, in Billings).” Alternate A was for movable metal partitions in lieu of demountable panel type partition and Alternate B was for furnishing and installing a diesel-electric generator.

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Hegeman-Harris received the project in March 1963 and were ready to employ about 21 local and state subcontractors.³⁰ Ground-breaking for the 660-day construction project occurred that month with city officials and business representatives in attendance.³¹ Hegeman-Harris laid the last steel beam on September 28, 1963 and set the cornerstone on October 9, 1964. The precast concrete panels were formed and cast by the Billings firm Montana Terrazzo, who likely poured and finished the interior terrazzo floors as well.³² The exterior work was completed in December 1964 and the mechanical system began operating for the completion of the interior. GSA moved into their offices in April 1965.³³

GSA continued to operate in the building, with a federal district court, magistrate court, bankruptcy court, and offices for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, GSA, US Marshal, the Bureau of Reclamation, and other federal agencies until 2012.

Naming the Building

In 1999, the Courthouse and Federal Office Building was named for James F. Battin, who as a state representative, aided the fight to restore funding for the building, along with senators Metcalf and Mansfield, and as a federal court judge, ruled in the Battin Building from 1978 through 1990. Battin had been raised and schooled in Billings, received his law degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. in 1951, and returned to Billings in 1952 to practice law. He served as a republican State Representative from 1961 through 1969 and honored in 1967 for his dedication “to the preservation of the spirit and principles of the constitution.”³⁴

In 1969, President Nixon appointed Battin to the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana. He served as the Chief Judge from 1978 through 1990, and then operated on senior status until his death in 1996. The Battin Building represented his judicial home. The proceedings for the building naming in 1999 summed up his effective and dedicated life:

James Battin earned a reputation for effectiveness and for integrity during five terms here in the Congress and for 27 years on the Federal bench. His accomplishments range from building new protections for the environment and wilderness preserves, to rulings on streamlining the Federal Judiciary proceedings. He, for example, created

³⁰ “May end Federal Building Enigma,” *Billings Gazette*, 13 March 1963.

³¹ “Ground-Breaking Tuesday Morning,” *Billings Gazette*, 18 March 1963.

³² Email to Lesley Gilmore from William Haynes, Collaborative Design Architects, 5 May 2022. William noted that the white marble chips permeate the full depth of the concrete panels, similar to the process typically used by a terrazzo installer.

³³ “Federal Building Topped Out,” *Billings Gazette*, 28 September 1963. “Cornerstone is Laid for Federal Building ‘Billings Didn’t Want,’” *The Missoulian*, 09 October 1964. “These Workers Toasty Warm,” *Billings Gazette*, 17 December 1964.

³⁴ “An Act to Designate the United States Courthouse Located at 316 North 26th Street in Billings, Montana, as the ‘James F. Battin United States Courthouse.’” 1999. Kenneth Schebiel, “Battin Is Honored For Conservation,” *Billings Gazette* (Gazette Washington Bureau), 8 June 1967.

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the precedent for the now universally accepted six-man Federal jury in federal cases.”³⁵

De-Accessioning the Building

In 2007, GSA began planning for a new federal courthouse in Billings, to rid themselves of the burden of the “...asbestos-tainted James F. Battin Federal Courthouse.”³⁶ Plans for construction of a larger and more modern court facility began at a downtown site just one block south of the original Battin Building.

In 2012, GSA initiated plans to move their federal department offices to a new building under construction on the grounds of an old lumber complex north of town. This five-story office building, at 2021 4th Avenue North, now completed, houses federal employees from GSA, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Office of the Field Solicitor, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Office of Special Trustees for American Indians. It was considered a “sister building” to the new federal courthouse constructed at 2601 2nd Avenue North and completed in late summer 2012.³⁷ The new federal courthouse now holds the appellation as the James F. Battin Federal Courthouse.

A New Owner and New Use

In 2013 the Colorado Tire Corporation bought the previous federal building and renamed it the Kono Building. After sitting vacant, the building was again on the market in 2015.³⁸ In July 2016, the WC Commercial company of Alaska purchased the building in a foreclosure sale with the intent to “remove the asbestos and turn the large building into office space.” Joe Holden, a managing member of the firm, had “family in Yellowstone County and visits often.”³⁹ Asbestos abatement and demolition of interior partitions and the courtrooms occurred during 2016-2017, followed by build-out on the third floor of offices for Yellowstone County officials. The county moved into the building – now known as the Stillwater Building - before March 2018.⁴⁰

WC Commercial also constructed the six-level parking garage on the block east of the building, with a skybridge to serve the county offices on the third floor. The garage was completed in 2019.⁴¹ At this time, the city entered into negotiations with the building’s owner, believing it addressed the needs of their six-year search for a new site or building. The building’s location, accessible parking, and secure underground parking were some of the features that placed it at

³⁵ Mr. Hill of Montana, *Congressional Record for H.R. 158*, 23 February 1999.

³⁶ Casey Riffe, “Billings developer struggles against publicly-funded Big Sky EDA,” *The Billings Gazette*, 10 November 2007.

³⁷ Jan Falstad and Clair Johnson, “Work starting on federal office building,” *Billings Gazette*, 22 January 2012. “Fired up by stimulus dollars: Contacts for federal courthouse work provide lift to Montana companies,” *Billings Gazette*, 22 January 2012.

³⁸ Tom Lutey, “Former federal building up for sale, asking price \$33.8M,” *Billings Gazette*, 9 September 2015.

³⁹ Clair Johnson, “Old Federal building sold for \$3.2 million,” *Billings Gazette*, 21 July 2016. Rob Rogers, “Work on parking garage slows down for the season,” *Billings Gazette*, 14 December 2018.

⁴⁰ “County to host Stillwater Building tour Tuesday,” *Billings Gazette*, 29 July 2018.

⁴¹ Rob Rogers.

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the top of the city's list for a place to lease, lease with option to buy, or to buy outright.⁴² The negotiation process was delayed with complications, economic setbacks, and disagreement on the building's value, yet the city prevailed and purchased the former Battin Building in 2021.⁴³

The City of Billings is currently working on plans to fit their offices and council chambers into the building. JLG Architects' Williston, North Dakota office, which specializes in civic design, is leading the programming and design effort for this 213,615 gross square-foot building.

