

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

A National Historic Landmarks Resource Guide



# Capitols as National Historic Landmarks



**Resource Guide  
prepared by the  
National Historic Landmarks Program  
2009  
Revised 2021**

**Capitols as  
National Historic Landmarks**

**Resource Guide  
prepared by the  
National Historic Landmarks Program  
2009  
Revised 2021**

*Front Cover.* Massachusetts State House. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith [LC-DIG-highsm-12099].

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Capitols and Architectural Significance.....	4
Capitols Included in Architectural Surveys .....	6
Inventory—Capitols Designated NHLs .....	7
NHL Criterion 4 Designations (Architecture) .....	8
NHL Criterion 1 Designations (History) .....	25
Architecture and History Designations (NHL Criteria 4 and 1).....	36
Potential NHL Capitols Study List (NHL Criterion 4) .....	43

---

## Introduction

Capitols are among the most prominent building types found across the United States. The architectural succession of a state's capitols can be a telling narrative of its settlement, wealth, geographic location, aspirations, and regional or national standing. The great majority of current state capitols were either constructed or were subject to major additions or renovations during the period between the Civil War and World War I. Rising industrial and agricultural wealth, large increases in population, well-honed feelings of civic pride and competition, new building technologies and transportation systems allowing for the movement of structural and finish materials, and professionalization in the field of architecture all converged in these decades, resulting in some of the nation's finest public buildings. The cultural contexts embodied by the architecture and building type are deepened by the activities that go on in a capitol. Most of these activities are unremarkable, and concern only essential business; however, at times decisions made by a legislative body are of exceptional historical significance to the nation.

Since 1960, thirty-five capitol buildings in the United States have been designated as National Historic Landmarks. This figure includes twenty current state capitols and fifteen "former" capitols—a descriptor that takes in older state capitols as well as colonial, tribal, and territorial capitols. Of these thirty-five, seventeen have been designated for architecture alone, eleven for history, and seven for both history and architecture. A number have been designated for reasons related to the country's political history. For example, the Maryland State House (NHL, 1960) is significant for its role in key events of the Revolution and the formation of the nation, and the Wyoming State Capitol (NHL, 1987) marks the first major jurisdiction in the United States where women attained full suffrage. While political history has been a profitable approach for arguing national significance, it should be stressed that no capitol has been designated based specifically on its function as a statehouse or as a symbolic representation of the federal system of government.

Beginning in 1960, the Secretary of the Interior designated eleven capitols as NHLs in the first years of the active program. Of these, ten were designated for history or a combination of history and architecture. In contrast, during the second decade (1970-79) only four of the fifteen designated capitols were found to possess national significance based on non-architectural historical contexts. The earliest nominations generally required a less rigorous process of documentation and the period seems to have been characterized by a tendency to cite the historical significance of a current or former capitol. The history represented by these NHLs overwhelmingly tended to be related to the Revolution and the Early National Period, and the Civil War, contexts that echoed the consensus narratives driving much of the nation's political and military history. Of the ten capitols designated NHLs since 1980, the three designated for history alone reflected a move away from the dominance of political history in the field to emphasize previously unrecognized areas such as women's history, African American history, and public health history. Looking to the future, it is doubtful that national significance can be effectively argued for every capitol in the United States based on historical contexts and determining the NHL eligibility of a capitol for history will have to be made on a case-by-case basis.

## Capitols and Architectural Significance

Because they are generally among the highest profile buildings in a capital city or, at times, an entire state, and often designed by noted architects or firms, arguing the national significance of capitols based on architecture has at times been relatively straightforward. Still, the practical and symbolic functions of these buildings, and the long and occasionally labyrinthine construction histories, make demonstrating national significance and accurately documenting physical integrity a daunting process.

Of the thirty-five capitol NHLs, twenty-four have been identified as having some degree of architectural importance to the nation. Most of the high-style trends impacting architecture in America during the past three centuries are represented by those designated.

