U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL GUANGZHOU, CHINA

RIBBON-CUTTING
FACT SHEET
MARCH 2014

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Architect / Engineer Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP

American General Contractor BL Harbert International, LLC

Chinese General Contractor China Huashi Enterprises LTD

Site 7.4 acres

Office Space 18,000 gross square meters

Total Project Budget $267 million

General Information

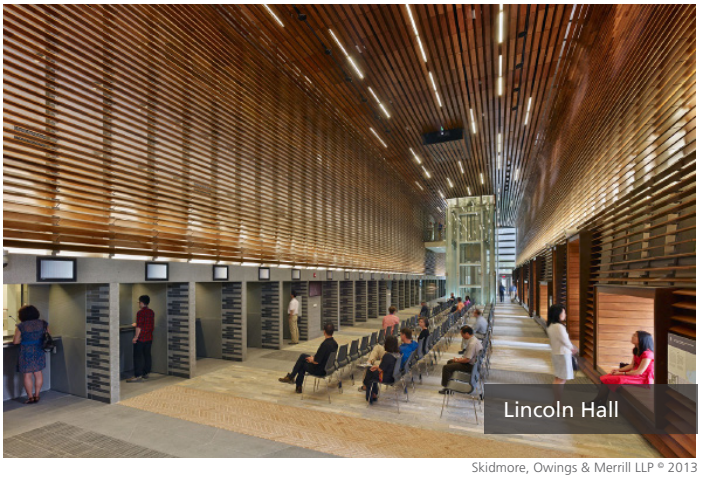
- The new Consulate General is located on a 7.4-acre urban site in Guangzhou's booming new Central Business District adjacent to the Pearl River.
- Situated in a garden setting, the seven-building complex includes a consular building, an office building, a residence for U.S. Marines, a warehouse with service shops, and three entrance pavilions to welcome employees, visitors, and consular customers.
- The new Consulate General will create a secure and pleasant workplace for nearly 400 employees, and a friendly and comfortable place for visitors.
- The new Consulate General is America's second purpose-built facility in China, following the completion of the Beijing Embassy in 2008.

Design

- The design received the 2013 *Architect* magazine annual design review award. The project was one of 17 recognized for representing the best in American architecture.
- The stone-clad exterior concrete shell of the Consulate office building is an organic structural and environmental form. The curved shape maximizes the efficiency of these qualities while the inward cant along the east façade catches the prevailing easterly breeze, focusing it on the consular plaza. This shape also gives the building a directional stance, emphasizing the civic quality of the more public eastern face. Its north and south ends, with their deep overhangs, provide welcome, open and warm gestures to the public.

- The architectural conception of the main Consulate office building begins with the visa process itself. The need to move thousands of daily applicants through a seamless, simple, and clear spatial sequence is the primary public function of the consular plaza. The arching roof form provides shelter from the heat and rain; there is also a gathering space for those awaiting their appointments, which can accommodate over 1,000 non-immigrant visa (NIV) and immigrant visa (IV) customers daily.
- The contrasting office building is a formal cube of self-weathering steel, clad in clear glass at its upper register, and resting on a stone base.
- The centerpiece of the complex is a four-story Consulate office building featuring an interior hall, named Lincoln Hall, and 67 service windows for visa applicants and U.S. citizens. The stone-clad building is flooded with natural light, and Lincoln Hall features natural wood wall and ceiling finishes as well as local stone flooring.
- Teak wood was chosen as a finish material for its ability to naturally withstand exterior climatic conditions, such as monsoon rains and extreme tropical heat, without reducing in strength, cracking, warping, or becoming brittle. Raw Teak wood was imported and finished in local mills in southern China.
- The Consulate General also offers facilities for public events. Lincoln Hall, the state-of-the-art multipurpose room, and the Information Resource Center will be used to host presentations, exhibitions and events to foster exchanges and mutual understanding between the United States and China.
- The facilities were designed for flexibility for current and future use. With the bilateral relationship between the U.S. and China evolving so quickly and the demand for consular services growing at such unprecedented rates, the building is designed to adapt to these changes easily with minimal cost.

