Case Study

Department of Homeland Security
Customs and Border Patrol Facility

TAG International has designed a new Customs and Border Patrol facility for Austin Developer Live-Oak Gottesman and Washington-based Federal Development Partners in a lease-back acquisition for the Department of Homeland Security.

The facility design reflects the strength, dignity and stability of the U.S. Government, while working in harmony with the surrounding agricultural landscape and rich cultural heritage of the Rio Grande Valley.

The design of the facility effectively overlays this project vision with the crucial mission and security components that are necessary for a successfully functioning border patrol facility. Designed to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) silver certification, the building is intended to a have a symbiotic response to the landscape and provide a unified campus appearance with the building and the site working in tandem.

The south façade of the facility allows for the casual observer passing by the site to experience the building as growing out of the landscape and connecting with the timeless heritage of the land and its people. The façade breaks open to the public at the south elevation of the site to draw visitors to the facility as a form of way-finding.

Project Snapshot

Live-Oak Gottesman and
Federal Development Partners
McAllen, TX
67,000 sf
Estimated Completion 2008
$13 million budget

Utilizing a steel frame structure with masonry veneer, carefully selected color variation and articulation of masonry design elements, the façade embodies a regional aesthetic with a contemporary language.

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Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Patrol Facility

Services Provided:
Site Evaluation and Planning
Architecture and Design

The building is a steel frame structure with masonry veneer selected for the aesthetics, efficiency of the design, cost of materials and the desired schedule presented for the end user. Sustainable features and a selected pattern of brick temper the effects of a utilitarian structure and afford the design a strong contemporary aesthetic.

The building is purposefully sited with minimal penetrations to the east and west for heat gain, as well as to provide the necessary street presence to the south for this project. Shading devices serve a dual purpose as a functional element and a signature element of the architectural character. The storm water management system and natural landscaping also contribute to the overall functional and aesthetic affect of the project.

The facility's interior finish addresses both the need for durable, as well as sustainable, materials that enhance the overall aesthetic. The project will utilize recycled terrazzo flooring, through body porcelain tile, as well as a high quality carpet tile for the flooring. The selection of wall finishes, tile and paint will address the aesthetic, initial and lifecycle cost, and sustainable aspects of the project.

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