Style	Capitol	City, State	Date Built	NHL Date
<b>Georgian</b>	Old Colony State House	Newport, RI	1739-1741	1960
<b>Neoclassical</b>	Virginia State Capitol	Richmond, VA	1785-1790	1960
<b>Federal</b>	Massachusetts State House	Boston, MA	1795-1798	1960
<b>Greek Revival</b>	Tennessee State Capitol	Nashville, TN	1845-1859	1971
<b>Gothic Revival</b>	Old Louisiana State Capitol	Baton Rouge, LA	1849	1974
<b>Romanesque and French Renaissance Revivals</b>	New York State Capitol	Albany, NY	1867-1869	1979
<b>High Victorian Gothic</b>	Connecticut State Capitol	Hartford, CT	1872-1880	1970
<b>Renaissance Revival</b>	Wisconsin State Capitol	Madison, WI	1906-1917	1992
<b>Moderne, Art Deco</b>	Nebraska State Capitol	Lincoln, NE	1922-1932	1976

Despite this varied sampling, most of the architecturally significant capitol NHLs emerged out of two specific traditions: the Greek Revival and the Neo-classical traditions derived from the Renaissance period. Both of these classically-based traditions readily convey strength and confidence through architectural form, even on a modest scale. The simple and staid character of the Greek Revival presents a solid and imposing public face, appropriate for a state's primary governmental building. It was also an extremely flexible design mode that could increase a building's presence through the simple introduction of a columned portico. Eight of the capitol NHLs have been identified as nationally significant examples of Greek Revival architecture (an additional three Greek Revival capitols have also been designated for historical reasons).

---

Important public buildings, topped first with cupolas and then small domes, began appearing late in the colonial period; however, the difficulty and expense of raising even a modest dome kept most of them small in scale and visually subservient to the rest of the building. The mid-nineteenth century expansion of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC, firmly established a new standard for public buildings where the dome became a dominant feature of the design. The increase of dome size was made possible by structural iron and steel, which, during the last decades of the nineteenth century, could be delivered to any capital city via the transcontinental railroad network. Gilded Age technology, wealth, and civic competition unleashed a period of capitol construction that will likely never be experienced again in the United States.

Between the Civil War and World War I, more than a score of new capitols having prominent domes were completed, and many existing capitols were significantly modified with new wings, larger domes, and extensive remodeling. Without exception, these capitols embody French academic Beaux-Arts planning principles and nearly all are representative of a strain of monumental classicism sometimes characterized as American Renaissance. The general similarity between this generation of capitols is striking, and underscores both the obvious influence of the U.S. Capitol Building, as well as the speed with which the form of a dominant dome became strongly symbolic of democracy in the United States. The likeness of architectural form and details is easily comprehended, yet the scale of these buildings, and a period aesthetic sensibility that did not always value restraint, translated into designs with variable degrees of individual success. Four domed capitols inspired by the Italian Renaissance have been designated as NHLs. Two of the four, the Texas State Capitol (NHL, 1986) and the Michigan State Capitol (NHL, 1992), were designed by Elijah E. Myers, who was both an early advocate of the U.S. Capitol as a model and, arguably, the most skilled in applying it to state capitol commissions. In addition to these works by Myers, the Wisconsin State Capitol by George B. Post & Sons (NHL, 2001), and the Pennsylvania State Capitol, an especially sophisticated integration of art and architecture (NHL, 2006, updated 2013), were designated as superb examples of the type.

## Capitols Included in Architectural Surveys

All of the state capitols that are commonly included in surveys of American architecture are already NHLs. These are:

Capitol	City, State	Style	Date Built	Architect	NHL Date
<b>Old Colony (State) House</b>	Newport, RI	Georgian	1739-1741	Richard Munday	1960
<b>Virginia State Capitol</b>	Richmond, VA	Neoclassical	1785-1790	Thomas Jefferson	1960
<b>Massachusetts State House</b>	Boston, MA	Federal	1795—1798	Charles Bulfinch	1960
<b>Ohio Statehouse</b>	Columbus, OH	Greek Revival	1838-1861	Various	1977
<b>Tennessee State Capitol</b>	Nashville, TN	Greek Revival	1845-1859	William Strickland	1971
<b>Old Louisiana State Capitol</b>	Baton Rouge, LA	Gothic Revival	1849	James Dakin	1974
<b>Nebraska State Capitol</b>	Lincoln, NE	Art Deco, Moderne	1922-1932	Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue	1976

