



**Name of Property:** U.S. Post Office and Courthouse (Elbert Parr Tuttle U.S. Court of Appeals Building)

**City, State:** Atlanta, Georgia

**Significant Dates:** 1961-1964

**NHL Criteria:** 1, 2

**NHL Theme:** II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements  
 2. Reform movements  
 IV. Shaping the Political Landscape  
 1. Parties, protests, and movements

**Previous Recognition:** 1973 National Register of Historic Places

**National Historic Context:** 2000 *Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States National Historic Landmark Theme Study*  
 2007; rev. 2009 *Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights National Historic Landmark Theme Study*  
 2004, rev. 2009 *Civil Rights in America: Racial Desegregation of Public Accommodations National Historic Landmark Theme Study*

**NHL Significance:**

- The U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Atlanta, Georgia, has exceptional national significance under National Historic Landmark (NHL) Criterion 1 for the preeminent role the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals played in reshaping the South during the modern civil rights movement. The Fifth Circuit developed a jurisprudence that effectively dealt with southern massive resistance to desegregation. Its decisions both fostered and



implemented nationally significant civil rights legislation.

- The courthouse also has exceptional national significance under NHL Criterion 2 for its association with Judge Elbert Parr Tuttle, Chief Judge of the Fifth Circuit from 1960 to 1967. His administrative leadership and innovative jurisprudence secured justice without delays and earned him a national reputation as one of the most significant judges of the twentieth century.

**Integrity:**

- Overall: After nearly a century of use, the building retains a high degree of historic integrity. The courthouse has been a prominent feature on the streetscape since its completion in 1910 and is a contributing resource of a National Register-listed historic district that has maintained its historic architectural character.
- Exterior: The arch spanning the courtyard on the Fairlie Street side contains one noticeable change in its historic fabric. The arch, spandrels, spaces between the columns, and space below have been enclosed with metal covers for security reasons. This alteration is reversible and does not conceal the historic materials, workmanship, and design of the arch.
- Interior: First floor restorations to the flooring and lanterns complement and blend with the lobby's American Renaissance Revival detailing and the conversion of the former mail room to a library, leaving the lobby walls and doors intact. Overall, the Appellate courtroom is a testament to the efforts of past courthouse officials and the General Services Administration to maintain the architecture and design of this courthouse.

**Owner of Property:** U.S. General Services Administration



**Acreeage of Property:** Approximately one acre

**Origins of Nomination:** In 1998, the U.S. Congress authorized the National Park Service (NPS) to study the history of racial desegregation in public education, and in 1999, the U.S. Congress authorized the NPS to conduct a special resource study of civil rights sites. As a result of these two Congressional directives, the NHL Program began either preparing or contracting for the completion of NHL nomination forms for properties associated with the civil rights movement in the United States and racial desegregation in public education. Nominations for the three courthouses associated with the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals were drafted as part of this special study.

**Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:**

- NHL designation will complete the recognition of the federal government's impact on the modern civil rights movement through its executive, legislative, and now, judicial branches.

**Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** None known

**Landmarks Committee Comments:**

**Landmarks Committee Recommendation:** Designation. Dr. Mills moved, Dr. Allan seconded; unanimous approval.

**Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of 2/4/15):**

Dr. David Colin Crass, Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia

**Advisory Board Recommendation:**