# TexasArchitect


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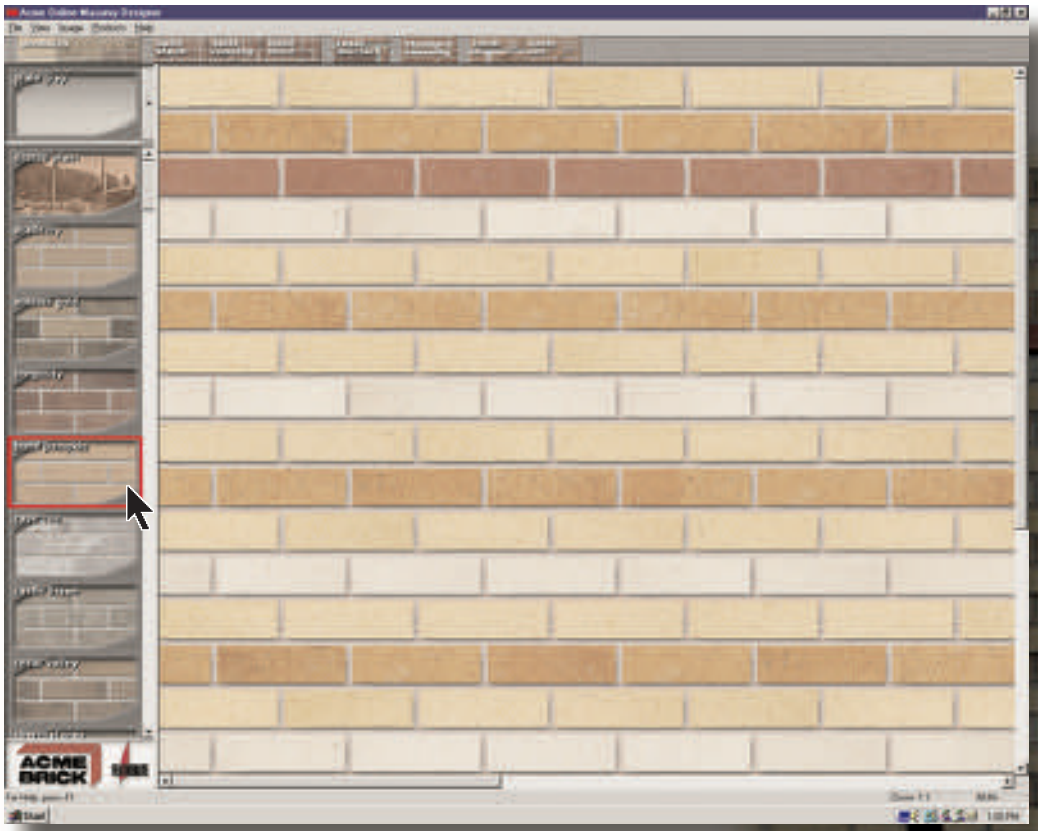

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# TexasArchitect

5/6 2002

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS



**UPCOMING ISSUES**

We invite submissions of project and story ideas for upcoming issues of *Texas Architect*.

**November/December 2002** – Urban Design
(deadline: June 3)

If you have ideas for "News" call us at (512) 478-7386, fax to (512) 478-0528, or e-mail editor@texasarchitect.org.

**(on the cover) United States Courthouse, Brownsville; photo by Jud Haggard. (left) San Antonio Convention Center Addition, San Antonio; photo by Leigh Christian McLeod.**

# TexasArchitect

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# Judicious Preservation

HISTORIC BUILDINGS HAVE TALES TO TELL, and the county courthouses of Texas are speaking volumes. Thanks to $100 million in public funds earmarked for courthouse preservation, the stories are pouring forth as restoration specialists peel off layers of insensitive "improvements" and scrub away years of benign neglect. Work now proceeds in 46 county seats under the auspices of the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Courthouse Preservation Program. Projects range from providing construction documents to managing comprehensive restorations.

In Waxahachie, $3.5 million in state funds has helped finance exterior and interior restoration of the Ellis County Courthouse and new landscaping historically appropriate to the 1896 treasure. The $10.2 million project has yielded fascinating stories of bygone days that have experts brimming with enthusiasm. "It's going to be very authentic when we're done," says Larry Irsik, a principal of ARCHITEXAS who directs the firm's efforts now wrapping up in Waxahachie.

**Ellis County Courthouse, Waxahachie; photo courtesy ARCHITEXAS.**

Tentatively set June 21, the rededication of the Ellis County Courthouse will culminate five years of preservation work. The restoration team rediscovered details long obscured by delinquency and a century's worth of modifications: the office floors were originally covered with canvas-backed "battleship" linoleum laid over unfinished long-leaf pine strip decking; ornamental cast-plaster trim, although painted white in subsequent years, was once painted dark brown to appear carved from wood; and paint flaking off basement walls revealed hand-rendered directional graphics.

One of the best examples in Texas of Romanesque Revival, James Riely Gordon's Ellis County Courthouse attests to the magnificence of the state's golden era of courthouse design. Gordon, a San Antonio native, designed 16 courthouses in the state. Twelve still stand. His exuberant edifices in the Romanesque style for Bexar County (San Antonio, 1892), Victoria County (Victoria, 1892), Gonzales County (Gonzales, 1894), and Hopkins County (Sulphur Springs, 1894) vary in exterior materials and ornamental detailing, but they share many characteristics – particularly in plan and his use of Romantic elements such as arches and turrets – with his Ellis County Courthouse. The most obvious resemblance is in Decatur. There, the pink-granite profile of Gordon's Wise County Courthouse (also completed in 1896 and similarly crowned with a massive central clock tower) seems a monochromatic reflection of its two-toned Waxahachie twin where Pecos red sandstone and Texas pink granite – together with a program of exceptional stone carvings – create a more imposing overall presence. Says Irsik, "Even though other courthouse designs by Gordon have similar plans and exterior forms, the elaborate surface ornamentation and building materials establish the Ellis County Courthouse as one of Texas' finest."

Given the similarities apparent in Gordon's courthouse designs, it may come as no surprise that the prolific architect and his business partner, San Antonio contractor Otto Kroeger, sold Gordon's copyrighted courthouse plan to several counties, including Ellis County. Ironically, as Irsik notes, Gordon probably never set foot in Ellis County although its courthouse is often acknowledged as his masterpiece. Endeavoring to amend the historical record, Irsik lauds the men who built the Waxahachie courthouse. He says the contractor and craftsmen – like other crews using the same Gordon-devised blueprint in other Texas counties – bestowed a unique character to the Ellis County project through choices of materials and slight rearrangement of exterior details. "The design and vision of the Ellis County Courthouse," Irsik has written, "is purely that of James Riely Gordon, but some credit is due to Marshall Sanguinet, the contractor who oversaw construction; Theodore Beilharz, the stone mason; and Harry Herley, the primary stone carver, for it was they who turned Gordon's vision, that might have been more commonplace, into what has now come to be admired as one of the most picturesque courthouses in the state."

STEPHEN SHARPE

# TSA DESIGN AWARDS 2002

**call**for**entries**

**ELIGIBILITY**

Individuals or firms whose primary office is located in Texas may enter any number of projects anywhere in the world. Texas-registered architects located in another state may enter any number of projects located in Texas. Categories have the following requirements:

General Design (including adaptive-re-use), Interior Architecture or Restoration: Construction must have been completed after January 1, 1995.

Urban Design/Planning: The project must at least have an active client and some portion under construction.

25-Year Award: Any project completed on or before December 31, 1977.

**RULES**

Entries must be submitted by the design architect, who must have been registered with the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners at the time the project was executed. Where responsibility for a project is shared, the design architect must be a registered Texas architect and all participants who substantially contributed to the work must be credited.

Projects must be submitted in the name of the firm that executed the commission. If that firm has been dissolved or its name has been changed, an individual or successor firm may enter projects in the name of the firm in effect at the time the project was executed. Multiple entries of the same project by successor individuals or firms will not be accepted. For multi-building projects, the architect submitting the project (or portion thereof) must designate authorship of each portion of the project.

25-year award projects may be submitted by the original architect, original architecture firm, a successor to the original architecture firm, or by a component of the AIA.

**AWARDS**

Architects and clients of winning projects will be honored at the TSA Convention in Austin, October 2002.

Winning projects will be featured in the September/October 2002 issue of *Texas Architect* magazine. (Winning entrants may be required to pay a fee to defray the cost of color publication.)

**RETURN OF ENTRIES**

Entries from firms in large cities will be returned to the local AIA chapter office and held for pick-up. Entries from firms located in cities without staffed chapters will be mailed individually to entrants via FedEx ground or U.S. mail. Entries from Austin will be available for pick-up at the TSA offices. If you wish to have your carousel returned by other means, please attach instructions and an account number or check for additional cost.

*The TSA Design Awards Program seeks to recognize outstanding architectural projects by architects who practice in Texas and to promote public interest in architectural excellence.*

**QUESTIONS?**

Call Judey Dozeto,

512.478.7386

or e-mail

*judey@texasarchitect.org*

**See back for entry form and specifications.**

## DEADLINE: JUNE 14, 2002

## ENTRY PACKAGE

Each entry package must contain the following items:

1. **SLIDES**
2. **DATA SHEETS (4 COPIES)**
3. **ENTRY FORM**
4. **REGISTRATION FEES**

### 1. Slides

Entrants must submit slides in a functional 80-slot slide carousel tray for each project, in which the slides are in proper order and position. **Your name or firm's name may not appear anywhere on any slide.** Each project is limited to 25 slides, presented in the following order:

The first slide of each entry must be a title slide that contains information about project type (see entry form); project size in gross square feet; and project location.

Following each title slide, each entry must include (in no particular order):

A: One slide of a site plan or aerial photograph with a graphic scale and compass points (interior architecture projects are exempt from this requirement).

B: At least one slide showing the plan of the project. For a multi-story building, include only those slides necessary to describe the building arrangement and envelope. Sections and other drawings are optional. If included, section location must be marked on the appropriate plans;

C: One text slide containing a brief description of the project, including the program requirements and solution;

D: For restoration and adaptive re-use projects, at least one slide describing conditions before the current work started.

E: For the 25-year award, at least one slide taken within three years of the project's original completion and at least one slide taken recently, which shows the project's current status.

### 2. Data Sheet

Each entry must include four copies of a data sheet consisting of a single image and text describing the project, including program requirements and solution, on one side of a letter-sized sheet of white paper. The image —a representative photograph or drawing —must be no larger 5"x 7". The four copies of the data sheet must be folded and placed inside the slide carousel box. For the 25-year award, up to four additional sheets of text and/or images may be submitted. **Do not write your name or the firm's name on this data sheet.**

### 3. Entry Form

Use the official entry form for your entry. Copies of the form should be used for multiple entries. Place the entry form(s) in an envelope with the fee(s) and tape the envelope to the outside of the carousel box.

### 4. Entry Fee

**TSA members:** include a registration check for:
$125 for the first entry
$100 for the second and subsequent entries.
**Non-Members:** For projects submitted by non-TSA members include a registration check for:
$200 for the first entry
$180 for the second and subsequent entries.
Make checks or money orders payable to Texas Society of Architects. You may pay entry fees for multiple entries on one check. No entry fees will be refunded.

Mail to:
Texas Society of Architects
ATTN: Judey Dozeto
816 Congress Ave., Suite 970
Austin, Texas 78701
Ph: 512.478.7386

Please provide all the information requested on this form and read carefully the competition rules before preparing your entry(ies). Please print clearly in ink.

## PROJECT CREDITS

Entrant's Name _____

Title/Position _____

Firm Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

TBAE Registration # _____

## PROJECT INFORMATION

Owner (at completion) _____

Architect _____

Project Name _____

Project Location _____

Size (sq. ft) _____ Mo./yr. completed _____

Category ◯ General Design ◯ 25-year award
◯ Interior Architecture
◯ Restoration/Renovation
◯ Urban Design/Planning

Project type ◯ Commercial ◯ Residential
◯ Institutional ◯ Other (please specify)

I certify that the information provided on this entry form is correct; that the submitted work was done by the parties credited; that I am authorized to represent those credited; that I am an architect registered with the TBAE; and that I have obtained permission to publish the project from both the owner and the photographer. I understand that any entry that fails to meet these requirements is subject to disqualification.

Signature _____

Date _____

Fee enclosed _____

TSA members: $125 for first entry
$100 for second and subsequent entries

Non-members: $200 for first entry
$180 for second and subsequent entries

DEADLINE: JUNE 14,2002

TSA DESIGN AWARDS 2002

# Index to Advertisers



## LETTERS

### Recognition is Gratifying

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the Cultural Arts Council of Houston/Harris County I would like to express our appreciation for the recent feature article "Artful Destination," by Donna Kacmar, AIA, and your column "Civil Collaborations" (*TA* March/April 2002). We have received many positive comments about the articles from our constituents. It is very gratifying when our work is recognized and thoughtfully presented by other design professionals.

The entire publication looked great and we were happy to be included in good company.

