

U.S.
DEPARTMENT
OF STATE

BUREAU OF
OVERSEAS BUILDINGS
OPERATIONS

Consulate General of the United States
Guadalajara, Mexico

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Guadalajara, Mexico

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“The opening of our new consulate in Colonia Monraz marks a significant milestone in our enduring partnership with western Mexico. This state-of-the-art facility not only symbolizes our commitment to deepening bilateral ties but also reflects the rich cultural and regional connections we share with Jalisco, Colima, Nayarit, and Aguascalientes. Showcasing our dedication to sustainability, the new consulate features solar energy, rainwater collection, and efficient heating and cooling systems, reducing our environmental impact by nearly 60%. We are excited to continue fostering collaboration and friendship in this impressive new space, greatly enhancing the experience for the hundreds of visitors we serve each day.”

Amy Scanlon
U.S. Consul General
June 2024

“The U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations’ mission is to provide the most effective facilities for U.S. diplomacy abroad. No place in the world is more important in this regard than Mexico. The completion of the new U.S. consulate general in Guadalajara marks a major milestone in OBO’s broader Mission Mexico efforts of a tangible and permanent commitment to the relationship between our nations. U.S. Consulate Guadalajara demonstrates our dedication to sustainability, customer service, and cross-cultural dialogue. I want to congratulate mission staff, our OBO project teams, our contractors, and the people of the United States and Mexico, on the new facility.”

Ambassador William H. Moser
Director, Overseas Buildings Operations
June 2024



Consulate General of the United States

Guadalajara, Mexico

Project Overview

The United States and Mexico have a consequential bilateral relationship, directly impacting the everyday lives of millions of U.S. and Mexican citizens, whether through trade, joint security, or tourism. Within a similar timeframe, the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations has undertaken five major projects across Mexico: four new consulate facilities in Guadalajara, Mérida, Hermosillo, and Nogales, and a new embassy in Mexico City. The new U.S. consulate general in Guadalajara is an important physical representation of the long-term commitment to the U.S. - Mexico relationship and a permanent presence in the region. With a focus on functionality, security, and architectural excellence, this new facility provides a safe and efficient environment for consulate operations and reflects the shared values and mutual respect of both nations.

Statistics

13,378 SQM
GROSS FLOOR AREA

8.5 Acres
SITE AREA

Design-Build
PROCUREMENT METHOD

The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP
DESIGN ARCHITECT

BL Harbert International
DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTOR

Page
ARCHITECT OF RECORD

\$191 million
PROJECT BUDGET

Timeline

December 2016
SITE ACQUISITION

January 2017
DESIGN CONTRACT AWARD

December 2018
DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACT AWARD

April 2019
CONSTRUCTION START

June 2024
RIBBON CUTTING AND MOVE-IN

Program

- New Office Building
- Entry Pavilions
- Marine Guards Residence
- Recreational Area
- (2) Underground Parking Garages
- Support and Utility Buildings



Forging a Bilateral Relationship

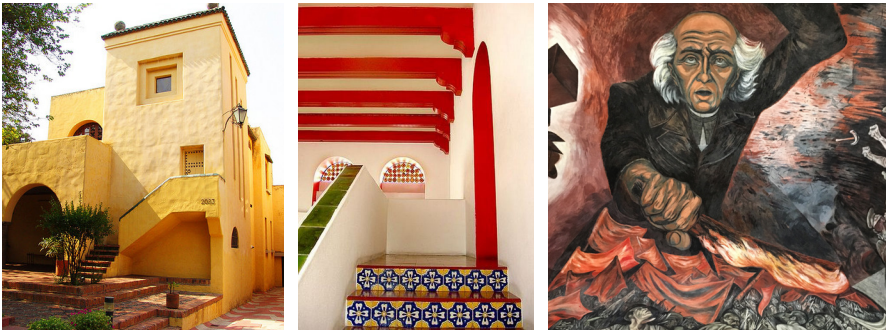
The relationship between Mexico and the United States is multifaceted and characterized by an interconnectedness founded on geography, sustained through economy, and nurtured by cultural exchange. The existing U.S. consulate general in Guadalajara has become a vital hub for fostering diplomatic ties, facilitating trade, supporting U.S. citizens abroad, and strengthening bilateral relations across Mexico. The new facility builds on the U.S. - Mexico partnership through expanded consular services, art and culture exchange, and shared sustainability goals.