ADDITIONAL CRITERION C DISCUSSION – MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN MONTANA AND BILLINGS

In 2010, the Montana State Historic Preservation Office commissioned a study of Montana's post-WWII building stock. The study summarizes the context of Modernism within Montana:

After World War II, many Montana cities experienced the growth characteristic of this era throughout the country. Nationwide, the post-war era saw rapid expansion of suburban neighborhoods, commercial centers, churches, schools, universities, medical clinics, and commercial office buildings; in short, all the facilities needed to serve a growing population. Montana in particular had an infrastructure deficit as well as a need to replace outmoded building stock. Following on twenty-five years of economic stagnation, Montana's communities required an infusion of new construction to alleviate pent-up demand and to respond to a new economic era.⁴⁴

In addition:

Government functioned as a particularly strong growth sector, apparent in the expansion of the university system statewide, the government campus in Helena, as well as individual buildings such as the Yellowstone County Courthouse and the United States Courthouse in Billings.⁴⁵

The city of Billings experienced explosive growth after World War II, with a 73% increase in population between 1940 and 1950, "...and by 1960 had more than twice as many people as in 1940."⁴⁶ This growth triggered construction in primarily the government sectors – federal buildings, schools, dams, etc.⁴⁷ This likely provided the conditions for local Billings businesses to express concern about construction of this federal building, given that the government agencies would no longer lease office space from these businesses, and the private economy had failed to keep pace with the federal economy.

⁴² Rob Rogers, "Stillwater Bldg. tops city hall search," *Billings Gazette*, 14 December 2019.

⁴³ Rob Rogers, "New home deal gets closer," *Billings Gazette*, 23 Jun 2021. "City of Billings will buy Stillwater Building for \$17.1M," *Billings Gazette*, 13 July 2021.

⁴⁴ Diana Painter, *Montana Post-World War II Architectural Survey and Inventory*. Prepared for the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, December 2010, page 1.

⁴⁵ Painter, page 1.

⁴⁶ Painter, page 16.

⁴⁷ Stepped-up construction activity was attributed to building of the Battin Federal Building and the Yellowtail Dam with a workforce nearing 1,000. "More Job-Making Activity," *Billings Gazette*, 4 August 1963.

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The Battin Building is among a collection of admirable modern buildings in Billings, including several at MSU-Billings: the Alterowitz Physical Education Building, and Apsaruke Hall. Downtown Billings has one other Modern-era building of note, the Yellowstone County Courthouse built in 1957. Yet the Battin Building stands out as the only example of Formalism and of federal construction in Billings. These attributes apply to a statewide analysis as well. The state has few examples of Formalist architecture; the Battin Building represents the first of them and is significant as a Modern-era federal courthouse with offices for several federal agencies. Construction of three other Formalist style government buildings/additions in Montana followed construction of the Battin Building: the Federal (Office) Building and U.S. Post Office in Bozeman, completed in 1966; the 1966 addition to the Missoula County Courthouse; and the more expressively styled Clapp Building at the University of Montana in Missoula, completed in 1971. The former is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for Criteria A and C and has a conventional columnar structure with brick infill walls. The Missoula County Courthouse addition is not considered contributing to the original building.⁴⁸

In summary, Montana has only two federal buildings from the Modern era: the James F. Battin U.S. Courthouse (original 1965; new building 2012) and Bozeman's Federal Building and U.S. Post Office (1966).⁴⁹ Montana's other federal buildings date from before World War II.⁵⁰ Both Billings and Bozeman benefited from federal funding in the 1960s, as reward for their respective population growths. As the first federal building and most important one of this Modern era, the Battin Building's statewide stature is significant.

Other Montana buildings in the modernist vein were either built simultaneously with the Battin Building or postdate it. The number of modernist buildings – particularly of the Formalist vein – in Montana proved limited due to the state of the economy at the time that relied primarily on government investment for construction.

The subtle beveled window grid of the Battin Building begs for comparison with the gold standard of Formalism – the HUD Building in D.C. – which is actually generally classified as a form of Expressionism.⁵¹ The HUD Building, designed by Marcel Breuer and constructed between 1965 and 1968, is a 10-story building set on robust piloti that is pronounced by its gently curving façade. Precast concrete panels define the elevations and contain the window openings and, similarly to the Battin Building, conceal the structure of the upper floors. Three major differences distinguish the HUD Building from the Battin Building: the precast panels are

⁴⁸ The National Register Nomination for the Missoula County Courthouse was written in 1976 before the addition could be considered eligible.

⁴⁹ The Bozeman Federal Building and U.S. Post Office was listed in the National Register 4/16/2018.

⁵⁰ The Mike Mansfield Federal Building & U.S. Court House in Butte, constructed 1904 and 1933, was listed in the National Register 11/15/1979; the Federal Building U.S. Courthouse and Post Office in Missoula, constructed in 1911 and 1927, was listed in the National Register 11/30/1979 and as a contributing resource to the Missoula Downtown Historic District, 8/21/2009; the Federal Building in Kalispell (now a library), constructed in 1917, was listed in the National Register 7/11/1994; and the Lewistown Federal Building and Post Office, constructed in 1931, was listed in the National Register 3/14/1986.

⁵¹ GSA, page 15. Judith Robinson, National Register Nomination, page 2.

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beveled only on the bottom slope of the opening, the opening is substantially deeper (at 3' compared to 1'-4") than the Battin panel, and the precast panels are load-bearing. The HUD Building's façade casts deeper shadows than that of the Battin Building.⁵²

The HUD Building is often cited as a masterpiece of the era, along with the U.S. Tax Court in D.C. by Victor Lundy, the John F. Kennedy Federal Building in Boston, and the Federal Center in Chicago by Mies van der Rohe: "The HUD headquarters, the first Federal project in Washington, D.C., built under GSA's 'Guiding Principles' was held up as a model and prototype for future public building projects and inspired a new sense of optimism for the direction of Federal design."⁵³

ARCHITECTURE FIRM J.G. LINK & COMPANY

The Battin Building is considered an atypical work by J.G. Link & Company. J.G. Link & Company, while prominent throughout Montana until its closing in 1985, is known primarily for buildings designed by J.G. Link, Sr. from 1896 throughout the 1940s. He established the eponymous firm in 1930, after partnering with other architects. His two sons, J.G. Link, Jr. and Elmer F. Link, went into business with him when the firm was established. In 1954, J.G. Link, Sr. died in Billings.⁵⁴ At the time of the firm's closing, it was known as Elmer F. Link & Associates. J.G. Link & Company, Architects & Engineers had offices in Butte and Billings, Montana. John G. Link, Jr. lived in Butte, hence presumably ran the Butte office, and Elmer F. Link lived in Billings, running the firm's office there.