**Genevieve Rousseve**
**President CACHH Board of Directors**
**Houston**

### Diluted Responsibilities

*Re: Daniel Barnum's letter (*TA *March/April 2002) in response to "Lessons in Sustainability," the previous issue's Editor's Note on Walker Elementary in McKinney.*

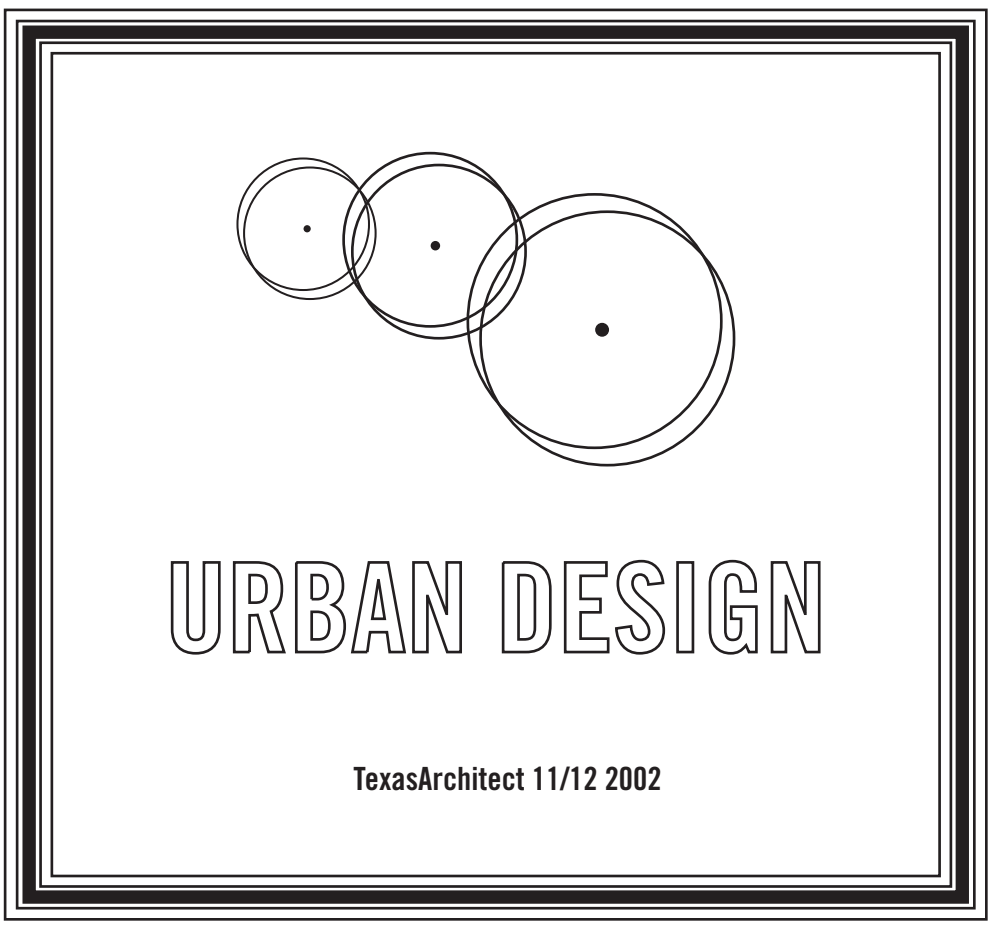
I am curious to understand the relationship between the North Carolina firm and the design of the school presumably awarded by the state to SHW. Criteria, high-performance or not, mandated by the client form the basis for the architect's commission. As such it becomes part of the design architect's responsibility.

It does appear that another of architect's responsibilities is being diluted and owners are paying fees for a service which an architect must perform as part of his solution.

**Robert J. Pesce, AIA Emeritus**
**Benbrook**

**CORRECTION** Credit for a photo illustrating an article on a design project by architecture students at UTSA ( "An 'Urban Studio' for San Antonio," *TA* 03/04 2002) was incorrect. The image was by John Grable, AIA.

Letters to the editor should be addressed to Stephen Sharpe, Editor, Texas Architect, 816 Congress Avenue, Suite 970, Austin, Texas 78701. E-mail: editor@texasarchitect.org.



# Making history again, even better ...

**Metal-clad wood Marvin windows preserve past beauty and save on energy and upkeep for decades.**

a gem of the Fort Worth skyline

original 1920 wood windows above, Marvin metal-clad wood windows below

photographer Ray Don Tilley, Bastrop, Texas

"Wooden windows need painting every 3 to 5 years and the cost to paint our 780 windows is around a quarter of a million dollars. Before we spent that kind of money again, we wanted to look into other options. We saw a Marvin advertisement that showed a window with a 70% Kynar baked-on metal finish on the outside and pine on the inside. These windows could also be designed to open just like the original ones in our 1920s building. They seemed to be the perfect choice for us. Installation has gone amazingly well and we are expecting to see some real gains in energy efficiency. Working with Marvin has been a very pleasant experience."
—Joy Webster, Director of Facilities, XTO Energy

## Steps toward a better beautiful window

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6. align, secure sides
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9. install operable sash
10. add interior finish trim
11. paint interior wood
12. enjoy uncompromising historical beauty and economical modern performance

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## Of Note: Emeritus Title Reinstated

AUSTIN **The Texas Board of Architectural Examiners (TBAE) is expected in May to create a new emeritus status for inactive architects, a move prompted by numerous complaints following the board's decision last year to eliminate that registration designation. The new status would allow inactive registrants who are retired after at least 20 years as a registered architect may use "emeritus architect" as their title. Inactive registrants, including those qualified for emeritus status, still would be prohibited from engaging in professional practice. TBAE Executive Director Cathy Hendricks said she expects the board to approve the new status at its May 13–14 meeting, with the rule becoming effective June 3. Prior to that meeting, the board will accept public comment. For more information, visit *www.tbae.state.tx.us*.**

## Noted Pre-War Gem Renovated

HOUSTON The Lee D. Allen House once was this city's most celebrated modernistic residence, and today it is one of the few extant examples of Houston's dwindling pre-war cultural legacies. The *Houston Post* and the *Houston Chronicle* featured it several times in 1936 as it was being built. Following completion of construction early the next year, *House Beautiful* recognized it with an honorable mention in the magazine's 1938 Small House Competition and *Architectural Record* showcased it in advertisements for glass block and built-up roofing systems. Even slightly worn after six decades, the Allen House's distinctively modern profile continues to turn heads of passersby driving along Bluebonnet Boulevard in the Braeswood neighborhood.

The Allen House was notable in its heyday for its Stran-Steel framing system (light-gauge steel folded in the shape of conventional wood 2x4 studs), a flat roof with accessible terraces, an attached three-car garage, modern interiors designed by J. Herbert Douglas that included a number of specially designed pieces by Herman Miller as well as a great deal of built-in furniture, and open-plan living areas originally divided by a folding partition.

Harold Calhoun of the Houston architectural firm Wirtz & Calhoun was the designer. After Calhoun teamed with Louis Milton Wirtz, the two young architects received the Allen commission in late 1935 or early 1936. Work progressed rapidly on the house and it was completed in January 1937 at a cost of $28,000. (A typical suburban house in Houston at the time went for about $3,000.)

Almost miraculously, until it was purchased in 2000, the house survived intact some 63 years of benign neglect. The new owners had grown up nearby and always remembered being impressed by the unusual house. When they began the renovation, the Allen House still retained all of the original built-in furniture as well as several of the Herman Miller pieces. Ernest Maldonado of Glassman Shoemake Maldonado Architects recalled recently that he saw the renovation project as a dream job because he greatly admired the International Style. His clear understanding of the movement's tenets is evident from his adroit design decisions.

The front facade was left mostly as it was except for a simple cornice added over the two front roof terraces to "capture" the spaces and better integrate them into the volume of the building. According to Maldonado, all the original aluminum windows, which had corroded, were replaced with green-gray steel windows which resemble the original configurations.

Other changes were more substantial, mainly those responding to the new owners desire to increase the amount of living space. This was accomplished by pushing out the rear wall 12 feet. The old service wing with its tiny enclosed kitchen, large butler's pantry, laundry room, and maid's quarters was reconfigured to provide a larger, open kitchen and home office. Upstairs, the old dressing room adjoining the master bedroom was converted to a sitting room. With the additional 12 feet, Maldonado fashioned a new master bathroom and closet, a second sitting room, and another bedroom with bath. The addition also greatly improved the rear facade which was monotonously flat compared to the lively massing of the front.

The most interesting portion of the interior is the main living areas, which remain essentially intact. Some small changes were made, however, to ameliorate certain original design defects. For example, at the foyer the architect replaced the solid wall facing the front door with a panel of frosted glass to improve lighting and reduce the feeling of claustrophobia. Most of built-in furniture on the first floor was retained and the new kitchen cabinetry was designed to evoke it. (Unfortunately, the second floor's built-ins were not so lucky—the dressing-room vanity, probably the finest piece, is now gone along with all the rest of that room's cabinetry.) In addition, building codes necessitated that panels of frosted glass be inserted between the staircase balusters.

In the backyard, the architects took full advantage of the large corner lot and installed a long lap pool surrounded by an extensive flagstone patio. A small original outbuilding was rebuilt as a miniature version of the main house and is now the most charming aspect of the entire project.

BEN KOUSH
CELESTE WILLIAMS

**Renovation of the 1937 Allen House in Houston's Braeswood neighborhood was completed earlier this year; photo courtesy Glassman Shoemake Maldonado Architects.**

## Overland to Design A&M Bonfire Memorial

COLLEGE STATION Overland Partners' memorial to the victims of the 1999 bonfire collapse at Texas A&M University shows considerable restraint by implying formal organization that references school traditions rather than employing overt Aggie symbolism. In March, following a year-long competition, A&M officials announced that Overland's design, the work of a team led by firm principal and A&M alumnus Robert Shemwell, bested the concepts of three other finalists.

The memorial will be sited on the polo grounds, at the northern edge of campus, where the collapse killed 12 students and wounded 27 others. A construction schedule is yet to be determined.

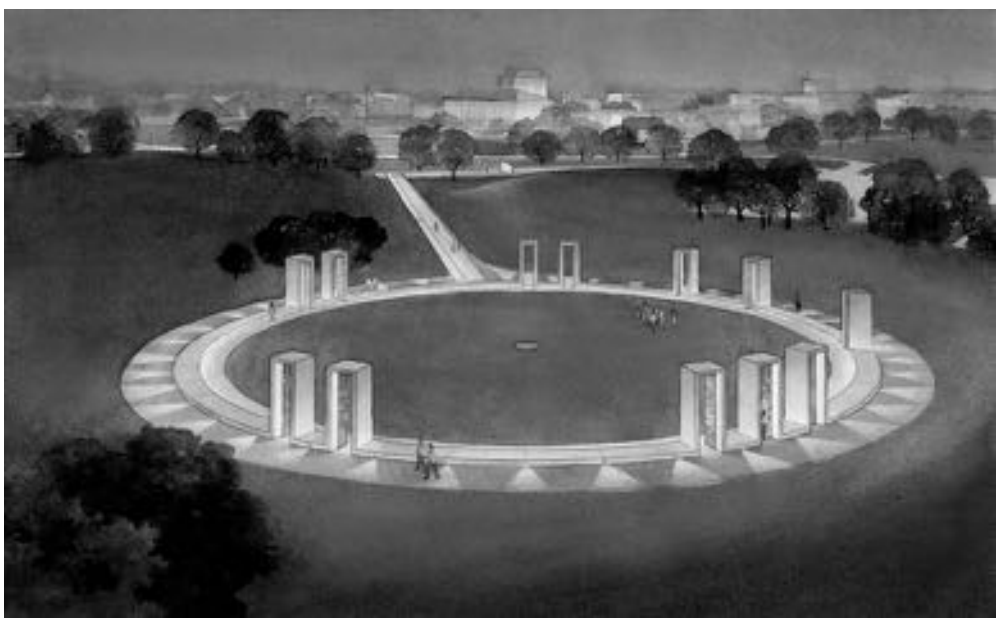
The San Antonio firm's memorial is a large ring of 12 portals standing in the void space of the site. The portals project strong figural qualities, symbolic of the 12 victims. An axis is implied from the center of the ring through each portal and oriented in the direction of each of the deceased's hometown. Connecting the portals are 27 lower panels which represent the injured students. Glass panels that will glow with light connect the 39 forms representing the dead and injured. Termed "slices of light" by the designers, these glass panels also provide a strong figural context, suggesting the form of a primal and communal gathering in the vast darkness.

The ring of forms – each individual, yet connected by light – reveals the effort made by Shemwell's team to imply the formal organization of the annual bonfire event while also referencing the continuity of Aggie tradition and spirit. As Shemwell has said, "It is the perimeter at which we stood in readiness, at which we mourned, said goodbye, and at which we celebrated." The orientation of the portals from the center of this perimeter toward the victims' hometowns suggests Shemwell understands the loss of life represented by this memorial extends beyond the realm or domain of "Aggieland." Bronze panels within each portal will be designed in collaboration with each victim's family and friends and is intended to reflect the individual qualities of each person.