◀ Historical photos of prior consulate general in Guadalajara



A Vibrant Mexican Cultural Hub

Guadalajara, the vibrant capital of Jalisco and one of Mexico’s largest metropolitan areas, is known as the “Pearl of the West,” a prominent cultural center in Western Mexico. Jalisco is the birthplace of iconic Mexican cultural emblems including mariachi music and tequila. Guadalajara is also increasingly known internationally for its contemporary art community. Renowned artists including José Clemente Orozco, María Izquierdo and Chucho Reyes are from the state of Jalisco, and Guadalajara is the hometown of Mexico’s world-renowned architect, Luis Barragán.



▲ Left: Casa González Luna, Luis Barragán

Middle: Casa Cristo, Luis Barragán

Right: Miguel Hidalgo mural, José Clemente Orozco

◀ Left page: Art installation on Calle Pedro Moreno

Working with the Landscape

Situated on a plateau 1,500 meters above sea level, Guadalajara is surrounded by the Primavera Forest to the west, the dramatic 600-meter-deep Oblatos Canyon to the northeast, and Lake Chapala to the southeast. The city’s unique landscape features rolling hills, lush greenery, and oak forests.

Guadalajara is located in the biodiverse Bajio Dry Forest ecoregion, which faces various ecological challenges including urbanization and deforestation. To address these issues, the new consulate site design prioritizes the preservation of the local environment and ecosystem by retaining a series of street trees that border the site protecting a mature grove of Jacaranda trees just inside the compound, and landscaping with native plants. These trees provide shade and greenery for employees and visitors and serve as vital habitat for wildlife. The exterior of the consulate assumes a more neutral palette intended to highlight the surrounding lush landscape.



Top left: Primavera Forest ►
Middle left: Oblatos Canyon
Bottom left: Lake Chapala
Right: Existing trees on site

