
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2010



Mission 66 Visitor Center Site
Fort Union National Monument

Table of Contents

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Concurrence Status

Geographic Information and Location Map

Management Information

National Register Information

Chronology & Physical History

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Condition

Treatment

Bibliography & Supplemental Information

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

The Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center and associated contributing landscape features are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The site is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the nationwide National Park Service Mission 66 Program and the overarching influence this program had on the national parks. The site retains integrity to the Mission 66 period in specific elements and in overall character. The Visitor Center is also eligible under Criterion C as a representation of the work of a master, noted National Park Service architect Cecil Doty.

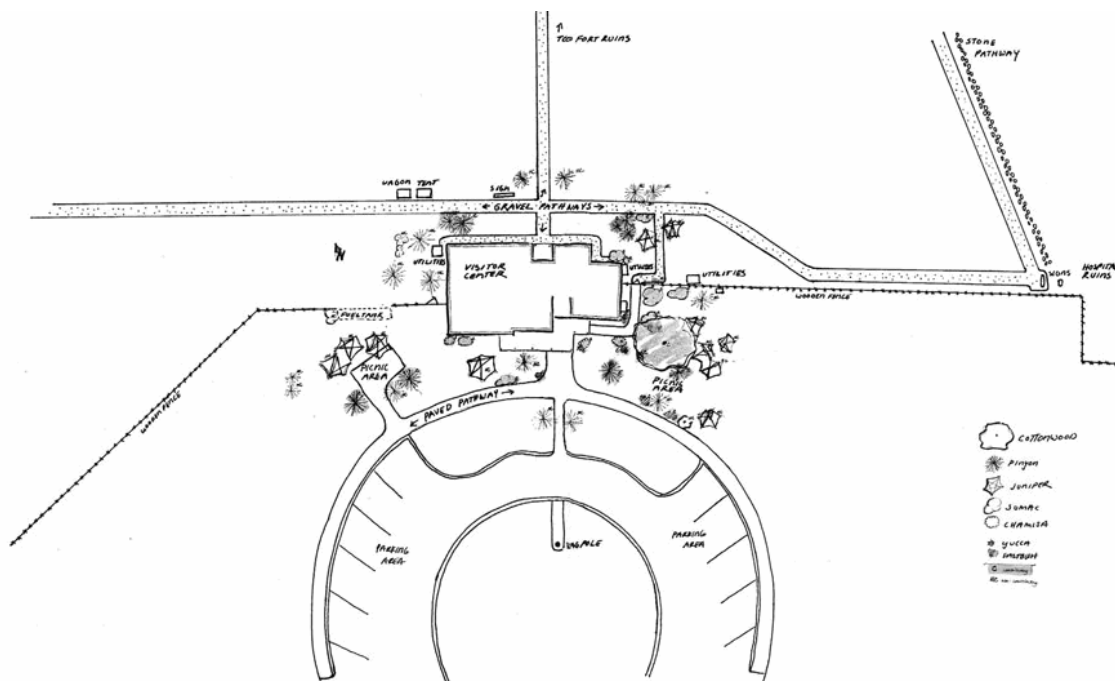
The level of significance is “State,” and the period of significance is 1959-60, from the beginning of construction in 1959 to the completion of the landscape in 1960. Fort Union National Monument was administratively listed on the National Register on October 18, 1966. A subsequent nomination documented the historic resources related to the military post and was listed on December 1, 1978 (NRIS # 66000044). The property is located within Fort Union National Monument, located in northeastern New Mexico in Mora County, and is wholly included within the National Park Service boundary.

Fort Union National Monument was the first park to be established and developed completely under the Mission 66 Program. Visitor Centers are one of the signature elements of Mission 66 park planning and design. Designed from 1956 to 1958 by Cecil Doty and constructed between 1959 and 1960, the property includes the Visitor Center building and associated loop drive and parking, walkways from the parking area to the Visitor Center and to the fort ruins, the plantings, fencing, and picnic areas. One of the early Mission 66 developments, the Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center was designed to reflect historic Fort architecture (New Mexico Territorial Style) and to afford visitors views of the Fort by locating the building close to the fort ruins. The adjacent landscape includes a spacious parking and entry layout, an informal design of native plants around the building, and progressive views of the fort ruins, all characteristic of Mission 66 era site design.

Site Plan



Boundaries of the Fort Union National Monument Mission 66 Visitor Center and associated landscape features. Source: 2009 Determination of Eligibility.



Detailed plan of Visitor Center cluster. Source: 2009 Determination of Eligibility.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Mission 66 Visitor Center Site
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	975508
Parent Landscape:	850082

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Fort Union National Monument -FOUN
Park Organization Code:	7230
Park Administrative Unit:	Fort Union National Monument

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

In March 2009, a Determination of Eligibility was completed for the Fort Union Mission 66 Visitor Center by Vicky Jacobson, IMR Historical Architect and Jill Cowley IMR Historical Landscape Architect. The New Mexico SHPO concurred with the DOE on 4/15/2009. This CLI is based upon that DOE. Information from the DOE was transferred to the CLI by Meg Frisbie, CLI program intern, followed by a site visit by Meg Frisbie, Katie Miller, and Derek Linn (CLI interns). The CLI was edited by Carrie Mardorf, IMR CLI Coordinator. Superintendent concurrence was received 7/29/2010.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	07/29/2010
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	04/15/2009

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The State Historic Preservation Officer concurrence document was signed in April 2009.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Mission 66 Visitor Center Site
Fort Union National Monument

MEMORANDUM

To: NPS-IMR CLI Coordinator
Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-0728

From: Marie Frias Sauter, Superintendent
Fort Union National Monument
P.O. Box 127
Watrous, NM 87753

Re: Mission 66 Visitor Center Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

I hereby concur with the content and the assessment of the cultural landscape for the Mission 66 Visitor Center.

1. The CLI has identified the Mission 66 Visitor Center component landscape as a Historic Designed Landscape (pg 14).
2. The CLI rates the condition of the Mission 66 Visitor Center cultural landscape as "Good" (pg. 59) and the Management Category is listed as "Should be Preserved and Maintained" (pg 8).
3. The period of significance for Mission 66 Visitor Center is 1959-1960 (pg. 14), and the Statement of Significance begins on (pg. 9).
4. The contributing features for Mission 66 Visitor Center are listed in the "Analysis and Evaluation" (pg. 32).

Marie Sauter
Superintendent, Fort Union National Monument

Date July 29, 2010

Superintendent concurrence on FOUN Mission 66 Visitor Center site CLI, 7/29/2010.

APR 17 2009



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
Fort Union National Monument
PO Box 127
Watrous, NM 87753
505-425-8025



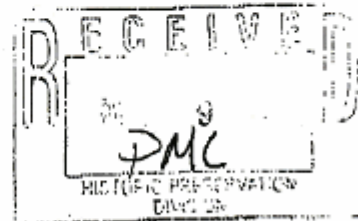
IN REPLY REFER TO:

H32(FOUN)

March 4, 2009

Katherine Slick
New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer
Bataan Memorial Building
407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

086415



Re: Determination of Eligibility for the Fort Union National Monument Mission 66 Visitor Center Historic Site

Dear Ms. Slick:

The National Park Service is requesting concurrence from the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office on a consensus determination of eligibility (DOE) for the Fort Union NM Mission 66 Visitor Center site. Visitor centers are one of the signature elements of Mission 66 park planning and design. A signature line has been included below, for your convenience.

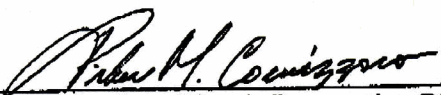
Fort Union NM was the first park to be established and developed completely under the Mission 66 Program. Designed in 1955 by Cecil Doty and constructed between 1959 and 1960, the visitor center site includes the visitor center building, associated parking lot, walkways and plantings, fencing, and picnic areas. One of the early Mission 66 visitor centers, the Fort Union visitor center was designed to reflect historic Fort architecture (Territorial style) and to afford visitors views of the Fort by locating the building close to the resource. Adjacent landscape includes a spacious parking and entry layout, an informal design of native plants around the building, and progressive views of the resource, all characteristic of Mission 66 era site design.

This site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because of its association with the nation-wide National Park Service Mission 66 Program and the overarching influence this program had on the national parks, and because it retains integrity to the Mission 66 period, both in specific elements and in overall character. The visitor center site is eligible under Criteria A and C, and meets requirements of Criteria Consideration G. The level of significance for the site is "State", and the period of significance is 1955-1960, from design and planning to completion of landscaping.

Because Fort Union National Monument was the first National Park Service unit to be wholly planned, designed, and constructed under the Mission 66 Program, and because the majority of Mission 66 elements appear to remain intact (e.g. water system, housing, maintenance, entry road,

SHPO DOE for FOUN Mission 66 Visitor Center Site, page 1 of 2

in addition to visitor center), we may in the future pursue a consensus determination of eligibility for the main unit of Fort Union National Monument as a district.


FOR New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer Concurrence *
*FOR ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION UNDER CRITERIA A. & C.
FOR THE FORT UNION MISSION 66 VISITOR CENTER.

4/15/09
Date

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (505)425-8025 x222. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this matter. Please forward the signed consensus determination of eligibility back to my attention.

Sincerely,



Marie Frias Santer
Superintendent

In duplicate
Enclosures (2)

cc:
Paul Chattey, IMSF

NM SHPO DOE for FOUN Mission 66 Visitor Center site, page 2 of 2.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

Uploaded Mission 66 DOE to Landscape Documents section, May 2012.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

Fort Union National Monument is located 100 miles northeast of Santa Fe, on New Mexico Highway 161 (known as Highway 477 until 1988), eight miles north of Interstate 25 in Mora County, NM. Rather than being defined by particular built structures or natural features, the boundaries of the site encompass all of the associated contributing elements, thus creating a unique shape. Within the boundary of the site are portions of the original Santa Fe Trail.

The southern boundary of the component landscape is on the entrance road, south of the teardrop-shaped one-way loop drive, and just slightly south of the dirt service road that extends east off of the two-lane entrance road.

The eastern boundary extends from the southern boundary on the entrance road directly north through the grassy field east of the loop road and west of the hospital ruins. Roughly on axis with the Visitor Center, the boundary veers to the northwest, incorporating and running parallel to the gravel pathway and adjacent stone pathway that leads to the ruins. The boundary does not include the hospital site or the section of the picket fence that surrounds the western and southern perimeter of the hospital ruins.

The northern boundary is north of and parallel to the picket fence and the Visitor Center. The boundary is at an angle, sloping from the eastern boundary to the southwest, parallel to the picket fence and northern façade of the Visitor Center.