Throughout most of its tenure, the firm was multidisciplinary with a "specialist in each department of construction, such as mechanical and electrical engineers, designers, detail man, and civil engineers."⁵⁵ The firm designed a diversity of building types: school buildings, churches, courthouses, hospitals, clinics, commercial, and public buildings. They also designed several federal buildings prior to 1960: Butte Naval Armory; Air Force Base at Great Falls, MT; and the Atomic Energy Commission Laboratory at Arco, ID.⁵⁶ The great number of courthouse designs throughout Montana, Oregon (both J.G. Link, Jr. and Elmer Link attended architecture school in Oregon), and Wyoming – as well as the firm's considerable size for a Montana firm – likely accounted for the firm's consideration for the Battin Federal Building project.⁵⁷

The firm was comfortable with the changing stylistic, material, and construction advances being made throughout the country. They produced documents for buildings that displayed good

⁵² Judith H. Robinson, page 7-1 and 7-2, and photographs.

⁵³ Ibid., page 8-8.

⁵⁴ "Pioneer Billings Architect Dies," *Billings Gazette*, 6 January 1954. Although this directly contradicts the Link entry in Withey's *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, page 373, which states that Link died in Chicago on March 17, 1947, the local news coverage is assumed to be accurate.

⁵⁵ "A Condensed Selection of Data and Pictures on Architectural Work: J.G. Link & Co.," in the archives at the Western Heritage Center, Billings, Montana.

⁵⁶ List of Projects prepared by J.G. Link & Company, March 24, 1960, in the archives at the Western Heritage Center, Billings, Montana.

⁵⁷ Typed "List of Courthouses," by J.G. Link & Company identifies twenty-five courthouses (the list is not dated, neither are the projects), in the archives at the Western Heritage Center.

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proportions, solid construction built to last, and finessed details, supported by a fine understanding of materials. Several of their other designs in Billings remain and include St. Vincent's Hospital, McKinley School, and the Babcock Block.

GSA records do not indicate the architectural selection process for the Battin Building, hence it remains unclear how the selection fit into GSA's process.⁵⁸ Local news coverage in a late March 1961 issue of the *Billings Gazette*, however, highlighted the desirability of being awarded such a plum contract, the concern that no local firm was large enough to handle the project, and the potential award to a competing architecture firm from Billings.⁵⁹ Soon after this article, an April 1, 1961 *Billings Gazette* article announced GSA's selection of J.G. Link & Co. for the new federal building.⁶⁰ GSA's engagement of a locally known prominent architect was not uncommon in the smaller cities throughout the United States.⁶¹

When GSA awarded the Battin Building project to J. G. Link & Company, Richard (Dick) Roth was appointed the project manager in charge of generating the construction documents for the building. Dick was a native Montanan who graduated from Montana State Colleges' (now University's) architecture school in 1948. In 1964, he left J. G. Link & Company during construction of the Battin Building, having been hired by GSA in Auburn, Washington, where he managed design and construction on the west coast.⁶²

⁵⁸ The GSA files in Denver have no entries for the Battin Federal Building, according to Andrea Collins, email correspondence to Lesley Gilmore, dated 31 January 2007. The Battin Building Property Manager in 2007 also indicated that they had no records in the building itself. The National Archives in Seattle, Washington has no entries for the Battin Building in the Real Property Files for GSA public buildings, Service Region 10 (ARC Search Results).

⁵⁹ "Juicy Plum: Billings Architect Eyes Federal Building Job," *Billings Gazette*, 25 March 1961. The article states that Billings architect Chandler C. Cohagen had been contacted by the government regarding plans for the Federal Building but wouldn't "...say anything for sure until I've got it on the dotted line."

⁶⁰ "J.G. Link & Co to Design Billings Federal Building," *Billings Gazette*, 1 April 1961.

⁶¹ GSA, page 6.

⁶² Richard Roth obituary, *Billings Gazette*, Billings, MT. 19 September 2007.

James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

Yellowstone, MT 24YL2459
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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James F. Battin Federal Building

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Kardoes, Mary J. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the United States Post Office in Missoula, MT. October 1979.

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Painter, Diana J. *Montana Post World War II Architectural Survey and Inventory*, prepared for the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, December 2010.

Pomeroy, Lyndon Fayne. "Structural Details," September 20, 1996.

Robinson, Judith H. and Daria A. Gasparini. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Robert C. Weaver Federal Building)* in D.C. 23 April 2008.

U.S. News & World Report. 28 August 1961.

Whiffen, Marcus and Frederick Koeper. *American Architecture: Volume 2: 1860-1976*. Cambridge, A: The MIT Press, sixth printing 1995.

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Detroit: Omnigraphics, republished edition, 1996.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☒ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☒ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #GS-P-08-09-JF-5021 (GSA Order no.)

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

James F. Battin Federal Building

Name of Property

Yellowstone, MT 24YL2459

County and State

☒ Federal agency (GSA)

☐ Local government

☐ University

☒ Other

Name of repository: Western Heritage Center in Billings, MT

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.967

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 45.785390

Longitude: -108.505570

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Taking leniency with true north (angled to the northeast), the Battin Building at 316 N. 26th Street is located on the east half of a full block described as follows. Fourth Avenue North is the northern boundary of the site; North 26th Avenue the eastern; Third Avenue North the southern; mid-block alley as the western boundary. See attached map page 39; reference to this map confirms this boundary.

Legal description:

Tract of land located in the SW¼, Section 33, T1N, R26E, M.P.M., more particularly described as follows, to wit: The E½ (with Lots 1 through 12) of Block 43, Original Town of Billings, Montana. Containing 0.967 Acres. (Certificate of Survey, 27 April 1964. Sheet 1-1 of original construction drawings)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The stated boundaries align with the original and unchanged property lines of the Jams F. Battin Federal Building.

10. Form Prepared By

name/title: Lesley M. Gilmore / Historic Preservation Consultant

organization: Gilmore Franzen Consultants LLC

street & number: 180 North Low Bench Road

city or town: Gallatin Gateway state: MT zip code: 59730-8541

e-mail: gilmorepreservation@gmail.com

telephone: (406) 600-0464

date: November 25, 2022

James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

Yellowstone, MT 24YL2459
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: James F. Battin Federal Building
City or Vicinity: Billings
County: Yellowstone State: MT
Photographers: Lesley M. Gilmore
Dates Photographed: 28 April 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

James F. Battin Federal Building

Name of Property

Yellowstone, MT 24YL2459

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<i>NR Photo Number</i>	<i>Photo #</i>	<i>Description of Image</i>
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0001	1 of 32	Facing southwest towards east façade.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0002	2 of 32	Facing southwest towards east façade.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0003	3 of 32	Facing southwest towards original floating granite-clad planter suspended from elliptical columns under south portion of east entry canopy.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0004	4 of 32	Facing northwest towards main entry and skybridge at east facade.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0005	5 of 32	Facing north towards east entry canopy and skybridge above.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0006	6 of 32	Facing northwest towards south (left) elevation and east facade.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0007	7 of 32	Facing northwest towards southeast corner.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0008	8 of 32	Facing northwest towards south (left) elevation and east facade.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0009	9 of 32	Facing northeast towards south entry.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0010	10 of 32	Facing northeast towards west (left) and south elevations.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0011	11 of 32	Facing southeast towards west elevation.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0012	12 of 32	Facing southeast towards north (left) and west elevations.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0013	13 of 32	Facing southeast towards north (left) and west elevations.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0014	14 of 32	Facing east towards north entry canopy.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0015	15 of 32	Facing south towards north elevation.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0016	16 of 32	Facing southwest towards east (left) façade and north elevation.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0017	17 of 32	First Floor. Facing northwest towards recessed entry area at east side of building.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0018	18 of 32	First Floor. Facing southwest towards original plaque at south wall of recessed entry area at east side of building.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0019	19 of 32	First Floor. Facing north within vestibule at east side of building.

