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2026 AIA Fellowship

Candidate Curtis F. Clay
Organization U.S. Department of State - Overseas Buildings Operations
Location Fairfax, Virginia
Chapter AIA Washington DC;

Category of Nomination

Object 4 (Government, Industry Org, Public Service) > Government

Summary Statement

Curtis Clay elevates public architecture worldwide, promotes excellence in diplomatic architecture and advances innovative government programs. Shaping national policy, creating opportunities for small firms, and inspiring students, his leadership enriches the global build environment.

Education

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1999-2000, Master of Architecture
Howard University, 1992 - 1997, Bachelor of Architecture

Licensed in:

District of Columbia ARC101106
Virginia 0401016844

Employment

Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, U.S. Department of State, 2015-Present
NoMa Business Improvement District, 2013-2015
Perkins + Will, 2011-2013
DC Department of General Services, 2007-2011
Accessibility Technical Advisory Group Chair, DC Construction Codes Coordinating Board, 2009-2011
Street Sense, 2006-2007
Sorg & Associates, 2005-2006
Group Goetz Architects, 2004-2005
VOA & Associates (now Stantec), 2000-2004
Atelier Architects, 1997-1999
Lorena Checa Associates, 1996-1997

DOUGLAS M BRINKLEY, FAIA, LEED Fellow
4509 Silverwood LN N | Oakland Park, FL 33309 | 919.800.1711

The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue NW
Washington DC 20006

Re: Curtis F. Clay, AIA Nomination for Fellowship

Dear Chair and Members of the 2026 Fellows Jury:

I am honored and humbled to sponsor Curtis F. Clay, AIA, for elevation to the AIA College of Fellows in Object 4, Government. I have witnessed the trajectory of Curtis' career, from his time educating future architects at Howard University, to his empathy for ensuring all people have access to the benefits of exceptional design, to his current role as Director of Architecture at the U.S. Department of State's Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) where he leads and inspires staff and award winning firms to generate solutions that promote and advance U.S. diplomacy worldwide.

As the Director of Architecture, Curtis leads one of the largest real estate portfolios in the world. His dedication ensures all OBO projects respond to diverse climatic, cultural, security, and functional hurdles. The result represents significant achievements in architecture, design, engineering, technology, sustainability, art, culture, and construction execution for the United States.

The impact of Curtis' work is best understood through the 14 programs he has created, such as *Embassy 2050*. This program has advanced the work of designers such as Thom Mayne and Marlon Blackwell, educated students at Howard and Harvard universities, and informed non-profit organizations, industry allies, and academic institutions on the importance of "future proofing" the built environment. The long-term resiliency and diplomatic effectiveness of the U.S. embassies and consulates designed under Curtis' leadership are the ripple effect of his work.

Embassy campuses require distinct typologies; significant expertise in utility infrastructure, data systems integration, and sustainability; and housing design and office planning. Curtis synthesizes this vast expertise to achieve an architectural, experiential, and environmental manifestation of U.S. diplomacy. His strong leadership means OBO facilities achieve the highest standards for design excellence with architecture that is safe and secure for diplomats and their communities, allowing diplomacy to thrive.

Curtis has established OBO standards for sustainable, resilient, and inclusive design in complete alignment with the AIA's *Framework for Design Excellence*. He has led development of OBO's Climate Security & Resilience Program, requiring all site acquisitions to undergo rigorous analysis before being approved. His rework of the Barrier Free Accessibility Program resulted in Congress allocating a funding source to resolve accessibility issues worldwide. He spearheaded congressional engagement to update the *Secure Embassy Counterterrorism and Construction Act* to add design inclusivity. Curtis has integrated these programs into OBO's culture and ensured their use on every project.

His leadership has spurred cities worldwide to update building and energy codes and improve stormwater infrastructure to prevent flooding, such as in Nogales, Mexico. He single-handedly made LEED Certification an OBO priority, committing full-time staff to ensuring all projects meet energy and water conservation goals. As a result, the number of LEED Certified OBO projects has risen from 55 to 75, with 29 more slated to be certified by 2026. Curtis elevates the profile of American architects globally as he expands employment opportunities for smaller, more diverse firms.

Curtis' leadership, policies, and programs promote culturally sensitive, sustainable, resilient diplomatic architecture. He elevates the architect's role in government by engaging them with the host nation's stakeholders in dialogue during the design process to bridge cultures, build resilience and shape U.S. Diplomacy. Curtis is extending the legacy of excellence in diplomatic architecture for the next century. I wholeheartedly endorse and sponsor Curtis F. Clay, AIA, to the AIA College of Fellows.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas M. Brinkley, FAIA
Design Manager, Office of Design & Engineering
Creative IT Solutions, LLC

Curtis Clay elevates public architecture worldwide, promotes excellence in diplomatic architecture and advances innovative government programs. Shaping national policy, creating opportunities for small firms, and inspiring students, his leadership enriches the global built environment.

TRANSFORMING EMBASSY DESIGN

From a foundational philosophy of “Design Diplomacy,” Curtis Clay has revolutionized U.S. embassy architecture. He initiated and now leads a multitude of innovative programs. These efforts elevate architecture to be an integral part of achieving the U.S. diplomatic mission and The Embassy Effect of positive growth globally.

Curtis established policies and programs, such as Embassy 2050, a strategic partnership with academia and industry that provides an implementation roadmap for U.S. embassies over the next 25 years using sustainable, resilient, and adaptable criteria. New Mass Timber Design Standards, developed through a multidisciplinary team, accelerate construction schedules, promote U.S. prefabrication, and reduce costs.

His leadership ensures secure, functional designs that incorporate sustainable features and prioritize local environmental needs. The result advances America’s global mission through architecture that is both beautiful and empathetic to local communities and their needs.

Curtis’ leadership has garnered eight U.S. Department of State honor awards for innovative policies and practices.

ADVANCING POLICY & ETHICAL PROGRAMS

To eliminate forced labor in the supply chain, Curtis drove policy change for the U.S. Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, partnering with the Grace Farms Foundation and the State Department’s Trafficking in Persons office to develop new procurement tools.

His Design Anthropology initiative, created through collaboration with HGA Architects, ensures locale-sensitive design decisions in overseas architecture. His advocacy for the Barrier-Free Accessibility Program mandates access at all diplomatic missions globally—often at sites where programs and policies had previously been ignored. Other advancements under his watch include SECCA 22 to codify performance-based setback requirements that allow greater design flexibility. The result is a smaller embassy footprint that still meets blast and progressive collapse requirements.

Together, the programs Curtis has created and championed redefine U.S. diplomacy. His work also ensures socially and responsible, culturally responsive, and locale-conscious architectural strategies remain at the forefront of shaping future U.S. embassies and consulates.

GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES

Curtis expands access to State Department work to architects across the country. He created the *Support Services Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity* (IDIQ) contract for flexible task orders based on agency requirements within a set time frame. This contract offers new opportunities to small architecture firms, such as Moore Ruble Yudell and WXY Architecture. His efforts have resulted in tens of millions of dollars in master planning, security upgrades, and deferred maintenance embassy projects being awarded to small American firms.

To introduce architects across the country to the State Department’s Embassy design program, Curtis initiated and executed a national outreach campaign that has resulted in the most geographically diverse responses to architect solicitation. Fifty-percent of 12 recently selected firms were registered small businesses who had not previously participated in diplomatic work.

To introduce aspiring young architects to career opportunities as a public architect, Curtis initiated design studios focused on Embassy projects at schools of architecture nationwide through the U.S. Department of State’s Diplomacy Lab Initiative.



As the Director of Architecture for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO), Curtis has created, developed, and implemented innovative programs that have transformed the way architects design embassies around the world. His early work for the District of Columbia, including as advisor to DC's Mayor to reshape the District's policies and programs on historic rehabilitation, homelessness, accessibility, and building codes, were instrumental to his success creating policies and programs at the U.S. Department of State.

EDUCATION

Master of Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2000
Bachelor of Architecture, Howard University, 1997

REGISTRATIONS

NCARB	93369
District of Columbia	ARC101106
Virginia	0401016844

COMMITTEE

Working Group Member, Design For Freedom, 2023 - present

EXPERIENCE

Director of Architecture, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, U.S. Department of State, 2019-Present
Design Manager, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, U.S. Department of State, 2015-2019
Director of Park & Public Realm Development, NoMa Business Improvement District, 2013-2015
Project Manager, Perkins + Will, 2011-2013
Deputy Director, DC Department of General Services, 2010-2011
Administrator, DC Department of General Services, 2007-2010
Mayor Advisor, Historic Eastern Market Rehabilitation & Homelessness, 2007-2010
Mayoral Appointee, Accessibility Technical Advisory Group Chair, DC Construction Codes Coordinating Board, 2009-2011
Architectural Designer, Street Sense, 2006-2007
Project Architect, Diplomatic Projects (Kabul, Bridgetown, Helsinki, Kathmandu), Sorg & Associates, 2005-2006
Project Architect, Group Goetz Architects, 2004-2005
Associate Architect, VOA Associates (now Stantec), 2000-2004
Junior Architect, Atelier Architects, 1997-1999
Intern Architect, Lorena Checa Associates, 1996-1997

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Member, Design Awards Jury, AIA Virginia, 2024
Member, AIA President's Prosperity Committee, AIA National, 2024
Member, AIA# 2015-present

ACADEMIA

Guest Lecturer, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, "Professional Practice" Course, 2023, 2024
Adjunct Assistant Professor, Howard University, School of Architecture, 2004 - 2009

2.1 | SIGNIFICANT WORK

PROJECTS EXECUTED UNDER CURTIS' LEADERSHIP

\$32 billion of projects in over 50 countries are currently in design, construction or have been completed under Curtis Clay's supervision. His leadership as a creator and champion of policies creates more sustainable, resilient, and culturally and contextually sensitive projects, promotes innovation and advances U.S. diplomacy worldwide. He currently represents the U.S. Department of State in all major design activities at 290 locations worldwide.

Under Curtis' watch, 10 diplomatic projects have received LEED Certification, with 29 more slated to achieve it by 2026. Many—17 to date—will be the first LEED certified projects in their country.



- Argentina
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Burkina Faso
- Cabo Verde
- Central African Republic
- China
- Colombia
- Curaçao
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Djibouti
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Estonia
- France
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Greenland
- Honduras
- Iceland
- India
- Iraq
- Israel
- Italy
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Lebanon
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Mali
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Moldova
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Peru
- Qatar
- São Tomé e Príncipe
- Saudi Arabia
- Slovakia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Tonga
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Uganda
- Vietnam



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Brussels, Belgium
EST COMPLETION 2033

SYNOPSIS

Curtis is leading the design of a new embassy in Brussels with the firm KieranTimberlake.

The Brussels' site also hosts the U.S. mission to the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

His design oversight ensures dedicated space to each organization while creating shared amenities, resulting in a functional and flexible space for the three entities that draws on the local art nouveau vernacular while respecting the Etterbeek neighborhood and creating a monumental face on a primary street.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

KieranTimberlake



NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND

Almaty, Kazakhstan
EST COMPLETION 2030

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led inclusion of a **design anthropologist** to be incorporated into the project team. The principles of design to foster Kazakh identity and social connectivity while respecting the local environment.

The inspiration for the primary building's central courtyard came from the aesthetic and structural influences of the traditional Kazakh yurt. This, along with the principles of creating thoughtful amenity spaces and providing opportunities for cross-cultural engagement, drove Curtis' hands-on design decisions for the 17.4-acre compound.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Ennead Architects, LLP



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
EST COMPLETION 2030

SYNOPSIS

Given that temperatures often drop to -30°F for much of the year, Curtis championed design solutions driven by the necessity of a shortened construction period, particularly for pouring concrete. To address this, he led the adoption of off-site manufactured precast panels, which significantly reduce both the time and the on-site construction activities.

The final design is resilient for the site's extreme conditions, reflecting a disciplined ethic of distilled utility throughout.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Allied Works Architects



NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND

Adana, Turkey
EST COMPLETION 2029

SYNOPSIS

Curtis served as jury chair for this design competition where the designer and contractor were selected concurrently with design.

Curtis' advocacy for this unique procurement process established design as the primary 'best value' factor. The project validates his **new model for design procurement** at OBO, which will allow the government to select the best architecture as long as the cost is reasonably close to the government's estimate.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

DLR Group

CONTRACTOR

Caddell Construction Co, LLC



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago
EST COMPLETION 2029

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led the procurement of a **design anthropologist** to be incorporated into the design process to ensure the new embassy's plan was sensitive to the local culture and the site's history. Located on a colonial residence that once housed slaves, the new design deftly responds to this painful history. The plan retrofits the original entrance—once prohibited for slave use—to serve as the primary entrance for all local visitors.

The design preserves two historic Samaan trees and adapts the site plan to ensure the legacy trees are retained while framing views that integrate them into the embassy experience.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Mark Cavagnero Associates

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

DLR Group



NEW OFFICE ANNEX

Nairobi, Kenya
EST COMPLETION 2029

SYNOPSIS

This new classified office annex will serve as the face of the U.S. embassy on a major street, providing a secure, modern, and **environmentally sustainable platform** for diplomacy.