An entrance plaza marked by trees and two freestanding walls that create a forced perspective along a sidewalk to the memorial was added during the second phase of the competition. The axial approach, honoring A&M's strong military heritage, is defined by an axis between the existing flagpole at the campus' main entrance and the center of the new memorial. One side of the walk is defined by low monolithic blocks, engraved with tick marks representing the years the Aggie bonfire has taken place, a sequence that began in 1909 and ran almost uninterrupted until 1999. One break in the line of ticks represents the only year the event was cancelled—1963, to mourn the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

JUSTIN PAUL HOWARD, ASSOC. AIA

**Overland Partner's concept for the A&M Bonfire Memorial features 12 upright forms symbolizing the students killed in the 1999 accident; rendering by Elizabeth Day, courtesy Overland Partners.**



### Essayist William Gass Speaks to DAF

The Dallas Architecture Forum concludes its sixth season with philosopher, novelist, and literary critic William Gass. Gass will speak about his long-held interest in architecture that finds expression in his new book *The Test of Time*, his sixth collection of essays. The event begins at 6 p.m. in the Horchow Auditorium of the Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 N. Harwood St. Admission is free to DAF members, $15 general, $10 for DMA members, $5 for students with ID. Call (214) 740-0644 for more information. MAY 2

### Preservation Tour Spotlights Downtown Dallas

Wrapping up events for Architecture Month, Preservation Dallas will sponsor a tour of downtown. "City Spaces: Hidden Places" takes place from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., beginning at the offices of Preservation Dallas, 2922 Swiss Avenue. The itinerary of the bus and walking tour includes 1505 Elm, 1611 Main Street Lofts, Umlaut, the Masonic Temple, and the Old Red Courthouse. Visit *architecturemonth.com* or call (214) 821-3290. MAY 4

### Tour Features East Austin's Historic Homes

A walking tour of East Austin sponsored by the Heritage Society of Austin is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will feature eight homes in the Robertson/Guadalupe neighborhood as well as the nearby Texas State Cemetery and French Legation. Heritage Homes Tour 2002 coincides with the beginning of National Historic Preservation Week (May 12–18). Sponsored annually by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, this year's theme is "Preserving the Spirit of Place." Visit *hsaustin.org* or call (512) 474-5198. MAY 11

### AIA Sculpts Sandcastles in Galveston

AIA Houston hosts its 16th Annual AIA Sandcastle Competition on Galveston's East Beach. Admission is free for spectators. Visit *aiahouston.org* or call (713) 520-0155. JUNE 1

### Medieval Frescoes on Exhibit in Lubbock

*Traditions and Renewal: Medieval Frescoes from the Vatican Museums Collections* will be on exhibit at the Museum of Texas Tech University in Lubbock. Admission is free. The exhibition highlights 31 works painted in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by unknown masters of the Roman School to adorn the churches of St. Nicola in Carcere and St. Agnese in Rome. The frescoes were removed and have been in storage since the early twentieth century. Visit *vaticanexhibit.org* or call (866) 803-6873 (toll free). BEGINS JUNE 2

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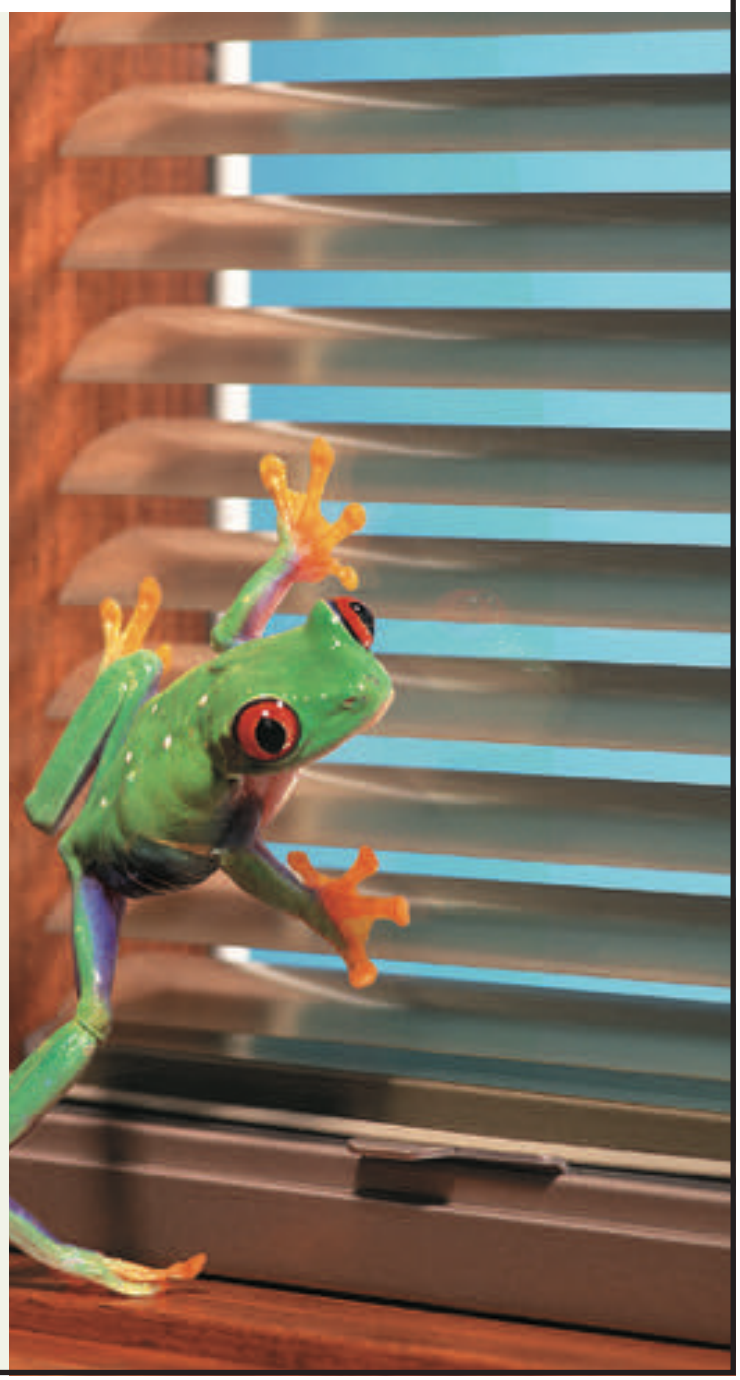

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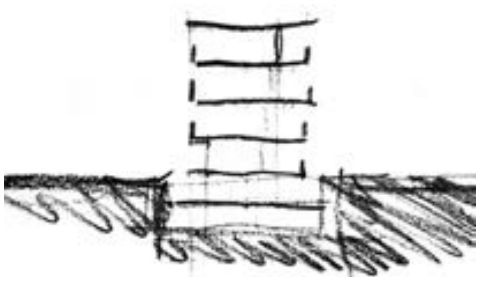
by RONNIE SELF

# Museums on Museums

**Called our era's cathedral, a once stuffy building type exemplifies current architectural experimentation**



**Swiss architect Peter Zumthor's sectional sketch of his design for the Museum of Fine Arts, Brégenz in Austria and the museum after completion in 1997; courtesy the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.**

AS ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS, WE CAN ONLY be gladdened to see exhibitions that promote architecture and extend current debates within the profession to a larger public. We have become accustomed to architectural exhibitions that focus on a movement, a style, or an individual architect; however, the recent exhibition at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, *Museums for a New Millennium: Concepts, Projects, Buildings*, is somewhat different in that it focuses on a building type. This is yet one more indication of the importance of museum buildings in the late twentieth century and presumably into the new millennium as well. Museums have been called the cathedrals of our time and they are considered to be places of contemplation and education. The 25 North American and European projects shown at the Modern are an impressive sampling of the building type and they allude to the prominence and sheer quantity of recent museum construction. (*Museums for a New Millennium* moves in early May to the new Milwaukee Art Museum designed by Santiago Calatrava.)

The Modern's exhibition, organized by the Art Centre Basel, introduces the museum as a "seismograph of architectural culture." As a building type it is currently unparalleled for the opportunities it provides for architectural investigation and experimentation. The diversity of the museum program should not be ignored, however, and the institutions for which these projects have been designed are as widely varied as the featured buildings' architectural styles. They range from relatively small, private institutions in suburban settings (e.g., the Beyeler Museum near Basel by Renzo Piano) to large, public, urban institutions (including The Tate Gallery in London by Herzog and de Meuron) to institutions that organize changing exhibitions and possess no permanent collection (such as The Bellevue Art Museum near Seattle by Steven Holl). Vittorio Gregotti's Center of Belém in Lisbon is more accurately labeled a "cultural center" since exhibition spaces are only one part of a diverse program that includes a conference center, a theater, a hotel, and shops. Rem Koolhaas's design for the Center for Art and Media Technology in Karlsruhe, Germany, exemplifies his attitude that architecture should remain "unfixed" and allow for novel uses as they arrive. Conversely, Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum, through its form and spatial sequences, aspires to embody the Jewish history of Berlin in the architecture itself. One of the most extraordinary and perplexing programs for a museum for a new millennium is the Altamira Cave Museum in Santillana del Mar, Spain, by Juan Navarro Baldeweg. The project will house a copy of prehistoric cave paintings in order to safeguard the nearby originals and protect them from tourists. More museums allow more works to be acquired and shown, and this solution gives a new twist to the museum's traditional role as conservator of artifacts and artworks.

Being three-dimensional objects to be experienced as such, buildings are not easy things to exhibit in a museum. Their physical presentation is obviously problematic, yet a greater obstacle is selecting and assembling the proper mix of supporting material to elucidate the ideas behind each designer's work. However, almost inevitably, the graphic materials presented are indecipherable for the general public or not detailed enough for a specialized public. Considering the large number of projects displayed within a limited space, the exhibition (as directed by the Art Centre Basel's Suzanne Greub) has managed to include plans, elevations, sections, large format interior and exterior photos, as well as at least one model for each project. A uniform selection of graphic materials favors a comparison of the many projects, as do the identical wood frames for drawings and the simple white pedestals for models. The exhibition, for the most part, shows the projects as a result rather than a process. This makes the design sketches and study models by Norman Foster, Zaha Hadid, Calatrava, and a few others a welcome addition to the generally descriptive graphic materials. Still, a complete story is often difficult to transmit in a stand-alone architectural exhibition and the 224-page catalog that accompanies the show elaborates the discussion of museums as a building type.

With such a quantity of new construction it is hard to believe that only 50 years ago museums were often thought of as stuffy places with little public appeal. In the exhibition catalog, two buildings recur in the descriptions as close "ancestors" of today's institutions: Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim, where the architecture is considered the real attraction, and Piano and Richard Rogers's Pompidou Center, a cultural facility with a complex program and a mission of urban revitalization. Though the more recent projects exhibited are undeniably innovative, the museum for a new millennium is undoubtedly rooted somewhere in the middle of the twentieth century.

*The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth was the first North American stop for the exhibition and Tadao Ando's awaited new building for the Modern, scheduled to open December 14, is one of the featured projects.*

A practicing architect, Ronnie Self teaches at the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture at the University of Houston.

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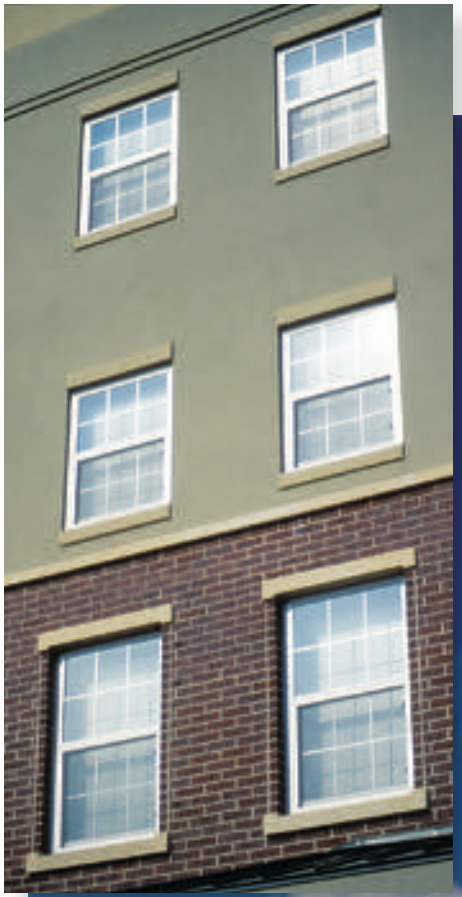




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# TAKING TEXAS PLACES

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# New Federal Projects in Texas:

## GSA's new focus on design excellence runs counter to its previous strategy: build a box, then move the people in

*THE PROJECT ALLUDES TO THE TIMELESS nature of Justice and the 'Deep Time' of the West Texas landscape. In silhouette the new federal courthouse becomes a suggested southwestern landscape, in the abstraction while examining a social amalgam of American egalitarian ideals.*

In describing his concept for the proposed United States Courthouse in El Paso, Antoine Predock, FAIA, of Albuquerque, took to heart an important objective of the General Service Administration's (GSA) Design Excellence Program. Established in 1994 to enhance the federal government's architectural and artistic legacy, the program sets guidelines for selecting architects to design high-profile public buildings. The El Paso project is the first example of a Texas facility planned under the program's three-stage selection process which results in a short list of architects – chosen in a "blind competition" by a panel of peers – presenting their visions for the project. Predock's presentation and conceptual renderings were chosen over those presented by three other A/E teams in the selection process' final phase. He envisions a 215,000-square-foot complex comprising a four-story building clad in copper and a seven-story tower of Texas limestone with copper accents. (GSA declined to release renderings until contracts are finalized, possibly by the end of May.) If funding is appropriated in the 2004 federal budget, the project may be completed in 2006.

*TA* Editor Stephen Sharpe spoke recently with the GSA official who oversees development of all federal projects in Texas and its four neighboring states. Len Murphy, acting assistant regional administrator for public buildings service, is based in the GSA regional headquarters in Fort Worth. Current projects under Murphy's watch include the planned courthouse in El Paso as well as two projects now under construction—a federal courthouse in Laredo and a facility to replace the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City destroyed by a bomb in 1996. Two courthouses have recently been completed in Brownsville and Corpus Christi. Also planned are a federal courthouse in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and new headquarters for the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Houston.

**One goal of the Design Excellence Program is to build facilities which reflect regional architectural traditions. How is this achieved?**

The directive to them (the panel chosen for the design competition, comprised of peer architects and local tenant representatives) at the beginning is that when we are building something – in El Paso or in Las Cruces or Brownsville – that we want to represent the local flavor of that community – the architecture, the culture, whatever – so that it is representative of not only the federal government and the customer – in this case, the courts – but also something that is representative of the local community and that the local community can be proud of. Not just "Build us a box," and move the people in, like we used to do. And in helping us to do that, we have local representation. In the case of El Paso, Senior Federal Judge David Briones sat in on our evaluation panel. And we have a mixture of people from the local region, our national office, the national office of the courts, and the local courts. So we are looking to them to keep the design honest in terms of how it represents them and the local community.