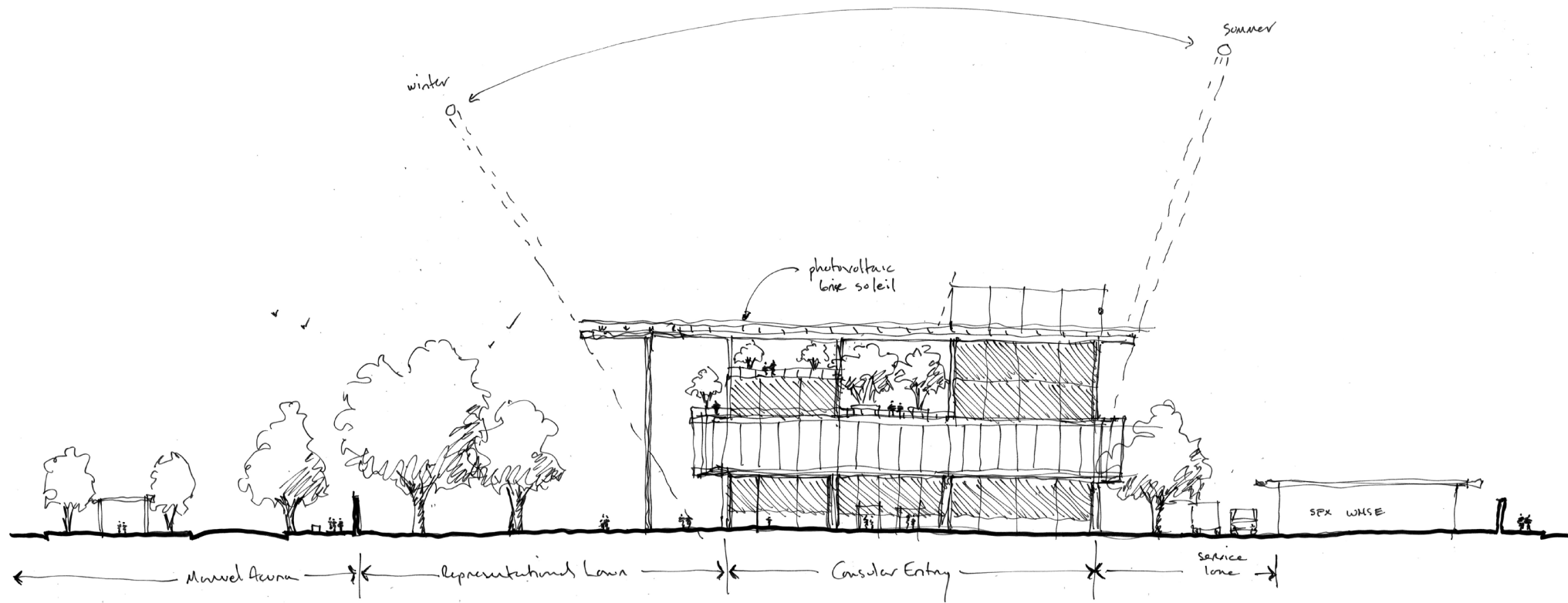
Local Climate & Context

Reinterpreting the Palapa

Given Guadalajara's mild climate, outdoor living is not only possible but also quite common provided there is protection from the sun and rain. To accommodate this indoor/outdoor flexibility, the building integrates an interpretation of the vernacular "palapa" shading device. Historically crafted from timber and palm fronds, contemporary versions utilize various materials such as fabrics, wood, steel, and even solar panels. This feature not only shades the consulate's façade and outdoor spaces but also creates a grand civic gesture befitting the facility's significance.

Palette and Materials

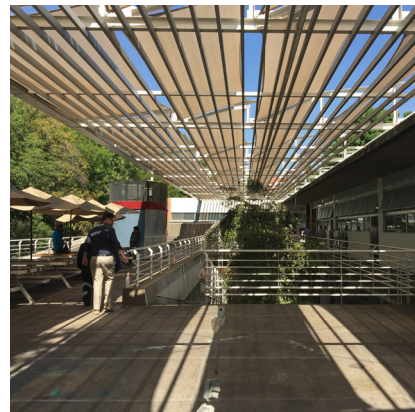
The refined material palette features white granite panels, floor-to-ceiling glass, and stainless-steel accents. A colonnade of tall, simple tubular steel columns supports the powder-coated aluminum palapa shade panels, reinforcing the building's civic character and ensuring functionality and visual appeal that will withstand the local climate.



Left: Shade structure at ITESO, Building Q5

Middle: Shade structure at ITESO, Building U

Right: Typical Palapa Structure





Urban Context

Located in Guadalajara's Monraz neighborhood, the new consulate enjoys a central position in a dynamic community that combines historical charm with modern amenities. Bordered by picturesque hills to the west and bustling commercial streets with retail and restaurants to the east, the area provides a blend of tranquility and vitality. With convenient access to major roads and services, the consulate serves as a hub for both official functions and community engagement, creating a welcoming and accessible site for diplomatic activities in the region.

Collaboration in Construction

The project utilized a design-build construction method, fostering close collaboration between construction and design teams for real-time problem-solving and alignment with the design intent. Building Information Modeling (BIM) enhanced on-site coordination by identifying and addressing potential conflicts prior to construction. Despite challenges posed by the compact site and stormwater management requirements, meticulous coordination ensured efficient work scheduling.