Part of Curtis' leadership involved mediation of tenant requirements with the available budget to achieve the best outcome and the most efficient use of taxpayer funds. The result is an elegant new entry sequence that seamlessly integrates into the existing Nairobi campus.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Ennead Architects, LLP



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
EST COMPLETION 2028

SYNOPSIS

Curtis oversaw the radical transformation from the architect's original proposal to the final design to ensure the project met OBO's constructability needs. He also led the A/E team to generate a refined façade solution that was more contextual than early design schemes.

With summer temperatures reaching 130°F and high humidity, Curtis worked with Morphosis to reorient the buildings to maximize passive cooling. This approach reduces the compound's energy load and maintenance costs by utilizing shading devices against the harsh sun while ensuring natural light penetrates the interiors.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Morphosis Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Integrus Architects



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Praia, Cabo Verde
EST COMPLETION 2028

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led the project team's incorporation of **design anthropology** and **climate security** principles into the project. He ensured use of Cabo Verdean planning principles, which prioritize sustainable development and environmental protection balanced with social equity and economic growth. This approach drove the site organization and landscaping to allow for flood events to occur without impacting embassy operations.

AWARDS

Unbuilt Design, Citation, AIA Arizona, 2024

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

STUDIO MA Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Integrus Architects



NEW OFFICE ANNEX

Bangkok, Thailand
EST COMPLETION 2028

SYNOPSIS

Curtis has led major design changes decided after the project was awarded for construction, including incorporation of significant program changes and a new ambassador’s vision, which conflicted with the original.

His stewardship of these changes successfully incorporates them with minimal impact to the project schedule. He also led a team to oversee a visual façade mock-up, resulting in both key aesthetic improvements and a reduction in constructability challenges for the project.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

SHoP Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Page Southerland Page, Inc.



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Juba, South Sudan
PAUSED DUE TO REGIONAL CONFLICT

SYNOPSIS

In one of the newest democracies and one of the poorest countries in the world, Curtis led designers to develop a modest yet representational design solution for Juba.

Drawing on nearby rock formations, the embassy and housing complex integrate into the landscape and align with the scale of the compound’s neighborhood through proportional massing strategies.

With no reliable power, water, stormwater or wastewater infrastructure, Juba, when completed, will be the most sustainable project in OBO’s portfolio.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Integrus Architects



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Bangui, Central African Republic
PAUSED DUE TO REGIONAL CONFLICT

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led close collaboration with Marlon Blackwell to develop a design that is welcoming to the host country and adheres to **design anthropology** principles. The design incorporates local cultural references while being simple to construct with local labor.

The site is prominent along a major north-south commercial corridor—one of only three paved roads in the city.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Marlon Blackwell Architects



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
EST COMPLETION 2027

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led the reorientation of the visitor experience to provide a distinct axis that enables a more dignified representational entrance.

The strategic location of housing allows space for a helicopter landing zone added late to the project.

He reinforced **design anthropology** principles in the development of the façade design, drawing direct inspiration from the diverse environmental mosaic of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

ROLE • TITLE

OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT

SHoP Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Page Southerland Page, Inc.



NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND

Lagos, Nigeria
EST COMPLETION 2027

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led site selection for the U.S.'s largest consular operation in Africa, choosing a new man-made island location.

The completed Lagos Consulate will be the largest such compound in the world, providing an exceptional example of **The Embassy Effect**. The new development is poised to spur major local growth, integrate resilient strategies, and develop new technical and safety skills for local workers.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
Ennead Architects, LLP

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Page Southerland Page, Inc.



EMBASSY EXPANSION & FAÇADE UNIFICATION

Podgorica, Montenegro
PHASE I 2025 / PHASE II EST 2027

SYNOPSIS

Curtis stepped in and led a redesign effort to replace a design rejected by the new OBO Director.

His intervention ensures the new design is representational and successfully unifies the Phase I renovation with the Phase II addition.

His approach established a **unique collaboration** between a new architect and the design/build contractor's architect, resulting in minimal impact on the project schedule.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
Beyer Blinder Belle and
Richard Kennedy Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Integrus Architects



CONSULATE LEASE FIT-OUT

S. Durban, South Africa
EST COMPLETION 2027

SYNOPSIS

Visa traffic overwhelmed the U.S. embassy in Pretoria. Curtis led a strategy to establish a new consulate on the top floor of a recently constructed mall.

He then spearheaded the unique lease-fit-out strategy. The solution provides dedicated vehicle screening, secure parking and a new controlled access point for staff. The design integrates local **anthropological** and **cultural references** through materials and patterns.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
Marlon Blackwell Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
HDR / KCCT Joint Venture



LILONGWE NEW EMBASSY

Lilongwe, Malawi
EST COMPLETION 2026

SYNOPSIS

For this new embassy compound, Curtis was instrumental in curating the façade design, ensuring each section performs individually by responding to the building's orientation and to interior programmatic elements. He then led design reviews / approvals and industry engagement to ensure the success of the intricate design feature.

He approved the innovative site plan, which required the addition of a pedestrian bridge to link parking facilities to the main entrance.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Page Southerland Page, Inc.



CURAÇAO NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND • Curaçao
PROJECT ON HOLD

SYNOPSIS

For this location, near a UNESCO World Heritage Site of pastel colored buildings, Curtis led the inclusion of **anthropological design principles** in the process. He incorporated dichroic glass, which changes colors, reflects light, and ensures the building respects its historic neighbors.

Curtis has targeted **LEED Silver Certification** for the project through its use of shading devices, photovoltaics, and indigenous landscape plantings, among other strategies.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
KieranTimberlake



MARINE SECURITY GUARD RESIDENCE • Tunis, Tunisia
PHASE I 2023 / PHASE II EST 2026

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led master planning efforts that resulted in site selection for a new Marine Security Guard residence on the existing Tunis Embassy Compound. This strategic move frees up the current residence for conversion into much-needed office space.

Curtis led the design team to incorporate the **anthropological principle** of local mashrabiya screens to provide privacy, ventilation, cooling, and light control for the new residence in a modern nod to local craft.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
BNIM Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Bradley/Parker & Associates PC



NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND
Doha, Qatar
EST COMPLETION 2026

SYNOPSIS

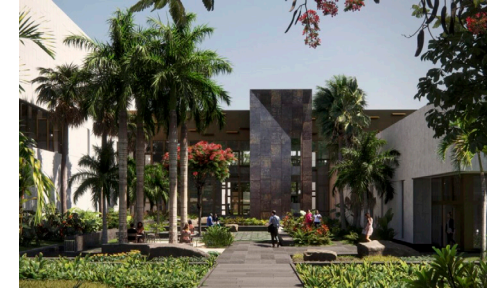
Curtis led senior management design reviews with the goal of selecting **regionally appropriate materials** and **construction techniques**. The result is a timeless, contemporary design that engages with the fabric of Doha and Qatar.

The architecture promotes sustainable values and responds to Qatar culture and environment through efficient water use and passive cooling strategies for cost effective operations.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
Richard Kennedy Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
KCCT Architects



NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND
Port Louis, Mauritius
EST COMPLETION 2026

SYNOPSIS

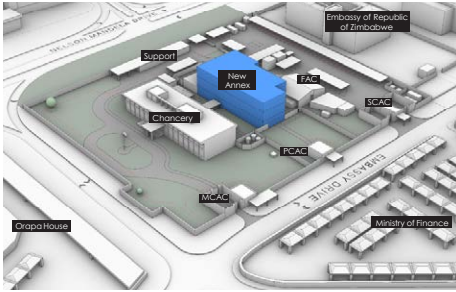
Curtis focused sustainability goals for the Port Louis project on efficient water use, photovoltaic power solutions and efficient HVAC systems. This approach ensures cost effective and **energy independent embassy operations** on this small island.

He navigated a complex zoning and building permit process with five entities to receive construction permits. The completed building will symbolize the U.S. commitment to Mauritius and its future economic growth.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture

DESIGN ARCHITECT
Richard Kennedy Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Page Southerland Page, Inc.



NEW OFFICE ANNEX MASTER PLAN
Gaborone, Botswana
COMPLETION 2025

SYNOPSIS

Facing overcrowding and a significant expansion of classified space needs, Curtis engaged Morphosis Architects to develop a series of options with cost estimates to address the future needs of the campus in accordance with the **Embassy 2050** principles.

He now leads a major rehabilitation with a new office annex as the path forward for the existing Gaborone Embassy.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture
DESIGN ARCHITECT
Morphosis Architects



NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND
Milan, Italy
EST COMPLETION 2026

SYNOPSIS

Designed before Curtis' tenure as OBO's Director of Architecture, he stepped in to lead problem solving for a compromised design execution by the general contractor.

He led collaboration between the design architect, the AOR, and local fabricators to preserve the original design intent throughout construction. His diligence drove the contractor to incorporate off-site manufacturing principles into the façade fabrication process.

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture
DESIGN ARCHITECT
SHoP Architects
ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Page Southerland Page, Inc.



NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND
Guadalajara, Mexico [Exhibit 3.10]
COMPLETION 2024

SYNOPSIS

Curtis selected the final design scheme and established strong sustainability goals and design principles that draw from the local vernacular to respect the neighborhood.

He led the design solution that provided significant outdoor space for staff within the building. This feature allows them to experience the site's temperate climate without exiting the secured perimeter.

AWARDS
Architecture Award, AIA National, 2025

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture
DESIGN ARCHITECT
The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP
ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Integrus Architects



NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND
Nogales, Mexico [Exhibit 3.9]
COMPLETION 2024

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led site selection and design oversight to create an architectural model that comprises **Embassy 2050, Design Anthropology** and principles of **The Embassy Effect**. His insistence on a xeriscape, requiring little to no water, drove the project's sustainability goals and water reduction strategies for the desert climate. The project has spawned hotels, restaurants, and retail development surrounding the Consulate project.

AWARDS
Design Award in Architecture, AIA Washington DC, 2025

ROLE • TITLE
OBO Director of Architecture
DESIGN ARCHITECT
Ennead Architects, LLP
ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Page Southerland Page, Inc.

2.1 | SIGNIFICANT WORK | ADVANCING POLICY & ETHICAL PROGRAMS



BARRIER FREE ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM • 2019 - present [Exhibit 3.6]

SYNOPSIS

Curtis recognized accessible access as the first act of diplomacy. He executed a multi-tiered approach—including global surveys and the Barrier Free Accessibility Dashboard—that drew Congressional attention and resulted in the allocation of dedicated, multi-year funding to resolve accessibility issues worldwide. This funding, coupled with his collaboratively formed Adaptable Accessible Housing Acquisition Program, created a new requirement to make a percentage of all non-representational staff housing accessible globally.

ROLE • TITLE

Advocate • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



GLOBAL ACCESSIBLE ADAPTABLE HOUSING ACQUISITION PROGRAM (AAHAP) • 2023 - PRESENT [Exhibit 3.6]

SYNOPSIS

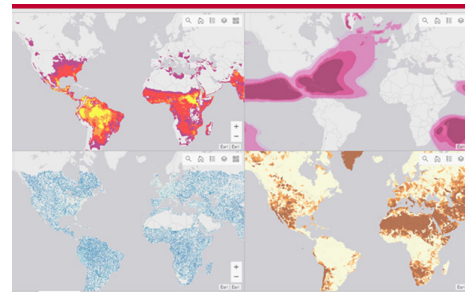
To address the lack of accessible housing for diplomats in 230 out of 288 worldwide diplomatic missions, Curtis created a four-member team to address the immense, labor-intensive challenge with minimal resources. He garnered a \$5 million/year annual appropriation to address Architectural Barriers Act staff housing compliance at 20 locations on 5 continents, including new unit acquisition in 13 locations, renovation of existing U.S.-owned units in 6 locations, and a leased solution in Bandar Seri Begawan.

PUBLICATIONS

[“OBO removes barriers with new housing program,”](#) Victoria Hartke & Ron Tomasso, STATE Magazine, Oct 2021

ROLE • TITLE

Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



CLIMATE SECURITY & RESILIENCE PROGRAM • 2021 - present [Exhibit 3.8]

SYNOPSIS

Extreme storms, heat, drought, flooding, and disease place more than 10% of the State Department’s diplomatic posts in the highest category of climate disaster risk.

To ensure diplomatic missions are more resilient and secure against current and projected natural hazards, Curtis' involvement was integral to the creation of a Climate Hazards Dashboard to identify and address natural hazard risks. This digital asset allows project teams across the government to proactively mitigate risk based on stakeholder data.

ROLE • TITLE

Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



MASS TIMBER SECURITY STANDARDS • 2021 - 2025 [Exhibit 3.5]

SYNOPSIS

With the goals of reducing on-site construction durations and carbon emissions and directing construction resources to U.S. prefabrication companies, Curtis commissioned development of a ‘proof-of-concept’ mass timber embassy to meet OBO’s unique security design criteria and secure construction logistics requirements.

The result is an update to OBO building code that allows mass timber construction for some building types with specific security threat levels. The Tallinn, Estonia New Embassy Compound, currently in design, is the first project to incorporate a mass timber structure on a diplomatic campus. Two other projects are under consideration.