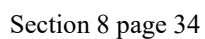
James F. Battin Federal Building

Yellowstone, MT 24YL2459

Name of Property

County and State

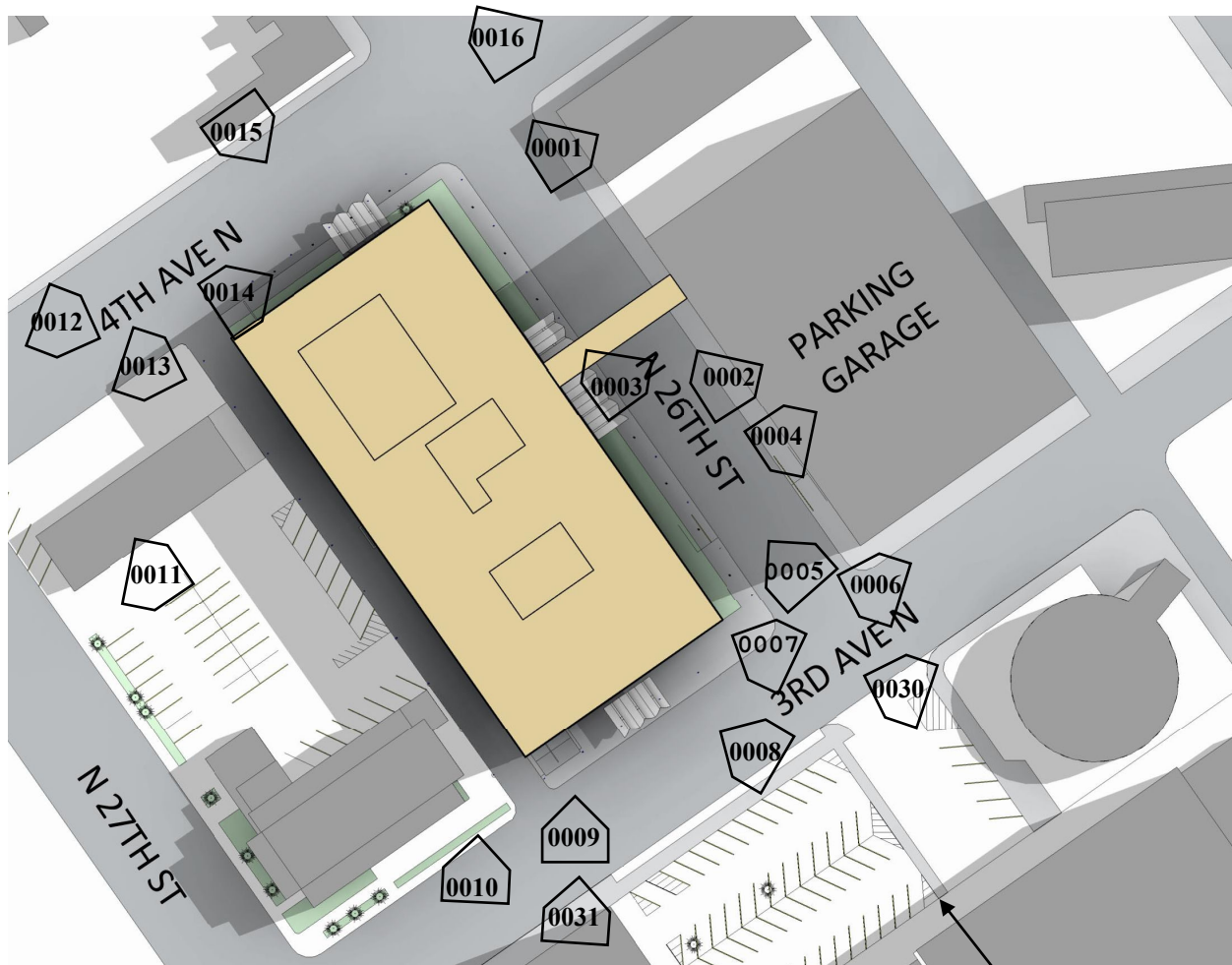
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0020	20 of 32	First Floor. Facing southwest towards elevators within elevator lobby.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0021	21 of 32	First Floor. Facing northwest towards sculptural mural at north wall of elevator lobby.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0022	22 of 32	Fourth Floor. Facing southeast within main stairway.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0023	23 of 32	Fifth Floor. Facing south down north stair tower.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0024	24 of 32	Roof. Facing north towards modified precast screening concealing cooling tower.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0025	25 of 32	Roof. Facing northeast towards upper portion of original district courtroom (left), elevator/stair penthouse (center), and cooling tower screening (right).
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0026	26 of 32	Roof. Facing northeast towards elevator/stair penthouse.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0027	27 of 32	Roof. Facing northeast towards upper raised portion of original district courtroom.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0028	28 of 32	Roof. Facing southwest at upper raised portion of original district courtroom.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0029	29 of 32	Roof. Facing southeast across North 26 th Street to the parking garage and skybridge.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0030	30 of 32	Historic Photograph, facing northwest towards completed building, 1965. Western Heritage Center accession #99.55.13.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0031	31 of 32	Historic Photograph, facing northeast at the roof during construction, c.1965. Western Heritage Center accession #2006.06.829.
MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0032	32 of 32	Historic Photograph, facing sample precast panel, c.1964. Western Heritage Center accession #2006.06.824.