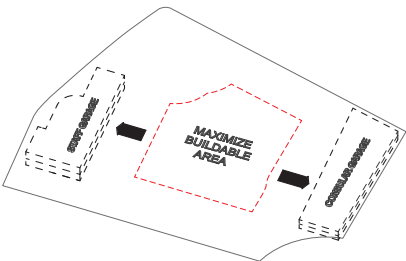
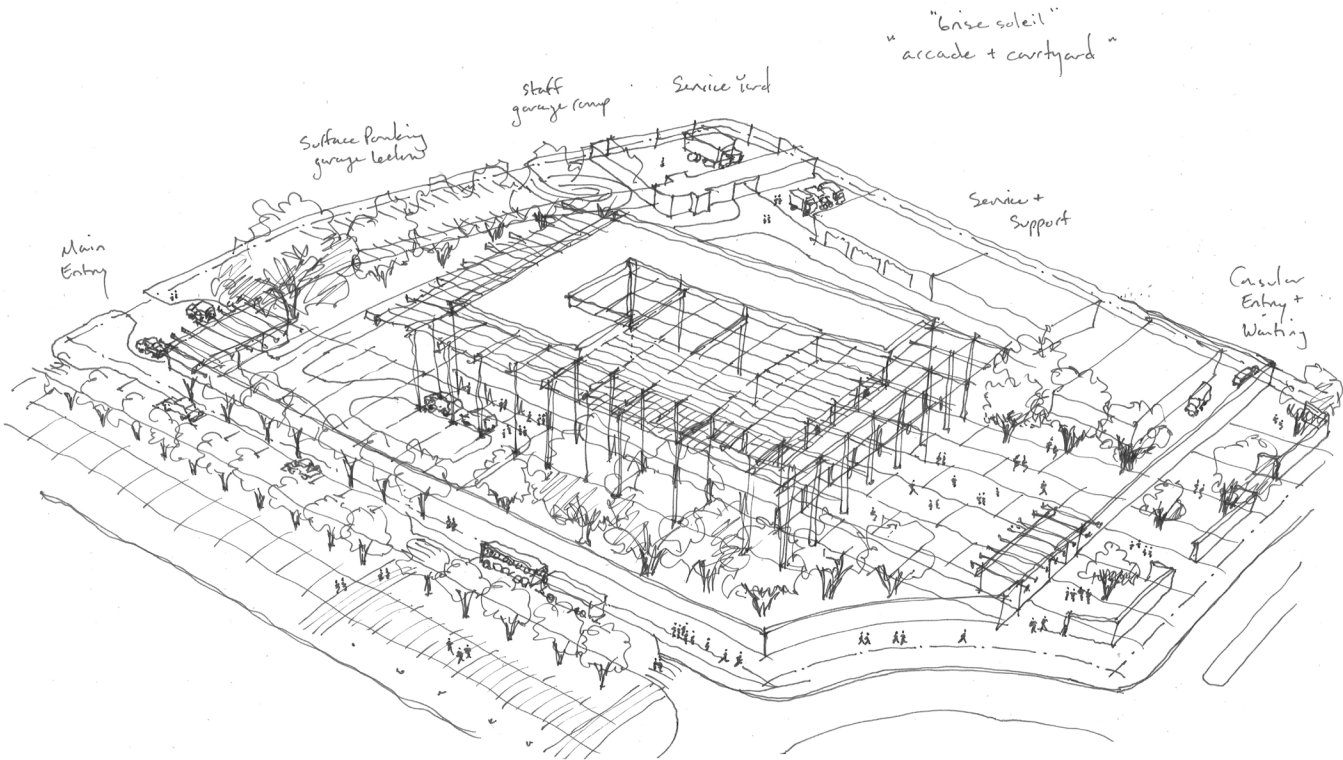
Constructing the canopy on the main office building presented notable challenges, requiring the installation of large steel columns and beams. Local collaboration was vital, with Grupo Recal providing the canopy steel structures and QHC supplying the interior steel finishes for the monumental staircases. Many other products were locally sourced, showcasing the strong collaboration with regional suppliers, such as Ceramica Suro supplying accent tiles, and contributing to a major art installation within the consulate.



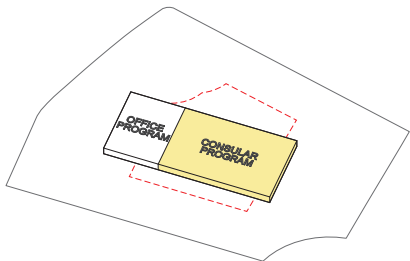
Construction photos ►

Designing for Communities

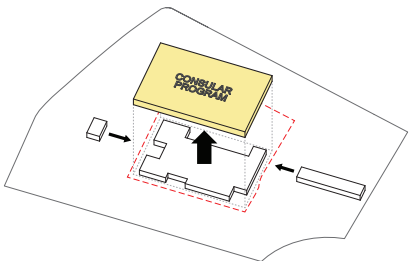
Given the small site area relative to the program components, maximizing the buildable area was crucial. This was achieved by placing the garages on the east and west edges of the site below grade to minimize their impact on the surrounding community. Elevating the consular section to the second level allows for a compact building footprint while enhancing the experience for consular visitors. Condensing the service buildings along the site's north edge creates space for the Marine Security Guard Residence (MSGR), photovoltaic panels, and future expansion within the center of the site.