The western boundary extends south from the northern boundary to incorporate the western edge of the picket fence. At roughly the location of where the boundary crosses over a rut from the original Santa Fe Trail, the boundary extends southeast through a grassy field following the angle of the teardrop-shaped loop road and meeting the southern boundary at the entrance road.

State and County:

State: NM

County: Mora County

Size (Acres): 8.00

Boundary UTMS:

Boundary Source Narrative:	Information is from Google Earth.
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	Other Datum
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	447,286
UTM Northing:	3,960,814
Boundary Source Narrative:	Information is from Google Earth.
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	Other Datum
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	499,048
UTM Northing:	3,973,443
Boundary Source Narrative:	Information is from Google Earth.
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	Other Datum
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	499,022
UTM Northing:	3,973,473
Boundary Source Narrative:	Information is from Google Earth.
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	Other Datum
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	498,897
UTM Northing:	3,973,412
Boundary Source Narrative:	Information is from Google Earth.
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	Other Datum
UTM Zone:	13

UTM Easting:	498,922
UTM Northing:	3,973,319
Boundary Source Narrative:	Information is from Google Earth.
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	Other Datum
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	499,022
UTM Northing:	3,973,227

Location Map:



Map of New Mexico with black dot indicating the location of Fort Union National Monument, approximately 20 miles north of Las Vegas, New Mexico. Source: USGS, augmented by Meg Frisbie.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Before European intrusion into the Mora Valley, the area was periodically occupied by various Native American groups, including Ancestral Puebloans, Apachean groups (notably the Jicarilla, who consider the Turkey Mountains sacred), and perhaps others. Later expansion by the Comanche in the 1700s also put the area within their range. The area's archeological sites indicate the area seems to have been a corridor for east-west and north-south contact. A major trail ran east and west. Although the Spanish entered the region in 1540, and colonized the northern Rio Grande valley at Espanola in 1598, it was not until 1816 that Spanish settlement in the Mora Valley was established. Spanish rule ended with the Mexican Independence in 1821, which also opened up trade with the Americans to the east through the establishment of the Santa Fe Trail, which runs through the site. The American influence in the Mora Valley was dynamic for that period, providing a complex mix of Indian, Spanish, and Anglo culture unique in the region. Such a mix is evident in the turn-of-the-century architecture of the nearby town of Las Vegas.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Located at an elevation of 6,670 feet, Fort Union lies at the edge of two distinct physiographic provinces: the Southern Rocky Mountain province and the Great Plains Province. Typical of such edge conditions, the setting of Fort Union is rich and varied. The Wolf Creek valley is bordered on the west by a low mesa resulting from a fault at the base of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. To the east, the valley is enclosed by the Turkey Mountains, a volcanic uplift. A period of volcanic activity 60 million years ago shaped much of the surrounding landscape, including Black Mesa and Ocate Peak (Cerro Pelon) to the north and Maxson Crater to the east.

Fort Union sits on a plain composed largely of shale from the Upper Cretaceous Period. The Fort Union valley was prized by the army for its abundant surface water, springs, pools, and streams, with artesian springs as the source. Some springs emerge in calcareous outcrops resulting in alkali pools. Soils are characterized as mollisols, although extensive wind and water erosion due to de-vegetation probably resulted in some loss of the upper loam strata. Vegetation in the immediate vicinity of the Fort is characteristic of the shortgrass prairie, although the pinon-juniper association is increasing toward the western mesa.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Fort Union is surrounded by lands belonging to the Union Land and Grazing Co., with whom the park has a working relationship in regards to issues of access and management. The nearest town is Las Vegas (about 20 miles away), although the settlement of Watrous is closer (about 7

miles) and has close historical association to the Fort.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 04/15/2009

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

A DOE for the Mission 66 Visitor Center was signed by NM SHPO in March 2009. Thus, the landscape should be preserved and maintained.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Type of Agreement:

Expiration Date: N/A

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

SHPO Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

A Determination of Eligibility was completed in March 2009. The State Historic Preservation Officer concurrence document was signed in April 2009.

Existing NRIS Information:

Name in National Register:	Fort Union National Monument
NRIS Number:	66000044
Other Names:	Fort Union National Monument
Primary Certification Date:	12/01/1978

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Contributing/Individual:	Individual
National Register Classification:	Site
Significance Level:	State
Significance Criteria:	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
Significance Criteria:	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1959 - 1960
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	NPS Mission 66
Time Period:	AD 1959 - 1960
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Landscape Architecture
Facet:	NPS Mission 66--Landscape Architecture

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
Area of Significance Category:	Landscape Architecture
Area of Significance Category:	Community Planning and Development

Statement of Significance:

The Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the Mission 66 program of park development and its “significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.” The Visitor Center and associated landscape features are also eligible under Criterion C as a representation of the work of a master, noted National Park Service architect Cecil Doty, who designed the building from 1956 through 1958; and as an example of New Mexico Territorial Style architecture adapted to the “modern” philosophy of design. The level of significance is “State,” and the period of significance is 1959-60, from the beginning of construction in 1959 to the completion of the landscape in 1960. Due to the design and contribution to the development of the park, the Fort Union National Monument Mission 66 Visitor Center is significant in the area of Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning and Development.

The Mission 66 Program

The Mission 66 Program was initiated in 1956 and was planned to terminate in 1966, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service. The goal of the Mission 66 Program was to adequately develop and staff National Park Service units in order to provide maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources. According to the formatted statement, “What is Mission 66?” that was posted at the front of every Mission 66 Prospectus for National Park Service units undergoing improvements, “modern roads, well-planned trails, utilities, camp

and picnic grounds, and many kinds of structures needed for public use or administration,” were needed to meet the requirements of the anticipated increase in visitors. Construction was an important element of the program and the formatted statement further asserted that, “Under this program, outmoded and inadequate facilities will be replaced with physical improvements adequate for expected demands but so designed and located as to reduce the impact of public use on valuable and destructible features. It will provide both facilities and personnel for visitor service of the quality and quantity that the public is entitled to expect in its National Park System. It is intended to assure the fullest possible degree of protection, both to visitors and resources.”

The rustic architectural style of structures of the preceding decades (1920s-1930s) set a precedent for the program and informed the architectural character and planning process of the Mission 66 program. After World War II, the National Park Service planning and design approach shifted from the NPS Rustic Style applied during the New Deal Era to modernist planning and design. Conrad Wirth, National Park Service director in 1951, initiated the program and George Hertzog, Jr. concluded it in 1972 when his Parkscape successor program (1966-1972) ended on the 100th anniversary of Yellowstone National Park. Following Hertzog, the political context of NPS leadership changed dramatically, marking the end of the initiative. Therefore, the broader period associated with Mission 66 within the National Park Service spans 1945-1972.

Associated Property type: Visitor Center

The term Visitor Center was coined by Mission 66 planners. Visitor centers combined features of several existing NPS building types to provide the efficiency needed to handle vastly increased visitation in the parks after WWII. Museum, administrative offices, information, and interpretation, as well as restrooms, all rolled into a "one-stop" shopping experience. The first Mission 66 visitor center was constructed at Grand Canyon National Park.

Siting of these new visitor centers was critical to circulate huge numbers of people and cars and intercept them at critical points. Locating centers as closely as possible to the resources to be interpreted was done to strengthen the interpretive message of the resources—despite the fact that the new visitor centers encroached to some degree on the resources themselves. It was desirable to provide significant views of the resources from viewing terraces or through lobby windows to facilitate interpretative talks and make sure that the "message" of the site was clear to visitors.

Progression through the sequence of the interior spaces, too, was carefully orchestrated to move large numbers of people through the building as efficiently as possible and to provide easy access to exhibits as well as the information desk.

Associated Architectural Style: Park Service Modern (NPS Modern)

Modernism was the style of postwar social, demographic, and economic conditions. American architects adopted this European born style, and NPS architects followed suit. New demands for

outdoor recreation, an emerging interstate highway system, as well as new construction practices and the budget policies of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations all influenced the new Park Service (NPS) Modern style. The new style utilized less expensive and labor intensive materials and construction methods, and while NPS Rustic Style was considered to blend in with the park settings and was even considered "picturesque," NPS Modern sought to minimize the impact of the new buildings on the landscape by their very simplicity and lack of ornamentation.

At Fort Union, a new visitor center was needed to replace a 16 x 20 foot wooden cabin which had been imported from Los Alamos to serve as a visitor center and offices when the park was first opened to the public in 1956. The only restrooms were outhouses and two trailers served as staff housing. These were located within yards of the Second Fort parade grounds. Design alternatives for the new Mission 66 visitor center ranged from the adaptive reuse of one of the historic barracks to an ultra-modern structure. The preferred alternative resulted in today's existing building, pulled back from the main ruins to a position in direct line with the remains of the Fort Hospital yet still within view of the fort ruins. Designed primarily by architect Cecil Doty and his Western Office of Design and Construction staff, its style is New Mexico Territorial, the style utilized for the historic fort buildings as depicted in the early photographs. The brown stuccoed walls were topped with several courses of burnt brick and, typical of the style, they featured wooden pedimented door and window lintels and porches, front and rear, trimmed with simple wood moldings. All of the wood trim was painted white in contrast to the brown stucco. The Territorial style served as New Mexico's belated version of the Greek Revival style. The stuccoed wood frame walls (rather than stone or adobe masonry), the asymmetry of the building's massing and the technologies utilized in its construction were evidence of NPS Modern.

The simple floor plan of the new building provided a direct progression from the front porch, through the vestibule with the information counter in full view and the exhibits as well as restrooms. Continuing on past the information desk and through the back door, the trail to the main fort ruins was directly ahead providing that instant visual connection to the ruins for interpretive talks. To the right, a hallway led to the administrative offices.

The Fort Union Visitor Center, by virtue of being one of the first to be constructed from the ground up under the Mission 66 program, represents a transition between the pre-war NPS Rustic architectural style and the NPS Modern of the full-blown Mission 66. With its picturesque qualities of the local vernacular, perhaps the choice of style was selected as was the style of the Civilian Conservation Corps visitor center at Tumacacori National Monument. The Tumacacori visitor center was intended to be an interpretive element in its own right, designed as it was in the Mission style. At Fort Union, with few remnants of the fort still extant, the ability to visualize what it looked like is aided by the recreation of the early New Mexico Territorial style in the Visitor Center.