Intriguingly, except for the U.S. Capitol itself, the domed, Renaissance Revival state capitols have been largely ignored in most general architectural histories of the United States, undoubtedly in part because of their physical similarity. The omission likely also stems from established academic narratives for the architecture of the period, which tend to focus on the impact of new technologies, for example in the realization of skyscrapers and exposition buildings, or on different types, such as houses. By the end of the nineteenth century the visual importance of government buildings, which, along with churches, had traditionally been by far the most prominent edifices in a city or town, also began to be challenged by such new types as railroad stations and institutional buildings like schools and libraries.

---

## Inventory—Capitols Designated NHLs

This list includes current and former state capitols, colonial capitols, and tribal and territorial capitols. Pennsylvania's extant colonial statehouse, Independence Hall in Philadelphia, is not included in this list because it is not a National Historic Landmark, but rather the centerpiece of Independence National Historical Park.

The buildings, listed here in alphabetical order by state, are grouped according to designation for architectural significance (Criterion 4), significance to historical events (Criterion 1), or both architectural and historical significance (Criteria 4 and 1).

As specified in the Criteria for National Historic Landmarks (36 CFR § 65.4), properties designated for Criterion 1 are "associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of United States history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained."

Those properties designated for Criterion 4, individually or in combination with Criterion 1, will "embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style or method of construction, or that represent a significant, distinctive and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction."



## **NHL Criterion 4 Designations (Architecture)**

### **Colorado State Capitol, Denver, Colorado**

**NHL 2012 (Denver Civic Center); 1886-1908, Elijah E. Myers, Frank E. Edbrook Architects; Renaissance Revival**

The Colorado State Capitol was designated as a component of the Denver Civic Center complex that includes several Renaissance Revival style buildings united by a landscape design completed by Edward H. Bennett. The civic center complex is an important example of the City Beautiful movement that features the capitol building anchoring one end of the mall. The building is one of three NHL statehouses by Myers, but this one was completed long after his initial involvement by Denver architect Frank Edbrook.



### **Colorado State Capitol, Denver, Colorado**

Photo by Roger Whitacre. NPS photo in NHL Program files, Washington, D.C.

## **Connecticut State Capitol, Hartford, Connecticut**

**NHL, 1970; 1872-80, Richard M. Upjohn, High Victorian Gothic**

Derived from Venetian Renaissance sources, this building represents a radical departure from Greek and Roman classicism with Gothic ornamentation. As is characteristic of the High Victorian Gothic, briefly popular in the northeastern states, much of the interior received a sumptuous polychromatic treatment.



**Connecticut State Capitol, Hartford, Connecticut**

Photo by Ragesoss. Wikimedia Commons

## Old Capitol, Iowa City, Iowa

**NHL, 1976; 1840-46, John Rague and Chauncey Swan, Greek Revival**

The Old Capitol in Iowa is an outstanding example of a Greek Revival legislative building constructed in a remote frontier setting with a standard pilastered exterior, columned portico, and cupola. The building served Iowa's territorial government, and the statehouse until the capitol moved to Des Moines.



### **Old Capitol, Iowa City, Iowa**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-39905]



## **Old State House, Frankfort, Kentucky**

**NHL, 1971; 1829-30, Gideon Shryock, Greek Revival**

Jefferson's Virginia statehouse in the form of a classical temple spawned the smaller Kentucky statehouse with its Ionic portico. Constructed of granite, Shryock's interior surpasses the Virginia example with a sweeping U-shaped flying staircase.



**Old State House, Frankford, Kentucky**

Photo by Daderot under Public Domain. Wikimedia Commons

## Old Louisiana State Capitol, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

**NHL, 1974; 1847-49, James Dakin; interior rebuilt 1880-82, William Freret, Gothic Revival.**

Gothic Revival was very popular for most types of buildings in antebellum America, but Louisiana and Georgia had the only examples for a statehouse. Designed by a prominent New Orleans architect, only the Louisiana example survives. With its Mississippi River setting, the Old Louisiana State Capitol provides a remarkable contrast to the popularity of Greek and Roman inspired designs.