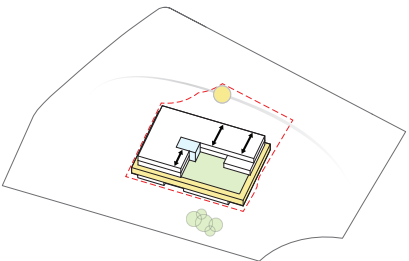
Maximize buildable site area, minimize impact to neighborhood



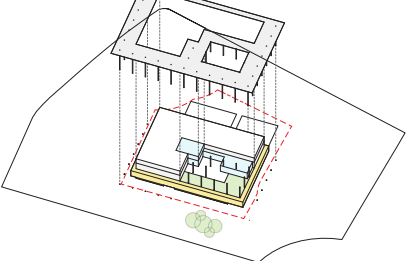
Typical ground floor program too large



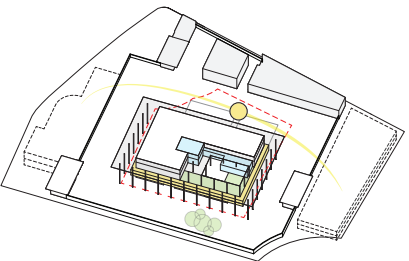
Elevate the consular experience and allow for a compact footprint by shifting Consular Department up to level 2



Thin floor plates and a shared, secure outdoor terrace create a high quality workplace with access to views and daylight and a sense of community



A "Palapa" shading structure keeps the terrace comfortable while also reducing the thermal load on the building



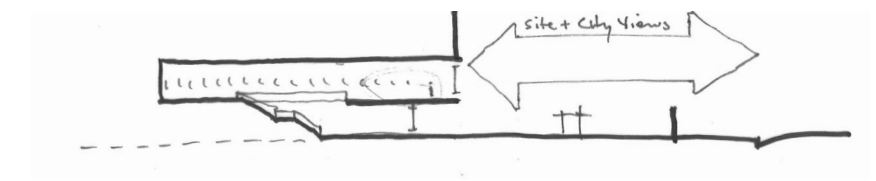
Service buildings are consolidated along the north edge of the site, creating a clear zone for the MSGR and future building expansion



Elevating the Consular Experience

The current average of 1,200 daily visitors is expected to increase to 2,000 over the next decade, driving much of the consular section's layout and the overall building and site design. The new facility more than doubles the number of service windows compared to the previous consulate, improving speed, efficiency, and the customer experience.

Most of the consular program is situated on the second floor, reducing the consulate's overall footprint and offering consular visitors panoramic views through the mature Jacaranda trees. Art installations enliven both the indoor waiting area and outdoor consular garden, shaded by the building's palapa. The glass-clad consular section, cantilevered from the floors above and below, is a prominent way finder for visitors who will have escalator and elevator access, ample service windows, and improved service times. Additionally, a dedicated visitor garage with 150 parking spaces and monitored pedestrian crossings enhances accessibility and safety.



◀ Consular garden and consular entry beyond



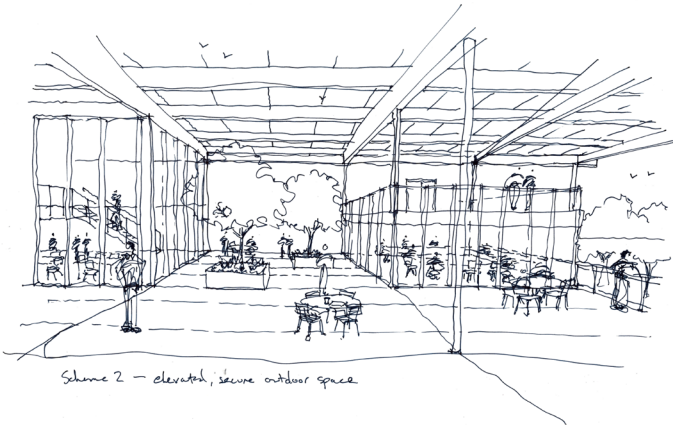
▲ *Top right:* Consular visitor arrival into consular waiting area on level 2

Bottom right: American Citizens Services waiting area

◀ Consular waiting area

Supporting the Working Community

The new facility not only support visitors but also provides a high-quality work environment for mission staff. Natural light and scenic views maximize daylight in the well-ventilated open floor plan. The third floor functions as a social hub where consulate personnel can access dining, service, and gathering spaces, as well as a spacious outdoor terrace for representational events.