Areas directly adjacent to the visitor center building also play a role. From Section F, Page 117 of the January 2006 Draft Multiple Property Nomination for National Park Service Mission 66 Resources:

Although visitor centers were typically sited in relationship to the park's automotive circulation plan, designers explored the potential for visitors to use nearby trails and outdoor spaces once they were out

of their cars. Outdoor amphitheatres, roof terraces, and other exterior features all served as functional parts of the visitor center complex. Restrooms often were designed as separate buildings adjacent to the visitor center, or at least with separate outdoor entrances. Nearby parking lots and site development were integral to the overall procession into and through the building. Ramps often replaced stairs into and out of the building, and window walls helped break down the division between site and interior space. Short interpretive trails (“nature trails”) were often developed to provide an outdoor experience near the visitor center, and outdoor picnic and sitting areas were common as well. Associated features directly associated with Mission 66 visitor centers may also include plazas, courtyards, arcades, porches, parking areas, paths, trails, and planted areas. Cultural landscape characteristics (including circulation, spatial organization, topography, vegetation, and views) should also be identified and evaluated for their ability to contribute to the significance of a visitor center district.

Of these associated features, the original Fort Union Visitor Center had a parking drop off and entry, portals, connections to trails, and planted areas. Picnic and informal outdoor amphitheatre areas developed later.

Designed by noted architect Cecil Doty between 1956 and 1958 and built between 1959 and 1960, the design of the Fort Union Visitor Center property is characteristic of early Mission 66 developments. One-way parking lot circulation, curving concrete paths, native plants planted in naturalized patterns and associations, and the design of outdoor spaces, seating areas, picnic areas, and trails adjacent to the visitor center to reflect and support visitor movement are typical Mission 66 design elements and are still present at the site.

Eligibility

On pages 273 to 278 of her Mission 66 Visitor Center theme study, Sarah Allaback outlines criteria to be used to evaluate the eligibility of visitor centers. The Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center site meets these criteria for 50-year old Mission 66 Visitor Centers:

1. The visitor center must be one of the visitor centers originally planned and built as part of the Mission 66 program between 1956 and 1966.

The Fort Union Visitor Center is one that was originally planned and built as part of the Mission 66 program (1956-1966)—in fact the first fully conceived and constructed Mission 66 Visitor Center to be built from scratch and is fully within the period of significance.

2. The building must retain most if not all of the physical characteristics of the property type:
 - a.) Be a centralized facility housing both visitor and administration functions,
 - b.) Include interpretive displays, a space for films or slides, visitor contact and other services,
 - c.) Intended to serve the public by interpreting the monument’s cultural resources, and
 - d.) Serve as a major point of visitor arrival, orientation, and service.

The Fort Union Visitor Center retains most of the physical characteristics of its original construction.

The building is a centralized facility with lobby, restrooms, information, exhibits, and administrative offices all under one roof. As originally designed the only service missing from the fully-realized Mission 66 formula is audio-visual and that was accommodated at a later date by enclosing parts of the back porch. While the building does not feature the "modern" window walls of the Mission 66 model, due to the selection of a more traditional vernacular style, both the Fort area and the remains of the Hospital are readily visible from the front and rear entrances of the building and are accessed from it. It is sited at the terminus of the entrance road, quite close to the Fort ruins and is very obviously the final vehicular destination for visitors who wish to visit the Fort.

3. The visitor center should possess physical integrity to the period of significance.

Despite the changes that have taken place over the last 50 years, the visitor center still maintains a high degree of historic and design integrity. The plan has undergone very minor changes, keeping the major spaces and the spatial flow through the building intact and as designed. The enclosure of most of the rear porch, while changing the effect of the long horizontal porch roof line across the rear elevation, does not significantly disturb the feeling of the low, brown stucco massing, particularly when the original plate glass windows in these new walls were later replaced with pedimented wooden ones to match those in the original design.

The Fort Union Visitor Center's architectural style represents the earlier precedent of the "local vernacular style," New Mexico Territorial style, rather than full blown Park Service Modern. Its interior spatial organization and program definitely achieve the new Mission 66 visitor center form—the centralized visitor services model with a direct link to the ruins both visually and via the trails from the back porch to the fort. The construction materials and HVAC as well as construction techniques, too, are thoroughly modern in keeping with Mission 66.

4. The building should be a successful reflection of the principles of "Park Service Modern," such as:

- a.) Building is sited based on the overall plan of visitor flow;
- b.) Building emphasizes plan organization
 - c.) Building program centralizes numerous park services,
 - d.) Building utilizes contemporary or period materials and systems,
 - e.) Building harmonizes with its setting,
 - f.) Building elevations are low profile and the massing is horizontal, and
 - g.) Building is sited near the resources so they can be interpreted.

The Fort Union visitor center was sited at the terminus of the park entry road, within visual range of the historic fort ruins. The floor plan achieves a definite segregation of public and administrative spaces and the "visitor flow" through the building is simple and direct. The services rendered for the visitor include restrooms, information and orientation, education about the fort ruins through museum exhibits and interpretive talks, and direct access once through the building to the interpretive trails to the Fort. In addition separation of public and administrative realms is accomplished by having the east wing of the building dedicated strictly to administrative functions.

Although designed in the New Mexico Territorial Revival style, the materials used in its construction as

well as the electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems, were all modern. Coincidentally the low horizontal massing of the building produces the low-profile effect of the new modernist style; likewise it harmonizes well with its high plains setting, again due to the vernacular style which was traditionally constructed from available local materials, therefore blending easily with its surroundings. Rather than the courtyards and other Modernist features that Doty often included in his VC designs, this early, almost transitional example, features exterior porches, front and rear. These features serve as architectural testimony to New Mexico Territorial style's acknowledgement of the conclusion of hostilities with Indians which had required a more inward orientation for the habitable spaces, and the opportunity to be more outwardly focused (per Bainbridge Bunting's 1976 *Early Architecture in New Mexico*, p. 90). Also, it uses the standard style for mid to late 19th century forts across the country.

Additionally, the visitor center property meets the criteria for the directly associated area adjacent to the building, per Allaback and Carr et al., in that the characteristic parking lot, walkways and trails, and landscape are extant and retain integrity to the period of significance.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Visitor Contact (Visitor Center)

Primary Current Use: Visitor Contact (Visitor Center)

Other Use/Function

Other Type of Use or Function

Parking Area

Interpretive Trail

Pedestrian Circulation

Vehicular Circulation

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Type of Name

Visitor Center

Both Current And Historic

Mission 66 Visitor Center

Both Current And Historic

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
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AD 1200	Colonized	First evidence of trade between the Hopewell Culture of the Ohio River valley and the Pueblo People of the southwest.
AD 1848	Land Transfer	The Mexican-American War (1846-1848) results in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which transfers the region to the US.
AD 1851 - 1861	Built	First Fort Union is built; Confederate invasion of New Mexico causes its abandonment in 1861.
AD 1861 - 1863	Built	Second Fort Union, defensive earthworks, built to protect Federal interests. The Battle of Glorieta Pass in 1862 ends the needs for the earthworks.
AD 1863 - 1868	Built	Third Fort Union is built of adobe brick. The Post garrison, Quartermaster depot, and hospital are located on one site, and the Arsenal is located about a mile away at the site of the first fort. Indian wars fought 1867-1874.
AD 1875	Purchased/Sold	Portion of Mora Land grant sold to General Butler. Butler forms Butler-Ames Cattle Co.
AD 1879	Built	Transcontinental Railroad arrives in northern New Mexico as the Santa Fe Railroad, for the most part replacing Fort Union and the Santa Fe Trail for commercial transportation. The Quarter Master depot continues use off and on through the 1880s.
AD 1882	Neglected	The arsenal at Fort Union is closed.
AD 1885	Established	Union Land and Grazing Company established ranch, surrounding the Fort, out of Butler-Ames operation.
AD 1891	Abandoned	Fort Union is closed by the military, and the troops march out, abandoning the structures. The land is used for grazing by Union Land and Grazing Co.
AD 1895	Destroyed	Scavenging period begins at Fort Union, with materials taken by locals for building on their own structures, notably at Watrous.

Mission 66 Visitor Center Site
Fort Union National Monument

AD 1929 - 1954	Memorialized	Free Masons of Las Vegas begin attempts to save Fort Union as a national monument. A long period of negotiation ensues between federal, state, and local officials with the Union Land Grazing Co.
AD 1954	Established	Fort Union National Monument is established.
AD 1955	Land Transfer	Local interests raise the money to purchase the road right-of-way. Union Land and Grazing Co., through donation, turns the Fort Union title over the US government.
AD 1955 - 1956	Built	Access road (NM 161) is built from US Highway 85 to the Fort.
AD 1956	Built	May. Fort Union obtains a 16'x20' wooden cabin from Los Alamos to serve as the temporary office and visitor center. With the efforts of Superintendent Wing and Clifford W. Mills, a seasonal ranger from Los Alamos, Fort Union has a visitor center, an interpretive trail, and living quarters, all of which are temporary.
	Established	June 08. Fort Union National Monument is opened to the public with a ribbon cutting ceremony. In the morning, a sixty piece band from New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas welcomes more than 600 people.
	Built	June 29. Steve Franken of Las Vegas fences in parcels of land to keep cattle out of the site. Recovery of the grasses from overgrazing begin.
	Built	Fort Union becomes the first monument developed entirely under Mission 66 for development of Fort Union's first facilities, including visitor center and housing units.
AD 1956 - 1958	Designed	Cecil Doty and the staff of the Western Office of Design and Construction design the Fort Union Visitor Center and surrounding property using the New Mexico Territorial Style.

Mission 66 Visitor Center Site
Fort Union National Monument

AD 1956 - 1959	Built	Visitor facilities are constructed under the Mission 66 program. They included temporary facilities, roads, fencing, a visitor center, employee housing, maintenance facility, well and water distribution system, parking lot, and road system. The entrance road is the first project at the monument.
AD 1957	Built	August 22. The Red Top Drilling Company of Las Vegas completes a 325-foot well.
AD 1958	Established	Spring. Water and sewage systems are operational.
AD 1958 - 1959	Built	The new territorial-style visitor center is completed, along with the parking lot and residential loop road. Park staff move into the new facilities in 1959.
AD 1959	Established	February. The Mountain Bell Telephone Company provides telephone services to the remote fort.
AD 1960	Built	Landscape is completed at the Visitor Center site. Picket fences and gravel pedestrian pathways to the ruins are complete circa 1960.
AD 1980	Altered	During the 1980s, the visitor center sign is moved from the east side of the visitor center entry to the start of the parking lot loop.
AD 1989	Altered	Sometime before 1989 the need to provide audio-visual interpretation and additional office space prompts the enclosure of most of the rear porch.
	Altered	The restrooms are expanded by bringing them out almost to the front façade of the original structure.
	Altered	A new front porch is added.
	Altered	A steel-framed hipped, metal-clad roof structure is installed behind the existing parapet walls to provide better drainage and a longer service life.
AD 2006	Altered	Along the rear façade, a new wall is built to enclose the back corner to create a garage for the park's electrified service cart.