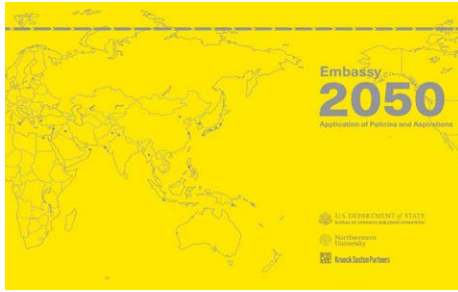
ROLE • TITLE

Advocate • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State

COLLABORATOR

STUDIO MA Architects

2.1 | SIGNIFICANT WORK | ADVANCING POLICY & ETHICAL PROGRAMS



EMBASSY 2050 2022 - 2024 [Exhibit 3.1]

SYNOPSIS

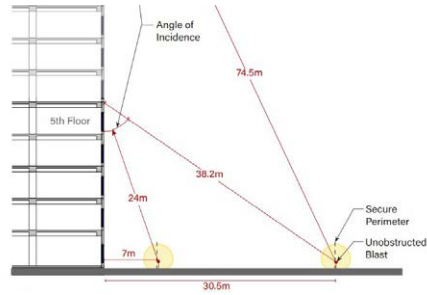
Curtis served as project lead in developing a roadmap to 2050 for the U.S. Government's Embassy building program. He established a collaborative ethos focused on transformative innovation to facilitate changes in structural design, building physics, energy demand, and storage. The *Embassy 2050* report establishes a new model to address issues that threaten international peace and security by guiding design decision-making on projects for decades to come.

ROLE • TITLE

Client • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State

COLLABORATORS

Kruek & Sexton Partners, Northwestern University, Arizona State University, STUDIO MA Architects



REDUCED SETBACK STUDY 2020 - 2023 [Exhibit 3.3]

SYNOPSIS

Curtis commissioned a study on the architectural/structural implications of designing for OBO code requirements at setback distances below mandated by law. He sought to develop performance-based criteria for the *Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999; 22 U.S.C. 4865*. His study analyzed the costs of enhancing superstructure and façade systems to achieve setback equivalency in blast events. Analysis of multiple setback distances determined a 'sweet spot' to achieve blast equivalency with only 6% cost increase, forming the basis for SECCA 22 and future design flexibility for all designers of embassies.

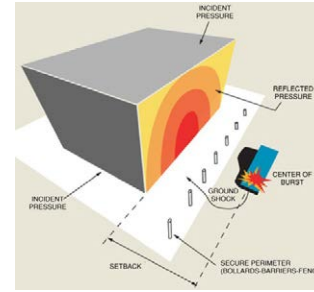
In Bratislava, the U.S. avoided significant costs, acquiring a smaller site instead of an entire block.

ROLE • TITLE

Client • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State

ARCHITECT OR RECORD

Kruek & Sexton Partners



SECURE EMBASSY COUNTERTERRORISM CONSTRUCTION ACT OF 2022 (SECCA 22) 2020 - present [Exhibit 3.3]

SYNOPSIS

Curtis briefed senior OBO leadership on the portfolio-wide impacts of the reduced setback study's results. In collaboration with Diplomatic Security, Curtis engaged Congress to facilitate the first update to congressionally mandated security requirements in 23 years.

The results are new provisions that provide greater flexibility in meeting security standards for new diplomatic facilities, requiring OBO to consider a higher risk tolerance in preparing for security threats at overseas facilities. Architects may now achieve blast equivalency with reduced setbacks, potentially avoiding the cost to acquire larger sites.

ROLE • TITLE

Advocate • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



DESIGN FOR FREEDOM 2021 - present [Exhibit 3.2]

SYNOPSIS

Curtis initiated a partnership between the U.S. State Department and the Grace Farms Foundation to leverage the name recognition and \$3.2B annual spending power of the global Embassy Construction program. This action brings awareness to the challenges of eliminating slave labor from the building material supply chain. Through a partnership with the U.S. Trafficking In Persons office, he has focused on eliminating slave labor from the acquisition of raw materials and introduced rigorous material supply chain risk mapping to advance ethical sourcing across OBO projects.

ROLE • TITLE

Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State

COLLABORATOR

Grace Farms Foundation, Non-Profit United States of America, Department of State Awards, U.S. Department of State, Office of Trafficking In Persons



DESIGN ANTHROPOLOGY

2021 - present [Exhibit 3.4]

SYNOPSIS

Curtis assessed OBO's global implementation of its Design Excellence program beginning in 2019. His work identified multiple instances of inappropriate cultural adaptation in design projects.

In 2021 he began advocating for teams to add a design anthropologist to perform research, interview local staff, and incorporate their findings into design development. The incorporation of the Design Anthropologist role is now a contract requirement on major capital projects and has been implemented on projects in Kazakhstan, Belgium, and El Salvador.

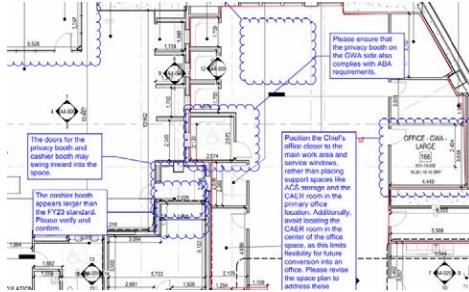
The result: valuable taxpayer resources are no longer spent to rework culturally offensive design elements.

ROLE • TITLE

Client • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

HGA Architects



DIGITAL DESIGN REVIEWS

2018 - 2021

SYNOPSIS

A complete embassy campus set of construction documents costs about \$50,000 to print. With over 20 subject matter experts performing reviews, the U.S. spent \$1M on every major printed design submission for multiple projects. Curtis led transitioning OBO from an antiquated paper-based review system to an intelligent PDF-based system with automated comment creation functionality.

Digital Design Review is now standard on all major design reviews, and OBO has eliminated 100% of paper-based deliverable requirements, resulting in multi-million dollar savings and functional communications review software interface upgrades. These savings funded large-format monitors for OBO technical reviewers.

ROLE • TITLE

Advocate • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



THE EMBASSY EFFECT

2020 - present

SYNOPSIS

In response to economic, environmental, and social controversies surrounding the U.S. Embassy in London—a project that exemplified the global challenges of acquiring new embassy sites—Curtis created a government marketing strategy modeled on the triple bottom line (People, Planet, Profits). His goal is to engage countries in understanding the benefits a U.S. Embassy for cities.

He compiled economic and environmental data on recently completed projects to highlight the social, cultural, security, and artistic enhancements of embassy development resulting in successful site acquisitions in previously challenging locations such as acquisitions in Chisinau, Moldova; Lagos, Nigeria; Brussels, Belgium; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Dublin, Ireland; and Singapore.

PUBLICATIONS

"[OBO Embassy Effect 2021](#)," YouTube, Oct 6, 2021

ROLE • TITLE

Client • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



LEED CERTIFICATION ADVOCACY

2019 - present

SYNOPSIS

Despite a contractual requirement for a minimum of LEED Silver on all major capital projects, several completed and ongoing projects lacked certification. Curtis leads a vigorous effort to complete and achieve LEED certification on all major projects.

In 5 years, 10 projects have achieved LEED Certification with 29 more slated for certification worldwide by 2026. Many—17 to date—will be the first LEED certified projects in their country. Curtis established a relationship with the USGBC, facilitated security clearances for their staff, and integrated USGBC design review teams into the government's LEED certification review system to facilitate expedited reviews.

PUBLICATIONS

"[U.S. Embassy Colombo Achieves LEED Gold Certification](#)," Office of the Spokesperson, State.gov, Dec 16, 2024

ROLE • TITLE

Advocate • Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE - ARCHITECTURE / ENGINEERING SUPPORT SERVICES IDIQ CONTRACT • 2021 [Exhibit 3.7]

SYNOPSIS

To open architecture and engineering firms to OBO work, Curtis led development of a new five-year contract to provide opportunities to small, woman-owned, service-disabled, and veteran-owned businesses. It provided operation and planning support services, research, and development, resulting in 12 new firms receiving contracts with a maximum value of \$25 million. His requirement that a percentage of contracts go to underserved firms created a pipeline for emerging practices.

PUBLICATIONS

"[12 Companies Win Spots on State Department's Worldwide IDIQ](#)," Jane Edwards, GovConWire.com, Aug 2, 2021
 "[The OBO announces selected firms](#)," Nathaniel Bahadursingh, *Architect*, Aug 2, 2021

ROLE • TITLE

Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



DIPLOMACY LAB • 2020 - Present [Exhibit 3.7]

SYNOPSIS

Previous to Curtis' tenure, OBO had not participated in the Diplomacy Lab, which provides opportunities for the U.S. Government to collaborate with academia. Since 2021, Curtis has led OBO engagement with architecture schools across the country, engaging students in the study of diplomatic campus design including design studios at Yale University; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Arizona State University; and Virginia Tech. His student engagement efforts focus on expanding awareness about the range of career options and celebrating and advancing the role of the public architect among emerging professional talent.

ROLE • TITLE

Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



OBO A/E ROADSHOW • 2022 [Exhibit 3.7]

SYNOPSIS

To garner interest, improve firm geographic diversity for OBO projects, and expand opportunities for small business A/E firms, Curtis partnered with AIA chapters nationwide, traveling to many to showcase the OBO's work, explain A/E procurement processes, remove barriers, eliminate assumptions about working for the government, and encourage architects from across the country to apply. His efforts resulted in the largest and most regionally diverse response ever to an architect RFP in OBO history with 50% of the 12 selected firms being registered small businesses from across the country.

PUBLICATIONS

[A/E Design Services Road Show](#), 2022
[A/E Design Services Industry Roadshow](#), U.S. Department of State, OBO, AIA Minnesota, 2022

U.S. Department of State Opportunity for Architects, AIA New Jersey, Oct 19, 2022

ROLE • TITLE

Director of Architecture, U.S. Department of State



LA CASA PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING • Washington, DC • 2014

SYNOPSIS

Curtis led implementation of a new approach to housing DC's unhoused. Set in a high-density neighborhood, the 40 single-occupancy units have amenities including training and laundry facilities. He initiated design solutions to meet community needs by adding a private outdoor terrace to assuage loitering concerns. His project brief and consistent community engagement created opportunities for people to transition into permanent housing.

AWARDS

Merit Award, AIA Virginia, 2015
 Award for Excellence, AIA Maryland, 2015
 Award of Excellence, AIA DC, 2015
 Housing Award for Architecture, AIA National, 2015
 Housing Award, Specialized Housing, AIA National, 2015

ROLE • TITLE

Administrator, DC Department of General Services

ARCHITECT

Studio 27 Architecture / Leo Daly Joint Venture

2.2 | SIGNIFICANT AWARDS, HONORS & RECOGNITION

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Curtis' leadership of OBO projects and his work for the District of Columbia have resulted in professional recognition for design excellence:

Architecture Award, AIA National, Hyderabad, India New Consulate Compound, 2025

Design Award in Architecture, AIA Washington DC, Nogales, Mexico New Consulate Compound, 2025
[Exhibit 3.9]

Architecture Award, AIA National, Guadalajara, Mexico New Consulate Compound, 2025 [Exhibit 3.10]

Unbuilt Design, Citation, AIA Arizona, Praia, Cabo Verde New Embassy Compound, 2024

Merit Award, AIA Virginia, La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, 2015

Award for Excellence in Design, AIA Maryland, La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, 2015

Award of Excellence in Architecture, AIA DC, La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, 2015

Housing Award for Architecture, AIA National, La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, 2015

Housing Award, Specialized Housing, AIA National, La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, 2015



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Meritorious Honor Award, Exemplary Support of the Worldwide Support Services IDIQ Contract, 2024

Meritorious Honor Award, Exemplary Service & Leadership as Acting Director of Design & Engineering, 2024

Superior Honor Award, *The National Defense Authorization Act of 2022 and "SECCA '22"*, 2023 [Exhibit 3.3]
(Exceptional coordination and effort to develop the implementation strategy to enact changes.)