Secure outdoor terrace
amenity for the working
community ▶

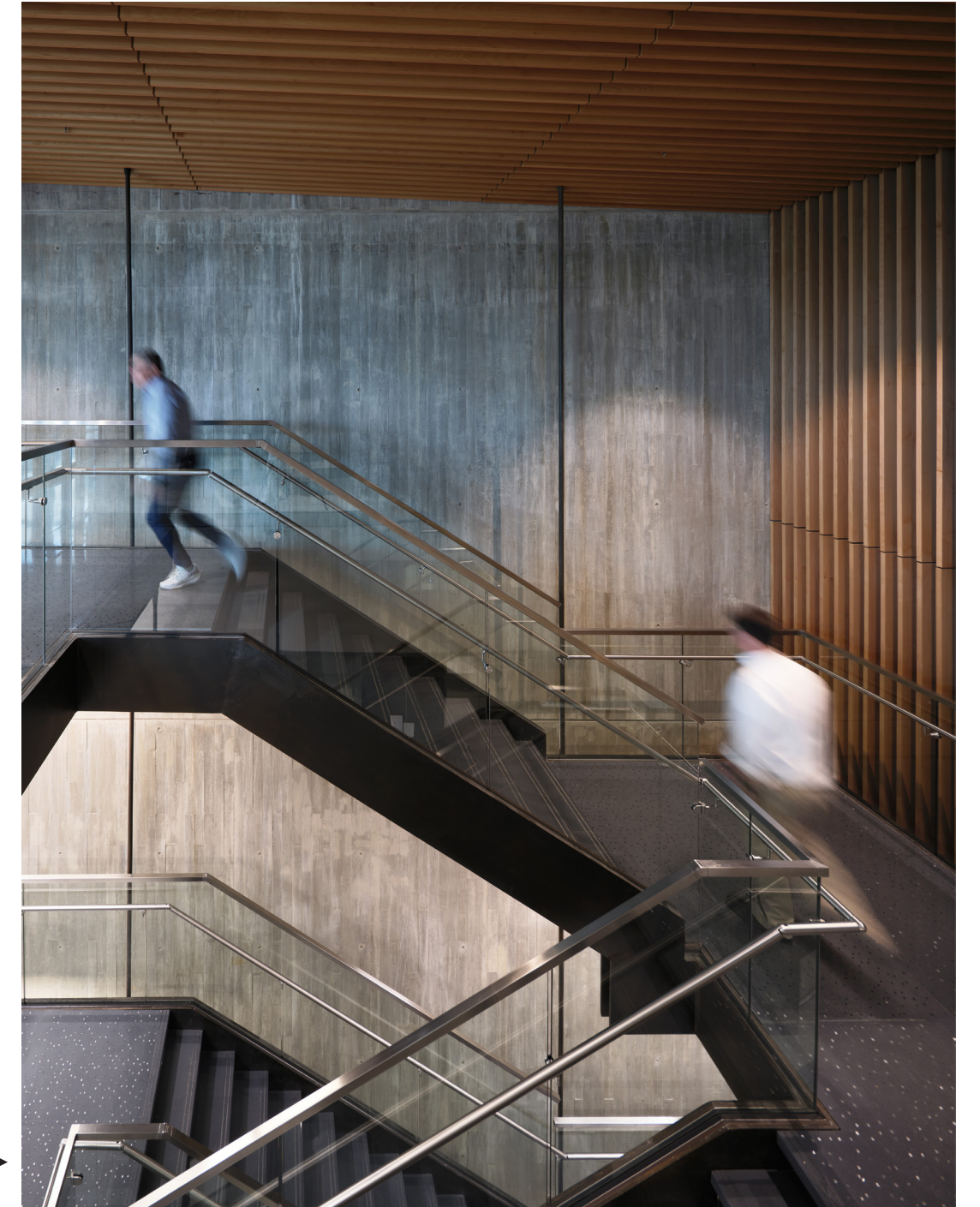




◀ The gallery on level 3 adjacent to the secure outdoor terrace, with *Floating Connections*, a site-specific sculpture by Beth Kahmi, above