Mission 66 Visitor Center Site
Fort Union National Monument

AD 2008	Altered	The front porch is elongated to span the entire front entry walk with the trim and new posts similar to the original.
AD 2009 - 2008	Established	DOE is completed and signed by the SHPO.
AD 2010	Established	CLI is completed for the Fort Union National Monument Mission 66 Visitor Center.

Physical History:

1200 AD - 2010 AD

Long before the Santa Fe Trail was “opened” by William Becknell in 1821 as a commercial and military highway, the Fort Union area was a landscape of passage. There is evidence of Native American habitation at the site dating back to 1200 AD. As Plains Indians began to appear in New Mexico, extensive trade commenced between nations.

When New Mexico became United States territory after the U.S. - Mexican War, the army established garrisons in towns scattered along the Rio Grande to protect the area's inhabitants and travel routes. Fort Union was thus established in 1851 as the guardian of the Santa Fe Trail. During its forty-year history, three different forts were constructed close together. The third Fort Union was the largest in the American Southwest, and functioned as a military garrison, territorial arsenal, and military supply depot for the southwest.

Shortly after its abandonment in 1891, the forts fell into ruin. A combination of weathering from the elements and removal of doors, windows, and lumber by local populations caused rapid deterioration. Today, only the rock foundations, partial adobe walls, and a few brick fireplaces of the forts remain.

After investigating Fort Union, the Southwest Regional Office eventually negotiated the National Park Service's acquisition of the majority of the fort ruins in 1954. Fort Union National Monument was the first park to be established and developed completely under the National Park Service Mission 66 Program. The goal of the Mission 66 Program was to adequately develop and staff National Park Service units in order to provide maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources. Visitor Centers are one of the signature elements of Mission 66 park planning and design. Designed from 1956 through 1958 by Cecil Doty and constructed between 1959 and 1960, the Fort Union Mission 66 Visitor Center property includes the Visitor Center building and associated loop road and parking, concrete and gravel walkways, plantings, fencing, and picnic areas. One of the early Mission 66 developments, the Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center was designed to reflect historic Fort architecture (Territorial Style) and to afford visitors views of the Fort by locating the building close to the fort ruins. The adjacent landscape includes a spacious parking and entry layout, an informal design of native plants around the building, and progressive views of the fort ruins, all characteristic of Mission 66 era site design.

Prior to the construction of the Mission 66 Visitor Center and accompanying landscape features, the early 1950s landscape at Fort Union had a very open character with a one-way elongated oval-shaped loop drive with one row of parking off of the eastern side of the loop. A major Santa Fe Trail rut cut diagonally through the loop drive. Aerial photographs show that there were paths leading north and east from the elongated loop drive to the fort ruins. Other than the grassy ground plane throughout the site, no vegetation is apparent.

A new Visitor Center for Fort Union was needed to replace a 16 x 20 foot wooden cabin which had been imported from Los Alamos to serve as a visitor center and offices when the park was

first opened to the public in 1956. The only restrooms were outhouses and two trailers served as staff housing. These were located within yards of the Second Fort parade grounds. Plans from 1954 sited the new Visitor Center at the northern end of original parking area, while a revised 1957 plan shows the Visitor Center aligned with the hospital ruins where it was ultimately built. Design alternatives for the new Mission 66 Visitor Center ranged from the adaptive reuse of one of the historic barracks to an ultra-modern structure. The preferred alternative resulted in today's existing building, pulled back from the main ruins to a position in direct line with the remains of the Fort Hospital yet still within view of the main fort ruins. Designed by architect Cecil Doty and his Western Office of Design and Construction staff, the building style is New Mexico Territorial, the style utilized for the historic fort buildings as depicted in the early photographs. The brown stuccoed walls were topped with several courses of burnt brick and, typical of the style, they featured wooden pedimented door and window lintels and porches, front and rear, trimmed with simple wood moldings. All of the wood trim was painted white in contrast to the brown stucco. The Territorial style served as New Mexico's belated version of the Greek Revival style. The stuccoed wood frame walls (rather than stone or adobe masonry), the asymmetry of the building's massing and the technologies utilized in its construction were evidence of NPS Modern style.

With the design and construction of the new Visitor Center, surrounding landscape improvements soon followed. The entrance road was the first project at the monument under the Mission 66 plan, and other major infrastructure improvements followed. Water and sewage systems were operational by 1958 and in 1959 the Mountain Bell Telephone Company provided telephone services to the Fort. Park staff moved into the new facilities in 1959.

While details of the landscape improvements are largely unknown, historic photographs from 1959 to 1960 provide information about the as-built design and original character of the site. A 1959 photograph of the Visitor Center site shows a Mission 66 sign in front of the entryway informing visitors of the project. The picket fence is not yet in place on the eastern and western sides of the building and no vegetation is visible. However, some small scale features, such as signage and a trash can are in place, as is a path (of unknown material) in front of (south) and running parallel to the Visitor Center.

A 1959 Site Plan demonstrates the design intent for vegetation at the Visitor Center site: use of native plants to frame and surround the building, offering windbreak and shade. The planting plan intent appears to be scattered, with the vegetation in clusters immediately around the Visitor Center, while individual plantings are more common extending east and west from the building. The plan consists of a combination of trees, shrubs, and grasses. The largest trees (cottonwoods) are symmetrically arranged in front of and behind the building, pinyon around the building, and shrubs (arranged in clusters from larger to smaller) directly around the building and as foundation plantings. Original species were: Broadleaf (or Fremont) Cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), Pinyon Pine (*Pinus edulis*), Chamisa (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*), Four-wing Saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), and Navajo Yucca (*Yucca navajoa*). No trees or shrubs were planted within the parking island, but native blue grama grass was planted in the green space separating the two parking areas, north of the loop road.

The 1959 Site Plan also shows the wood picket fence and accompanying gates on either side of the Visitor Center and concrete pathways located on the southern side of the building leading to the parking area. Another concrete path, leading directly from the picket fence gate east of the Visitor Center to the concrete sidewalk around the parking area was built and was later removed. There is no evidence of picnic areas in the 1959 plan.

Historic photographs suggest that the white picket fence was in place by 1960. The pedestrian pathways appear to have been completed around the same time. A 1960 oblique aerial shows the teardrop shaped loop road with the two parking areas separated by a green space with a concrete path leading to the loop road through its center. The grassy island within the loop road does not yet have a flagpole. Some newly planted vegetation is visible around the Visitor Center. In addition to the picket fences, both gravel and concrete walkways are visible in the 1960 aerial.

The landscape remained largely unchanged during the first decade of the park. Photographs from 1975 show clusters of picnic tables on both the east and west sides of the Visitor Center. There are plantings along the north and south sides of the picket fences and it appears that the planting plan was carried out based on tree locations. Photographs from 1975 also show a plaque with a sign southeast of the Visitor Center in the grass, off the concrete walk. Some small scale features include a railing along the entrance walk and some trash cans near the eastern picnic area.

Over the years several changes were made to the original Visitor Center. Sometime before 1989 the need to provide audio-visual interpretation and additional office space prompted the enclosure of most of the building's rear porch. Public access was still maintained to the back of the building and the interpretive trail to the fort. Based upon the comparison of the 1956 and the pre-1989 plans, the restrooms were enlarged to allow for accessibility.

In 1989 a major project expanded the restrooms by bringing them out almost to the front façade of the original Visitor Center. A new front porch was added to the building to continue the original length of the porch, with posts and trim detailing replicating the original. The enclosure walls of the previous rear porch enclosure were stuccoed to match the rest of the building, and new windows were installed to match the original. The biggest change was made to the roof: a steel-framed hipped, metal-clad roof structure was installed behind the existing parapet walls to provide better drainage and a longer service life.

In 2006 along the rear elevation, a new wall was built to enclose the back corner to create a garage for the park's electrified service cart. As of 2008 the configuration of the building has not changed much more. The front porch was elongated to span the entire front entry walk with the trim and new posts similar to the original.

The interior of the building was designed with three distinct areas: visitor contact, museum, and administrative spaces. The primary character defining spaces are the entrance vestibule and main lobby with a visitor contact desk and decorative wood ceilings. While the museum is

significant for its general placement there are no character defining features associated with this space; it is a “white box” with recessed exhibits, plain white drywall walls, and a tile ceiling with contemporary lighting. The administrative area is also significant for its placement within the overall design, but it too does not contain any character defining features or materials. These spatial distinctions and overall spatial organization of the interior remains, despite some minor changes (office space to the right of the visitor space was expanded, encroaching somewhat on the size of the lobby, and a partition wall was added in the exhibit room). Circulation within the building has changed very little from the visitor's point of view. The necessary expansion of office space to handle additional staffing over the years, and the enclosure of some of the porch area for the addition of audio-visual interpretive media, are typical of Mission 66 visitor centers across the service, considering the tight budget constraints under which most of them were conceived and constructed as well as the passage of time and changes in park management policies over the years.

None of these changes has seriously impacted the original design intent of the building. While the rear elevation has been somewhat more compromised by the loss of the long, horizontal porch, the use of Territorial style windows and trim in the now-enclosed walls keeps the style reading clearly. Even the addition of the sloping, metal roof has had a negligible visual impact from any side of the building, and the front porch, although now broken up into two sections, still reads as it did originally.

Today, the Visitor Center and the surrounding landscape features remain largely unchanged from the historic period. Historic overall spatial organization and circulation patterns remain. The original siting of the building – just south of a major Santa Fe Trail rut and further south from the Fort ruins than originally planned – remains. Except for restriping parking spaces and relocating the visitor center sign from the building entry to the beginning of the one-way loop, the parking lot has not been modified from its original teardrop shape and single row of head-in parking on the outside of the loop. The white picket fences on either side of the building remain, and continue to fulfill their intended function of separating the non-historic (south of the fence) and the historic ruins (north of the fence). The visitor experience sequence – from parking to visitor center entry (some by way of the restrooms) to interior lobby and continuing north out to the fort ruins – remains the same. The entry view of the hospital ruins upon entering the parking lot, and the procession of views into the visitor center and out to the north remain. The increased number of noncontributing pinyon and juniper trees along the south elevation of the building and vegetation section, below) somewhat obscure the view of the front of the building.