**What is the next phase for the El Paso project?**

Proceed to design concepts. We'll try to do some reality checks. Oklahoma City is a good example. It's a unique example, of course, because of the nature of what we're doing there—replacement and involvement of the survivors and the city. We had extensive meetings, presentations of the design concepts, throughout that process to the local community, the media, and to the customers to get their feedback. In the typical building of a courthouse we may not have quite as many meetings, but we still want to make sure that we're heading in the right direction.

**In contrast to the process used in El Paso, how were the architects chosen for the federal courthouses in Brownsville, Laredo, and Corpus Christi?**

Those were made using a source-selection process where we're looking for the best value. We're evaluating the A/Es on their past performance. In other

# Representing the Local Flavor

words, it's not a low-bid competition. In those cases, they do not present a design of any kind to us. We're selecting a team and then they develop a design concept. We work with them, with our customer, and with our national office to develop that concept up to the final design.

**Subsequent to the Oklahoma City bombing and the World Trade Center attack, how have increased security concerns affected GSA's building program and its focus on design excellence?**

Significantly, as you can imagine. We've had to make sure that we're addressing the security concerns in a way consistent with our desire to meet our design excellence objectives and achieve an appearance that is lasting. Early on, in a lot of locations, we just went around and put up barriers or bollards around the buildings to provide immediate security and we realize that's not the appearance we want to present to the public. These are public buildings and we want them to be open and pleasing and secure. We have tried to incorporate design criteria that include structural issues. The Murrah Building suffered from progressive collapse because of how it was designed, so we've made that a basic requirement of our buildings in terms of designing to prevent progressive collapse in the future.

We've even done some risk retrofitting wherever possible in old buildings. We've done extensive research on blast requirements for the facade and for the windows to determine the things we need to do to prevent the sorts of things that happened in Oklahoma City, where the windows broke into a lot of small pieces and caused extensive damage. Now we have new design criteria for the kind of glass we use, the kind of frames that are there, and those sorts of things. A Department of Justice study came out the year after Murrah establishing different security levels of buildings and we established minimum setbacks that we would like for our buildings from the street. The Murrah Building was only about 20 feet from the street. We established minimum setbacks to mitigate the blast from a similar situation.

**What is the recommended setback?**

A minimum of 50 feet. They prefer more than that, they would like to see 100 feet, but sometimes you can't get it in an urban situation. So if you're not going to do the setback then we have to have tradeoffs with building in additional structural hardening.

The report was coming out after we were into design on those (Brownsville and Corpus Christi) so we incorporated as much of the recommendations as possible. We were in the middle of design. We had to do a number of things as quickly as possible to make sure we incorporated the most important parts of it into those designs.

**Were those setbacks achieved in Brownsville and Corpus Christi?**

To the maximum extent possible. As recently as a couple of weeks ago, I was meeting before the Corpus Christi City Council trying to convince them to maintain or to build the park that was directly south of the new courthouse for this very reason, as opposed to at one point they had a plan to reopen a street that was directly behind the building. We and the U.S. Marshals met with them and said, "No. You promised us that was going to be a park and so we sited this building where it is with the understanding that it would always be a park. We moved the building back a little bit from Shoreline Boulevard to get as much of a setback there knowing that you were always going to have a park behind us and now you're starting to change your tune and that's unacceptable to us." And they said, "You're right, and we won't."

**What high-profile federal projects do you foresee for Texas in the future?**

We do not release our list of potential future projects until they have been presented by the president to the Congress. However, the courts have a five-year plan which establishes their requirements and priorities. Basically, the courts come up with their rolling five-year plan of where they see the highest need and then that eventually makes it's way to Congress and they bless it, appropriate it or not, and then it comes back to us. So, with the understanding that anything in the future is problematic, depending on the legislative process and other national prioriites, there are an additional couple of projects that are on the courts' list. One of which is Austin and the next one after that would be San Antonio—both courthouses.

Oklahoma City was the first purely federal building that we've built since the early '80s and could be the last. We can't fund all the new construction that we would like to have and courthouses have a higher priority than federal space because you can take care of that federal space in the private sector, in the commercial market, so courthouses have a much higher priority and we don't have enough money to build all the courthouses we would want. Therefore, that's where all the money goes.

Austin is a proposed courthouse. It's roughly the size (in square footage) of El Paso, a little bigger than Corpus Christi. San Antonio is a little bigger. There's a much higher need there. They've totally outgrown it. And a round building is just not very functional as a courthouse.

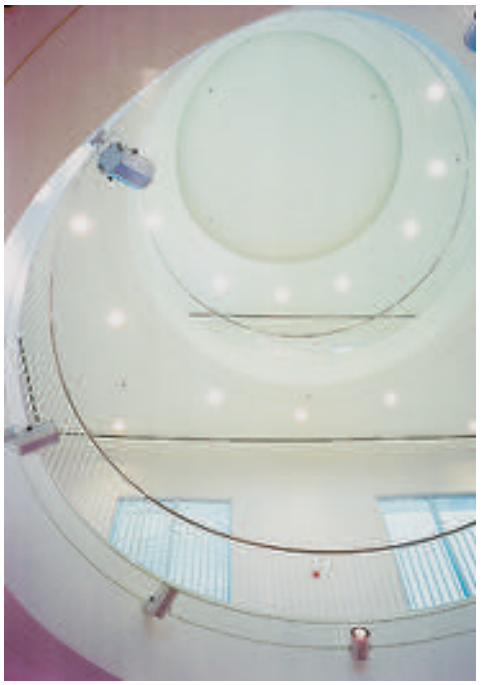
**How does Texas rank in the number of federal projects compared to the rest of the country?**

I would say it's doing okay. It's about average. The Southeast at the moment is getting a lot of projects for a number of reasons. We've been doing okay. As for the size of our inventory that houses courts and that sort of thing in Texas and in our five-state region, we're in pretty good shape and we've maintained that inventory pretty well to the point where we didn't have huge, glaring needs that other parts of the country did. So I think we're doing pretty well.

United States Courthouse, Corpus Christi; rendering courtesy WKMC Architects


# Gateway to Brownsville

by WILLIAM RIOS, ASSOC. AIA



**PROJECT** United States Courthouse, Brownsville
**CLIENT** General Services Administration
**ARCHITECT** Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville
**CONTRACTOR** Centex Construction
**CONSULTANTS** Walter P. Moore (structural); CHP & Associates (mechanical); Gomez Mendez Saenz (electrical); Wrightson Johnson Haddon & Williams (acoustical consultant); Justice Planning Associates (courtrooms); Clark Condon Associates (landscape)
**PHOTOGRAPHER** Jud Haggard

SOUTH TEXAS BRIDGES TWO CULTURES, AND both influence its architecture. Individually, the region's *norteño* heritage is reflected in the historic Spanish Colonial structures while the modern multistory buildings manifest the more recent touch of Anglo settlers. The new United States Courthouse in Brownsville celebrates this cultural duality by blending elements symbolic of Brownsville's past and its aspirations for the future.

The 198,000-square-foot facility is the work of Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville's (PGAL) Houston office, which was selected for the project under the General Service Administration's (GSA) Design Excellence Program. The program, established in 1994, seeks to produce "facilities that reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the Federal Government, emphasizing designs that embody the finest contemporary architectural thought."

"We felt that PGAL was best suited for the project based on their experience and body of work," explains GSA Project Manager Richard Stephenson. "It was important to create something that would meet the needs of the program but it also had to fit the city of Brownsville both culturally and architecturally."

Based on this idea, architect David Andrews of PGAL worked with GSA personnel to design a structure that responded to Brownsville's context. "After we were selected, we went to see the site. We wanted to design something that would be appropriate for the city of Brownsville so we created a master plan that showed the courthouse as a gateway to Brownsville and its downtown. It was intended to be a centerpiece of a historical area."

The courthouse is located on the former site of an abandoned rail yard at the edge of the central business district, an area which the city plans to revitalize with future construction of office buildings and civic facilities. Nearby structures include the original Cameron County Courthouse, designed by Atlee B. Ayres and completed in 1912. Also, there's Fort Brown which was built around 1846. The fort, deactivated around 1945, is currently part of the University of Texas at Brownsville campus located several blocks southeast of the new courthouse.

"It was important for us to create something that reflected the local culture," Andrews says. "We started by trying to draw from the area and the roots of Brownsville, so we drew from the memory of the old courthouse, and from Fort Brown and its memories."

Upon entering the new courthouse's Civic Plaza, visitors experience the dualist concept of past and present in both formal and material terms. The plaza is trimmed with granite accents and limestone panels—materials which reference Ayres' courthouse. Also reminiscent of the 1912 edifice is the smooth, beige brick covering much of the exterior. In addition, both the new and the old structures feature stone copings over parapet walls

**(opposite page) Granite accents and limestone panels, references to nearby historic structures, adorn the Civic Plaza. (this page, left) The north facade exhibits contemporary materials and form while low arches recall local architecture. (above) A light well illuminates the lobby and offers views.**

**(top) Abundant natural lighting graces the lobby. (bottom) Courtrooms feature traditional styling.**

that conceal built-up roofs. Low arches inspired by Fort Brown line ample exterior corridors that march mutely along the new building's sides. The portico serves its traditional role in civic architecture as a place of passage and a transition to the interior, and yet features contemporary form and lines. The portico also functions as a backdrop for special occasions held in the Civic Plaza. Another formal design element which recalls the region's architectural traditions is a fountain arrayed with palm trees which works in conjunction with the prevailing breezes to provide a cool refuge from the often unyielding heat of South Texas.

The interior, too, reflects the memory of Brownsville with a sensitive incorporation of fixtures reused from an older structure. "Using the old benches from the original courthouse was a way of trying to bring something from the past into the new project," Andrew says, adding, "The terrazzo and marble in the interior were not original materials but were chosen to give a more permanent feel to the building." Another prominent feature exuding a sense of permanence is the structure's overall symmetry. This is most notable upon entering a large central public space known as the Great Hall where both sides are lined with courtrooms and a monumental staircase leads to upper floors.

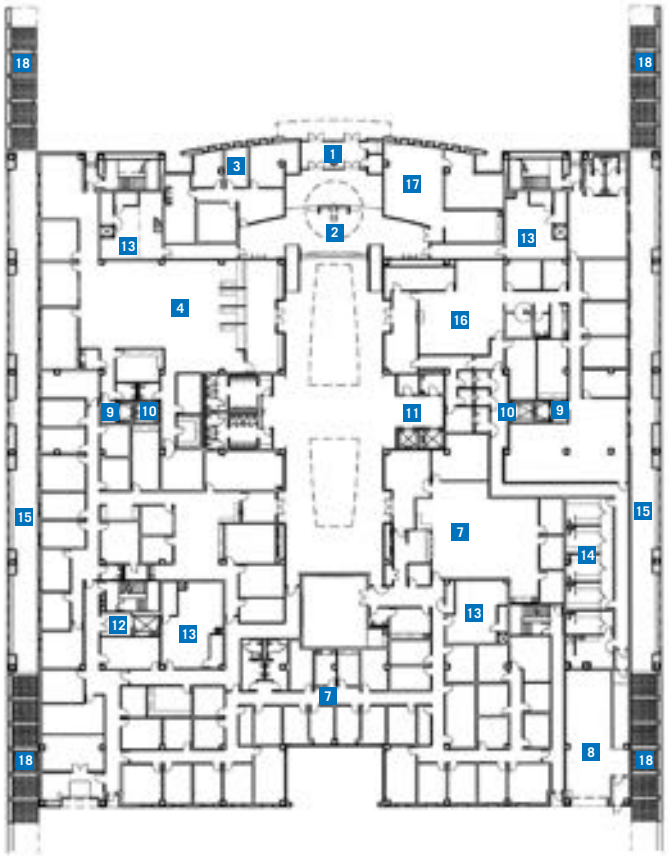
Another aspect of the building that responds to the local environment is the lighting. "The central skylight was created to highlight the public and visual areas by allowing all the great light in Brownsville to come into the building," Andrews says. "We did the same thing with skylights in the courtrooms, and windows in the judges' chambers."

In the end, both client and architect were pleased with the results.

"We wanted something that wasn't just another steel and glass skyscraper," says the GSA's Stephenson. "This is one of the best examples of a courthouse that fits the architectural and cultural context of its city."

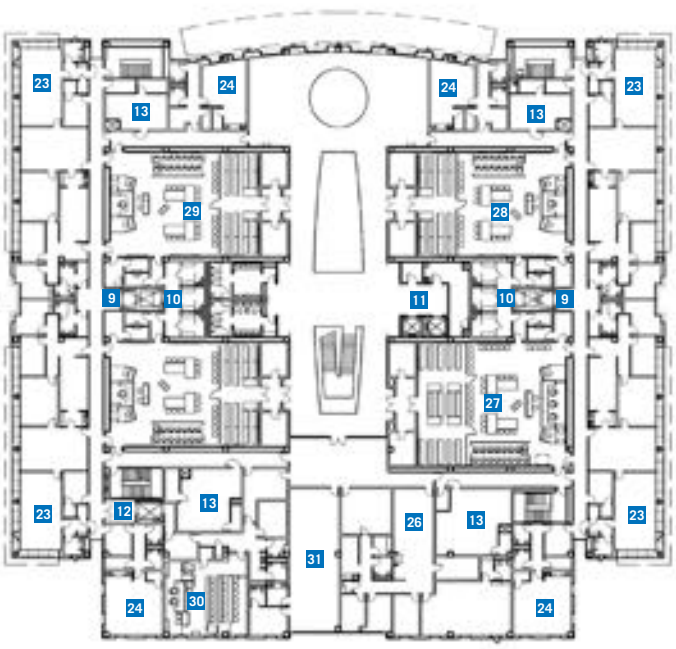
William Rios, Assoc. AIA, is an instructor of architectural CADD classes at South Texas Community College.