◀ Open office areas promote wellbeing through access to daylight and tall ceilings



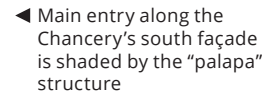
Daylight at the top of the open central stair draws people up through the building ▶



Respecting the Neighborhood

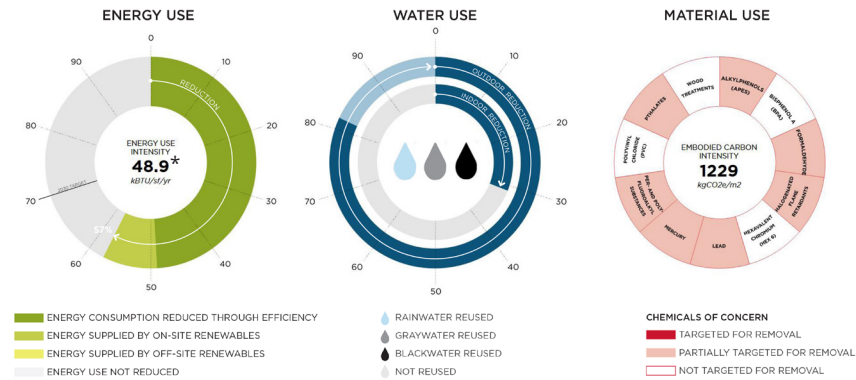
Designated parking areas and on-site waiting zones minimize daily visitors' impact. Careful consideration was given to vehicular entry and exit points, taking into account heavy traffic and nearby street configurations. Lower traffic volume service and support areas are located along quieter residential streets to act as buffers for the local community. The property's stone perimeter walls are integrated as "memories" of the site's past, and power lines are located underground. Sidewalks are widened and feature pedestrian benches.

◀ The consular arrival plaza provides a large space on site for consular visitors to gather before passing through the consular entry pavilion, helping reduce impact on the neighborhood



The new consulate exemplifies environmental stewardship by integrating advanced energy- and water-efficient solutions into its design. Exceeding stringent Federal Performance Goals for energy efficiency and renewable energy, the building reduces energy consumption by 36% compared to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED® baseline and is targeting LEED Silver certification. By integrating passive strategies such as the overhead palapa shade structure, which provides year-round comfort and reduces solar heat gain, with daylighting and efficient HVAC systems, energy consumption is reduced by 23% before renewables. Solar panels contribute 15% of the building's energy needs, further reducing the project's reliance on traditional energy sources.

All of the site's water features utilize rainwater captured from building roofs. Irrigation sourced from treated wastewater supports the project's goal of net-zero water consumption. Drought- adapted native plantings such as agave, succulents, cacti, and trees highlight the region's unique biodiversity and support the project's sustainability goals.



*Energy reduction compared to AIA 2030 Commitment baseline





► The Jacaranda tree grove and new landscaping in the staff garden provide a peaceful spot to relax and support local bird and butterfly habitat

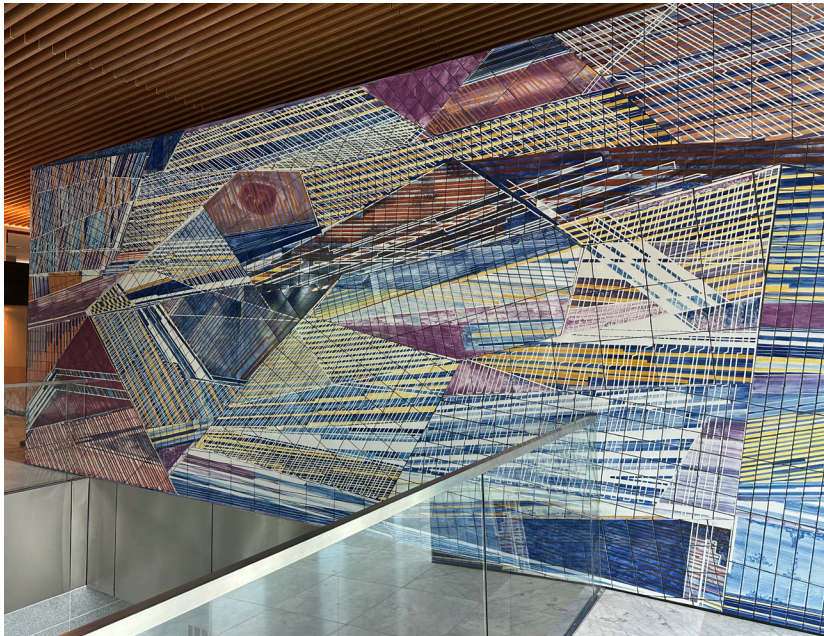
◄ A cactus garden echoes the repetitive vertical structure of the Chancery



