

U.S. EMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT, MAURITANIA

GROUNDBREAKING FACT SHEET

JUNE 2014



Integrus Architecture

Design Architect AECOM

Architect of Record Integrus Architecture

General Contractor Caddell Construction

Site 10.5 acres

Total Project Cost \$ 181 Million

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The new U.S. Embassy campus will be situated on a 10.5-acre site in the Tevragh Zeina district of Nouakchott and will include a chancery office building, warehouse and maintenance facilities, a utility building, multiple access pavilions, and community facilities.
- The new Embassy campus and new buildings will provide a secure, modern, and environmentally sustainable platform for diplomacy in Nouakchott.

DESIGN

- Known as the “Place of the Winds,” the capital city of Nouakchott is located on the west coast of Mauritania where the Sahara Desert meets the Atlantic Ocean. With its unique location, the city is susceptible to seasonal winds from the Harmattan – battering it with harsh Sahara sand – and winds from the Atlantic Ocean – bringing in salty and humid air.
- The new Embassy design addresses the corrosive environment with a modern interpretation of the traditional Islamic mashrabiya – an element of Arabic architecture dating back to the Middle Ages that provides screening and shading from the harsh desert sun.
- More than half of the entire façade of the new office building features an intricately designed latticework of perforated copper that serves as a screen wall, providing shading to the building. It allows natural daylight to diffuse into the interior spaces while providing for views outward for occupants inside.
- Copper represents a natural choice as it is one of Mauritania’s leading exports and it is a proven material that can withstand the environmental challenges of this location.

- The remaining portions of the new office building as well as the access pavilions and U.S. Marine Corps residence will be clad in limestone and cement plaster with copper accents.
- The Chancery will feature a multimedia center to enhance outreach and U.S. public diplomacy efforts. It will become an accessible and inviting location for press conferences, meetings, and presentations.
- A gallery space inside the new office building will provide a place for large gatherings, events, lounge areas, and cafeteria seating. Interior public spaces will feature limestone, wood, etched glass, and wood lattice screen walls reminiscent of traditional Islamic architectural elements.
- Visitors to the complex will be invited through a gateway plaza and consular garden with integrated site lighting, artwork, and plantings. Exterior walkways and parking areas introduce trees and canopies for shading. Walkway patterns and stones are based on local textile methods and materials.



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CONSTRUCTION

- The contractor is in the process of mobilizing and full construction will begin in June 2014. The project is expected to be completed by early 2017.
- An estimated 600 workers will be involved in the construction of the new Embassy.

SUSTAINABILITY

- The new Embassy design targets Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED®) Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.
- The new embassy will use emissions-free power from a 185 kilowatt (kW) photovoltaic array, as well as a 50 kW wind turbine - the Department's first major wind-powered turbine for an American Embassy.
- The embassy is projected to reduce energy costs by 30% compared against a conventional building. This savings will be accomplished through energy-efficiency measures including light-emitting diode (LED) site lighting; dedicated heat recovery chillers; electric traction elevators; and variable frequency drives from pumps, fans, and motors.

- Water from an on-site wastewater treatment plant will be reused to irrigate site plantings, which are carefully selected to reduce the required amount of irrigation.

ART

- The art collection will include works by contemporary artists from the United States and Mauritania.
- One theme of the exhibition will be Oasis, which will provide images full of color, pattern, and texture, that will be welcoming among the earth colors and bright sunlight of the desert.
- The collection will include objects in a variety of media, to be installed in the Chancery and on the grounds of the Embassy.



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