

U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL MÉRIDA, MEXICO

GROUNDBREAKING FACT SHEET
DECEMBER 2020



The Miller Hull Partnership
Design Architect

BL Harbert International
General Contractor

\$210 Million
Project Budget

\$85 Million
Estimated Local Community Impact

Since 1843, a U.S. Consulate General on the Yucatán Peninsula has served both Mexican and U.S. citizens. In addition to the thousands of U.S. citizens who reside in the Consular District, millions of U.S. citizens visit the Yucatán Peninsula annually. The Yucatán attracts a variety of tourists in all seasons: beachcombers on the Riviera Maya, history buffs and art collectors to the colonial cities of Mérida and Valladolid, and explorers to the iconic Mayan ruins of Chichén Itzá and Uxmal. Mérida and its environs continue to provide an exciting vision for Mexico's future: a strong regional partner with robust cultural and interpersonal ties presenting extensive opportunities for U.S. investment.

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) awarded the construction contract for a new U.S. Consulate General in Mérida in September 2019 and anticipates completion in 2023. Throughout this project, an estimated \$85 million will be invested in the local economy, and the project will employ an estimated workforce of over 1,000 American, Mexican, and third-country nationals throughout construction. The U.S. Department of State is investing over \$1.5 billion in new building construction to support U.S. diplomatic operations in Mexico, including the new Consulate General in Mérida.

Design and Construction

Landscaping, stone walls, and water features will direct visitors around and through the site, creating an accessible experience. Distinct zones will create outdoor spaces that can be used by the community for outdoor gatherings and formal ceremonies. Balancing the gardens' orthogonal shapes, areas of dense, tropical vegetation will offer a reprieve from the sun and heat.

The glass-clad upper floors extend out over the limestone-clad first floor, creating a shaded walkway around the building. The upper floors' sunscreen will primarily control glare and mitigate solar heat gain, creating

comfortable spaces inside. The resulting effect is reminiscent of the Mayan ruins, which hover above the jungle and provide views over the trees across the peninsula.

A green, stone-clad atrium — inspired by the *cenotes* dotting the region — will be the heart of the building, providing a place for the community to meet while also serving as the main circulation spine for the building. Hidden inside, the core is discovered upon entry, an element of surprise that will be familiar to anyone who has visited a *cenote*. The atrium extends from the lobby, past the gallery, and up through the office area. The central stair, atrium, and gallery come together on the second level, creating a multi-functional space for formal ceremonies and informal meetings. With views out to the south and into the skylit atrium, the gallery will be full of natural light.

Resiliency

The project, registered with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) version 4.1 and aiming for Gold certification, will be an example of OBO's goals for sustainable and resilient embassies and consulates with 350 KW solar power generation, air-cooled chillers with heat recovery, optimized daylighting controls, and high-efficiency plumbing fixtures. The landscape's native vegetation and greywater irrigation ensure that the site will minimize potable water use. Additionally, the site itself is a remediated brownfield site.

Art

Curated by OBO's Office of Art in Embassies, the permanent art collection will include paintings, photographs, textiles, and sculptures by American and Mexican artists. The collection seeks to create a dialogue based on shared values between the people of our two nations. Highlights will include site-specific commissioned works that reflect the diversity and richness of American and Mexican cultural heritage.



Bird's Eye View



Section Through Atrium

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