### **Louisiana State Capitol, Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey,  
photograph by David J. Kaminsky [HABS LA,17-BATRO,6-]

## Massachusetts State House, Boston, Massachusetts

**NHL, 1960; 1795-98, Charles Bulfinch, Federal**

Designed by the preeminent architect of the Federal period and based upon contemporary English precedents, the Massachusetts State House introduced a hemispherical dome surmounting a monumental portico for an American statehouse. Large Renaissance Revival additions visually defer to the original building.



### **State House and Capitol, Boston, Massachusetts**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-12099]



## **Michigan State Capitol, Lansing, Michigan**

**NHL, 1992; 1872-78, Elijah E. Myers, Renaissance Revival**

This is an early example of a state capitol modeled on the U.S. Capitol. Myers was a Midwest architect responsible for more statehouses than any other architect, and whose work is highly characteristic of the lavish ornamentation of the Gilded Age.



**Michigan Capitol Building, Lansing, Michigan**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Balthazar Korab Collection [LC-DIG-ppem-00786]

## Mississippi State Capitol, Jackson, Mississippi

NHL, 2016; 1900-1903, Theodore Link, Classical Revival

This exceptional early example of Classical Revival architecture is notable for having been constructed in a single three-year building campaign under the direction of one architect and one contracting firm. The building features a large collection of art glass by Louis Millet and decorative scagliola.



### Mississippi State Capitol Rotunda

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-47091]



## Nebraska State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska

**NHL, 1976; 1922-32, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue Associates**

Stylized stripped classicism and Byzantine ornamentation combine with other influences to create a highly original Art Deco, or Moderne, design. With an interior almost ecclesiastical in character, the Nebraska State Capitol is an exceptional departure from traditional design with its extraordinary skyscraper form in a prairie setting. The interior features mosaics by Hildreth Meiere and sculpture by Lee Lawrie along with Guastavino tiles.



### **Capitol Building, Lincoln, Nebraska**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-04814]

## New York State Capitol, Albany, New York

**NHL, 1979; 1867-99, Fuller & Gilman, substantially revised by H. H. Richardson and Leopold Eidlitz, completed by Isaac Perry, French Renaissance Revival**

The influence of several different architects resulted in a unique design among American statehouses. The New York State Capitol is of national significance due to the involvement of two major designers, Richardson and Edlitz, who were responsible for the exceptional interior spaces.



### **New York State Capitol Senate Chamber**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-52412]

## State Capitol, Raleigh, North Carolina

**NHL, 1973; 1833-40, Town & Davis completed by David Paton, Greek Revival**

This state capitol represents the popular Greek Revival approach ornamented with pilastered walls, a boldly executed raised portico supporting a pediment, and a low dome centered over a cruciform plan. The desired monumentality is achieved for a relatively small-scale statehouse.



**North Carolina State Capitol, Raleigh, North Carolina**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm- 43740]



## **Ohio Statehouse, Columbus, Ohio**

**NHL, 1977; 1838-61, Thomas Cole, Henry Walter, Isaiah Rogers, Greek Revival**

No statehouse better represents the affinity frontier America had for the image of Greek democracy as a classical temple than the one in Columbus, Ohio. While the long, complex construction history involved several architects, the monumental exterior likely reflects the design of artist Thomas Cole begun by architect Henry Walter and completed by Isaiah Rogers.



### **Ohio Statehouse, Columbus, Ohio**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-41852]

## **Pennsylvania State Capitol Complex, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

**NHL, 2006, updated 2013; 1902-06, Joseph Huston, Classical Revival.**

The statehouse is a major example of Classical Revival architecture and features an important collaboration between the architect, artists, sculptors, and other craftspeople. With a 1916 landscape by Arnold Brunner, the designated property includes later buildings and objects incorporated into the complex.