The walkway layout remains substantially the same, with the paved arced paths along the parking areas, entry walk on axis with the flagpole, the smaller path around the building on the east side, and more informal, unpaved paths to the fort ruins to the north of the building. One modification has been made: a section of the smaller path between the parking walkway and the path around the east side of the building has been removed.

Native vegetation around the building continues to provide some windbreak and shade. Even though not all of the original plants from the 1959 planting plan have survived, the same variety

of plants remains today. In addition, a number of junipers were added in the 1960s, perhaps for additional windbreak. Several cottonwoods (now struggling) were added on the west side and one cottonwood (doing well) was added within the last few years near the east side picnic area. The initial intent of framing the building with large trees and leaving the view of the front elevation unobstructed has been weakened over time by the demise of the cottonwoods and the addition of junipers, and more pinyon, on the south side. Even with these changes, however, the overall “island” effect – plants clustered around the building and no plantings in the parking lot -- remains.

Small-scale features in the landscape such as outdoor furnishings and signs have been added and removed over the years. The visitor center sign was moved from the east side of the visitor center entry to the start of the parking lot loop in the 1980s. Benches arranged as an informal amphitheatre to the north of the building that were present in the 1970s are no longer present; some of these benches are now located along the north wall for seating. Two picnic areas have developed, with the attendant picnic tables and trash containers.

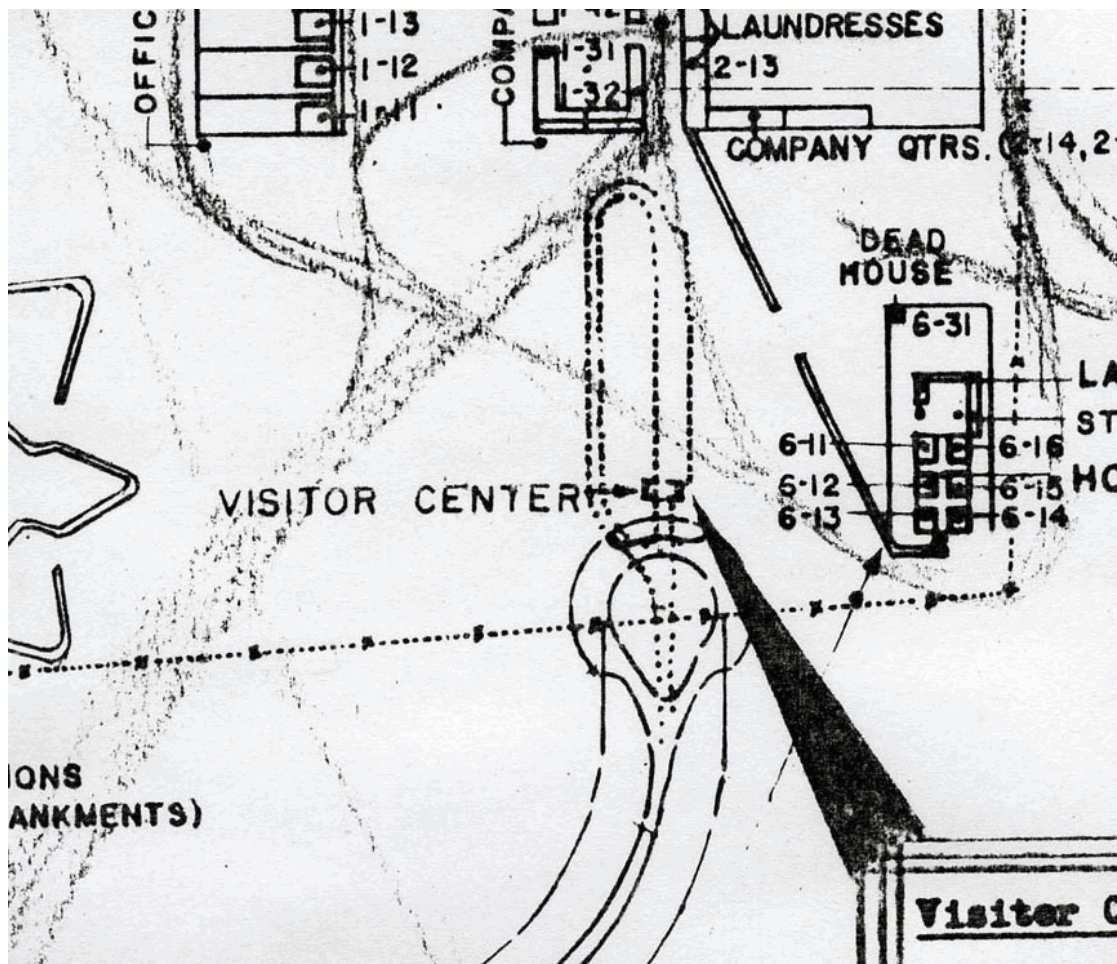
The overall design of the Fort Union Visitor Center property is characteristic of early Mission 66 developments. One-way parking lot circulation, curving concrete paths, native plants planted in naturalized patterns and associations, and the design of outdoor spaces, seating areas, picnic areas, and trails adjacent to the visitor center to reflect and support visitor movement – all still present at this site – are typical Mission 66 design elements.



Aerial photo, circa 1954-57, showing parking area prior to visitor center construction, located directly south on the edge of the fort ruins. (Note location of major Santa Fe Trail rut). Source: Park photo files; taken from 2009 DOE.



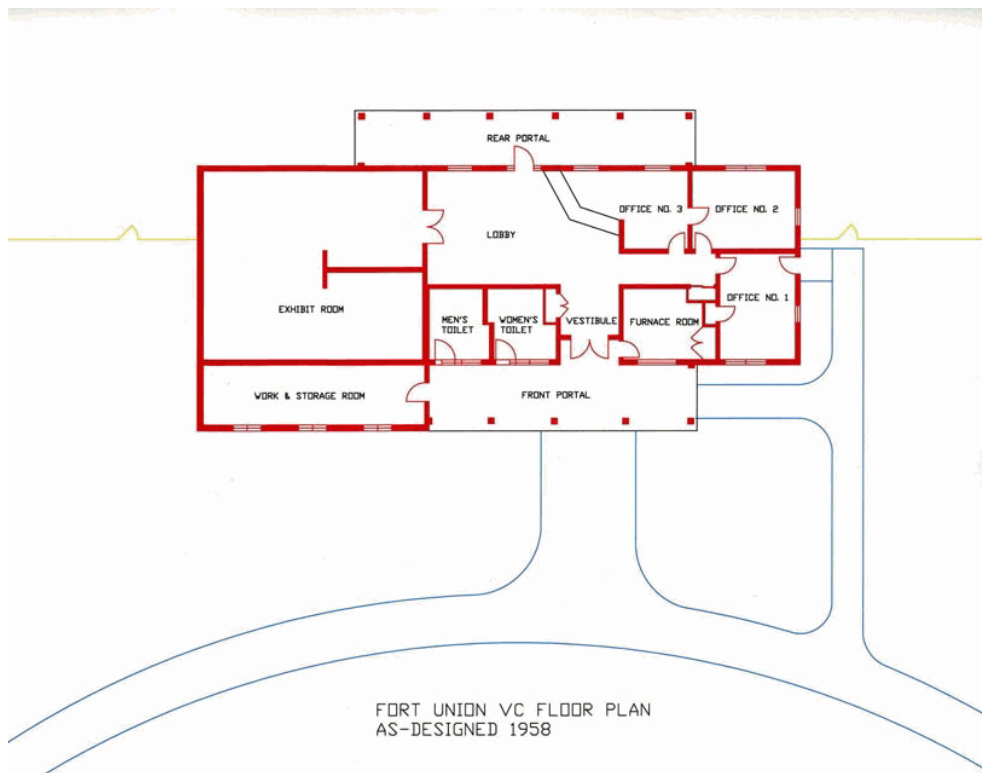
1959 photo of southern elevation. Source: Zhu 1992, 34; taken from 2009 DOE.



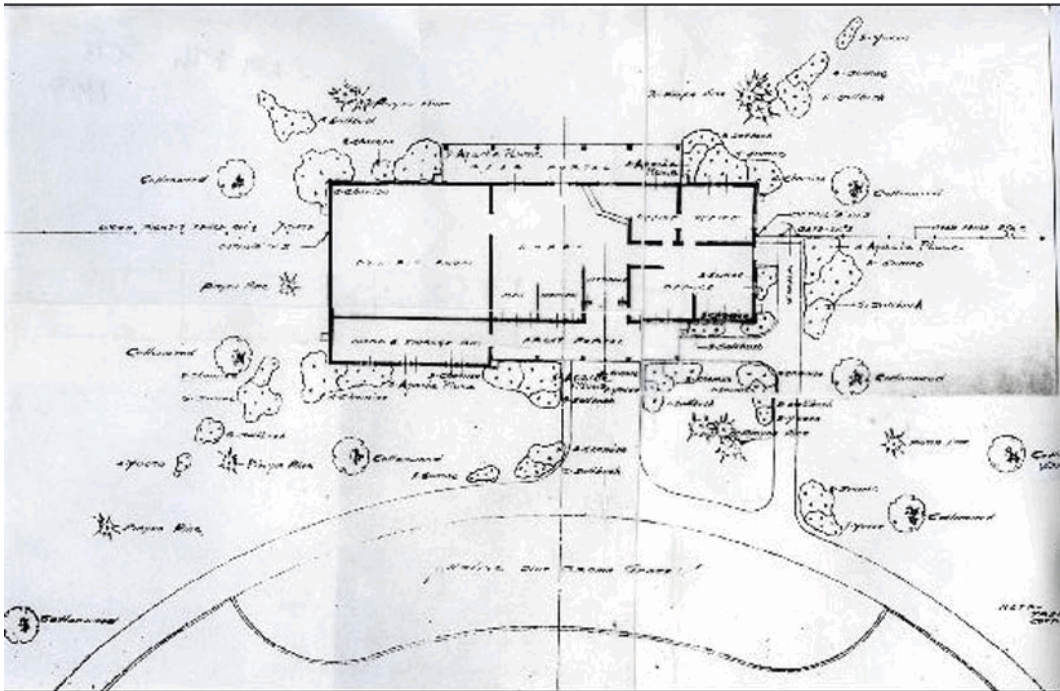
1957 plan showing Visitor Center location aligned with Fort hospital ruins. The original elongated loop road is demonstrated through dotted lines. Source: Drawing No. NM FTU 3014, August 1957 (with 1966 annotations); taken from 2009 DOE.