James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

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Maps and Floorplans (showing photograph directions)



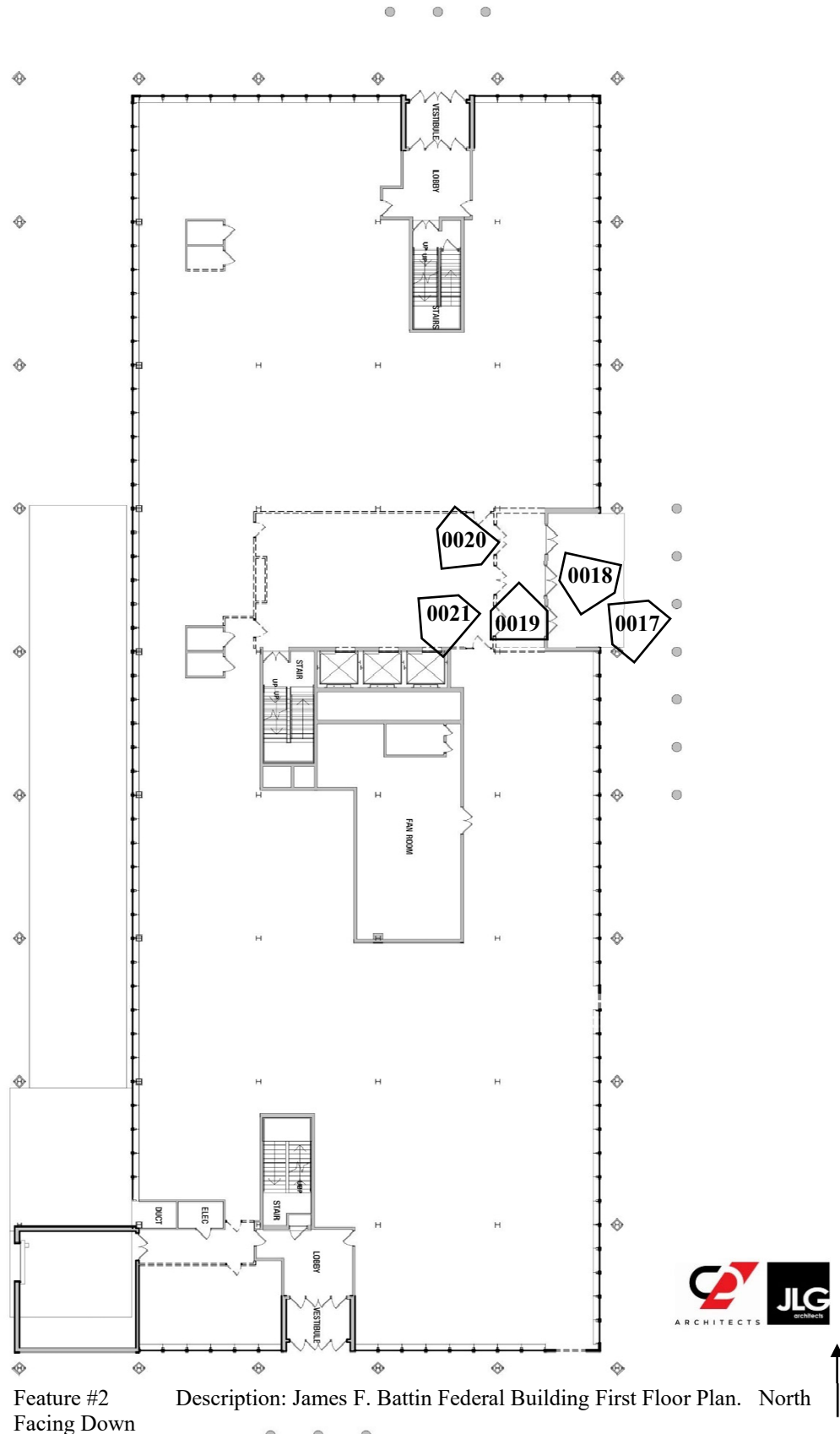
Feature #1 Description: James F. Battin Federal Building Site Plan.
Facing Down at Site. Center point = Latitude: 45.785390 Longitude: -108.505570

North



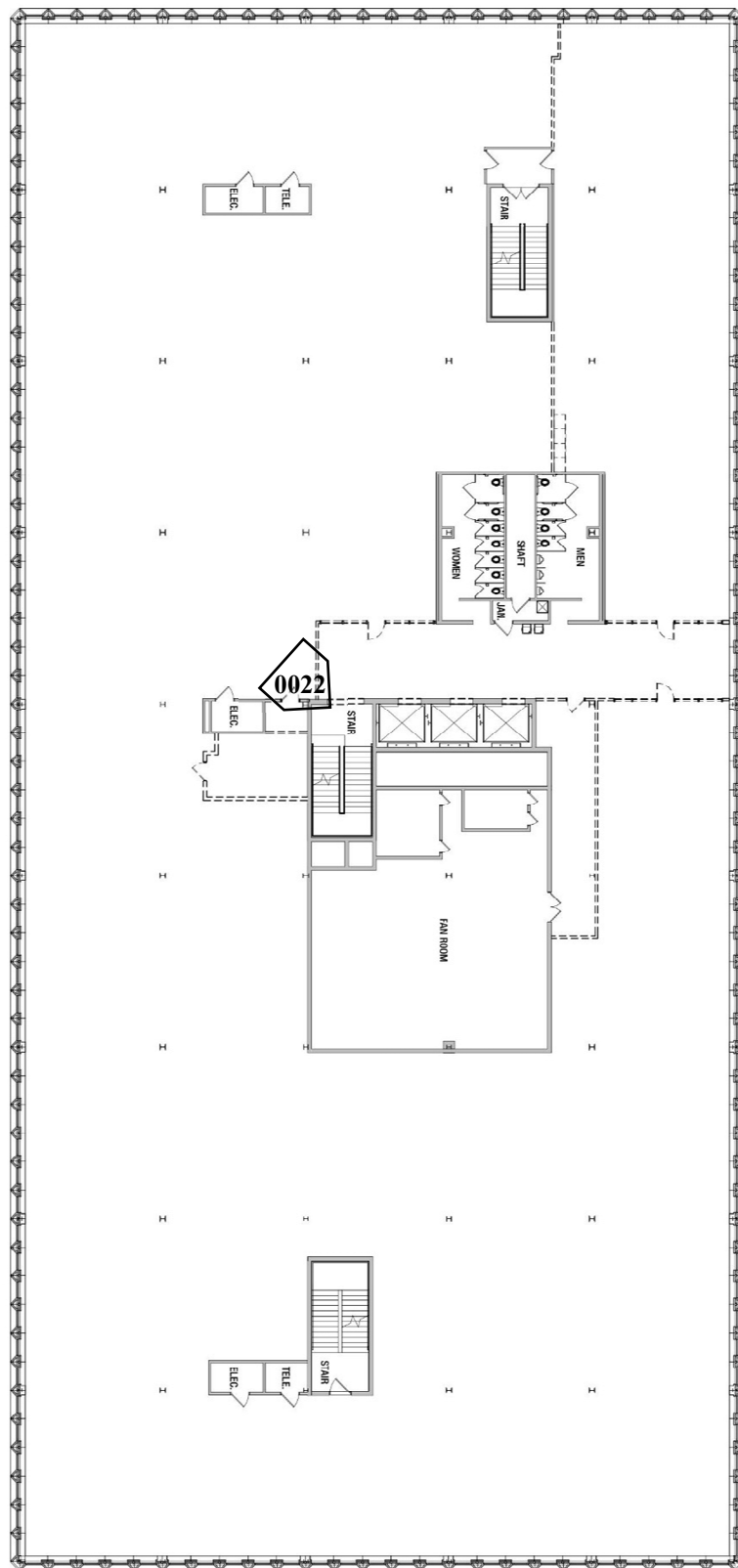
James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