**Pennsylvania State Capitol and Office Buildings, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

Photo by Toniklemm. Wikimedia Commons

## Tennessee State Capitol, Nashville, Tennessee

**NHL, 1971; 1845-59, William Strickland, Greek Revival**

Designed by one of America's leading antebellum architects, the Nashville capitol employs classical orders in a unique interpretation of Greek Revival. Avoiding a traditional Roman dome, Strickland created a striking tower based upon classical Greek precedents.



**Tennessee State Capitol**

Photo by Kaldari under Public Domain. Wikimedia Commons

## **Texas State Capitol, Austin, Texas**

**NHL, 1986; 1882-88, Elijah E. Myers, Renaissance Revival**

When completed, the Texas statehouse was the largest in the country with a dome taller than the United States Capitol. Below the dome is a monumental arched pavilion that adds to the distinctive character of the Texas statehouse.



### **Texas State Capitol, Austin, Texas**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-27831]



## **Vermont State House, Montpelier, Vermont**

**NHL, 1970; 1833-38, Ammi B. Young rebuilt 1857-59, Thomas Silloway, Greek Revival**

Designed by Ammi Young in a compact, muscular Greek Revival style with a squat dome, Vermont's state house was gutted in a fire. When reconstructed it combined Young's Doric portico with newly fashionable Italian Renaissance treatments, an early example among capitol buildings.



### **Vermont State House, Montpelier, Vermont**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-12045]



## **Wisconsin State Capitol, Madison, Wisconsin**

**NHL, 2001; 1906-17, George B. Post & Sons, Renaissance Revival**

The New York City architects departed from convention to design a monumental building in the form of a St. Andrews Cross with four wings radiating from a central dome.



### **Wisconsin State Capitol, Madison, Wisconsin**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-39976]

## **NHL Criterion 1 Designations (History)**

### **First Confederate Capitol, Montgomery, Alabama**

**NHL, 1960; 1851, Greek Revival**

Rebuilt after a fire with a monumental portico and dome, the building was designated for its association with a nationally significant event—serving as the first statehouse of the Confederate States of America during the early months of secession.



#### **Capitol Building, Montgomery, Alabama**

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division,  
The George F. Landegger Collection of Alabama Photographs in Carol M. Highsmith's America

## Old State House, Little Rock, Arkansas

**NHL, 1997; 1833-42, Gideon Shryock, Greek Revival.**

Although a significant early example of a Greek Revival statehouse, this designation is for the period of 1912-1934 when the building was used as the University of Arkansas Medical School. The designation cites the national significance of its public medical programs in rural areas, particularly the model program for the treatment of malaria.



**Old State House, Little Rock, Arkansas**

Photo by L. Allen Brewer under CC BY 2.0. Flickr.



## **New Castle Court House, New Castle, Delaware**

**NHL, 1972; 1730-31, 1765, 1845, Georgian**

The New Castle Court House is historically important as the building where local government seceded from both Pennsylvania and the Crown, declaring independence for the new state of Delaware. With its 1845 addition, the courthouse (as it had become) was the location of the important abolitionist trial of Thomas Garrett and John Hunn in 1848.



### **Court House, New Castle, Delaware**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-51753]

## **Iolani Palace, Honolulu, Hawai'i**

**NHL, 1962; 1879-82, Thomas J. Baker with others, French Renaissance Revival (Second Empire)**

Built as the royal palace of the last two rulers of Hawai'i and the site of the formal transfer of power to become an American colony, the Iolani Palace is nationally significant for use as the territorial capitol.



**Iolani Palace, Honolulu, Hawai'i**

Photo by Tom Patterson under Public Domain. Flickr

## **Louisiana State Capitol, Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

**NHL, 1982; 1930-32, Weiss, Dreyfous & Seiferth, Art Deco/Moderne**

This 34-story Art Deco building is designated for its association with the controversial governor, Huey Long. Governor Long's power and influence ensured the richly ornamented building was completed relatively quickly. It is also where he was assassinated in 1935.