1960 oblique aerial, showing parking area, walkways, trails, picket fences and newly planted vegetation. Source: Fort Union NM photograph files; taken from 2009 DOE.



Visitor Center Floor Plan, as designed 1958. Source: Park files; taken from 2009 DOE.



1959 Site plan, showing design intent for vegetation at the Visitor Center. Source: Fort Union NM map files, Drawing No. NM FTU 3018, March 1959; taken from 2009 DOE.



1975 photo of southwest side of visitor center. Source: Park photo files; taken from 2009 DOE.



1975 photo of east and south sides of visitor center. Source: Park photo files; taken from 2009 DOE.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Landscape Integrity Assessment:

Assessment of integrity is based on evaluation of the existence and condition of physical features dating from a property's period of significance, taking into consideration the degree to which the individual qualities of integrity are present. As noted in National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance....Historic properties either retain integrity (that is convey their significance) or they do not. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant." The seven aspects of integrity included in the National Register criteria are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

LOCATION

Location is the physical place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The location of a property is an important factor in determining why the property was created. If a property is separated from its location, the recapture of a sense of historic meaning and character is fragmented.

Designed in 1956-58 by Cecil Doty and constructed from 1959-1960, the Fort Union National Monument Mission 66 Visitor Center property has remained in its original location at the terminus of the entrance road within walking distance of the fort ruins, just south of a major Santa Fe Trail rut. Its position is in direct line with the remains of the fort hospital. Except for restriping parking spaces and relocating the visitor center sign from the building entry to the beginning of the one-way loop, the parking area has not been modified from its original teardrop shape with angled head-in parking on the outside of the loop. The adjacent curved concrete sidewalk has also not changed in location. The picket fence has stayed in its original location extending east and west from the Visitor Center. There have been no major alterations in the location of the building or major landscape features and it thus, the property retains integrity.

DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property or its significant alteration. The design of a historic property reflects the functions, technologies, and aesthetics of its period of significance, and can include elements such as massing,

spatial arrangement, site layout, texture and color of materials, style of ornamental detailing, and type of vegetation.

The plan for the Visitor Center property has undergone minor changes, keeping the major spaces and the spatial flow through the site intact and as designed.

Sited near the fort ruins and adjacent to the parking area, the Visitor Center and associated parking, walkways, plantings, fencing, and picnic areas retain integrity in design. By virtue of being one of the first Visitor Centers to be constructed from the ground up under the Mission 66 program, the building represents a transition between the pre-war NPS Rustic architectural style and the NPS Modern of the full-blown Mission 66. NPS Modern sought to minimize the impact of the new buildings on the landscape by their simplicity, lack of ornamentation, and asymmetry of the building's massing. With few remnants of the fort still extant, the ability to visualize what the fort looked like is aided by the recreation of the early New Mexico Territorial style in the design of the Visitor Center.

Designed landscape features, such as circulation and vegetation patterns, are also important to the design of the property. The entrance road leads to a one-way teardrop-shaped loop road. The design of the loop road, with the public parking located around the wide arc of the loop, has not changed in design and retains integrity. As originally planned, the parking area is divided in two sections on the eastern and western sides of the arc with a green space in between.

Providing access from the parking area to the Visitor Center, a concrete sidewalk mirrors the vehicular asphalt arc and connects the two parking areas. The overall layout of walkways remains substantially the same, with the curved pedestrian path along the parking areas, the entry “mini plaza” on axis with the flagpole, smaller paths around the building on the east side, and the gravel pathways to the fort ruins located on the north side of the building. One modification has been made: a section of the path between the arced walkway and the path around the east side of the building has been removed. Despite minor changes, overall the design of the pedestrian pathways retains integrity.

As put forth in the 1959 Site Plan, vegetation continues to frame and surround the building thereby providing some windbreak and shade. Even though not all of the original plants from the 1959 planting plan have survived, the same varieties of plants remain today. The original species were: Broadleaf (or Fremont) Cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), Pinyon Pine (*Pinus edulis*), Chamisa (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*), Four-wing Saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), and Navajo Yucca (*Yucca navajoa*). A number of junipers were added in the 1960s and several cottonwoods (now struggling) were added on the west side and one cottonwood (doing well) was added within the last few years near the east side picnic area. The initial intent of framing the building with large trees and leaving the view of the front elevation unobstructed has been weakened as trees now obscure parts of the front façade. There has been a demise of cottonwoods while junipers and pinyon have been added on the south side of the building. Even with these changes, however, the overall “island” design – plants clustered around the building and no plantings in the parking lot – retains integrity.

Though there have been some changes to the landscape, no changes have seriously impacted the original design intent.

SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the physical place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the character of the site. Setting includes the physical elements of a site, such as spatial organization, land use, vegetation, topography, circulation, and small-scale features. Setting also includes the character of the contextual lands that surround a historic property.

The setting of the Fort Union Mission 66 Visitor Center retains integrity as the land use, spatial organization, topography, and major circulation features have remained the same. While some small scale features have been added for comfort (such as picnic tables and trash cans) and utilitarian need (such as propane tanks), overall the physical elements and character of the site have remained the same as the major spaces have not dramatically changed in purpose and use.

As noted in the Design section, the vegetation has undergone some changes. Not all of the original plants from the 1959 plan have survived, but the same varieties of plants remain today, maintaining the same character. The overall design of plants clustered around the building with no plantings in the parking lot retains integrity of setting.

Since Fort Union is surrounded by lands belonging to the Union Land and Grazing Co., with whom the park has a working relationship in regards to issues of access and management, there has been no encroaching development, so the expansive vistas have not been altered and contribute to the character of the setting.

MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveal the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies.

Although designed in the New Mexico Territorial Revival style, the materials used in the Visitor Center construction as well as the electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems, were all modern. The materials associated with the Fort Union Visitor Center property retain integrity as they have been altered minimally. The biggest change was made to the roof: a steel-framed hipped, metal-clad roof structure was installed in 1989 behind the existing parapet walls to provide better drainage and a longer service life. The remodels of the building were carried out to facilitate visitor use and operations and do not change the overall character.

Otherwise, the building is composed of stuccoed wood frame walls that are topped with several

courses of burnt brick and feature wooden pedimented door and window lintels. These materials retain integrity.

The materials associated with the landscape include the asphalt loop road, concrete arc sidewalks, gravel pathways, and wooden picket fence. All retain integrity of materials. Additionally, some vegetation from the period of significance has survived, and also retains integrity.

WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components.

The Mission 66 style plan for the Fort Union Visitor Center retains integrity in workmanship. The plan created by Cecil Doty and the Western Office of Design and Construction staff is characteristic of Mission 66 style in specific elements and in overall character, particularly the siting of the Visitor Center and accompanying features, which is critical to circulate large numbers of people and vehicles.

The workmanship of the Visitor Center site retains integrity. The elements of the New Mexico Territorial Style have not changed despite alterations to the building during the 1980s to facilitate visitor use that enclosed most of the rear porch and later added a new front porch space.

The choice of native plants that surround and frame the Visitor Center, in clusters immediately around the building and then as individual plantings further away from the building, successfully incorporates the building into the landscape.

Workmanship in the circulation features is not particularly distinct as the materials are primarily concrete and asphalt and produced via machinery. The gravel pathways leading to the ruins are fairly well maintained and the grassy areas immediately surrounding the pathways are maintained and mowed.

FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. In conjunction with location and setting, feeling describes what the property feels like or the senses it evokes to a person on the property.

The feeling of the Fort Union Visitor Center site retains integrity. The landscape of Wolf Creek Valley has experienced minimal modern development and the uninterrupted views throughout the surrounding valley and to the fort ruins contribute to the overall feeling of the site.

The Fort Union Visitor Center's architectural style represents the earlier Mission 66 precedent of the "local vernacular style," and retains integrity for this stylistic expression. The New Mexico Territorial Style building hints at the architecture of the former fort and is sited near the fort ruins and adjacent to the parking area. The direct link visually and by way of trails to the ruins is part of the Mission 66 style and contributes to the feeling of the site.

The enclosure of most of the rear porch of the Visitor Center, while changing the effect of the long horizontal porch roof line across the rear elevation, does not significantly disturb the feeling of the building. Following this alteration, the original plate glass windows in these new walls were later replaced with pedimented wooden ones to match those in the original design.

The landscape surrounding the Visitor Center also retains integrity of feeling. The flow of vehicles and pedestrians has not been altered since the period of significance which contributes significantly to the feeling of the site. The circulation features, including the vehicular loop road and arc sidewalk immediately south of the Visitor Center, and the gravel pathways to the fort ruins have not been changed significantly. The fort ruins are accessed the same way as during the period of significance. Further, the picket fence has not been altered and contributes to the feeling of the site.

In regards to vegetation, more trees have been added to the Visitor Center area and the original plantings are now much larger than during the period of significance and obscure part of the front façade. Nonetheless, the same varieties of plants remain today as does the "island" design with plants clustered around the building and no plantings in the parking lot and as such retains integrity of feeling.

Having undergone only minor changes since the period of significance, the total site comprised of the Visitor Center building and associated parking, walkways, plantings, and fencing, retain integrity of feeling.

ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. A property with high integrity of association portrays its historic character through physical elements and their relationships to each other. Like feeling, association is based on individual and/or community perceptions.

The site retains integrity to the Mission 66 period in specific elements and in overall character. The association of the Visitor Center and surrounding landscape thereby retains integrity. The building represents a transition between the pre-war NPS Rustic architectural style and the NPS Modern of the full-blown Mission 66. The siting of the building and accompanying landscape features portrays the historic character of the property. Overall, since the spaces and spatial flow have only changed minimally and are still in use for their original intended purpose, the vegetation, fencing, loop road, pathways, and building retain integrity and directly contribute to the association of the site.

SUMMARY

The National Park Service has determined that the Fort Union Visitor Center is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the state level under Criteria A and C for its association with the NPS Mission 66 Program and the integrity of Mission 66 planning and design elements that remain. The Period of Significance is 1959-1960. The property retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Contributing elements include the Visitor Center building and associated parking lot and entry loop, concrete and gravel walkways, fencing, and vegetation. Noncontributing/compatible elements include the visitor center remodels (they facilitate visitor use and operations), the west accessible picnic area (picnic use is characteristic of Mission 66 visitor centers), and evergreen trees added in the 1960s (although they now obscure the front elevation, they continue the “island” effect of the initial landscape). Recent additions such as trash cans and the propane tank are noncontributing.