Meritorious Honor Award, Outstanding Teamwork, Leadership & Execution in a 6 year effort to sign a contract for the Republican Stadium NEC site in Chisinau, Moldova, 2023

Superior Honor Award, Excellence & Outstanding Performance for the U.S. Department of State, 2020

Superior Honor Award, Outstanding Dedication, Exceptional Contributions & Skill in Developing Complex Security Standards in concert with Diplomatic Security, 2020

Superior Honor Award, Outstanding Performance, Collaboration & Dedication in completing the multi-year site acquisition for a New Consulate Compound site in Lagos, Nigeria, 2020

Meritorious Honor Award, Unwavering Dedication & Superlative Effort to completely revamp OBO's approach to bridging design resulting in tangible cost and schedule savings with the benefit of putting our diplomats in safe and secure buildings faster, 2019



2.3 | SIGNIFICANT PUBLICATIONS

BY NOMINEE / NOMINEE AS CONTRIBUTOR

[Design for Freedom International Guidance & Toolkit](#), Contributing Author, Mar 31, 2025

"OPSR5 - OBO Deliverable Requirements: J.2.5 ODR 09 - Cultural Heritage Standards," Contributing Author, 2025 Edition

["U.S. Department of State, Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan 2024-2027,"](#) Contributing Author, Oct 13, 2024

["Functional Bureau Strategy: Overseas Building Operations,"](#) Contributor, January 13, 2022

Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan, Contributor, U.S. Department of State (in response to Biden Administration Executive Order #14008), 2024-2027

"Embassy 2050: Application of Policies and Aspirations," Contributor with Northwestern University and Krueck Sexton Partners (publication pending security review)

ABOUT NOMINEE & NOMINEE'S WORK

["Building Resilience Against Extreme Weather: From UF to Global Policy and Design,"](#) Forward Pathway, U.S. College Database, Mar 26, 2025

["U.S. Embassy Colombo Achieves LEED Gold Certification,"](#) Office of the Spokesperson, State.gov, December 16, 2024

"Securing the future," Kimberly Dowdell, AIA, NOMAC, The American Institute of Architects, Dec 9, 2024

["Future-proofing U.S. embassies and consulates,"](#) Amanda Morris, *Northwestern Now*, Oct 10, 2024

"Advancing prosperity for architects," Kimberly Dowdell, AIA, NOMAC, The American Institute of Architects, Oct 30, 2024

["Materials Matter: Building the Embassy of the Future,"](#) Naresh Thadhani, *National Academy of Engineering Perspectives*, Aug 31, 2023

["Announcement: New Embassy site in Port of Spain,"](#) usEmbassy.gov, Apr 13, 2023

["U.S. Government Acquires Land for Future Construction of Two Diplomatic Missions in Brussels,"](#) U.S. Embassy in Belgium, usembassy.gov, Dec 14, 2022

["Embassy 2050,"](#) Marc J Neveu & Philip M Horton, Arizona State University, AIA / ACSA Intersections Research Conference: Resilient Futures, Oct 7, 2022

["U.S., Nigeria Celebrate Historic Groundbreaking of New U.S. Consulate General in Lagos,"](#) by U.S. Mission Nigeria, March 31, 2022

["OBO Embassy Effect 2021,"](#) YouTube, Oct 6, 2021

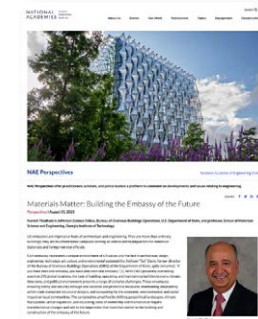
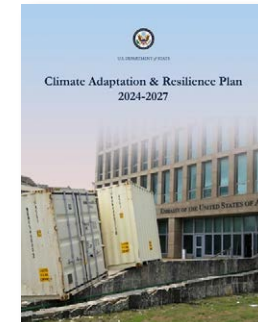
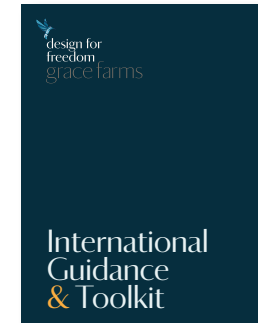
["The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations announces selected firms for worldwide architectural and engineering support services,"](#) Nathaniel Bahadursingh, *Architect*, Aug 2, 2021

["New State-of-the-Art Consulate General Construction on Curaçao,"](#) BES-Reporter.com, 12 July 2021

["OBO removes barriers with new housing program,"](#) Victoria Hartke & Ron Tomasso, *STATE Magazine*, Oct 2021

["12 Companies Win Spots on State Department's Worldwide Architectural, Engineering Support IDIQ,"](#) Jane Edwards, GovConWire.com, Aug 2, 2021

["OBO announces new embassy compound in Port Louis,"](#) Nicholas Von Mertens, *STATE Magazine*, Oct 2020



2.4 | SIGNIFICANT PRESENTATIONS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

TRANSFORMING EMBASSY DESIGN AND ADVANCING POLICY & ETHICAL PROGRAMS

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

- Speaker, “**Design Diplomacy**,” AIA Washington DC, Design Excellence Committee Meeting, Washington, DC, Jun 10, 2025
- Speaker, “**Bridging Cultures and Fostering Diplomacy**,” AIA Middle East Conference, Doha, Qatar, Nov 22, 2024
- Speaker / Panelist, “**Architecture and Planning for Cultural Preservation and Resilience**,” AIA New York, New York City, NY, Nov 9, 2024
- Speaker, “**The Embassy Effect**,” AIA Conference on Architecture & Design, Washington, DC, Jun 6, 2024
- Speaker, “**Representing U.S. – U.S. Embassy Design Worldwide**,” AIA Washington, DC (virtual), Jun 29, 2020
- Speaker, “**Design Diplomacy: Cultural Assessment Strategies for Designing in Foreign Countries**,” AIA Conference on Architecture, Chicago, IL, Jun 22, 2022

BUREAU OF OVERSEAS BUILDING OPERATIONS

- Speaker, “**Annual Update on Projects in Design, Embassy 2050, and Design for Freedom**,” OBO Industry Advisory Group (IAG) Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, Sept 21, 2023
- Speaker, “**Design For Freedom**,” OBO Industry Advisory Group (IAG) Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, Sept 15, 2022
- Speaker, “**Embassy 2050**,” OBO Industry Advisory Group (IAG) Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, Sept 17, 2021

ACADEMIA

- Speaker, “**Design Diplomacy**,” Kansas State University School of Architecture, Manhattan, KS, Oct 26, 2022
- Speaker, “**Embassy 2050**,” Kansas State University School of Architecture, Manhattan, KS, Oct 26, 2022

COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY

- Panelist, “**Building the Change We Seek: Art and Architecture**,” Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Apr 14, 2023
- Speaker, “**Accelerating the Movement**,” Grace Farms Design for Freedom Summit, New Canaan, CT, Mar 30, 2023
- Interviewee, “**Best Practice – OBO: Rethinking the Role of the Public Architect**,” Monograph Podcast, Online, Feb, 21, 2022



Curtis presenting at the 2024 AIA Middle East Conference

“With the Industry Advisory Group (IAG) [Curtis] facilitates the perspectives of architects less familiar with OBO to inform the problems and possibilities faced in OBO work. His focus and dedication to the benefits of broadening the field creates excitement around shared design responsibility for preserving, enhancing, and reimaging the Nation’s overseas buildings, spaces, and places for the next generation.”

Claire Weisz, FAIA, Hon. FRAIC, Hon. ASLA
Principal-in-Charge, W X Y



Curtis speaking at the Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, 2023

2.4 | SIGNIFICANT PRESENTATIONS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Speaker, “**A/E Design Services Roadshow**,” AIA Austin, Austin, TX, Nov 16, 2022

Speaker, “**A/E Design Services Roadshow**,” AIA Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, Oct 27, 2022

Speaker, “**A/E Design Services Roadshow**,” AIA Kansas City, Kansas City, MO, Oct 25, 2022

Speaker, “**A/E Design Services Roadshow**,” AIA New Orleans, New Orleans, LA, Oct 18, 2022

Speaker, “**Opportunities to work with OBO**,” AIA Chicago, Chicago, IL, Nov 04, 2019

BUREAU OF OVERSEAS BUILDING OPERATIONS

Speaker, “**A/E Design Services Roadshow**,” U.S. Department of State – Overseas Buildings Operations (virtual), Dec 15, 2022

Panelist, “**Small Business IDIQ Opportunities for Architects**,” ACEC Metropolitan Washington – Federal Government Luncheon, Mar 30, 2022

ACADEMIA

Panelist, “**Homecoming Alumni Panel, Howard University School of Architecture, Engineering and Computer Sciences**,” Washington, DC, Oct 17, 2024

Speaker, “**Diplomacy Lab**,” Kansas State University School of Architecture, Manhattan, KS, Oct 26, 2022

COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY

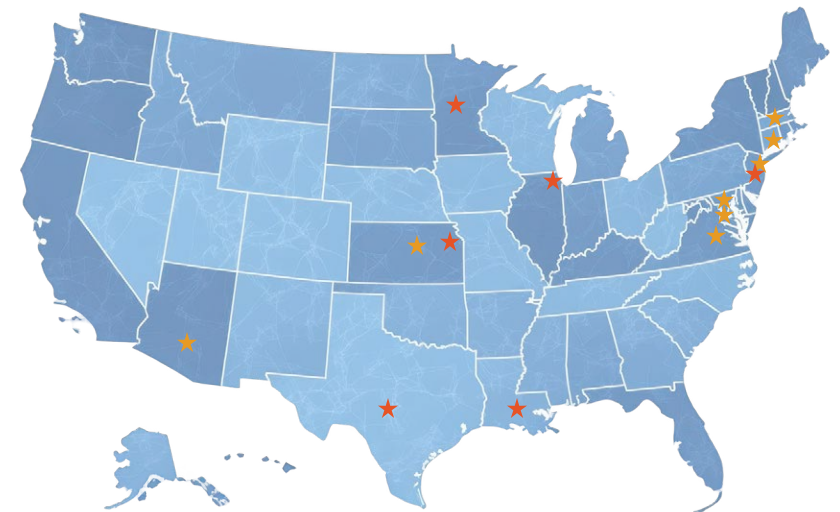
Speaker, “**Architecture and Engineering Contracting Opportunities at OBO**,” FedCon Federal Contractor’s Conference, Washington, DC, Jun 05, 2024

Speaker, “**Designing Overseas with the State Department’s Overseas Buildings Operations**,” The Architecture League of New York – League Mentorship Program, New York City, NY, Apr 12, 2022

Speaker, “**Introducing U.S. Embassy Design**,” Virginia Tech Washington Alexandria Architecture Center (WAAC) Graduate Program, Alexandria, VA, Jan 28, 2020



Clay as panelist at Design For Freedom Workshop at Grace Farms, New Canaan, CA



★ Roadshow Engagements: Austin, Chicago, Kansas City, Minnesota, New York, New Orleans

★ University Engagements: Arizona State University, Columbia University, Howard University, Kansas State University, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Yale University

EXHIBITS LIST

3.1 Embassy 2050

3.2 Design For Freedom

3.3 SECCA 22

3.4 Design Anthropology

3.5 Mass Timber Design Standards

3.6 Barrier Free Accessibility Program

3.7 Opportunity Generation

3.8 Climate Security & Resilience Program

3.9 Nogales New Consulate Compound

3.10 Guadalajara New Consulate Compound



HYDERABAD NEW CONSULATE

DESIGN ARCHITECT | Richärd Kennedy Architects

ARCHITECT OF RECORD | Integrus Architects

“The Embassy 2050 project has effectively changed the way my entire office thinks about and executes projects. The vision Curtis challenged us with will impact my firm and the way we engage our clients for decades to come.”

Mark Sexton, FAIA, Kruek & Sexton Partners

ROLE

Director of Architecture, OBO, U.S. Department of State

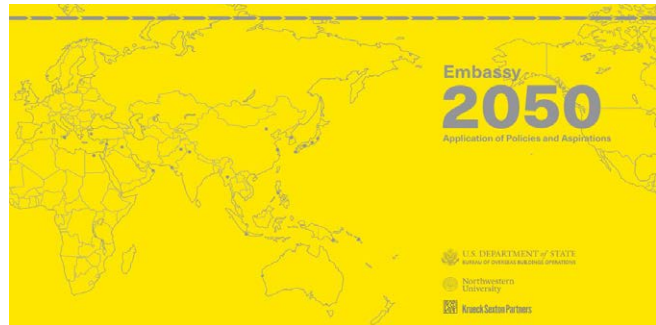
INDUSTRY COLLABORATORS

Kruek & Sexton Architects, Studio Ma Architects

ACADEMIC COLLABORATORS

Northwestern University, Arizona State University

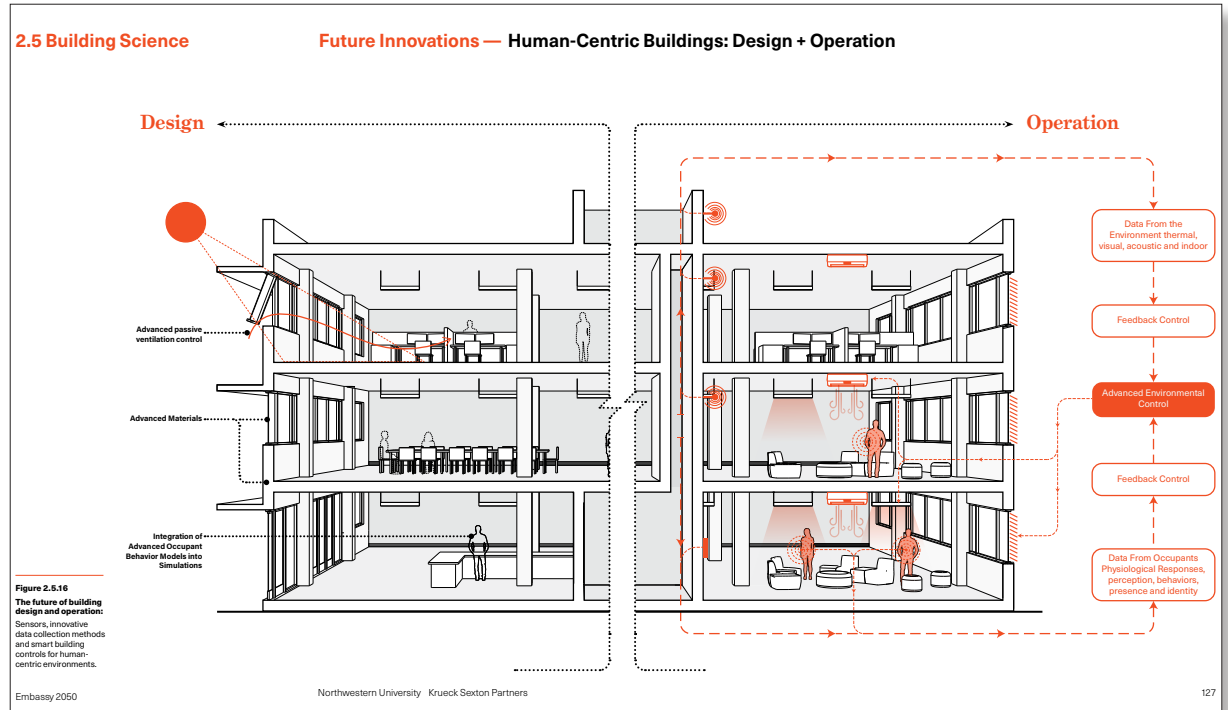
COMPLETION 2022-2024



Embassy 2050 Application of Policies & Aspirations Cover

CHALLENGE

The number and severity of climate change related natural hazards have increased, elevating global economic, political, and foreign policy risks. In a rapidly changing future, everything about shelter, mobility, resources, and supply must be reimaged.