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James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

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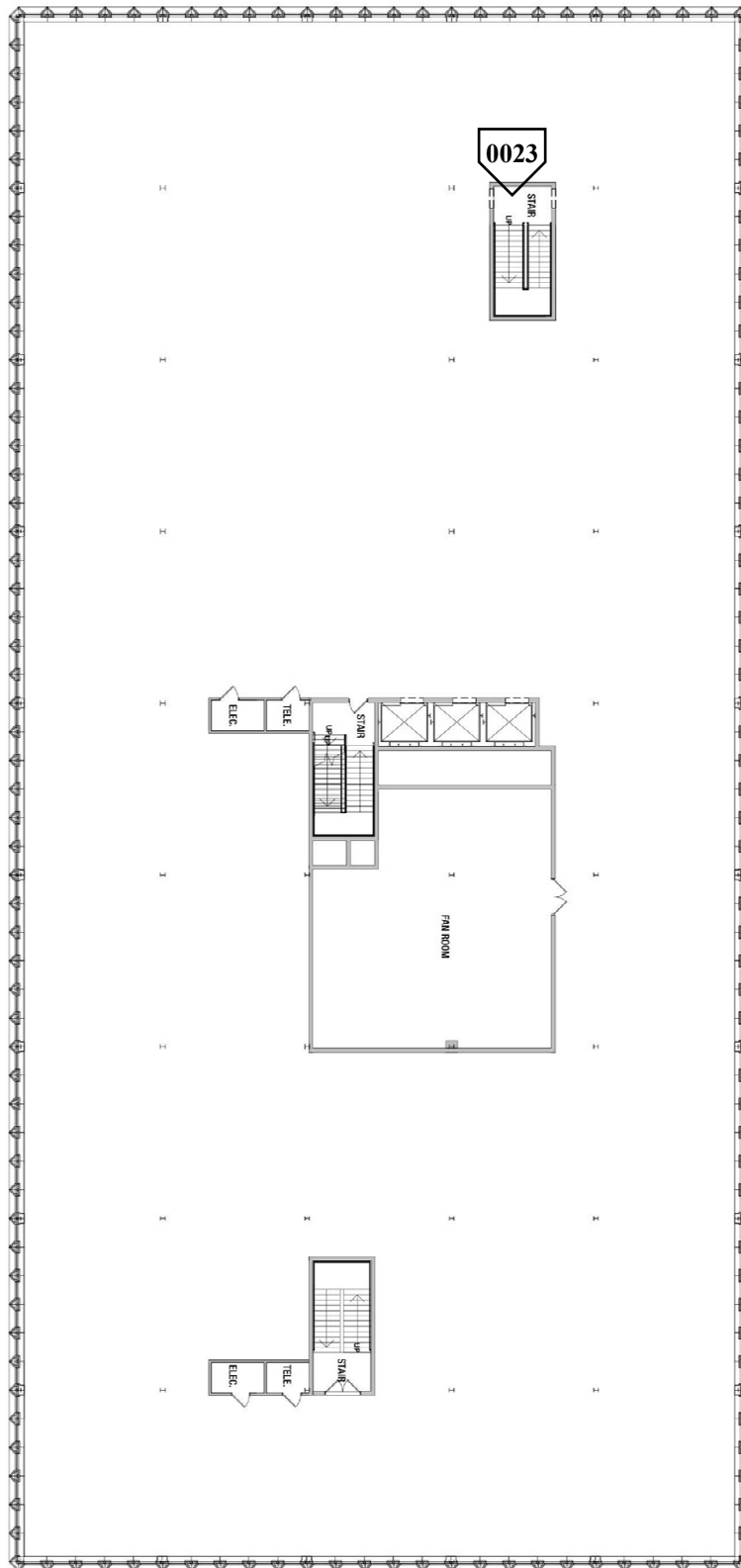