Supporting Artistic Exchange

Curated by OBO’s Office of Art in Embassies, the consulate’s permanent art collection includes a variety of media reflecting U.S., Mexican, and Mexican-American cultural heritage. These artworks serve as a cultural bridge, highlighting the innate humanity of artistic expression, and the common ground on which both populations walk.

Site-specific works have been commissioned. *Butterfly Effect*, an outdoor sculpture by Norman Mooney, poetically reflects on the migratory journey of Monarch butterflies. The Monarch butterfly, native to the USA, migrates annually to Guadalajara and then returns. This sculpture symbolizes the movement and interactions between the two countries, highlighting our connection to the natural environment. The Monarchs’ arrival also coincides with Día de los Muertos, when they are believed to represent the souls of ancestors returning for their annual visit. Inside, *Floating Connections*, a hanging sculpture by Chicago-based artist Beth Kahmi, contemplates the interconnectedness of the two cultures. This piece also highlights the sister city relationship between Chicago and Guadalajara, further emphasizing cultural bonds. *Terra Matrix*, a hand-painted tile wall mural by Mexican-American artist Vargas-Suarez Universal, offers a visual homage to Mexican modernism, textile traditions, and abstract paintings. The artist uses tessellated stepped lines, or ‘vectors,’ to create a layered complexity that evokes the fabric of time and space. By merging fine art, craftsmanship, and design, he develops a unique visual language that resonates with primal folk art while embracing a futuristic, indigenous paradigm. Made with over 1200 uniquely shaped tiles, the artist collaborated with Ceramica Suro Studio in Guadalajara to realize the complex monumental wall. Other notable works include Marie Herwald Hermann, Grant Levy-Lucero, Christine Joy, Cianne Fragione, Dan Namingha, Gonzalo Lebrija, Octavio Abúndez, Jorge Méndez Blake, Julio César Morales, Ricardo Mazal, Raquel Charabati,



▲ *Terra Matrix*, a site-specific wall mural inside consular waiting



▲ *Butterfly Effect*, a site-specific sculpture adjacent to the consular entry

and Monica Bizzarri. Together, these works create a vibrant artistic landscape that celebrates the complementary convergence of cultures.

This permanent art collection, embodies the rich cultural dialogue between the U.S., Mexico, and Mexican-American communities. Featuring site-specific works and diverse artistic expressions, the collection draws inspiration from Mexican art forms such as modernist murals, textile traditions, and folk art. These elements highlight the shared heritage, traditions, and interconnectedness of these cultures. The collection serves as a lasting testament to the enduring power of art to build bridges, celebrate diversity, and create common ground across borders.





U.S. Department of State

Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

The planning, design, and construction of a U.S. diplomatic facility only happens with the contributions of many. We extend particular thanks to the OBO staff and leadership from real estate through operations and to our partners in Diplomatic Security and at the U.S. Consulate General Guadalajara who contributed to making this safe, secure, functional, and resilient platform a reality. This collective team has ensured that this new U.S. diplomatic campus represents the best in American architecture, design, engineering, technology, sustainability, art, culture, and construction execution. Without their diligent work and expert advice, this project would have not been possible.

Ambassador William H. Moser
Director, Overseas Buildings Operations

J. Douglas Dykhouse
Principal Deputy Director, Overseas Buildings Operations

Project Team

The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP
Design Architect

Page
Architect of Record

BL Harbert International
Design - Build Contractor

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Building and Aerial Photography

The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP
Drawings, diagrams and context photos not listed below

Additional Images:

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