**RESOURCES** **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme; **STONE:** National Terrazzo Tile & Marble; **LIMESTONE:** Cold Springs Granite; **GLASS BLOCK FLOORING:** IBP Glass Block; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Quality Woodwork Interiors; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Johns Manville; **METAL ROOFING:** Kovach; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** US Aluminum; **METAL WINDOWS:** US Aluminum; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** US Aluminum; **TILE:** Daltile; **TERRAZZO:** National Terrazzo Tile & Marble; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Armstrong; **ACOUSTIC PANELS:** Wall Technology (Owens Corning); **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams; **CARPET:** Lees Carpet




GROUND LEVEL


SECOND LEVEL




THIRD LEVEL

**FLOOR PLAN**

1 ENTRY
2 LOBBY
3 GSA
4 CLERK OF COURT
5 FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
6 LOADING DOCK
7 U.S. PROBATION
8 U.S. MARSHALS' SALLYPORT
9 JUDGES' ELEVATORS
10 PRISONER ELEVATORS
11 PUBLIC ELEVATORS
12 FREIGHT ELEVATOR
13 MECHANICAL
14 HOLDING CELLS
15 EXTERIOR COVERED ARCADE
16 U.S. MARSHALS
17 DINING
18 TRELLIS COVERED WALKWAY
19 U.S. ATTORNEY
20 JURY ASSEMBLY
21 U.S. PRE-TRIAL SERVICE
22 MAGISTRATE COURTS
23 JUDGES' CHAMBERS
24 JURY DELIBERATION
25 DISPUTE RESOLUTION
26 U.S. CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS
27 CEREMONIAL COURT
28 DISTRICT COURTS
29 VISITING COURT
30 GRAND JURY
31 LAW LIBRARY

# A Step Outside of Convention

**(opposite page) The curved tubular steel trusses evoke the flow of water in a view overlooking the convention center's south hall; photo by Paul Bardagjy. (above) The broad arch of the south hall as seen from HemisFair Park.**

**PROJECT** Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center Expansion, San Antonio

**CLIENT** City of San Antonio

**ARCHITECTS** Kell Muñoz Architects; Thompson, Ventulett, Stainback, & Associates; Haywood, Jordan, McCowan, SAT, Inc.

**CONTRACTOR** Clark/JT Construction

**CONSULTANTS** Walter P. Moore, Jaster-Quintanilla (structural); K.M.Ng & Associates, CHP & Associates (MEP); Fernandez Frazer White & Associates (civil); Leonard Smith & Associates (cost consultant); Boner Associates (acoustical & audio/visual); Schiff & Associates (security); H.M. Brandston & Partners (lighting); Rialto Studio (landscape architect); Professional Services Industries (environmental abatement); Walter P. Moore (traffic engineering); Freeman Whitehurst Group (arts program coordinator); Jody Pinto, Celia Muñoz (consulting artists); Center for Archaeological Research, University of Texas at San Antonio (archaeological consultant); Cini-Little International (food service); Rolf Jensen & Associates (code life safety); Agnew Moyer Smith (graphics); OTM Engineering (telecommunications)

**PHOTOGRAPHERS** Al Rendon, Paul Bardagjy (where noted)

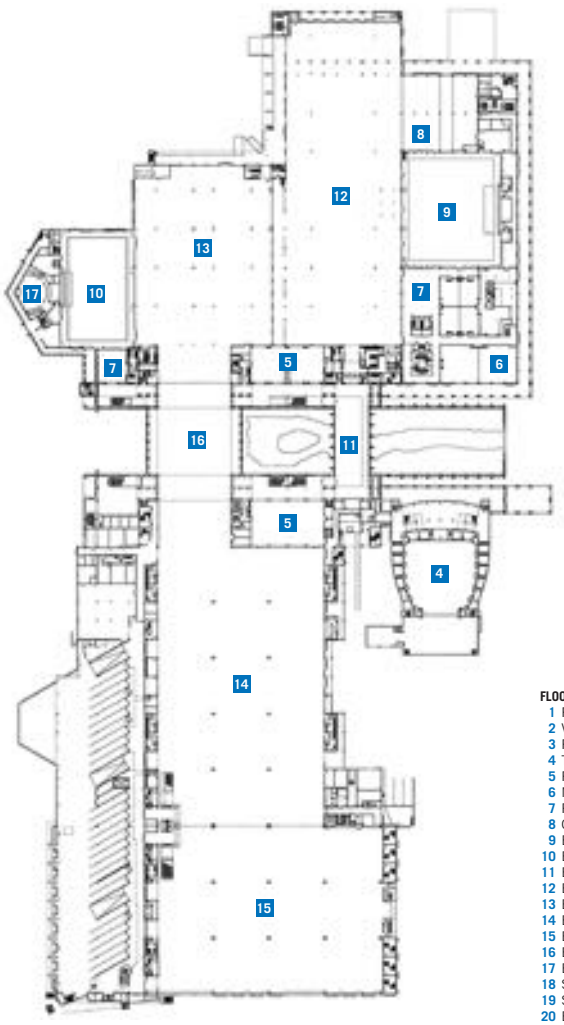
**by VINCENT B. CANIZARO, PH.D.**

TODAY'S CONVENTION CENTERS ARE BY requirement large blank volumes and thereby often anti-urban. Or, as Steve Tillotson of Kell Muñoz Architects puts it, "They are usually just a big utility space, really just a closed, windowless box with the truck access on one side and the people access on the other." At least that's the conventional wisdom about convention centers. They are not necessarily a building type within which one expects to find an inspiring confluence of form, order, materials, and social purpose. But Kell Muñoz – with a little self-professed naiveté and critical resistance to the typology – has managed to step outside of convention just enough to make a step in the right direction.

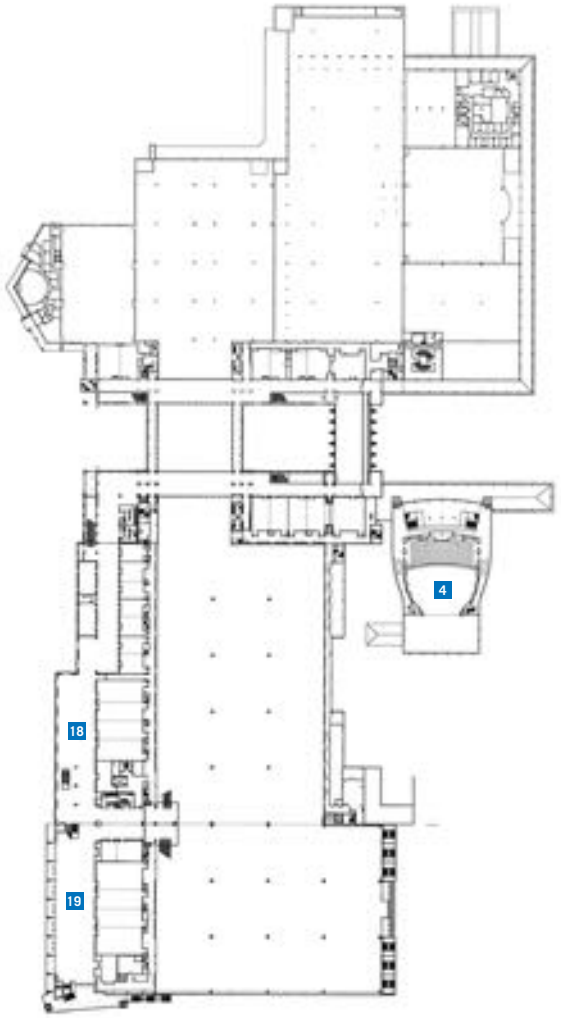
The expansion of the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center opened in August 1999 (further work was completed just last October) that increased the facility to 1.3 million square feet, doubling the original size. The expansion was designed to better facilitate a growing need for flexible event space, meeting rooms, and adequate parking, all in a location very near the downtown filled with hotels and restaurants. Moreover, the planning of the expansion also provided the city with an opportunity to right the wrongs of the old convention center built in 1968 by the architecture firm of Noonan, Kracker, & Phelps & Simmons & Associates—a building complex roundly criticized for having disassociated the downtown and its Riverwalk from HemisFair Park, the site of a pleasurable ensemble of plazas and fountains underneath the emblematic Tower of the Americas.

It was this "river issue" which served as the starting point for Kell Muñoz's praiseworthy efforts at producing a more responsive and "civic" convention center. By siting the bulk of the expansion to the southeast and extending the Riverwalk under the architecturally transparent and structurally memorable bridge lobby, new public pedestrian access was established at the river level that unites the city and HemisFair Park—at least in part. Clear and direct street-level public access to the park is still denied unless one attempts to pass through the


LEVEL ZERO - RIVER LEVEL




LEVEL ONE - STREET LEVEL




LEVEL TWO - CONCOURSE LEVEL


LEVEL THREE - BALLROOM LEVEL

**FLOOR PLAN**

1 RIVER ROOM
2 VIP ROOM
3 REHEARSAL ROOM
4 THEATER
5 REGISTRATION
6 MISSION ROOM
7 PREFUNCTION
8 GALLERY
9 BALLROOM A
10 BALLROOM B
11 BRIDGE LOBBY
12 EXHIBIT HALL A
13 EXHIBIT HALL B
14 EXHIBIT HALL C
15 EXHIBIT HALL D
16 BRIDGE HALL
17 EXECUTIVE ASSEMBLY
18 SOUTH CONCOURSE
19 SOUTH HALL
20 BALLROOM C

interior of the center itself. Here, due to cost-cutting measures, an important opportunity was missed to create an effective transition from Market Street to river level below. "Such criticism is well founded," says Tillotson, "and I'd loved to have burrowed right through to the park." But as it stands, he continues, "you kind of have to find your way into it."

Where Kell Muñoz has most fully succeeded is apparent once one enters the center. There they have resisted the often anonymous volumes common to convention centers through a strategy of creating "room to room experiences." They deployed clear and simple architectural elements to scale down the immense interior volumes, applied bold colors to enliven the spaces, and opted for transparency throughout to break open "the windowless box." From Market Street to HemisFair Park on the south, a series of heavy limestone-clad pylons provide a sense of transition between the large volumes while also serving as access points for phones and restrooms, and orientation which is achieved through elegant backlit plate-steel signage. Niches have

"A Step Outside of Convention" continued on page 44

**(clockwise from top left) The transparent bridge lobby spans the Riverwalk. The image of a "ballet folklorico" dancer brightens a meeting room. A grotto underneath the center connects the Riverwalk to HemisFair Park. A *mirador* balcony provides a sense of human scale.**

**PROJECT** New Residences, Richmond State School, Richmond
**CLIENT** Texas Department of Mental Health & Mental Retardation
**ARCHITECT** Taft Architects
**CONTRACTOR** Bass Construction
**CONSULTANTS** Jackson & Ryan Architects (consulting architect); Matrix Structural Engineers (structural); Smith Seckman Reid (MEP); Karen Rose Engineering (civil)
**PHOTOGRAPHER** Hester + Hardaway; Taft Architects

# A New Model for Group Living

by BEN KOUSH

THE RICHMOND STATE SCHOOL, ADMINISTERED by the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (TDMHMR), is one of 11 facilities around the state housing the mentally retarded. Located in Fort Bend County, just southwest of Houston, it's sited on the former Vaclav Pultar farm, a bucolic parcel along a bend in the Brazos River north of the town of Richmond. Taft Architects of Houston has designed a new project on the state school's 242-acre campus, a small housing complex that sets a bold precedent for institutional living.

