Located on a hill called Bukit Timbalan, the building was erected in 1940 to symbolize Johor's progress during that time. It was built by local craftsmen under the supervision of a European architect; the building blends the cosmopolitan architecture of Renaissance style with an overlay of Anglo-Malay influence. The square tower of the massive building continues to dominate the Johor Bahru skyline. It houses the State Secretariat as well as the other departments of the State Government.

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