Graphic of future innovations for human-centric buildings



Graphic spread of Natural Hazards section of Embassy 2050

ROLE

Curtis initiated a partnership between industry, academia, and government to assess five global drivers impacting the U.S. Department of State’s building program until 2050. He believed the risks of embassy planning, design, construction, and operation must be identified and embraced before a strategy could be adopted. His vision guided the group to assess risks and create a resilience framework for future projects by focusing on climate, resources, technology, population, and urbanization. In this partnership, Curtis led development of the 2050 roadmap for the U.S. Government’s Embassy building program. Their assessment of natural hazards, structural design, materials, mobility, building science, energy, and water led to a series of change adoption strategies. These strategies provide a ‘next steps’ guide to prepare the U.S. Government to meet the challenge.

IMPACT

The Embassy 2050 program aims to tackle the climate challenge with innovation and global leadership, establishing a model for addressing threats to international peace and security. Through the program, Curtis established that transformative innovation is a quiet yet powerful form of diplomacy, requiring new approaches to the rapidly changing climate.

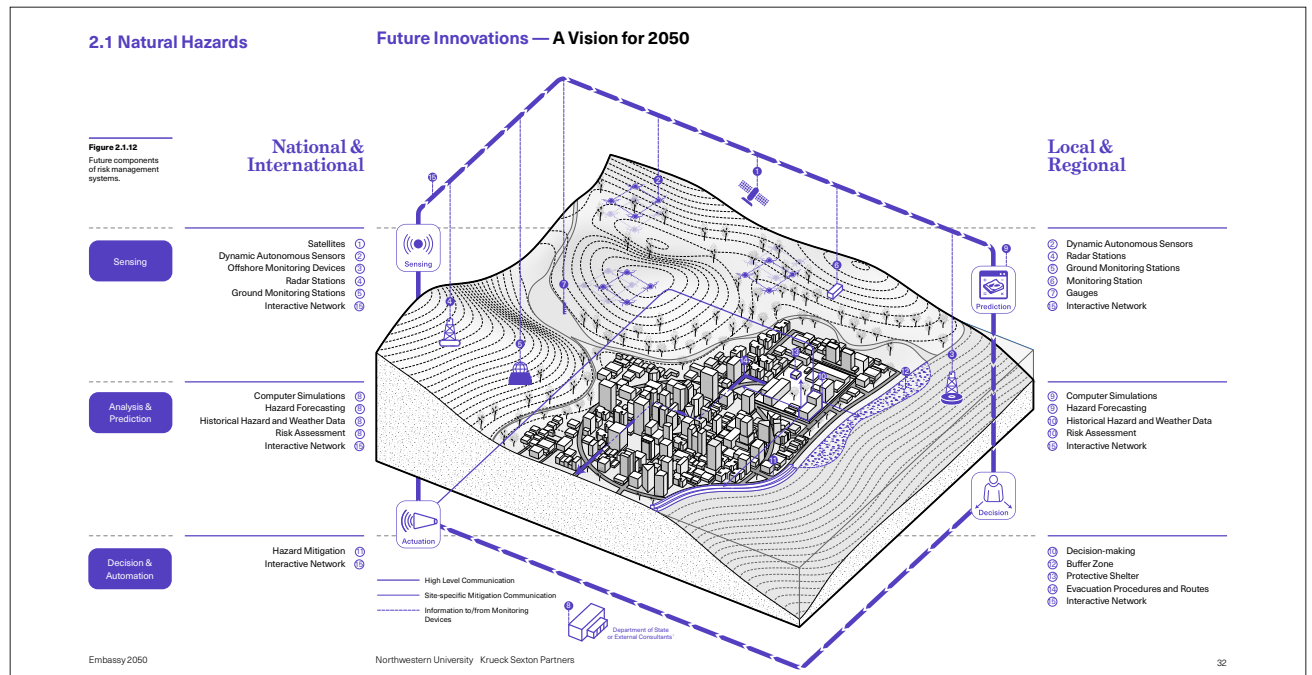
The documents offer OBO a playbook for implementation and inspire excellence in showcasing American values and the best in American architecture, design, engineering, innovation, technology sustainability, culture, and construction execution globally.

The publication of the *Embassy 2050* document is pending security classification review.

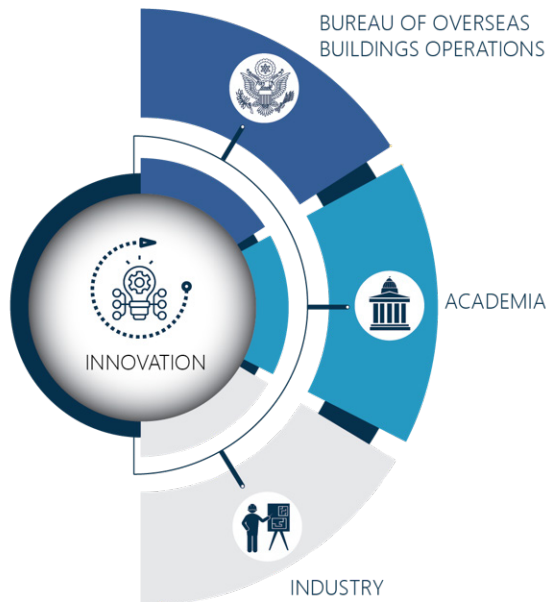
DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

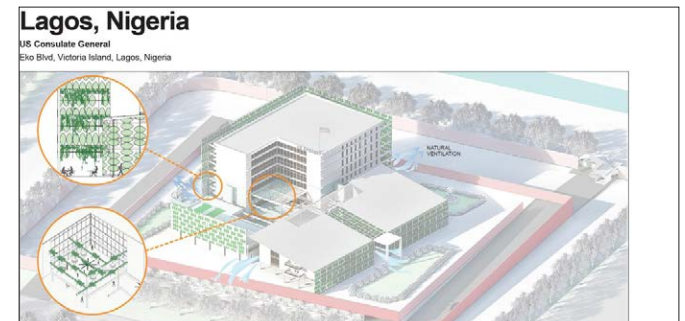
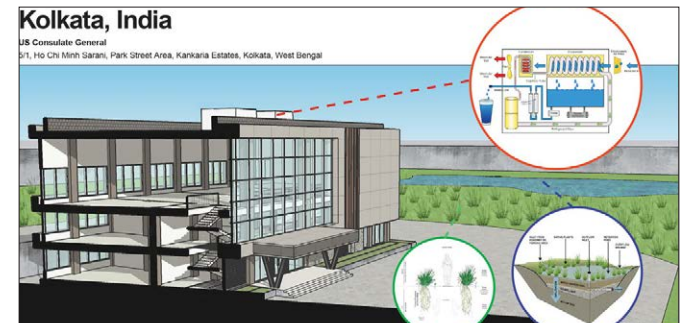
Mark Sexton, FAIA, Co-Managing Partner, Krueck Sexton Partners



Graphic of future innovations for risk management in embassy projects



Embassy 2050 Collaboration Strategy Diagram



Embassy 2050 sample project features

3.2 | DESIGN FOR FREEDOM



"Curtis Clay has raised awareness about the dangers of modern-day slavery in construction. He garnered the support of senior State Department leaders and developed a cross-functional team to test new approaches to promote ethical labor practices... fundamentally changing procurement practices within OBO and with our partners around the world."

Suzanne Balson, Senior Supply Chains Advisor
Office to Monitor & Combat Trafficking in Persons
U.S. Department of State

ROLE

Director of Architecture, OBO, U.S. Department of State

COLLABORATORS

Grace Farms Foundation
Office to Monitor & Combat Trafficking in Persons
U.S. Department of State, Verite

COMPLETION 2021-present

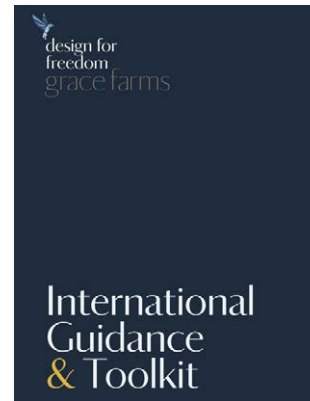
CHALLENGE

A clause in the Federal Acquisition Regulations (52.222-56 *Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons Compliance*) requires contractors to develop a compliance plan for any portion of a contract over \$550,000 performed outside of the U.S.

This clause was seldom enforced for material procurement on embassy projects due to compliance review complexity, meaning U.S. OBO architecture projects could be utilizing products and materials produced using slave or child labor.

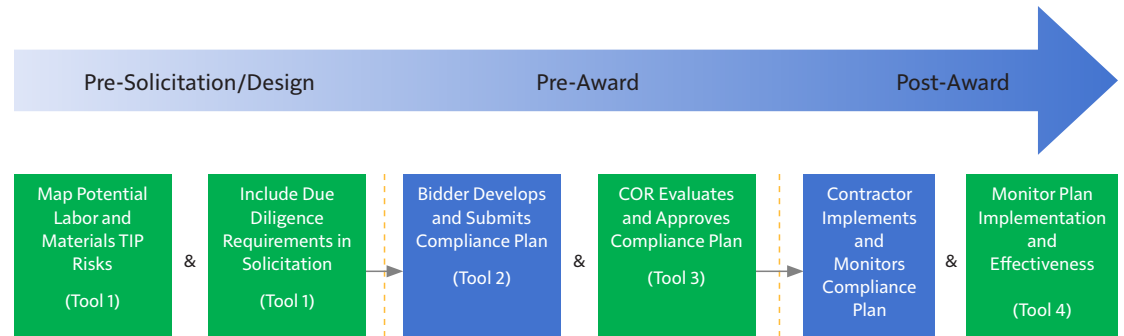


Curtis (far left) with Grace Farms CEO Sharon Prince (center) at the annual Design for Freedom Ethical Supply Chain workshop



Material #1: Bricks	
Is it produced in-country?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If "Yes," is there an associated forced labor risk?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Child Labor	
Other known or likely source countries	List source countries Kenya, Turkey, Europe
Forced labor risk of source countries	Country 1: Kenya <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Country 2: Turkey <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Country 3: Europe <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Material #2: Cement (in Concrete)	
Is it produced in-country?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If "Yes," is there an associated forced labor risk?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other known or likely source countries	List source countries Kenya, Turkey
Forced labor risk of source countries	Country 1: Kenya <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Country 2: Turkey <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Material #3: Sand (in Concrete)	
Is it produced in-country?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If "Yes," is there an associated forced labor risk?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

International Guidance and Toolkit sample pages.



Design for Freedom compliance roadmap

3.2 | DESIGN FOR FREEDOM

ROLE

With a \$3 billion annual appropriations budget, Curtis recognized the U.S. Government's impact and leadership in enforcing 52.222-56 requirements.

He formed a partnership with government and non-profits to raise awareness and develop compliance tools for future projects. He facilitated collaboration between the Grace Farms Foundation, a cultural and humanitarian focused non profit, publisher of *The Design For Freedom International Guidance & Toolkit*, and OBO's partner firms by featuring the Grace Farms CEO at OBO's annual Industry Advisory Meeting. He collaborated with the State Department's Office to Monitor Trafficking in Persons to develop [The Responsible Sourcing Toolkit](#), a public website that helps users understand and address risks to workers in material supply chains through responsible material selection. Curtis' leadership developed a unique toolset for OBO that aligns with 52.222-56 requirements with Verité, an independent, non-profit, civil society organization.