**Louisiana State Capitol, Baton Rouge, Louisiana**  
Photo by Chrismiceli under Public Domain. Wikimedia Commons



## Maryland State House, Annapolis, Maryland

**NHL, 1960; 1772-79, dome 1789; Georgian**

The statehouse is nationally significant for use by the Continental Congress in 1783-84. The Treaty of Paris ending the Revolutionary War was ratified here, and General George Washington presented his resignation from the military in this building.



### **Old Senate Chamber, Maryland State House**

Photo by Bestbudbrian licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0. Wikimedia Commons

## **Creek National Capitol, Okmulgee, Oklahoma**

**NHL, 1961; 1878, Italianate**

Constructed for the Creek Indian Council with halls for two legislative bodies and a supreme court, this building served as the capitol of the Creek nation until statehood. Like the earlier building constructed by the Cherokees, it is a symbol of cultural adjustment and compromise.



### **Creek National Capitol, Okmulgee, Oklahoma**

Photo by Jimmy Emerson, DVM licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0. Flickr



## **Cherokee National Capitol, Tahlequah, Oklahoma**

**NHL, 1961; 1867-69, C. W. Goodlander, Italianate**

Built as the Cherokee tribal capitol, the building is significant as a symbol of cultural adjustment and compromise.



**Cherokee Nation Court House**

Photo by Sharon Baker licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0. Wikimedia Commons

## **South Carolina State House, Columbia, South Carolina**

**NHL, 1976; 1851-1860, 1869-1907, John Niernsee, Charles Wilson, Greek Revival**

Begun prior to the Civil War and not completed for fifty years, the statehouse was designated for a period of national significance from 1867 to 1877. It was during these years that South Carolina was the only state with a majority Black legislature. That led to a reaction by Whites who created the myth of Republican corruption during Reconstruction, a narrative that was widely accepted nationally.



**South Carolina State House, Columbia, South Carolina**

Photo by Florencebballer under Public Domain. Wikimedia Commons

## Old City Hall, Salt Lake City, Utah

**NHL, 1975; 1864-66, William H. Folsom, reconstructed on current site in 1961-62, Italianate**

Constructed for a city hall and used as the Utah Territorial Capitol (1866-1894), the building is historically important as a focal point in conflicts between Mormon leaders and federal officials.



**Old City Hall, Salt Lake City, Utah**

Photo by Sean O'Neill under CC BY-ND 2.0. Flickr



## Wyoming State Capitol, Cheyenne, Wyoming

**NHL, 1987; 1886-90, David W. Gibbs & Co., Renaissance Revival**

The Wyoming State Capitol was designated as nationally significant for the role the territory and new state played in advancing the cause of women's suffrage. Wyoming is the first state that granted women the right to vote.



### Wyoming State Capitol, Cheyenne, Wyoming

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-47777]

## **Architecture and History Designations (NHL Criteria 4 and 1)**

### **Old State House, Hartford, Connecticut**

**NHL, 1960; 1792-96, Charles Bulfinch, Federal**

The building is nationally significant as the location of the Hartford Convention of 1814, an important event in the debate of state vs. federal sovereignty during the War of 1812. It is also an early design by Bulfinch, one of America's premier architects of the Federal style.



**Old State House, Hartford, Connecticut**

Photo by Daderot DSC 04900, Wikimedia Commons

## **State Capitol Building, Atlanta, Georgia**

**NHL, 1973; 1884-89, Edbrooke & Burnham, Renaissance Revival**

The monumental, yet conventional classicism of this state capitol signified the recovery of Georgia and the emergence of a “New South” after the destruction of the Civil War.



**Georgia State Capitol, Atlanta, Northwest view**  
Photo by DXR under CC BY-SA 4.0. Wikimedia Commons



## Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois

**NHL, 1961; 1837-40, John Rague, Greek Revival**

The Old State Capitol is where Abraham Lincoln argued cases before the State Supreme Court, and it is where he gave his House Divided speech declaring his presidential candidacy. The stone building is also architecturally significant for its design. Like the Old Capitol in Iowa City, the building reflects the popularity of the Greek Revival as an inexpensive monumental style for small capital cities.



