

## **First Federal Savings and Loan Building**

The First Federal Savings and Loan Building opened in 1954 to accommodate the needs of the growing Arlington community. Having experienced rapid post-war expansion, Arlington County grew into a thriving suburb and the community needed commercial buildings and services to accommodate customers. The bank building provided modern amenities and accommodations that were expected from a business, including air-conditioning and convenient parking. Architecturally, the bank building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the International Style, with its use of clean lines, lack of ornamentation, and the asymmetrical front entrance. The International style, which is rare in the Colonial Revival-dominated Arlington County, became synonymous with corporate America. Originally two stories tall and three bays wide, the banking building's modern appearance was emphasized by its smooth limestone and marble panels, a large lobby window and ribbon windows throughout, and a minimalist approach with an angled corner main entrance. As Arlington's commercial presence continued to flourish, the bank building was expanded in 1966 with the construction of a third story and an addition on its east side that complimented the original design.

## **Preservation and Adaptive Reuse**

In 2011, the First Federal Savings and Loan Building was identified as a significant resource in Arlington County's Historic Resource Inventory, as the bank building represented an important aspect of the County's commercial history and its International-style architecture.

Accommodating a new mixed-residential development, in 2021 the historic facades of the First Federal Savings and Loan Building were adapted and reused. This became a challenging endeavor because there were no original plans of the 1954 bank building that had survived other than a grainy photograph for reference. Architects, preservationists, and trades people worked together to incorporate the historic façades into the new building, opting to retain the north and west elevations of the original 1954 building and remove the 1966 additions to restore balance to the north facade. The limestone and marble panels from the north and west elevations were carefully dismantled, cleaned, repaired, and reinstalled on the new building.

Though sensitive to the building's original appearance, several changes were made to facilitate the building's new retail use and dimensions. This included, but not limited to, enlarging the windows on the west elevation at the first story, elongating the large lobby window, design adjustments to the second story windows, the reshuffling of deteriorated limestone panels, and in-kind replacement a portion of the marble. Two distinct interior features of the building, including a terrazzo floor insignia and a decorative clock, were salvaged from the building for future use.