Feature #3
Facing Down

Description: James F. Battin Federal Building Fourth Floor Plan. North

James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

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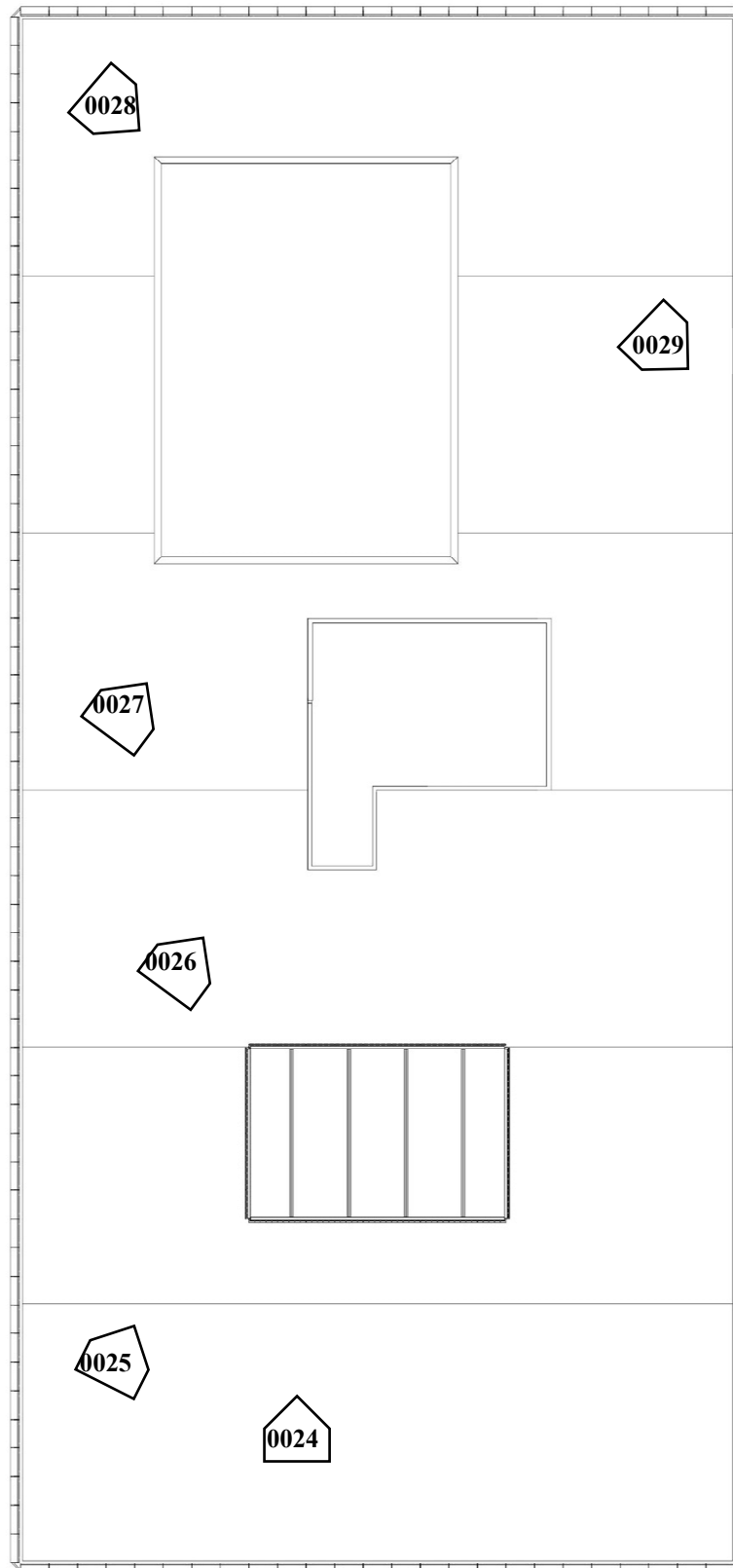
Feature #4
Facing Down

Description: James F. Battin Federal Building Fifth Floor Plan.

North

James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

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Feature #5
Facing Down

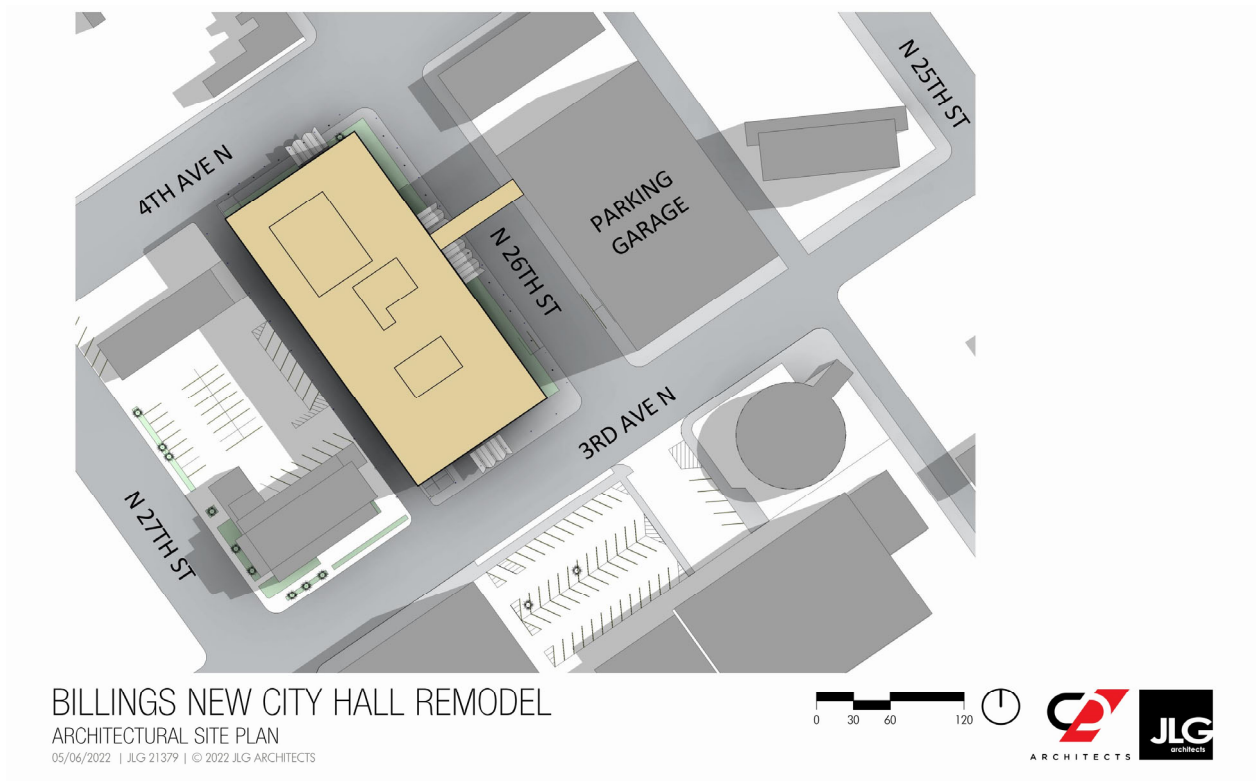
Description: James F. Battin Federal Building Roof Plan

North



James F. Battin Federal Building
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Site Map as drawn by JLG Architects.

National Register Photographs (below)

Name of Property: James F. Battin Federal Building

City or Vicinity: Billings

County: Yellowstone

State: MT

Photographers: Lesley M. Gilmore

Dates Photographed: 28 April 2022

James F. Battin Federal Building
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0001, Feature #E-1 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southwest towards east facade.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0002, Feature #E-2 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southwest towards east facade.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0003, Feature #E-3 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southwest towards original floating granite-clad planter suspended from elliptical columns under south portion of east entry canopy.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0004, Feature #E-4 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northwest towards main entry and skybridge at east facade.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0005, Feature #E-5 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: North towards east entry canopy and skybridge above.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0006, Feature #E-6 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northwest towards south (left) elevation and east facade.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0007, Feature #E-7
Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022.
Facing: Northwest towards southeast corner.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0008, Feature #E-8 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northwest towards south (left) elevation and east facade.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0009, Feature #E-9 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northeast towards south entry.

James F. Battin Federal Building
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0010, Feature #E-10 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northeast towards west (left) and south elevations.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0011, Feature #E-11 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southeast towards west elevation.

James F. Battin Federal Building
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0012, Feature #E-12 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southeast towards north (left) and west elevations.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0013, Feature #E-13 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southeast towards north (left) and west elevations.