**Old Capitol Building, Springfield, Illinois**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-59248]

## Old State House, Boston, Massachusetts

NHL, 1960; 1712-13, 1748, Georgian

Serving as the statehouse from 1777 to 1797, this building witnessed many major events leading up to the Revolution. Altered for other uses, public and private, over the years, the building was authentically restored to its Georgian style appearance.



**Old State House, Boston, Massachusetts**

Photo by TheFSaviator under Public Domain. Wikimedia Commons



## **Old Mississippi State Capitol, Jackson, Mississippi**

**NHL, 1990; 1836-40, William Nichols, Greek Revival**

Architecturally, the building is significant as a major example of an antebellum statehouse design in the Greek Revival style designed by an important English-trained architect. Historically, nationally significant events here included the passage of the Married Women's Property Act in 1839, and election of Hiram Revels in 1870, the first Black man to serve in the United States Senate. Unfortunately, and more significantly, legislation to disenfranchise Black citizens culminating in state constitution of 1890 was approved by the legislature in the Old Statehouse.



### **Old Mississippi State Capitol, Jackson, Mississippi**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-46884]

## Old Colony (State) House, Newport, Rhode Island

NHL, 1960; 1739-41, Richard Munday, Georgian

This building is nationally significant as one of the most important surviving examples of Georgian public architecture in the United States. Historically, the building served as one of two statehouses from 1776-1900 and was the site of significant events during the Revolution.



**Old Colony House, Newport, Rhode Island**

Photo by Kenneth C. Zirkel under CC BY-SA 4.0. Wikimedia Commons

## Virginia State Capitol, Richmond, Virginia

**NHL, 1960; 1785-90, Thomas Jefferson, executed by Samuel Dobie, Classical Revival.**

The Virginia State Capitol is architecturally nationally significant as the first public building in the United States based upon a Roman temple, providing a precedent for both public and private buildings based on that form. The Capitol was also designated as historically significant as the location of the Confederate government during the Civil War.



**Virginia State Capitol, Richmond, Virginia**

Photo by Roger Reed. All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission



## **Potential NHL Capitols Study List (NHL Criterion 4)**

A brief survey of the current state capitols not already designated as NHLs shows that there are a handful that might be nationally significant based on Criterion 4 for their architectural design. The domed Renaissance Revival state capitols of Minnesota and Rhode Island stand out as having potential for NHL designation based on the renown and prominence of the architects or firms involved. However, a capitol commission's importance within the body of work of a nationally significant architect or firm would have to be substantiated in a nomination for architectural importance.

The Moderne state capitols of North Dakota and Oregon feature an updated take on traditional statehouse forms using stripped-down decoration representative of the 1930s that may make these buildings eligible for consideration as an NHL. For capitols by architects or firms having more of a regional importance, a thorough preliminary evaluation of their work, influence, and the overall character of a capitol's design will be necessary before a study for an NHL nomination should be recommended.

### **Minnesota State Capitol (1893-1905, Cass Gilbert)**



#### **Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul, Minnesota**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-59668]

---

**Rhode Island State House (1894-1905, McKim, Mead & White)**



**Rhode Island State House, Providence, Rhode Island**

Photo by Kumar Appaiah licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0. Flickr

**North Dakota State Capitol (1931-1934, Holabird & Root)**



**North Dakota State Capitol**

Photo by Bobak Ha'eri licensed under CC BY 3.0. Wikimedia Commons

---

**Oregon State Capitol (1935-1938, Trowbridge & Livingston, New York)**



**Oregon State Capitol, Salem, Oregon**

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith  
[LC-DIG-highsm-50685]



**National Historic Landmarks Program**  
**National Park Service, Department of the Interior**  
**1849 C Street NW**  
**Washington, DC 20240**



This National Historic Landmarks Resource Guide, *Capitols as National Historic Landmarks*, was prepared by James A. Jacobs, PhD (2009), with additions by Roger G. Reed (2021). Photo editing by Francesca Maisano, NHL Program intern (2021). To search for digitized NHL nominations of capitols and statehouses visit: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/search.htm>