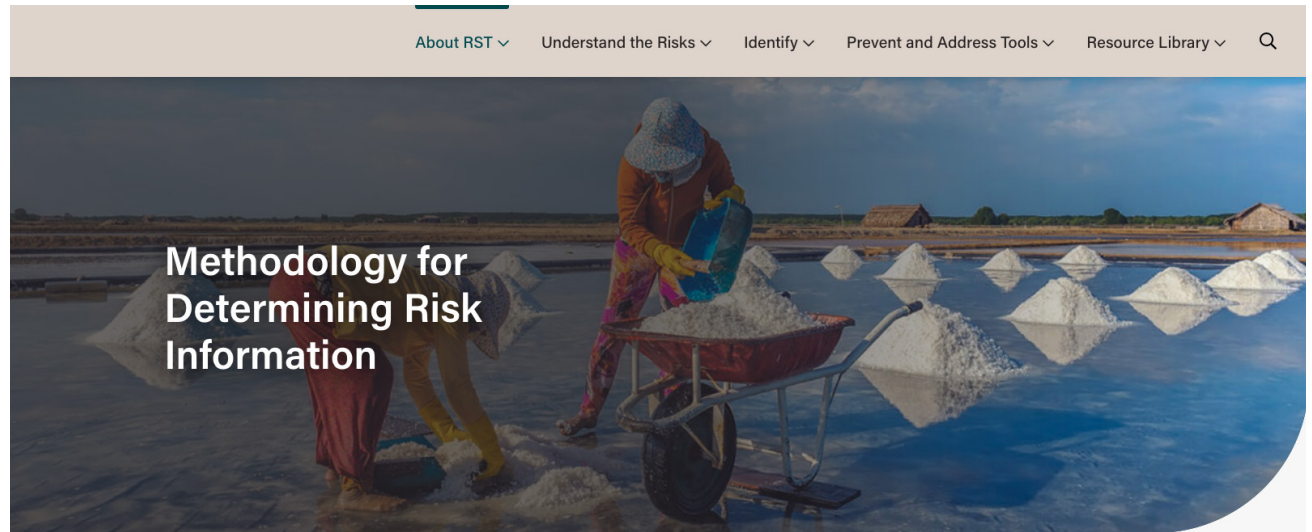
IMPACT

Four tools are now available on OBO projects, enabling architects to map potential labor and materials risks during design and allowing contractors to monitor compliance plans during construction. These tools have been used on projects in Kampala, Uganda; Almaty, Kazakhstan; and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. By outlining requirements for slave-free materials in OBO projects, Curtis has introduced procurement transparency to the federal government and raised global expectations. The Responsible Sourcing Toolkit is a publicly accessible web resource.

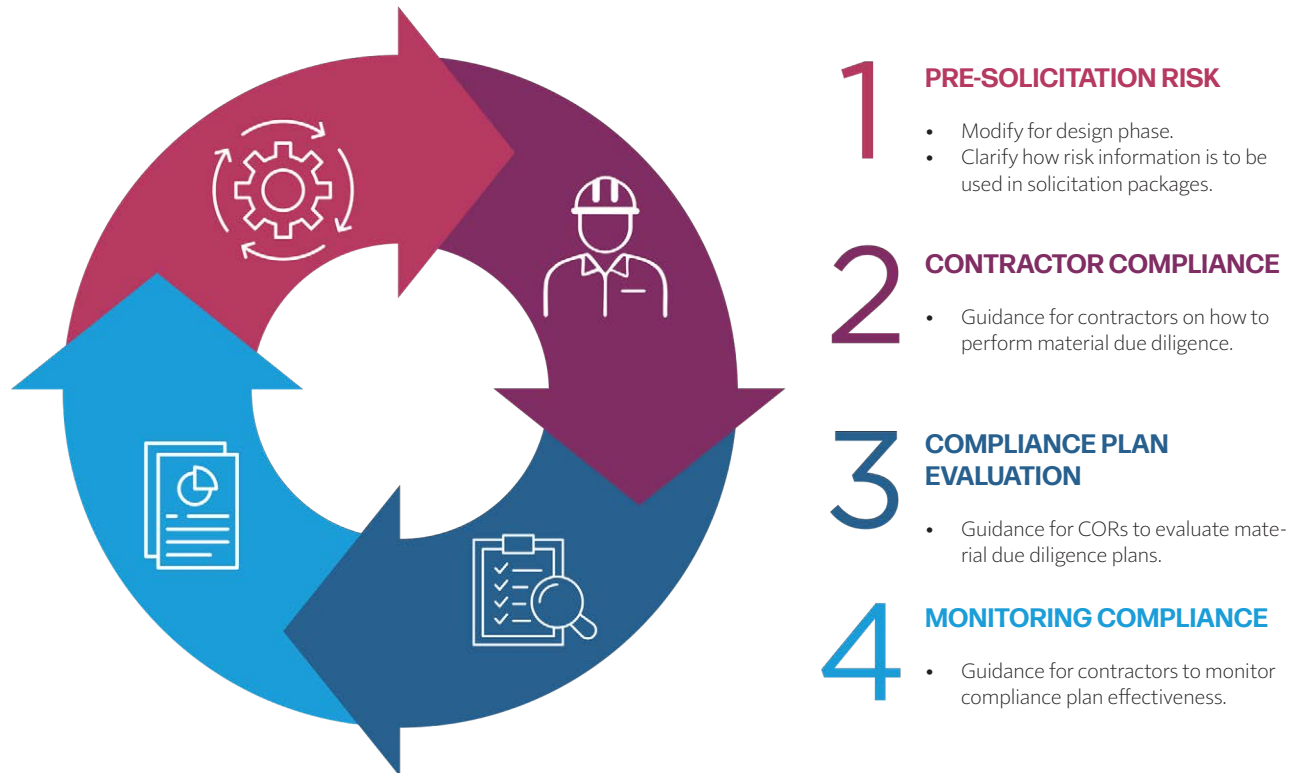
DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

Suzanne Balson, Senior Supply Chains Advisor, Office to Monitor & Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State



Responsible Sourcing Tool website (Verité)



Four tools available for architects, government employees, and contractors' use to reduce labor and material sourcing risks

3.3 | SECURE EMBASSY CONSTRUCTION AND COUNTERTERRORISM ACT (SECCA 22)



Curtis had the long term vision to initiate a study of reduced setback that led directly to the enactment of the SECCA '22 law. His efforts have enabled the acquisition of smaller, centrally located, urban sites that will help foster diplomacy worldwide for decades to come.”

Richard Sullivan, PE
 Managing Director, U.S. Department of State
 Overseas Buildings Operations

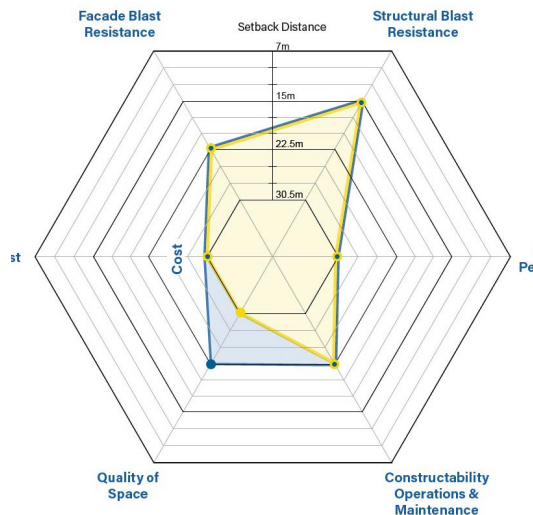
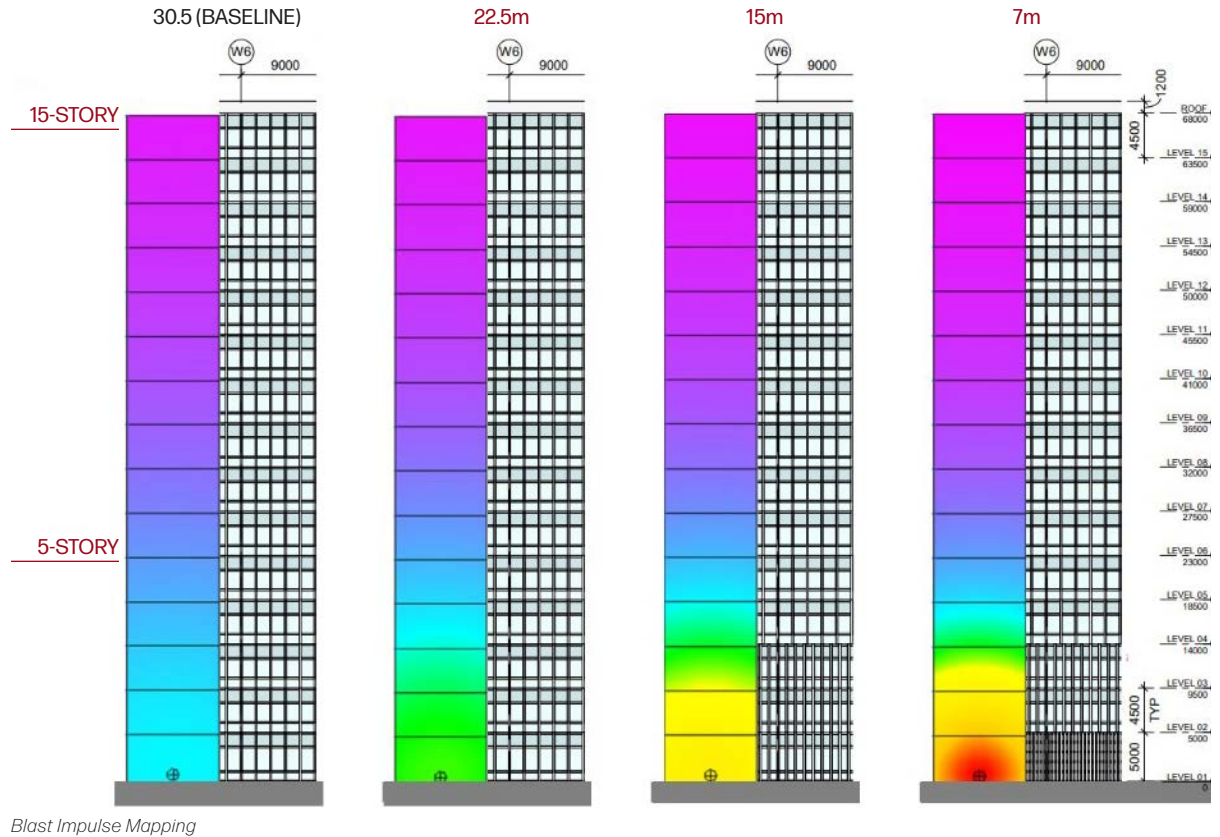
ROLE

Director of Architecture, OBO, U.S. Department of State

COMPLETION 2020-present

CHALLENGE

After the 1998 bombings of U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Congress enacted the *Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act* (SECCA) of 1999. America’s diplomatic competitors do not face the same restrictions as U.S. diplomats, putting the U.S. at a disadvantage in executing foreign policy abroad. The law’s setback and collocation requirements led to soaring costs, inconvenient site acquisitions, and hindered U.S. diplomatic missions.



117TH CONGRESS
 2d SESSION

S. 4320

To enhance security at United States diplomatic facilities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES
 MAY 26, 2022

Mr. RISCH introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

JULY 21, 2022

Reported by Mr. MENENDEZ, with an amendment

(Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic)

A BILL

To enhance security at United States diplomatic facilities, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

Record of 117th congressional session on s.4320, SECCA

3.3 | SECURE EMBASSY CONSTRUCTION AND COUNTERTERRORISM ACT (SECCA 22)

ROLE

Curtis initiated a study to create performance-based setback requirements for shorter blast equivalency distances than allowed by the 1999 law. The study analyzed façade and structural blast resistance, performance, constructability, operations, daylight transmittance, and impacts on space quality if the measures were enacted.

IMPACT

Curtis' work led to the *Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act* of 2022, which established performance-based setback requirements and will allow the acquisition of urban sites. This approach provides more robust diplomatic engagement with local populations.

Thanks to the updated law, OBO has acquired smaller diplomatic sites in urban locations such as in Bratislava, Slovakia, enabling the U.S. Government to meet programmatic and security requirements with a reduced setback.

The law's ultimate objective is to create design solutions that empower diplomats to engage more intimately with local populations while ensuring their security.

DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

Rick Sullivan, Managing Director, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

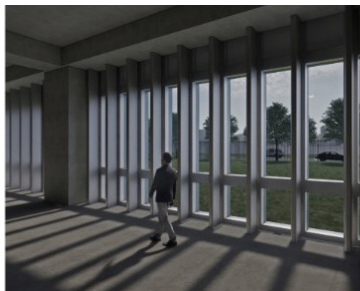
22.5m (74')

Most feasible reduced setback



15m (49')

Possible, multiple challenges & testing



7m (24')

Glazing unlikely, assume solid concrete wall

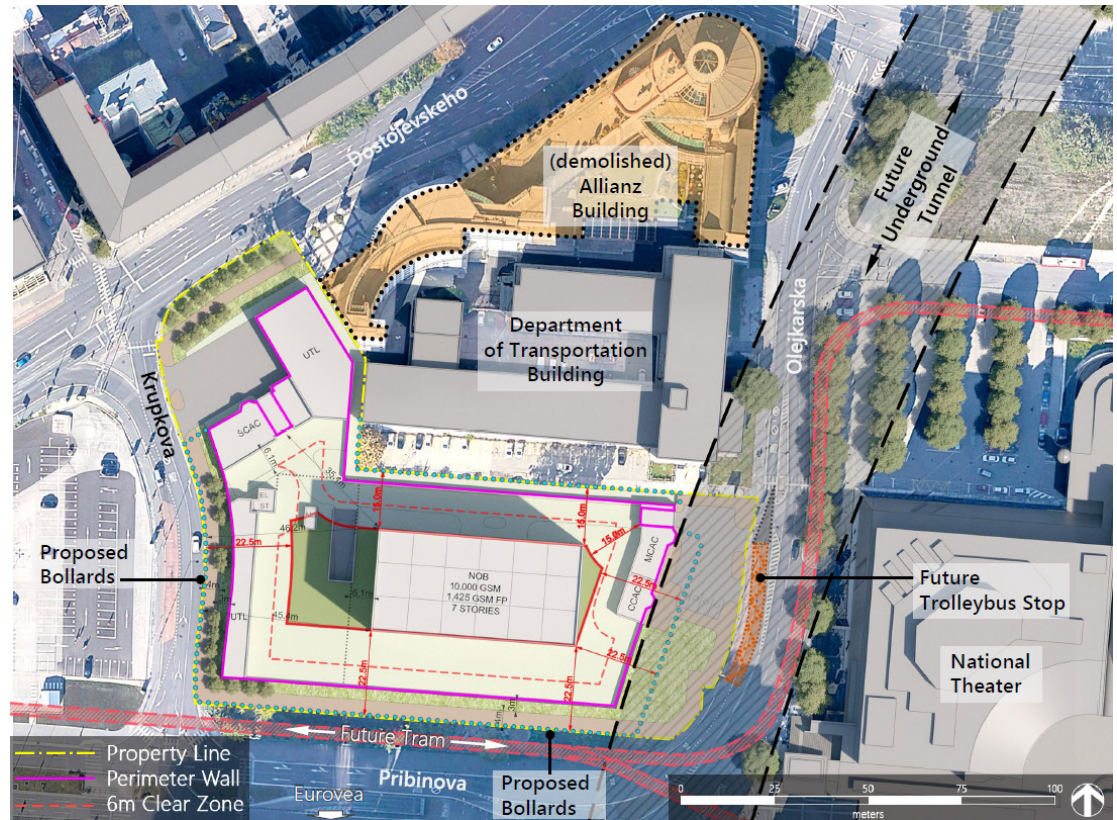
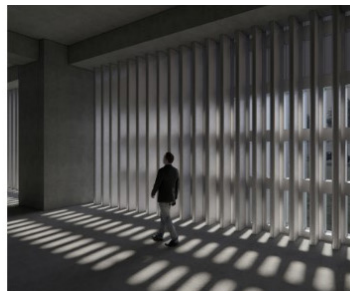
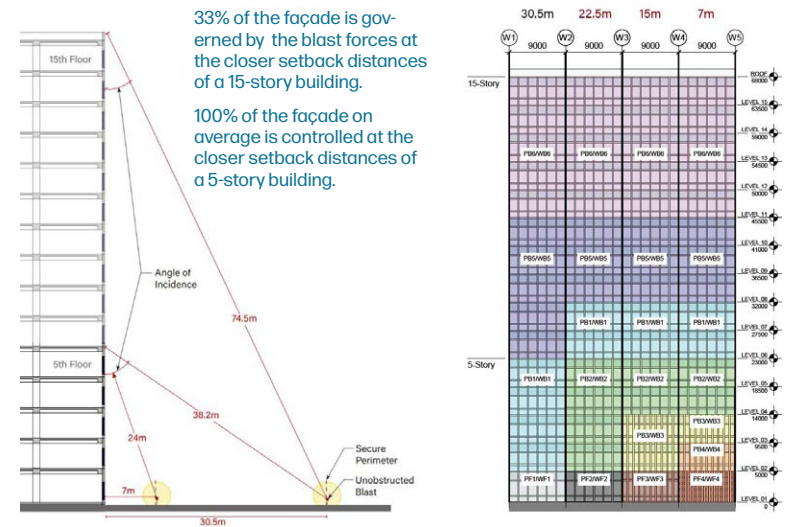


Diagram of Bratislava, Slovakia reduced setback strategy



Architectural implications of blast impacts at various setback distances

Façade Comparison, Window Wall

3.4 | DESIGN ANTHROPOLOGY



Curtis' leadership is both advancing OBO's mission and pushing the field toward a more inclusive, contextually attuned practice—one capable of creating architecture with lasting social and cultural impact for communities outside the US and our diversity of cultures and project types within the U.S.”

Adaheid Mestad
Sr. Design Anthropologist, HGA

ROLE

Client / Director of Architecture
OBO, U.S. Department of State

COLLABORATORS

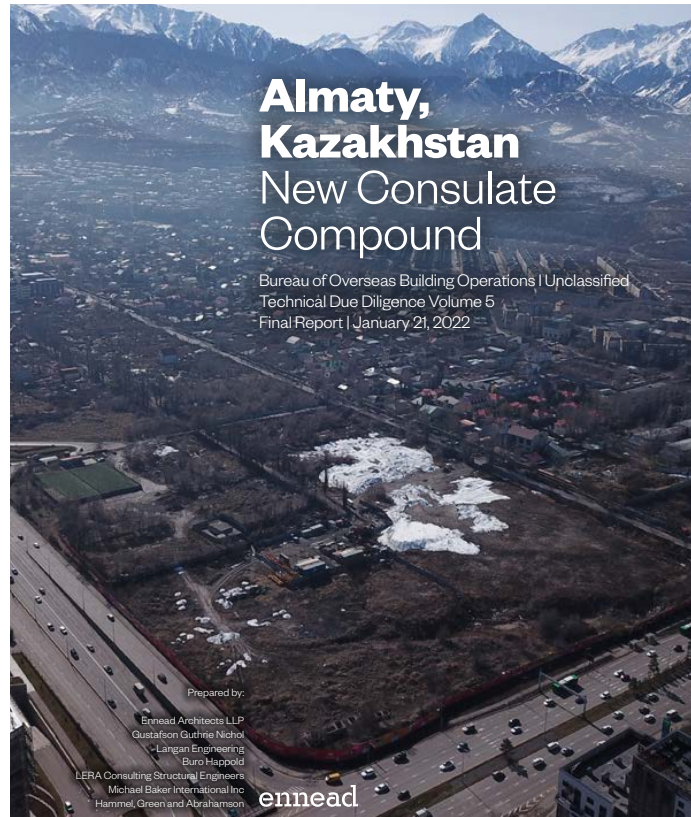
HGA Architects

COMPLETION

2023-present

CHALLENGE

The U.S. Government selects architects from across the country to design new embassy campuses in foreign locations where the firm often lacks knowledge of local culture. Many firms lack the resources, capacity, or desire to hire a consultant who will evaluate the historic, cultural, and context that influences the local user experience and architectural design. As a result, American architects often reduce culture to primitive elements, unintentionally offending locals and costing U.S. taxpayers.



Almaty Anthropology Assessment Report



Cover of Design Anthropology Standards

2.7 Anthropologic Context Assessment (ACA)

The Contractor shall develop an Anthropologic Assessment to evaluate historic, cultural, and design context through desktop research, questionnaires, and virtual interviews.

Understanding that every region, community, and project is different, it is imperative that the assessment to capture the unique character and cultural elements of a place, and how such context could inform the design and improve foreign policy relationships. The regional anthropologic assessment shall minimally include the following:

- Socio-demographics and patterns of uses
- Cultural context, values, and historic and current perceptions
- Lifestyle and workplace beliefs, rituals, practices, motivations, and other forms of intangible cultural heritage.
- Material and color culture perception and meaning
- Semantics and symbolism
- Potential impact on building and structure siting, design, and interior layouts

Anthropological Context Assessment Requirements

3.4 | DESIGN ANTHROPOLOGY

ROLE

Collaborating on the process with HGA Architects, Curtis acquired the basis to mandate that all major capital projects include the role of a Design Anthropologist consultant in the design team. The associated OBO Scope of Work Templates require the architect to produce an assessment evaluating socio-demographics, usage patterns, cultural values, perceptions of the U.S. Government, lifestyle beliefs, rituals, material and color symbolism impacting building design and interior layouts.

IMPACT

Architect teams using the Design Anthropological assessment are better informed about the impacts of their design decisions. Curtis and his team now verify design considerations that respect and promote the values and culture of visitors and local staff, who make up more than half of the overseas workforce. The results of these analyses produce sustainable and aesthetic value systems that represent local cultural values through architectural expressions and bolster the foundational practice of Design Diplomacy.

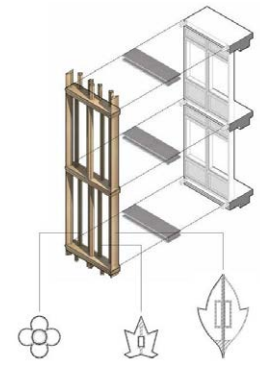
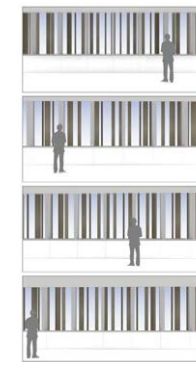
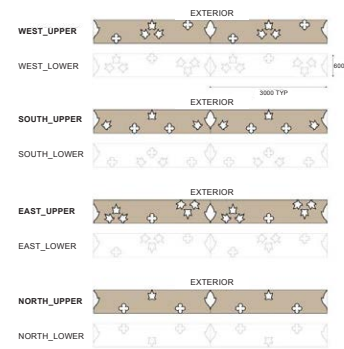
DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

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Adaheid Mestad, Design Anthropologist, HGA



Bangkok design anthropology studies



Façade integration of anthropological assembly study



Almaty, Kazakhstan New Consulate interior courtyard rendering and Cultural inspiration of Kazakh yurt for interior courtyard



3.5 | MASS TIMBER DESIGN STANDARDS

“Curtis Clay’s leadership has advanced innovation through OBO’s funding of the research, development, and testing required for mass timber use in diplomatic buildings. His forward-thinking advocacy enables a future of decarbonization for the U.S. Department of State and beyond.”

Christiana Moss, FAIA
Principal, STUDIO MA

ROLE

Client / Director of Architecture
OBO, U.S. Department of State

COLLABORATORS

Studio Ma Architects, KPFF Engineers, LERA
Structural Engineers, K&C Blast Engineers

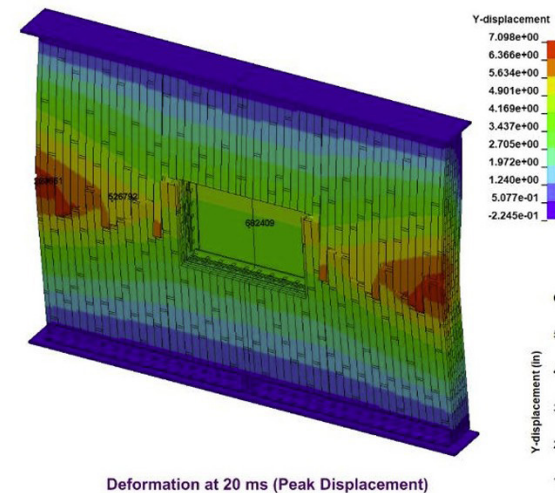
COMPLETION 2022-2025

CHALLENGE

U.S. Embassies are typically constructed of carbon-intensive concrete. Curtis sought alternative construction materials that would shorten schedules, lower carbon emissions, showcase U.S. technological innovation, and reduce costs in accordance with OBO’s security design and construction requirements.



Mock-up of mass timber assembly for blast test



Deformation at 20 ms (Peak Displacement)

Blast testing mass timber mock-up with digital assessment of impacts

3.5 | MASS TIMBER DESIGN STANDARDS

ROLE

Curtis initiated work to produce proof-of-concept drawings for mass timber buildings on U.S. diplomatic campuses.

These drawings underwent analysis for building performance and blast simulations, followed by actual blast testing for progressive collapse.

A deep dive into alternate cost and procurement requirements for mass timber was also performed.

IMPACT

The study found a 25% reduction in construction schedules and a 10% decrease in construction costs that could ultimately benefit US prefabrication and manufacturing companies.

A revised moment-frame kit was developed to demonstrate alternative load path strategies. This study effectively secured funding to blast test mass timber assemblies, providing vital technical information for advancing mass timber construction when feasible.

Since 2024, as a result of successful blast testing, laminated timber systems are now included as a permitted structural system in the OBO Building Code Supplement - chapter 23, to include cross laminated timber, structural glue-laminated timber, and structural composite lumber.