James F. Battin Federal Building
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0014, Feature #E-14 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: East towards north entry canopy.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0015, Feature #E-15 Description: Battin Federal Building. 28 April 2022. Facing: South towards north elevation.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0016, Feature #E-16 Description: Battin Federal Building, 28 April 2022. Facing: Southwest towards east (left) façade and north elevation.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0017, Feature #1-1 Description: Battin Federal Building, first floor. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northwest towards recessed entry area at east side of building.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0018, Feature #1-2 Description: Battin Federal Building, first floor. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southwest towards original plaque at south wall of recessed entry area at east side of building.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0019, Feature #1-3 Description: Battin Federal Building, first floor. 28 April 2022. Facing: North within vestibule at east side of building.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0020, Feature #1-4 Description: Battin Federal Building, first floor. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southwest towards elevators within elevator lobby.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0021, Feature #1-5 Description: Battin Federal Building, first floor. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northwest towards sculptural mural at north wall of elevator lobby.

James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

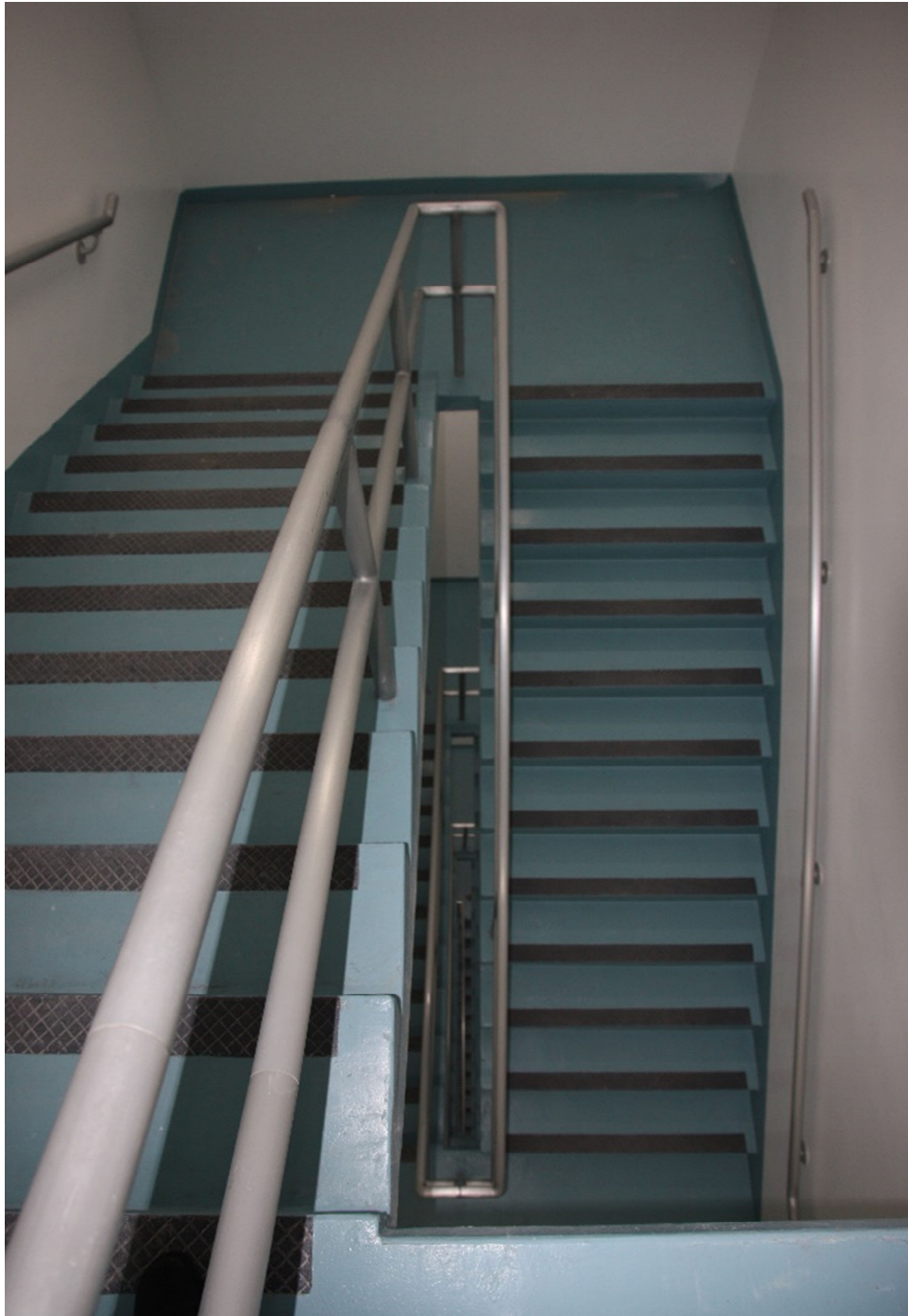
Yellowstone, MT 24YL2459
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0022, Feature #4-1
Description: Battin Federal Building, fourth floor. 28 April 2022.
Facing: Southeast within main stairway.

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0023, Feature #5-1
Description: Battin Federal Building, fifth floor. 28 April 2022.
Facing: South down north stair tower.

James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0024, Feature #R-1 Description: Battin Federal Building, roof. 28 April 2022. Facing: North towards modified precast screening concealing cooling tower.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0025, Feature #R-2 Description: Battin Federal Building, roof. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northeast towards upper portion of original district courtroom (left), elevator/stair penthouse (center), and cooling tower screening (right).

James F. Battin Federal Building
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0026, Feature #R-3 Description: Battin Federal Building, roof. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northeast towards elevator/stair penthouse.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0027, Feature #R-4 Description: Battin Federal Building, roof. 28 April 2022. Facing: Northeast towards upper raised portion of original district courtroom.

James F. Battin Federal Building
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0028, Feature #R-5 Description: Battin Federal Building, roof. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southwest at upper raised portion of original district courtroom.



MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0029, Feature #R-6 Description: Battin Federal Building, roof. 28 April 2022. Facing: Southeast across North 26th Street to the parking garage and skybridge.

James F. Battin Federal Building
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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0031, Feature #H-2 Description: Battin Federal Building. Photograph courtesy of the Western Heritage Center, accession #2006.06.829.
Facing: Northeast at the roof during construction, c. 1965. Note the tighter grid of precast panels screening the cooling tower. The current panels are similar to the scale of the building's window panels.

James F. Battin Federal Building
Name of Property

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MT_YellowstoneCounty_JamesFBattin Federal Building_0032, Feature #H-3 Description: Battin Federal Building. Photograph courtesy of the Western Heritage Center, accession #2006.06.824.
Facing: Sample precast panel, c. 1964.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.