Taft's housing complex sits in stark contrast to the campus' original residential buildings, built

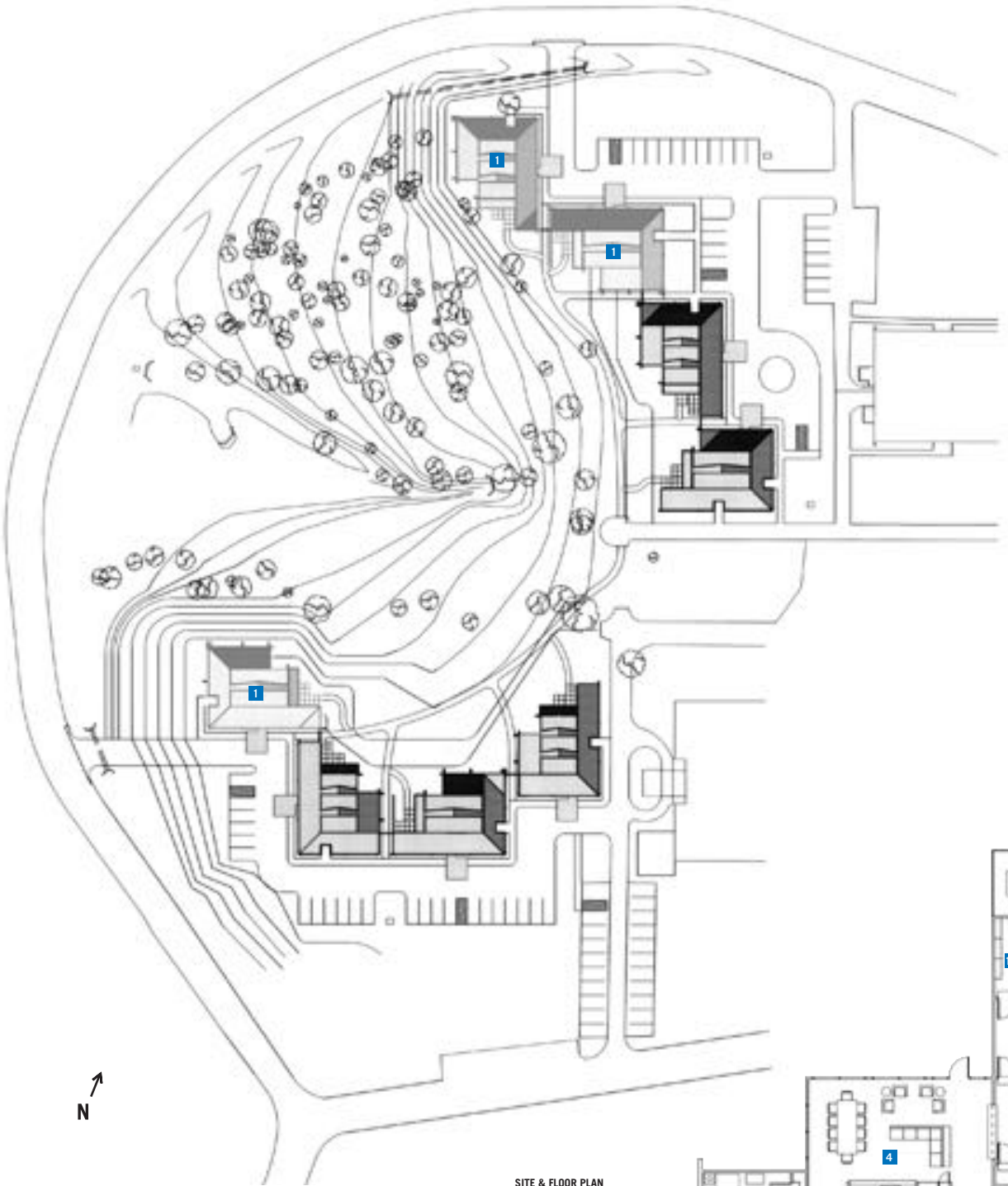
**(opposite page) Auto traffic is relegated to the outside edge of the complex, providing the cottages with a quiet communal backyard; photo by Taft Architects. (this page) Large gang-nailed trusses support north-facing skylights; photo by Hester and Hardaway.**

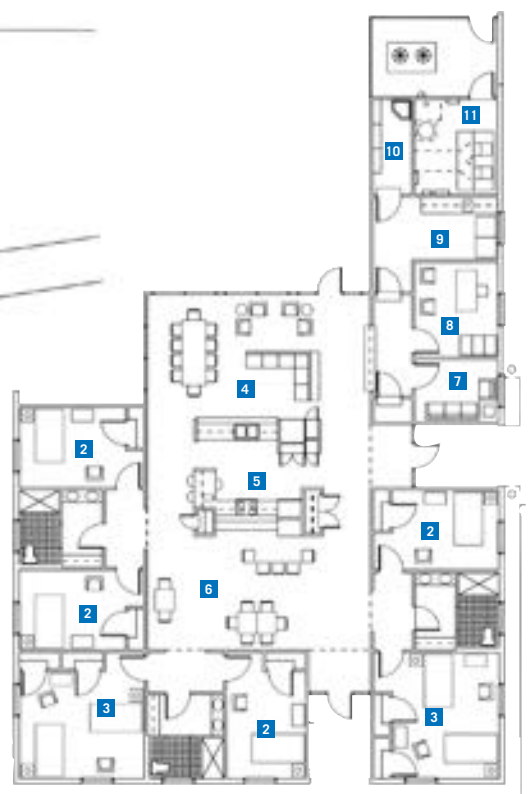
from 1965 to 1968 and designed in a quasi-Brutalist mode by Golemon & Rolfe of Houston (best remembered for the Houston Intercontinental Airport of 1969). The new project is comprised of five cottages organized in a scheme reminiscent of Aldo Van Eyck's Amsterdam Orphanage of 1960—an array of self-contained living units set along "interior streets." Van Eyck invoked the imagery of a traditional town plan to foster a sense of community among the residents.

Like Van Eyck's orphanage, Taft's prototype residential complex was a public-funded experiment aimed at improving living conditions for wards of the state. And like most other experimental government projects, Taft's original idea – two adjacent assemblages of four cottages, each thoughtfully arranged to create a protected area of wheelchair-accessible green space – did not survive intact its journey through the bureaucracy. Budget constraints, as well as the vociferous demands of protective parents, steadily chipped away at the clarity of Taft's concept. The result is a project diminished by the state's decision to omit three of the planned eight cottages, an alteration to the prototype's original program which eliminated the cottage's articulate relationships to each other and the site.

When opened in April 1968, the Richmond State School housed nearly 2,000 residents – known as "clients," most of whom were under 21 – and 650 staff personnel. Currently, the state school houses 546 clients – whose average age is 43 – and 1,450 staff. The reduction in the number of clients is explained by the declining number of children born with mental retardation due to improved medical and pre-natal care. Policy changes subsequently adopted by the TDMHMR have played an equally significant role in the reduced number of clients housed in state institutions. Unlike its policy in the 1960s, TDMHMR today advocates that mentally retarded children remain in the care of their families rather than being placed in institutions. According to Claire Chipman, the school's public relations director, most of the facility's new clients were raised by their parents who are now too old to care for them. Chipman suggested that one reason the TDMHMR decided to fund this experimental project was to provide an appealing, domestically scaled environment for clients who have never before been institutionalized.

Taft originally envisioned eight 3,900-square-foot cottages housing eight clients each. The cottages




**SITE & FLOOR PLAN**

1 UNBUILT BUILDINGS
2 BEDROOM - SINGLE
3 BEDROOM - DOUBLE
4 LIVING/DINING
5 KITCHEN
6 ACTIVITIES
7 STUDY
8 OFFICE
9 LAUNDRY
10 STORAGE
11 MECHANICAL

**(top) The jagged roofline and choice of materials differentiates the cottages from the older buildings and create a sense of community; photo by Hester + Hardaway. (bottom) Because of the overhead lighting, even areas with no exterior windows seem light and airy; photo by Taft Architects.**

contained a combination of single and double bedrooms and baths wrapped around a central living area with a "tail" at one end for storage and mechanical rooms. According to Taft's Danny Samuels, FAIA, he and partner John Casbarian, FAIA, divided the program into small cottages "to provide a sense of dignity, community belonging, and individual privacy"—and despite the extraordinarily low budget ($98 per square foot), it's within the interior communal living areas that the architects were able to focus their attention. The ceiling is composed of large north-facing saw-tooth skylights supported by exposed wooden trusses. Taft chose skylights, Samuels said, to provide inexpensive lighting that would illuminate the interiors evenly and efficiently.

The outward appearance of the cottages – with dark-red brick walls extending past the building edges and gigantic sets of tall saw-tooth skylights – sharply contrasts with the red-orange brick and low, green copper mansard roofs of the campus' existing residential blocks. The visual distinction is all the more appropriate considering the major break in policy the cottages represent. Taft designed the cottages to look even more distinctive but budget constraints forced the substitution of several significant exterior materials. While Taft originally specified corrugated galvalume for the roofs and walls facing the grove, those surfaces are now clad with brown composite shingles and hardi-plank siding. These substitutions of materials have further transformed the once-cohesive collection of intimately scaled cottages into what now appears to be five conventional yet over-sized suburban ranch houses.

Although the project as built can be termed only a qualified success, the state school reports that morale has improved dramatically among both the clients living in the cottages and the staff assigned there as caretakers. Taft's prototype, even after many alterations in program and specification, may prove over time to be a good model for the TDMHMR to employ in the future. T

Ben Koush recently earned his Master of Architecture from Rice University.

**RESOURCES** **MASONRY UNITS:** Boral; **PRE-FABRICATED WOOD JOISTS AND TRUSSES:** All-Pan; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** WR Grace; **BUILDING INSULATION:** Johns Manville; **SHINGLES:** GAF; **SIDING:** James Hardie; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** VT Industries; **METAL WINDOWS:** Alenco; **GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING AND ACCESSORIES:** USG; **TILE:** Daltile; **WALL COVERINGS:** Kydex; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams

# Act II for a Panhandle High-Rise

by DARWIN HARRISON, ASSOC. AIA

**PROJECT** Santa Fe Building Restoration, Amarillo
**CLIENT** Potter County
**ARCHITECT** Lavin Associates Architects
**CONTRACTOR** Page and Associates Contractors
**CONSULTANTS** Tadhi Silsby Hayes, PE (structural); Brown Consulting Engineers (mechanical); Reynolds Engineering Associates (electrical); The Williams Company (historical consultant)
**PHOTOGRAPHER** Shannon Richardson

A BEACON ON THE WEST TEXAS PLAINS SINCE 1930, the 14-story Santa Fe Building in Amarillo has a new lease on life and now stands as a testament to thoughtful rehabilitation after being vacant for several years. The high-rise office tower was, at the time it was built, the tallest and most distinctive building in downtown Amarillo. It was also an imposing symbol. Originally, the skyscraper signified the Santa Fe Railroad's economic and cultural impact on the region, especially on the growing city of Amarillo which owed its fortunes and prestige to the railroad. But, as with the railroad, time has been hard on the Santa Fe Building. The railroad's staff dwindled over the years, eventually leaving the edifice all but vacant. With prospects for the future apparently diminishing, the high-rise faced its possible demise—or, as some hoped, its potential rebirth.

The Santa Fe is fortunately blessed with good "bones," and several developers saw hidden promise within such a solid infrastructure. The structure, like many built by the railroad companies, was the product of high-quality workmanship and was also well maintained. Using state-of-the-art fireproofing techniques for the era, its builders encased structural elements in concrete and limited the amount of woodwork. In addition, the building has a rectangular plan with large, repetitive banks of windows on all four sides allowing natural light to infiltrate a great many of the spaces. Still, the various ideas considered by interested developers proved difficult to implement due to the same problems inherent with most older buildings. The costs of modernizing the structure and bringing it up to current code standards, as well as updating the mechanical and electrical systems, were too great for typical redevelopment schemes. Fortunately for those who longed for the building to regain its eminence, Potter County purchased the building in 1995 for $426,288. Thus began a long and at times complicated process of restoring, renovating, and ultimately re-inhabiting the office tower.

Because of the building's relation to the transportation industry, the county applied for and received a $3 million grant from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The public funds made the project economically feasible, allowing the county to proceed with redevelopment plans while adding an additional layer of coordination issues. TxDOT stipulated that the grant could only finance restoration of the historic exterior and interior spaces directly linked to transportation (such as a transportation museum slated for completion in the near future). While agreeing that such funds were essential to a project like the Santa Fe, John Jenkins, project architect for Lavin Associates, said the endeavor also required lots of patience—the project team collaborated with Potter County to satisfy multiple groups which exerted considerable influence on the restoration. Those other parties, including code authorities and design review committees, often had different priorities. For example, Jenkins said, when the Texas Historical Commission states that historic features must be retained but the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation requests that it be updated to meet accessibility standards, someone must negotiate such issues while maintaining the overall vision for the project and the goals for the building's ultimate reuse.

Now that the renovation is complete – thanks to the skill and dedication of the entire project team – the final result is a building whose historic

**The restored Santa Fe Building with its distinctive terra cotta cladding remains an icon of downtown Amarillo and the plains of West Texas.**


Santa Fe

**(left) The richly detailed lobby, a characteristic of the structure's 1930 provenance, gleams anew. (right) Distinctively elaborate fixtures were either restored or used as inspiration for newly fashioned replacements.**

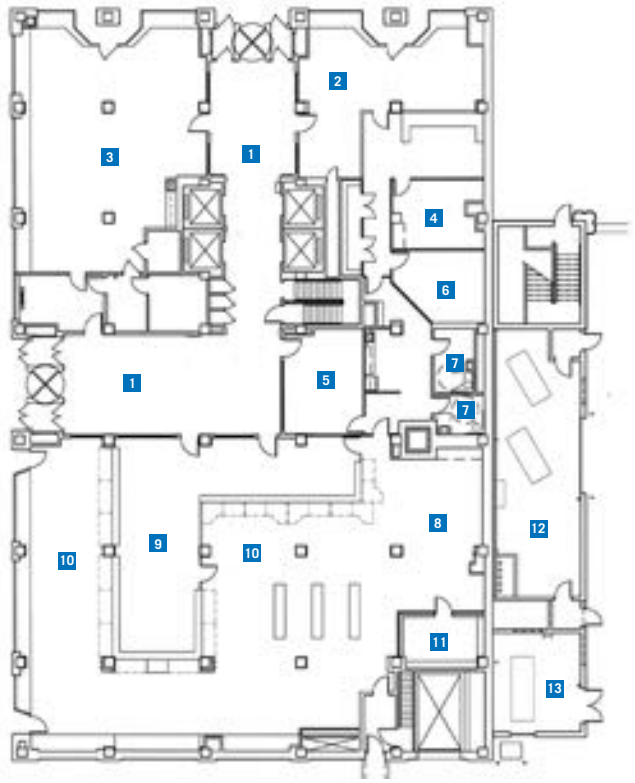
integrity remains intact while also being completely functional in its new purpose, primarily as varied county offices. The renovated building is once again a lively workplace rather than a vacant building unintentionally symbolizing an industry's decline. The county also realized the value in adapting the eleventh-floor auditorium into a functional public space—it's now a popular place for private receptions and social events.