Aspects of Integrity:	Location
	Design
	Setting
	Materials
	Workmanship
	Feeling
	Association

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

There are no archeological sites at the Visitor Center pertaining to the period of significance. Although it does not date to the period of significance, ruts from the original Santa Fe Trail fall within and are visible from the boundaries of the site.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

N/A

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Santa Fe Trail ruts

Buildings and Structures

Under the Mission 66 program, the Visitor Center at Fort Union National Monument was designed by Cecil Doty and the Western Office of Design and Construction staff. The Visitor Center now contains administrative offices, a museum, information desk, and interpretation, as well as restrooms, all under one roof. Designed in the New Mexico Territorial Style, the Visitor Center reflects historic fort buildings as depicted in early photographs. The one-story building

has brown stuccoed walls that feature wooden pedimented door and window lintels. All of the wood trim is painted white in contrast to the brown stucco. The stuccoed wood frame walls (rather than stone or adobe masonry), the asymmetry of the building's massing, and the technologies utilized in the building's construction are evidence of the NPS Modern style.

The building has experienced some changes since its initial construction. Sometime before 1989 the need to provide audio-visual interpretation and additional office space prompted the enclosure of most of the rear porch, though public access was still maintained to the back of the building and the interpretive trail to the fort.

In 1989 a major project expanded the restrooms by bringing them out almost to the front façade of the original structure. A new front porch was added to continue the original length of the porch, with posts and trim detailing replicating the original. The enclosure walls of the previous rear porch enclosure were stuccoed to match the rest of the building, and new windows were installed to match the original. The biggest change was made to the roof: a steel-framed hipped, metal-clad roof structure was installed behind the existing parapet walls to provide better drainage and a longer service life.

In 2006 along the rear façade, a new wall was built to enclose the back corner to create a garage for the park's electrified service cart. The front porch was elongated to span the entire front entry walk with the trim and new posts similar to the original.

The alterations on the building were completed to facilitate visitor use and operations and the remodels are thus noncontributing but compatible elements. Despite these alterations to accommodate changing needs, the Visitor Center has retained integrity as an example of the New Mexico Territorial Style that dates to the period of significance. None of these changes have seriously impacted the original design intent of the building. While the rear façade has been somewhat more compromised by the loss of the long, horizontal porch, the use of Territorial style windows and trim in the now-enclosed walls keeps the style reading clearly. Even the addition of the sloping, metal roof has had a negligible visual impact from any side of the building, and the front porch, although now broken up into two sections, still reads as it did originally.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Visitor Center

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Visitor Center remodels

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Front entrance of the Visitor Center, facing northwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Front façade of the Visitor Center from the western parking area, facing northeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Rear elevation of the Visitor Center with gravel pathways leading to ruins, facing south, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Detail of the western elevation and southern façade of the Visitor Center, facing northeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.

Circulation

The circulation of visitors through the Visitor Center site to the ruins at Fort Union National Monument is central in the experience of the site. The visitor experience sequence at Fort Union – from the entrance road and parking area to the arced sidewalk to the visitor center entry walk to the interior lobby and continuing out of the rear exit of the building north to the fort ruins by way of gravel pathways – has remained the same since the period of significance.

Fort Union National Monument is accessed via New Mexico Highway 161. The entrance road leads to a one-way teardrop-shaped loop road. The narrow tip of the teardrop is the entrance into the asphalt loop road from the south, while the wide arc (the bottom of the teardrop) is the northern terminus of the road and parking area. At the center of the loop road is a grassy island that mirrors the teardrop shape of the road. There is a flagpole and associated walkway on the northern end of the grassy island.

The asphalt is wider along the arc where it serves as the only public parking facility for the site with angled pull-in parking spaces. The parking area is divided in two sections, one on the eastern side and one on the western side of the asphalt arc, separated by a sinuous green space in between. The green space consists of turf grass with two pinyon trees and has a concrete path through its center that is on axis with both the flagpole to the south and the entryway into the Visitor Center to the north.

A concrete sidewalk mirrors the vehicular asphalt arc and connects the two parking areas. By way of the curved concrete sidewalk, visitors are directed towards the entry walk “mini plaza” in front of the Visitor Center from which restrooms and picnic areas are also accessed. The “mini plaza” and entry walk into the Visitor Center are on the same axis as the flagpole and the concrete path in the sinuous green space. From the “mini plaza” area, another concrete path leads from the covered porch area of the Visitor Center and winds around the eastern side of the building to the picket fence gate.

To the north of the Visitor Center, the fort ruins at Fort Union are experienced primarily by foot. The layout of paths at Fort Union remains substantially the same as the layout during the period of significance with the curved paths along the parking areas, entry walk on axis with the flagpole located in the grassy island, the entry “mini-plaza” in front of the Visitor Center, a smaller path around the building on the east side, and more informal, unpaved gravel paths to the ruins to the north of the building.

Generally, visitor circulation leads from the parking area to the Visitor Center through the main entrance then out the rear exit of the Visitor Center towards the fort ruins. Once north of the picket fence and Visitor Center, the trails are well-articulated gravel paths of approximately 3.5 feet wide. From the rear exit (north) of the Visitor Center, a gravel path extends directly north/northwest to the fort ruins. Off of this northbound gravel path, a perpendicular gravel path extends east and west, parallel to the Visitor Center, as part of the same larger pedestrian

circulation pattern around the ruins. On the eastern side of the northbound path, the path heads east, then jogs southeast, then continues east again before sharply turning north/northwest in front of the hospital ruins. As the gravel path turns north/northwest at the hospital, there is a 3 foot grass strip separating the gravel path from a historic paved stone pathway that is approximately 2.5 feet wide. On the west side of the northbound path, the path heads west then jogs southwest parallel to the original Santa Fe Trail. All of the gravel pathways are well articulated. Their precise date of construction is unknown but historic photographs show they are in place by 1960, which falls within the period of significance.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Entrance road
Teardrop-shaped one-way entrance loop
Parking areas
Walkway to flagpole
Curved concrete sidewalk paralleling entrance loop
Concrete path on east side of Visitor Center
“Mini-plaza” entry walk in front of Visitor Center
Gravel pedestrian pathways north of the picket fence

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Stone paved walkways
Old Santa Fe Trail

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



New Mexico Highway 161 leading to the entrance of Fort Union National Monument, facing south, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



The wide arc of the teardrop-shaped loop road, teardrop-shaped grassy island (with flagpole), and beginning of the eastern parking area, separated from the western parking area by a green space, facing southwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Teardrop-shaped island with flagpole inside of loop road, facing north, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Curved concrete sidewalk leading from western parking area to the Visitor Center main entrance.

The sinuous green space that separates the two parking areas is visible, facing southwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Curved concrete sidewalk and “mini plaza” entry way leading to the Visitor Center main entrance, facing west/southwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Gravel pathway lead from rear exit of Visitor Center to fort ruins. The perpendicular gravel pathway is visible, extending east and west, facing south/southeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



The gravel path, framed by trees, extends directly from the rear exit of the Visitor Center to the ruins. The gravel pathways are well articulated and contrast with the surrounding grasses, facing north/northwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Perpendicular to the northbound gravel path, this gravel path heads west towards the 2nd fort ruins. A tent and wagon, in addition to other wayside exhibits, are on the north side of the path, facing west, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Gravel path, grass strip, and stone path leading from the hospital ruins northwest to the fort ruins, facing northwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.

Cluster Arrangement

The Visitor Center is a standalone building offering information, restrooms, and interpretation for visitors and administrative offices for staff, just north of the teardrop-shaped loop road and parking area. The Visitor Center is sited immediately north of the parking areas on the loop road, on axis with the hospital ruins. Siting of Mission 66 visitor centers was critical to circulate the large number of people and cars visiting National Park sites after World War II. The Visitor Center is located near the historic Fort Union ruins and the building is connected to the ruins visually and via gravel trails. Although arrival at the park is by vehicle, the ruins are accessed by foot which informs the cluster arrangement.

Circulation features, vegetation, and small-scale features are clustered compactly around the Visitor Center. The vehicular loop entrance drive and the pedestrian paths are located in the immediate vicinity of the building as are all visitor amenities such as picnic tables and trash cans. While the majority of the site is a grassy valley, trees and shrubs are planted in clusters around the Visitor Center offering windbreak and shade, with more sparse individual plantings common to the east and west of the building.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Clustering of circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features around the Visitor Center

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Cluster of fort ruins

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Looking east from a gravel walkway, the proximity of the parking area/loop road, picket fence, Visitor Center, and hospital ruins (in the background) is evident, facing east, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.

Constructed Water Features

There are no constructed water features on the Visitor Center property.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

N/A

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

N/A

Cultural Traditions

Developed entirely under the Mission 66 Program, the Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center is an example of the Mission 66 Program's goals of developing new facilities for public use, expanding vehicular facilities within national parks, reducing impact on the site, and adequately staffing National Park Service units. To meet the demands of a growing visitor population, improvements were needed for roads, trails, comfort stations, and structures for public use and administration. The Fort Union Visitor Center and surrounding landscape is an expression of the cultural traditions of the Mission 66 Program in its goals and in design.

The continued operation of the Visitor Center with its original purpose is another cultural tradition. It continues to provide administrative space for staff and a museum, information, interpretation, and restrooms for visitors. As during the period of significance, the Visitor Center provides interpretation of, and access to, the fort ruins.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Continued use of the Visitor Center

Access to and interpretation of Fort Union

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

N/A

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Sign informing visitors of resources with view of hospital ruins in background, facing northeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.

Land Use

Historically, the principal activity of the component landscape entailed visitor contact with interpretive information and other amenities before proceeding via pedestrian pathways to the fort ruins. This land use remains today. The purpose of the Visitor Center site is to have a centralized means by which to provide interpretation, information, restrooms, picnic areas, and to effectively circulate visitors. As a result, the land use, cluster arrangement, and circulation patterns are interrelated. The land is used for accessing the ruins by footpath. The land is also

used for administrative purposes, providing space for staff offices.

Other non-contributing land uses that have been added to the landscape since the period of significance include more recreational uses.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Visitor parking and access to Fort Union
Visitor contact and interpretation
National Park Service Administrative uses

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Recreational land use (picnicking, hiking)

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Porch of the Visitor Center with a bench, facing east, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.

Natural Systems and Features

See Vegetation and Topography.