Interior and Exterior



Lincoln Hall

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Consular Arrival Court with local stone

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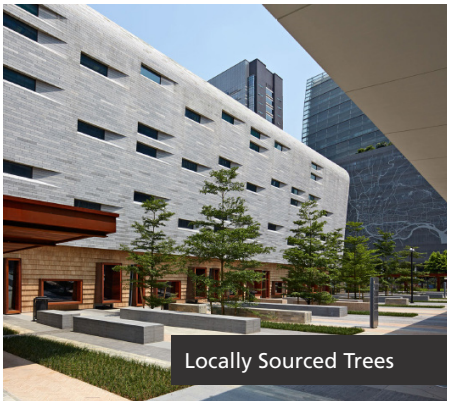
Construction

- The construction groundbreaking took place in October 2009 and the project was completed in June 2013.
- Over 800 Chinese and American workers were involved in construction of the new Consulate General.
- Waste generated from construction activity was sorted on site and over 50% was diverted from landfills for recycling or reuse.

Landscape

- The landscape design facilitates an intuitive understanding of movement through the buildings and site. This landscape includes a walkway modulated by a tapestry of local stones and unit pavers, interspersed with living plants in a pattern that extends from the visa windows, across Lincoln Hall, through the garden and entry pavilion, and out to Hua Xia Road.
- The building façade and landscaped areas integrate local stones from Fujian province with trees and other plants from local nurseries in southern China. A variety of tree and plant species were used, including the Hong Kong Orchid, Chinese Scholar, Madagascar Almond, Camphore, Crape-Myrtle and Flame trees, as well as Iris Pseudoacorus Grass and Zebra Grass.

Landscape



Locally Sourced Trees

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Iris Pseudoacorus Grass and Zebra Grass

Stone-clad Exterior

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Sustainability

- The Consulate General facility earned the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Silver certification. The design demonstrates strategies to reduce energy consumption and pollution, mitigate storm water runoff and other development impacts, and create a more livable, sustainable community.
- The main Consulate office building features a white, highly reflective roof, which reduces cooling needs by reflecting the sun's heat. Green roofs are featured on the smaller entrance pavilions and service buildings with hardy grasses and flowering plants. The green roofs help insulate the buildings, capture and filter rainwater, and filter city air.
- Storm water is retained on site and filtered through a series of "bio basins" or sunken gardens filled with indigenous grasses and plants.
- The electric lights in the buildings automatically dim when daylight can illuminate the building's interior, saving energy and costs. Daylight is controlled to prevent heat gain through the use of recessed exterior windows and wooden louvers.
- The building has water-conserving plumbing fixtures, including low-flush toilets and low-flow sinks.

Art

- The permanent art collection, curated by the Office of Art in Embassies (AIE), includes works by contemporary American and Chinese artists for both the interior and exterior spaces. The works include a variety of media: paint, photography, textiles, paper, and steel.
- The Chinese photographers in the collection—An Hong, Gao Bo, Guan Ce, Hong Lei, Jiang Zhi, Jin Yongquan, Liu Anping, Liu Zheng, Qiu Zhijie, Rong Rong, San Mao, Wang Xu, Yan Lei, Zhao Liang, Zheng Guogu, and Zhuang Hui—all played a seminal role in the history of Chinese experimental photography.
- The collection also features three site-specific commissions by renowned video artists Doug Aitken, Jennifer Steinkamp, and Bill Viola.
- In addition, the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies (FAPE) has graciously donated a monumental work by U.S. artist Joel Shapiro. FAPE is a private non-profit organization that supports the Art in Embassies' mission and the U.S. Department of State.

Art Installations

Joel Shapiro, Now

Doug Aitken, New Horizon

Jennifer Steinkamp, Orbit

Jane Rosen, Chinese Celadon

Mari Eastman, Moonscape with Fo-dog

Yan Lei, New Photo-Ten Years

Wang Xu, Untitled

Bill Viola, Old Oak (Study)

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