The Santa Fe is emblematic of the Panhandle region, with an original design that embodies West Texas simplicity. There is no large, opulent lobby and the decorative detailing – while elaborate and appealing, particularly at its crown – is never ostentatious. The renovation has carefully maintained and, in fact, has highlighted these core qualities while adapting the spaces for newfound purposes.

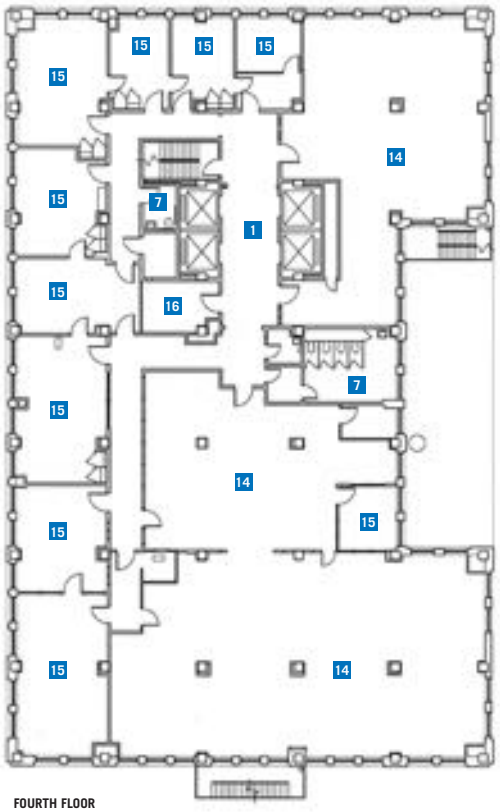
The care taken with the restoration is evident in many places, but one detail stands out. The large sign atop the building which spells out "Santa Fe" was originally designed with lighting that mimicked a vivid flame of red and amber cast against the edifice's pale terra cotta skin. Using modern lighting, the restoration team recreated the effect so that, at night, the Santa Fe's beacon once again burns brightly amidst the vastness of the wide-open plains.

Darwin Harrison, Assoc. AIA, teaches architecture at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

**RESOURCES** **MASONRY RESTORATION AND CLEANING:** Edison Coatings; **METAL CASTINGS:** Degginger's Foundry; **ARCHITECTURAL METAL WORK:** Degginger's Foundry; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** C&G Millworks; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Dur-O-Last; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** Maiman Co.; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Degginger's Foundry; **METAL WINDOWS:** Winvent; **DOOR HARDWARE:** Corbin/Russell; **GYPSUM FABRICATIONS:** Casting Designs; **TILE:** Daltile, American Olean; **WOOD FLOORING:** Kentucky Wood Flooring; **PAINT:** ICI Dulux; **DECORATIVE FINISHES:** Zinser Glazes; **HIGH PERFORMANCE COATINGS:** Edison Coatings; **LETTERS AND PLAQUES:** A.R.K. Ramos Architectural Signage Systems; **BULLET RESISTANT PROTECTION:** Safeguard Security Services



FIRST FLOOR



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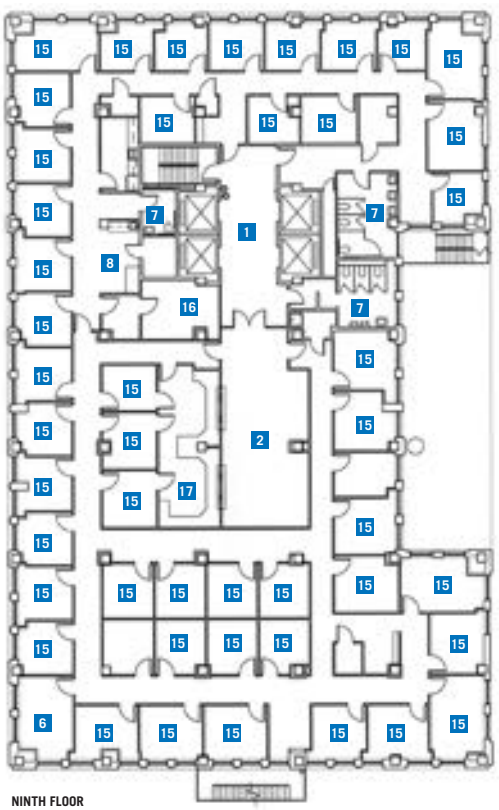
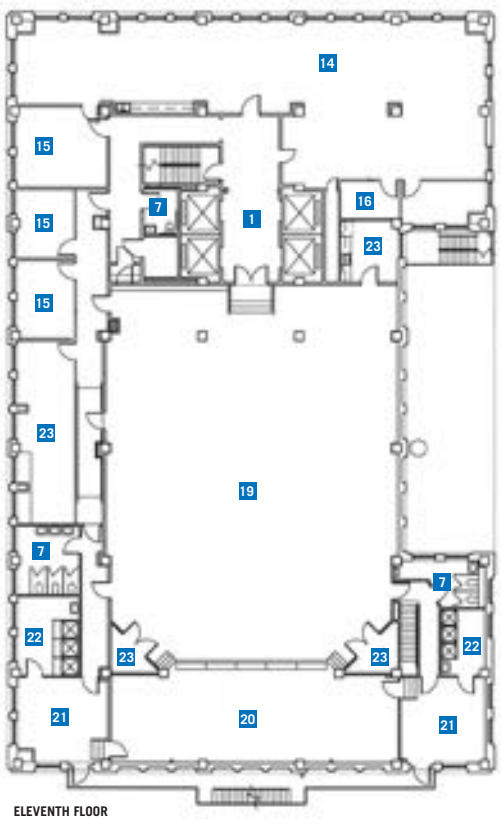


NINTH FLOOR

**FLOOR PLAN**

1 LOBBY
2 WAITING
3 LEASE SPACE
4 TAX ASSESSOR
5 ASSISTANT TAX ASSESSOR
6 CONFERENCE
7 RESTROOM
8 WORK AREA
9 PUBLIC AREA
10 TAX EMPLOYEES
11 VAULT
12 CHILLER ROOM
13 GENERATOR ROOM
14 OPEN OFFICE
15 OFFICE
16 ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT
17 CASHIER
18 WORK AREA
19 AUDITORIUM
20 BACK STAGE
21 DRESSING ROOM
22 SHOWERS
23 STORAGE



ELEVENTH FLOOR

# Clinical Care Center



**FLOOR PLAN**
1 PLAY STRUCTURE
2 WAITING AREA
3 ELEVATORS
4 DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING
5 MECH/ELECT
6 WORK AREAS
7 EXAM ROOMS
8 SHELL SPACE

**PROJECT** Clinical Care Center, Houston
**CLIENT** Texas Children's Hospital
**ARCHITECT** FKP Architects
**CONTRACTOR** W.S. Bellows Construction Corp.
**CONSULTANTS** Walter P. Moore (civil and structural); Burns DeLaue McCoy (MEP); Audio Communication Corp (audio); fd2s (graphics); Facilities Design International (interior design); Rolf Jensen & Associates (life safety); Bernard Wolfe & Associates (lighting); Knudson & Associates, Tapley Associate Architects (landscape)
**PHOTOGRAPHER** Craig Dugan for Hedrich Blessing

**(top left) The new 16-story Clinical Care Center at the Texas Children's Hospital serves as the central outpatient facility for the hospital. The center is home to an outpatient lab, a pharmacy, an imaging facility, and an eight operating room ambulatory surgery suite. There are also 10 floors of pediatric sub-specialty clinics and physician's offices, including the Texas Children's Cancer Center. During the design process, special attention was put on making the facility more family/patient-friendly. This can be seen in the bridge that connects the third floor with the West Tower to provide easy access to the most highly used outpatient services—the food court (top right), pharmacy, lab, blood donor center, and conference center. The clinic is organized around two-story, shared waiting areas color-coded to assist with wayfinding. These spaces serve as both the central check-in area and a play space for children. (bottom) Geometric play forms that decorate the waiting areas include equipment for climbing, slides, cargo nets, and a fun-house hall of mirrors. Bright, bold colors provide a comforting and welcoming environment for both parents and children. The design of the waiting spaces helps reduce overcrowding. Many elements of the design were implemented to improve staff efficiency, including grouping of clinics with similar functions and services, a common clock-in/clock-out station, and a centralized medical record storage area. Modules of 10-12 exam rooms are placed together to allow physicians to practice together and share rooms, allowing more interaction throughout the day. Most of the center was designed for potential future growth. Space is dispersed through the building to allow for growth of offices and clinics as needed. Below ground, four levels of parking created 500 new spaces, and a drivable tunnel connects the ambulatory center to the existing hospital.**

TARA SPARKS

**RESOURCES** **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme; **CURTAINWALL:** Arrowall; **GRANITE:** Cold Springs Granite; **PRE-CAST:** Redondo Manufacturing; **CARPET:** Interface; **INTERIOR GLASS:** Vision Glass; **TERRAZZO:** National Terrazzo Tile & Marble; **LAMINATES:** Formica, Wilsonart; **VCT:** Mannington; **SIMULATED WOOD FLOORING:** Toli; **CEILING PANELS:** Decoustics; **SECURITY:** Schiff & Associates; **FURNITURE:** McCoy, Inc.; **FLOORING:** McCoy, Inc.

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# Medical Center of Plano

SITE PLAN
1 NEW CONSTRUCTION: MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING
2 M.O.B./STAFF PARKING CONNECTOR
3 TWO-LEVEL PATIENT TOWER ADDITION
4 SURGERY EXPANSION
5 CCU/ICU EXPANSION


PROJECT Medical Center of Plano
CLIENT HCA, Inc.
ARCHITECT Collins Reisenbichler Architects
CONTRACTOR Beers Construction
CONSULTANTS L.A. Fuess (structural); Needham Wright Engineers (civil); ccrd Partners (MEP); CRA Architects (interior design); Kendall Landscape Architecture (landscape)
PHOTOGRAPHER Mark Trew

**Originally built in 1974, the Medical Center of Plano recently completed an essential expansion and renovation project. The Medical Center and the owner, HCA, recognized the needs of the growing community and expanded the center, which sees more than 140,000 patients annually. CRA Architects created the master plan for the Medical Center, providing both architecture and interior design services for the entire project. Nearly every department of the hospital was included in the renovation and expansion—the outpatient services unit, nurse stations (top), patient rooms, surgery department, critical care unit, pediatric department, heart center, emergency department, radiology, outpatient imaging center, and endoscopy center. Careful consideration was made to ensure that all hospital services remained open during the construction of the multi-phase project by beginning new construction and the first phase of renovation at the same time. The $96 million project includes 167,550 square feet of which 89,300 square feet is new construction. The expansion includes two new floors to the patient tower, making room for approximately 80 additional beds. A 290,000-square-foot parking lot was added providing 750 new spaces. The surgery department was also expanded, creating 10 new operating rooms that nearly tripled the size of the department. The center's expanded heart center has also benefited from the project because it can now offer better treatment for its patients. Additionally, the large arched roof (bottom) and giant-scaled pilasters create a visual landmark that can be seen for several miles. CRA worked within site constraints limiting horizontal development by building a pedestrian skywalk across one of the city's busiest thoroughfares connecting the old facility to a new medical office building on the Medical Center campus and to additional parking.**

TARA SPARKS

**RESOURCES** METAL DECKING: Consolidated Systems; ARCHITECTURAL METAL WORK: Ennis Steel; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: Williams & Clark Custom Woodworking; LAMINATES: Formica; PLASTIC FABRICATIONS: Corian; ROOF AND DECK INSULATION: Carlisle; EXTERIOR: Dryvit; MEMBRANE ROOFING: Carlisle; METAL DOORS AND FRAMES: PW Metals; PREASSEMBLED METAL DOORS AND FRAME UNITS: PW Metals; WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES: VT Industries; SPECIALTY DOORS: Total Door; METAL WINDOWS: Wausau Windows; GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING AND ACCESSORIES: Dietrich; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: Armstrong; PAINTS: Sherwin-Williams; HIGH PERFORMANCE COATINGS: Tnemec; SIGNAGE AND GRAPHICS: J&B Graphics

# Design Opportunities with High-Performance Glass

OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN A constant evolution of glass products and technology. We have seen the development of tinted glass, insulating glass, heat-treated and safety glass, reflective and low-emissivity coated glasses, and spectrally selective glazings.

This wide array of products has provided design professionals with countless aesthetic possibilities, and significantly, opportunities to achieve increased energy efficiency and occupant comfort.

This trend is not unique to North America. In other parts of the world, glass components are utilized, and often showcased, as part of the building envelope. European glass and window systems frequently involve double-wall glazing. Operating windows, which allow natural ventilation to reduce or eliminate mechanical ventilation, are commonly used. The German energy code even limits the area in the core of a building to ensure that offices have access to natural light coming through windows.

Regardless of the specific climatic condition, today's glazing products afford architects and engineers more design freedom, and, increasingly, the opportunity to achieve reduced building costs and on-going operating savings through energy conservation.

## High-Performance Products

Glass products are a complex part of a building's envelope and play a key role in the energy efficiency of the building. While current glazing systems cannot achieve the same insulating performance or direct solar heat gain reduction as materials like masonry or metal panels, neither can these opaque components allow the free use of natural daylighting like glass products. Modern design, therefore, is premised on a recognition of the trade-offs among alternatives and the integration of these to achieve desired aesthetics, and more importantly, optimum first costs and long-term energy conservation.

A high-performance glass product has three principal performance criteria: insulating performance or U-factor, solar control or solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) and visible light transmittance (Tv). The key is to assess the interaction of all three and their total impact on a building's energy consumption and to select products that meet the most efficient performance specification.