Small Scale Features

Small-scale features in the Visitor Center landscape, such as outdoor furnishings and signs, have been added and removed over the years. The visitor center sign was moved from the east side of the visitor center entry to the start of the parking lot loop in the 1980s. Benches

arranged as an informal amphitheatre to the north of the building that were present in the 1970s are no longer present; some of these benches are now located along the north wall for seating. Two picnic areas have developed, with the attendant picnic tables and trash containers. The picnic area on the west side of the Visitor Center is a paved accessible site, while the picnic tables at the site east of the building are located in the grass. There is a flagpole located on the northern end of the loop road's grassy island.

The white picket fences on either side of the building remain, and continue to fulfill their intended function of separating the fort ruins (north of the fence) and the visitor amenities and resources not affiliated with the fort (south of the fence).

The picket fence starts on the southeastern corner of the hospital ruins then follows the southern periphery of the hospital, then north along the periphery of the hospital until the fence is on axis with the center of the Visitor Center's eastern façade. The picket fence then heads west to the eastern side of the Visitor Center. There is a gate through the picket fence to the east of the Visitor Center. On the far western side of the Visitor Center, the picket fence starts near and runs parallel to the remains of the Santa Fe Trail, then upon reaching the same axis of the Visitor Center's western façade, the fence heads east and goes directly to the building side. There is a gate through the picket fence to the west of the Visitor Center.

There are numerous utilitarian small scale features such as trash containers, signs, wayside exhibits, a chain link fence around utility areas, small metal posts and utility boxes that are non-contributing.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Flagpole
Picket fences

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Trash containers
Ashtray bins
Signage
Fusebox
Utilities
Firebox
Chain link fence
Propane tank
Picnic tables
Two wooden stakes in flagpole area
Spigot in flagpole area
Small metal posts
Benches
West accessible picnic area

Wayside exhibits
Concrete blocks
Wagon
Tent
Soda machine

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Picnic area southeast of the Visitor Center, facing southwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Accessible, paved picnic area on the west side of the Visitor Center, facing south/southeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Picket fence extending east from the Visitor Center to the hospital ruins, facing east, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



*Wayside exhibit on gravel pathway and sign in the grass, facing east/northeast, July 2010.
Source: National Park Service.*



Propane tank and chain link fence on western side of the Visitor Center. The chain link fence interrupts the white picket fence, facing northeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Large brown firebox located on the north side of the white picket fence on the eastern side of the Visitor Center, facing east, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Utility cover that reads, "Communications," July 2010, Source: National Park Service.

Spatial Organization

The circulation of visitors through the Visitor Center to the ruins is central in the experience of the site. The space around the Visitor Center is organized so that the building is on axis with the hospital ruins and located near the fort ruins for access. The ruins are thereafter accessed by foot which informs the clustered spatial arrangement of the Visitor Center site. The spatial organization remains the same as during the period of significance.

The site's vast openness with minimal vegetation that lends to expansive vistas of the surrounding Wolf Creek Valley contrasts with the compact cluster of the Visitor Center site. Circulation features, vegetation, small-scale features, and visitor amenities are all clustered compactly around the building.

Further, the vegetation contributes to the overall "island" effect of the spatial organization. Trees and shrubs are planted in clusters immediately around the Visitor Center offering windbreak and shade. There are individual plantings to the east and west of the building, while the bulk of the vegetation, like the circulation features and visitor amenities, are in close proximity of the Visitor Center building.

See Cluster Arrangement for additional details.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Layout of features for visitor flow from the parking area to the visitor center to the fort ruins
Clustering of circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features around the Visitor Center

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

N/A

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Looking south from the gravel walkway, the hospital ruins and Visitor Center cluster contrast with the surrounding openness of the Wolf Creek Valley, facing southeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



The Visitor Center creates an “island” effect as a compact cluster of visitor amenities and as a site for receiving information before accessing the ruins by way of pedestrian pathways, facing west/southwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.

Topography

Fort Union National Monument is situated on a level floor of one of the arms of the Mora Valley and is next to the banks of Wolf Creek. The Wolf Creek Valley is bordered on the west by a low mesa resulting from a fault at the base of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. To the east, the valley is enclosed by the Turkey Mountains, a volcanic uplift. The entrance road gradually rises to meet the elevated site of the Visitor Center site and fort ruins at an elevation of around 6,670 feet.

Fort Union lies at the edge of two distinct physiographic provinces: the Southern Rocky Mountain province and the Great Plains Province. The topography of the immediate fort area is flat with minimal vegetation. The valley walls and views of the Turkey Mountains to the east and Ocate Peak to the northwest are distinctive and help define the landscape of Fort Union. Topographic features remain relatively unchanged from the historic period.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Relatively flat topography

Wolf Creek Valley floor bounded by the Santa Fe National Forest to the west and by the Turkey Mountains to the east.

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

N/A

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



The grassy region surrounding the entrance road leading to the Visitor Center site is flat, lending to expansive views of the surrounding valley, facing south/southwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



The flat topography surrounding the Visitor Center invites views to the fort ruins and mountains in the distance, facing north, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.

Vegetation

Native vegetation around the Visitor Center building provides some windbreak and shade. The 1959 planting plan suggests the original landscape design intent: use of native plants, as individuals or in small clusters, to frame and surround the building, with the largest trees (cottonwoods) symmetrically arranged in front of and behind the building, pinyon around the building, and shrubs (arranged in clusters from larger to smaller) directly around the building and as foundation plantings. The tallest trees are approximately the height of the Visitor Center and surround the building, while the plantings are gradually smaller east and west of the building. Original species included were: Broadleaf (or Fremont) Cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), Pinyon Pine (*Pinus edulis*), Chamisa (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*), Four-wing Saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), and Navajo Yucca (*Yucca navajoa*). No trees or shrubs were planted within the parking island.

Even though not all of the original plants have survived, the same variety of plants remains today. In addition, a number of junipers were added in the 1960s, perhaps for additional windbreak. Several cottonwoods (now struggling) were added on the west side and one

cottonwood (doing well) added within the last few years near the east side picnic area. The initial intent of framing the building with large trees and leaving the view of the front elevation unobstructed has been weakened over time by the demise of the cottonwoods and the addition of junipers, and more pinyon, on the south side. Even with these changes, however, the overall “island” effect – plants clustered around the building and no plantings in the parking lot -- remains.

The remainder of the site is populated by grasses and occasional low-lying shrubs.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Cottonwood
Pinyon Pine
Chamisa
Apache Plume
Sumac
Four-wing Saltbush
Navajo Yucca
Grasses

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Vegetation planted after the period of significance (pinyon, juniper, cottonwood)

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Trees surround the Visitor Center, while the rest of the flat landscape is primarily grasses and occasional low-lying shrubs, facing south, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



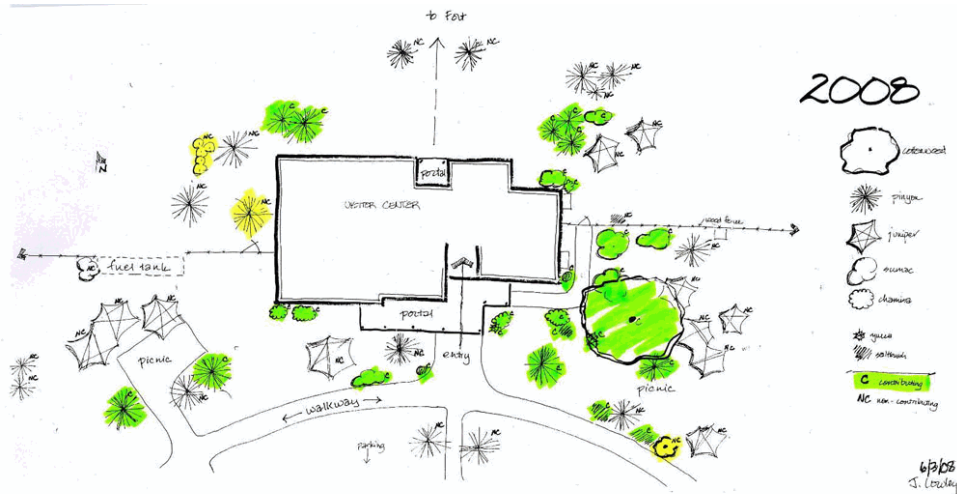
Pinyons and junipers are the most common trees around the low-lying Visitor Center, facing east/northeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



Grasses are the predominant form of vegetation throughout the site, lending to large expansive views, facing north, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



The largest trees are clustered near the Visitor Center and are roughly the same height suggesting they were planted at the same time. The trees get smaller away from the Visitor Center, facing west/southwest, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



2008 Site Plan of existing plantings around Visitor Center. Contributing vegetation is shown in green; historically compatible vegetation (recently planted cottonwoods and new pinyon in historic location) is shown in yellow. Source: National Park Service.

Views and Vistas

All views and vistas of the site remain similar to those extant during the period of significance. As visitors enter the Wolf Creek valley on New Mexico Highway 161, Fort Union National Monument becomes visible in the distance. Since the topography of the immediate surroundings is flat with minimal vegetation, the views in every direction are vast.

The surrounding lands are undeveloped and the views are thus uninterrupted to the Turkey Mountains and Ocate Peak at the base of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the Santa Fe National Forest and other nearby landforms.

From the loop entrance road, the hospital ruins are visible. From the north side of the Visitor Center, the view is primarily one of the reddish brown fort ruins against the broad sky.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Expansive views around Wolf Creek Valley
Views of the fort and hospital ruins
Views of surrounding mountains

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

N/A

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View from south of the Visitor Center to the Hospital ruins with grassy fields and mountains in the background, facing northeast, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



The flat topography and minimal vegetation lends itself to vast vistas of Wolf Creek Valley, facing west, July 2010. Source: National Park Service.



*The gravel pedestrian pathway and accompanying tent and wagon exhibit, crosses the flat topography with a wide view of the Santa Fe National Forest, facing northwest, July 2010.
Source: National Park Service.*

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 07/01/2010

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The landscape is stable with no major erosion problems within the Visitor Center site. The vegetation is in pretty good condition and the parking lot paving and sidewalks are in good shape.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Other

Other Impact: Decline of vegetation/plantings

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Vegetation planted as part of the original design of the landscape is in decline due to a combination of maturity and climatic conditions.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Citation Author: | Jill Cowley and Vicky Jacobson |
| Citation Title: | Fort Union National Monument Mission 66 Visitor Center
Determination of Eligibility |
| Year of Publication: | 2009 |
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| Citation Location: | National Park Service
Intermountain Regional Office |
-
- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Citation Author: | Amy L. Freitag |
| Citation Title: | Cultural Landscape Study of Fort Union National Monument: A
Thesis |
| Year of Publication: | 1994 |
| Citation Type: | Narrative |
| Citation Location: | National Park Service Intermountain Regional Office |