Glazing functions as an enclosure, and has a key role in the heat gain/loss balance of a building. Higher performance products are better insulators than their predecessors and typically achieve a U-factor of 0.35 Btu/hr-ft$^2$-F or less. In cold climates, where wintertime space heating is significant and reduction of heat loss is important, a lower U-factor results in less heat loss and improves interior comfort. In hot climates, the U-factor is less important; solar heat gain control and reduced air conditioning are key elements of design, making a solar heat gain coefficient the most important criterion.

In office buildings, artificial lighting accounts for 40 to 50 percent of the energy used in a commercial building and a good daylighting design can minimize lighting energy use. Because of the potential benefits of daylighting, high-performance glazing is often defined as having a visible light transmittance greater than the solar heat gain coefficient. However, high-performance glazing is not limited to this definition. In buildings without actively controlled daylighting, managing solar loads and heat loss may be the most important selection criterion. Another important consideration is minimizing glare, which may require a low visible light transmittance.

As design professionals establish specific glass product performance criteria for a project, they typically consider aesthetics, relative first costs, impact on HVAC, and interior lighting. As a base line, they must also consider applicable local building codes. In the few areas without codes, it is common to refer to ANSI/ASHRAE/IESNA *Energy Efficient Design of New Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings* (ANSI/ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1-1999). It is the most widely used standard and contains prescriptive requirements for glazing U-factors and solar heat gain coefficients for locations throughout North America.

Windows are addressed head-on in the energy codes because of the significant impact they can have on energy use. The window performance requirements in ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1 are based on a detailed cost analysis. The cost analysis uses actual products and real costs to establish the cost effectiveness of glazing options in different climates. The analysis shows that high performance products are cost effective in almost all climates.

## Designing with the Energy Codes

Because ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1 is based on an extensive cost-effectiveness analysis, the prescriptive requirements in the code provide a solid starting point. In addition to the prescriptive method, the

code includes two other compliance methods, which are particularly instructive when using an integrated design approach.

The other methods in ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1 are the system performance method and the energy cost budget method. Basically, the energy code sets an energy budget for a building. The prescriptive method gives you one way to meet the budget without any flexibility. In contrast, the system performance and energy cost budget methods allow for many different designs to meet the energy budget. The building envelope trade-off option allows trade-offs between envelope components, such as windows and wall insulation. The energy cost budget method allows trade-offs between all the building components and systems. For example, windows with a lower SHGC than the prescriptive requirement can offset a less efficient lighting design. Any building with 50 percent or more window area must use the energy cost budget method to demonstrate compliance.

Software tools have been developed to help show compliance with ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1 using the trade-off option. These software programs are ENVSTD and COMCheck-EZ. In addition, the energy cost budget method or an hourly, whole-building energy simulation program can be used to help identify the best glazing for a project. The whole-building simulations predict the interactions between all building systems in terms of peak and annual energy use.

Many projects today have established a goal to comply with certification programs such as the LEED Green Building Certification Program. A prerequisite of LEED is compliance with ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1, and additional credits can be earned by achieving greater energy efficiency than required by the standard. The improved efficiency levels must be demonstrated using the energy cost budget method, meaning that hourly, whole-building energy simulations must be run. The buildings earning these credits typically have high-performance windows, daylighting controls coupled with an efficient lighting design, and high-efficiency chillers.

## Other Benefits

It is important to remember that there are many more energy-efficient products that can result in a much more comfortable space. The challenge is taking advantage of all the benefits high-performance glazing offers within the design of a project. This can be accomplished through an integrated design approach that recognizes the synergistic relationship between building systems.

High performance windows have greatly expanded design opportunities for a project. Advances in coating technology and tinted glass have made a broader range of products available, many of which have a solar heat gain coefficient of less than 0.40. The current energy codes can be used to identify the most suitable product, and show that glass-enclosed buildings can meet the energy code with the use of high-performance glazing. High-performance glazing also improves comfort conditions and has the potential to reduce first costs as well as operating costs.

SUSAN REILLY

Susan Reilly is president of Enermodal Engineering, Inc., based in Denver. Reilly has over a decade of experience in sustainable design and building energy efficiency and works as a consultant to the window industry.

This article includes segments of a feature story written by Susan Reilly and commissioned by the Primary Glass Manufacturers Council for *Glass Magazine*'s March 2002 issue. Excerpted with permission from *Glass Magazine*, © National Glass Association.

"A Step Outside of Convention" continued from page 29

been sculpted from these thick walls at various points to provide much needed personal space, the best of which makes local reference to *mirador* balconies and *tronera* ("rifle slot") windows.

As a whole, the building is structured by an L-shaped promenade in which the short end runs from north to south (city to park) and the long end from west to east with a striking hall/lobby at its terminus. At the corner, one changes elevation between the street level and the concourse level above for access to the rooms along the facility's south side. A clever sectional shift allows a continuity of interior spatial experience while maintaining the functional requirement of truck access for the massive convention floor at street level.

A thick, blue wall brings order and continuity to the long south-side concourse, which is in itself a string of lobbies. However, these daylight-filled spaces inadequately address the human scale. In most cases, the task of mitigation has been delegated to the oddly placed bench or furniture suite. Along this concourse, individual meeting rooms are subtly marked by carpet patterns and barrel vaults that are almost too high but nonetheless pleasing. At its terminus, the south hall takes its curving and angular form from the unique geology of Texas limestone and flowing water. Impressive in size, tectonics, quality of light, and for its measured engagement with HemisFair Park, the exterior of this part of the convention center – with its broad arch, battered walls, and angular geometry – projects such a photogenic visage that it frequently serves as the representative image of the entire facility. So strong an image, in fact, that one senses the building as facing backwards, that it shows its best face to the park rather than to downtown. Perhaps the planned re-cladding of the exterior facing the city will provide the architects the opportunity to alter this perception.

Despite the successes readily apparent throughout the expansion, the project's one weakness is the lost opportunity for creating a truly unconventional "civic" place—a center that, if only at a minimum, would fully engage the downtown's bustling street life and foster more robust public access to other adjacent parts of the city. While the new "riverlink" and the architecturally distinctive south hall are welcome gifts to the public-at-large, the best experiences of the expansion remain on the inside for the conventioneers who are able to enjoy the departures from convention— the internal order, carpets that are works of art, city vistas, and most important, easy access to the park *and* downtown.

Vincent B. Canizaro, Ph.D., teaches architecture at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

**RESOURCES** **UNIT PAVERS:** Alamo Concrete Pavers; **FOUNTAINS, POOLS AND WATER DISPLAYS:** Cost of Wisconsin; **SITE, STREET AND MALL FURNISHINGS:** Smith & Hawken; **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** River City Ready Mix; **PRECAST ARCHITECTURAL CONCRETE:** Pyramid Stone; **MASONRY UNITS:** Featherlite; **LIMESTONE:** Texas Quarries (Texas Cut Stone, fabricator); **METAL MATERIALS:** ADF; **METAL DECKING:** CSI; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** The Bratton Corp.; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Hausmann & Hausmann; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** TC Miradry; **BUILDING INSULATION:** Owens Corning; **EXTERIOR INSULATION AND FINISH SYSTEMS:** STO; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Bond Coat; **METAL ROOFING:** AEP-SPAN; **CUSTOM BARREL ROOF OVER LOBBY BRIDGE:** A.D. Willis Co.; **METAL DOORS AND FRAMES:** TexSteel; **PREASSEMBLED METAL DOOR AND FRAME UNITS:** Total Door; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** Dimension Millwork; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Samuels's Glass Company; **UNIT SKYLIGHTS:** Naturalite; **GLASS:** PPG Industries; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** PPG Industries; **GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING AND ACCESSORIES:** USG; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** USG; **SPECIAL WALL SURFACES:** Duroplex; **ACOUSTICAL WALL TREATMENTS:** Wall Technology (Owens Corning); **PAINTS:** Tnemec, Sherwin-Williams; **HIGH PERFORMANCE COATINGS:** Tnemec; **SIGNAGE AND GRAPHICS:** Autografx; **OPERABLE PARTITIONS:** Hufcor

# Marketplace



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# Marketplace

# Marketplace



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# Courthouse Style

**A survey of the previous century identifies three distinctive varieties**

TRADITIONALLY A SOURCE OF LOCAL PRIDE, THE TEXAS COUNTY courthouse also entices the casual historian. "Cultural tourism" – traveling around the state looking at courthouses with snapshot/video/digital camera in hand – has been an active pursuit in Texas long before there was a term for it.

Much of the appeal of the state's 254 county courthouses is in their diversity of size, age, and style. Most – 225 to be exact – are considered "historic," meaning more than 50 years old. The Cass County Courthouse (Linden; Charles Ames; 1861) is the oldest functioning courthouse, its Tuscan columns and pediment a last flair of antibellum neo-classicism.

Courthouses of the late 1800s are the best known and have come to symbolize the courthouse itself. Built during a period of prosperity following Reconstruction, the ornate stone and brickwork, high pitched roofs, and tall towers of these eclectic "Victorian" designs created an image of stability and authority. The massive Romanesque pile of two-tone rusticated stone in Ellis County (Waxahachie; J. Riely Gordon; 1896) is the epitome of the period.

The first decades of the twentieth century saw a dramatic shift from exuberant eclecticism to a Beaux Arts-inspired classicism. The McLennan County Courthouse (Waco; J. Riely Gordon; 1901), one of the earliest, also shows the adaptability of the architect to changing fashion. Courthouses for Bee County (Beeville; Stephenson & Heldenfels; 1912) and Harris County (Houston; Lang, Witchell & Barglebaugh; 1910) illustrate this style's adaptability to the needs of both rural and metropolitan areas.

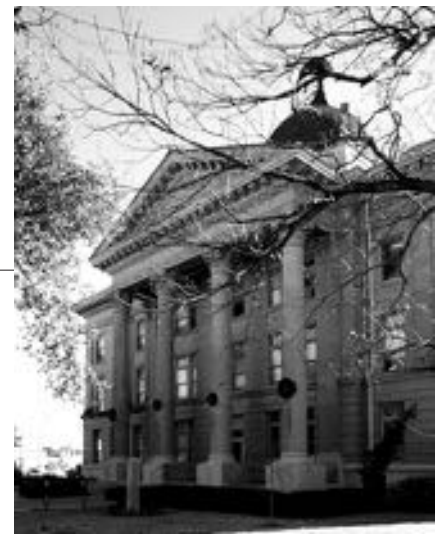
The next stylistic shift came in the late 1920s, inspired by the Paris *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* of 1925 and the published work of Peter Behrens, Eliel Saarinen, Paul Cret, and Bertram Goodhue. These new courthouses in the "Moderne" style brought a renewed sense of stability to Depression-torn communities. The Liberty County Courthouse (Liberty; Corniel Curtis; 1931), an early example, was designed in 1927 and has a rich program of relief sculpture composed of local motifs—oil derricks, covered wagons, locomotives, longhorns, palmettos, and pelicans.

Unfortunately, many courthouses built since World War II fail to make the best of modernism and lack an appropriate civic dignity. An exception is the Matagorda County Courthouse (Bay City; Rusty, Martin & Vale; 1965). Raised on a stepped plinth, the overhanging second floor with its deep, shading window frames responds to the Gulf Coast climate of intense sun and heavy rain.

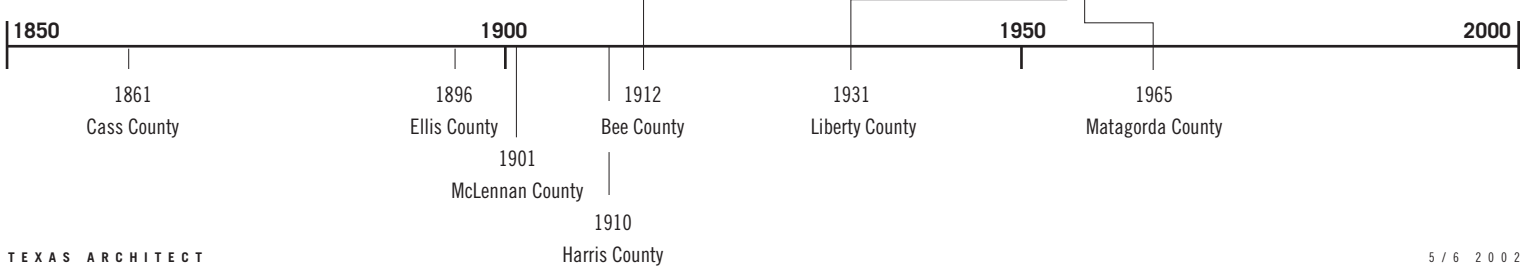
Since 1999, even more attention has been focused on the courthouses as the Texas Historical Courthouse Program of the Texas Historical Commission attempts to bring them up to code and restore their architectural integrity. To date, 46 courthouses have received some level of funding.

GERALD MOORHEAD, FAIA

A *TA* contributing editor, Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, is also editor of *Buildings of Texas*, to be published by the Society of Architectural Historians.



Photos by Gerald Moorhead, FAIA



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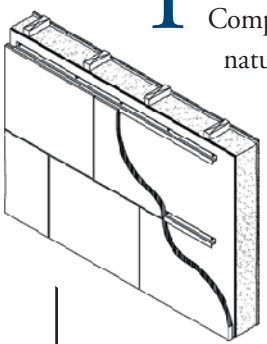

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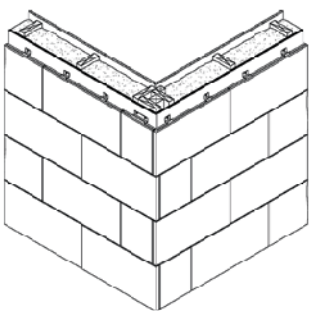

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