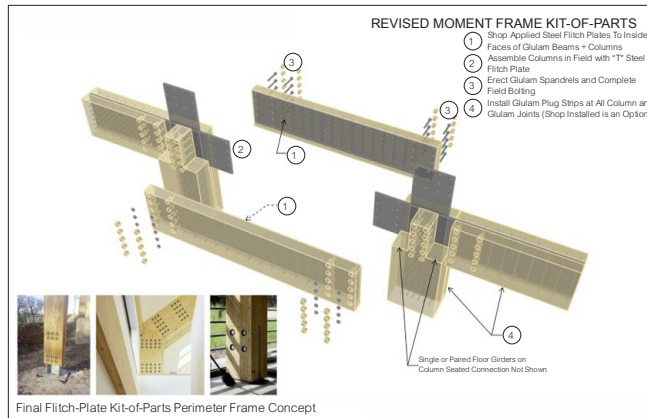
DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

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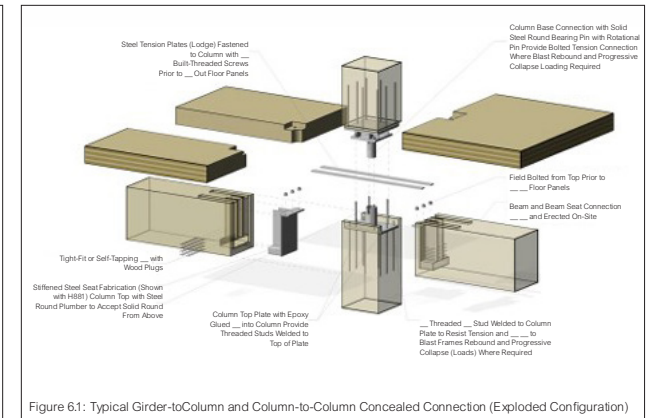
Christiana Moss, FAIA, Principal, Studio Ma Architects



Forced entry testing of mass timber assembly



Prototypical mass timber assembly details



3.6 | BARRIER-FREE ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

“The creation of the internal dashboard by Curtis allows our compliance data to prioritize accessibility projects with new clarity. This, along with Curtis’ advocating for project funding has helped the program make great progress in removing barriers”

Ron Tomasso, FAIA,
OBO Barrier-Free Accessibility

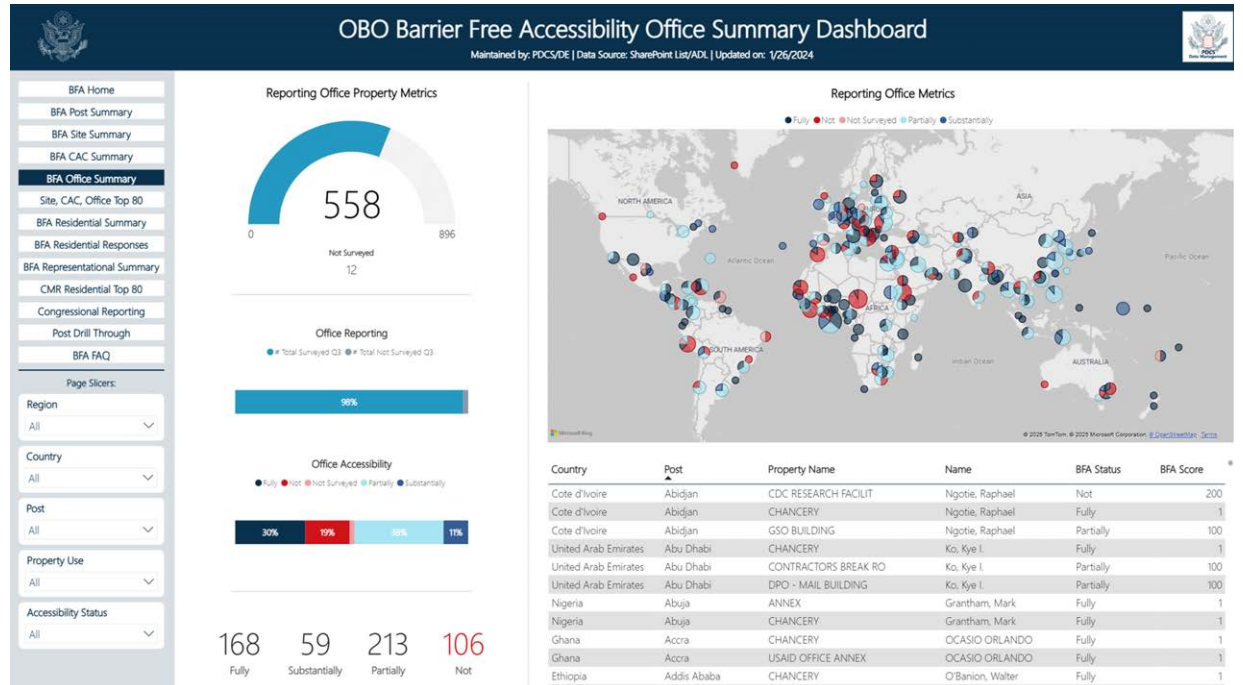
ROLE

Director of Architecture, OBO, U.S. Department of State

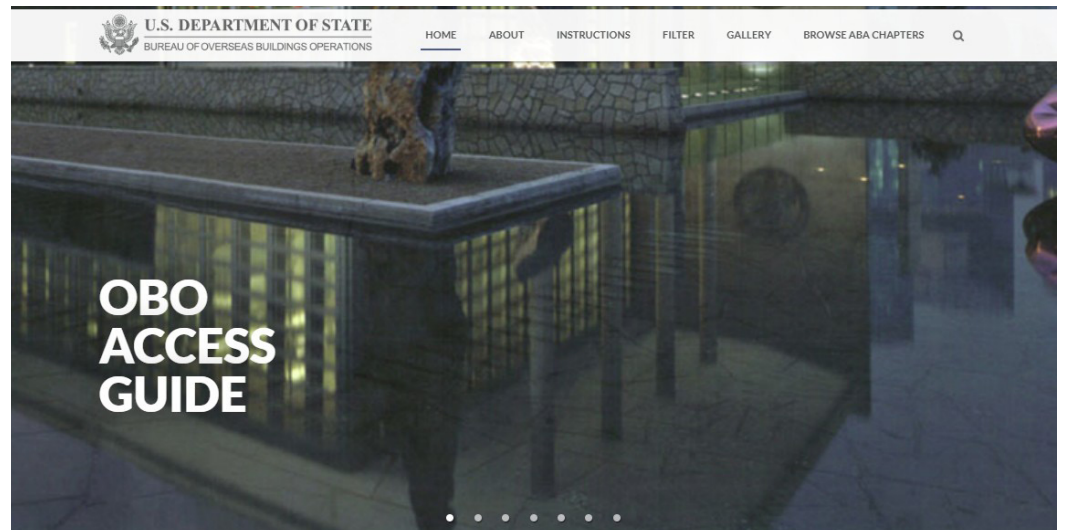
COMPLETION 1997-present

CHALLENGE

The *Architectural Barriers Act* (ABA), codified in 1968, mandates accessibility in all new Embassy projects, but many existing locations did not comply. Renovation projects with strict budgets often deleted accessibility upgrades, and facility managers worldwide lacked the knowledge required to update existing facilities for accessibility.



The accessibility survey responses dashboard created by Curtis created a multi-year capital program



OBO Access Guide Website

3.6 | BARRIER-FREE ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

ROLE

Curtis recognized that accessible access to U.S. embassies is the first act of diplomacy for visitors. He executed a multi-tiered approach to enhance global diplomatic mission accessibility beginning with a global accessibility survey and publication of the Barrier Free Accessibility Dashboard with compliance statistics for all embassy locations.

His work drew Congressional attention to the magnitude of the problem. He then led the execution and publication of the [OBO Access Guide](#), a free resource that explains how to adapt existing facilities for accessibility.

IMPACT

Thanks to Curtis' work, OBO was directed by Congress to establish a dedicated, multi-year funding appropriation to address the problem.

His leadership has resulted in \$10 million in accessibility upgrades for office buildings and a new requirement for 1 unit or 5% of non-representational staff residential units to be made accessible at all diplomatic locations worldwide. To achieve this goal, in collaboration with the OBO Office of Real Estate, Curtis formed the Adaptable Accessible Housing Acquisition Program resulting in 20 new accessible housing units worldwide in the program's first year.

Curtis leadership on Accessibility spans 15+ years since he was first appointed to the Washington, DC Construction Codes Coordinating Board in 2009 by Mayor Adrian Fenty where he served as the chair of the Accessibility Technical Advisory Group writing and approving Amendments to Chapter 11 of the DC Building Code.

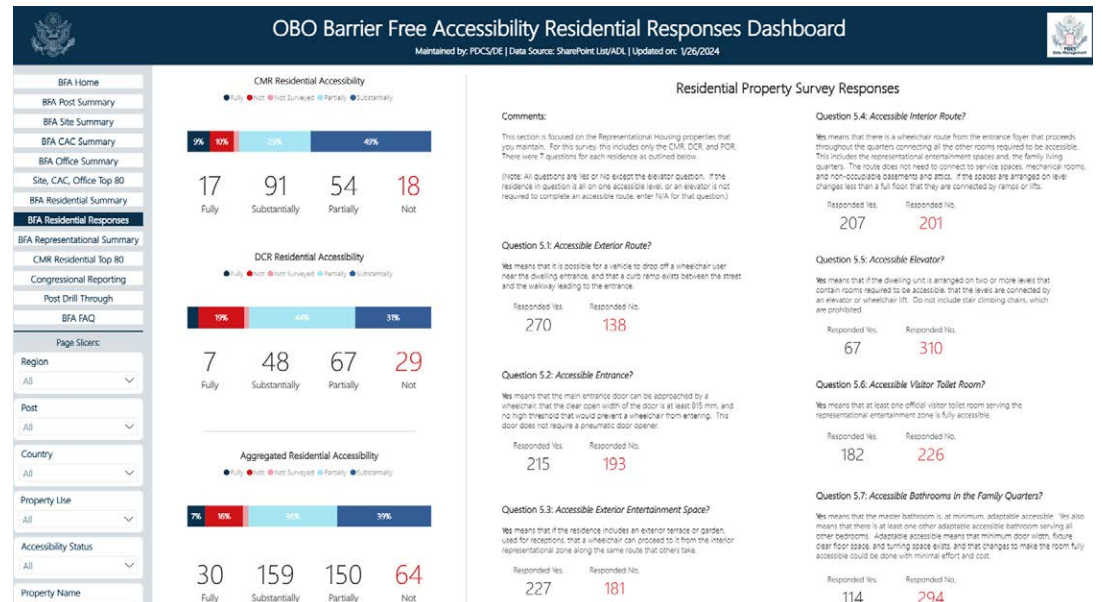
DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

Ron Tomasso, FAIA, Design Manager, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations



New accessible ramp at the Luxembourg Ambassador's residence provides access to diplomatic events for guests



OBO Barrier Free Accessibility Residential Responses Dashboard

3.7 | GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES



The influence of Curtis Clay is that the mission of ensuring resilient and secure diplomatic facilities across the globe is best served by attracting and supporting opportunities for a broad range of architectural practices. Without his support many women-founded, regionally based practices, including mine, would have never had the chance to work with the OBO.”

Claire Weisz, FAIA, Hon. FRAIC, Hon. ASLA
Principal-in-Charge, W X Y



Curtis speaking to A/E firms about how to join the OBO program

ROLE

Director of Architecture
OBO, U.S. Department of State

COMPLETION 2021-present

CHALLENGE

Architecture firms seek U.S. Government contracts but often lack awareness of available opportunities and application processes. The government never proactively expanded the pool of contractors or created opportunities for registered small businesses architecture firms to engage in government work. Students in architecture schools are unaware of career opportunities in local, state, and federal governments. The U.S. Department of State had run an academic engagement program called “Diplomacy Lab” for years without OBO involvement.

2021 OBO A/E roadshow promotion material

3.7 | GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES

ROLE

To increase the regional diversity of firms who conduct business with the government, Curtis collaborated with local AIA chapters nationwide to create the first “[OBO A/E Roadshow](#).” His engagements showcased diplomatic facility design, explaining the RFP process, and offering tips for securing U.S. Government contracts. These lectures opened a path for architecture firms new to working for OBO via an *Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity* (IDIQ) contract, which aims to direct small-scale activities—surveys, master plans, project studies, accessibility projects, surveys, phasing analysis, security mitigation studies, and other project services to firms new to government work. As part of the roadshow, he approached local architecture schools to engage students on a public architect career path.

IMPACT

SMALL FIRMS

A non-binding “sources sought” announcement gauged interest in the small business architecture pool. Over 100 responses were received, and 25 firms were shortlisted, including 14 small businesses. Six of the 12 selected were small businesses.

Curtis also created the “[Capabilities Conversation](#)” intake request form, providing A/E firms an ongoing opportunity to engage with OBO. The intake process allows any architecture firm to set up a meeting with Curtis to share their work and discover how they might support OBO’s needs. He has hosted nearly 100 30-minute sessions with interested firms.

ACADEMIA

Curtis produced several proposals for the State Department’s Diplomacy Lab, inviting universities to collaborate with the government on specific issues and challenges.



Curtis engages with architecture students at the University of Maryland

Curtis has since engaged in design studios on U.S. Embassy design with students from Yale, University of Maryland, Kansas State, University of Massachusetts, Howard University, Columbia University, Arizona State and the University of the District of Columbia. These efforts raise student awareness of career opportunities as government architects.

DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

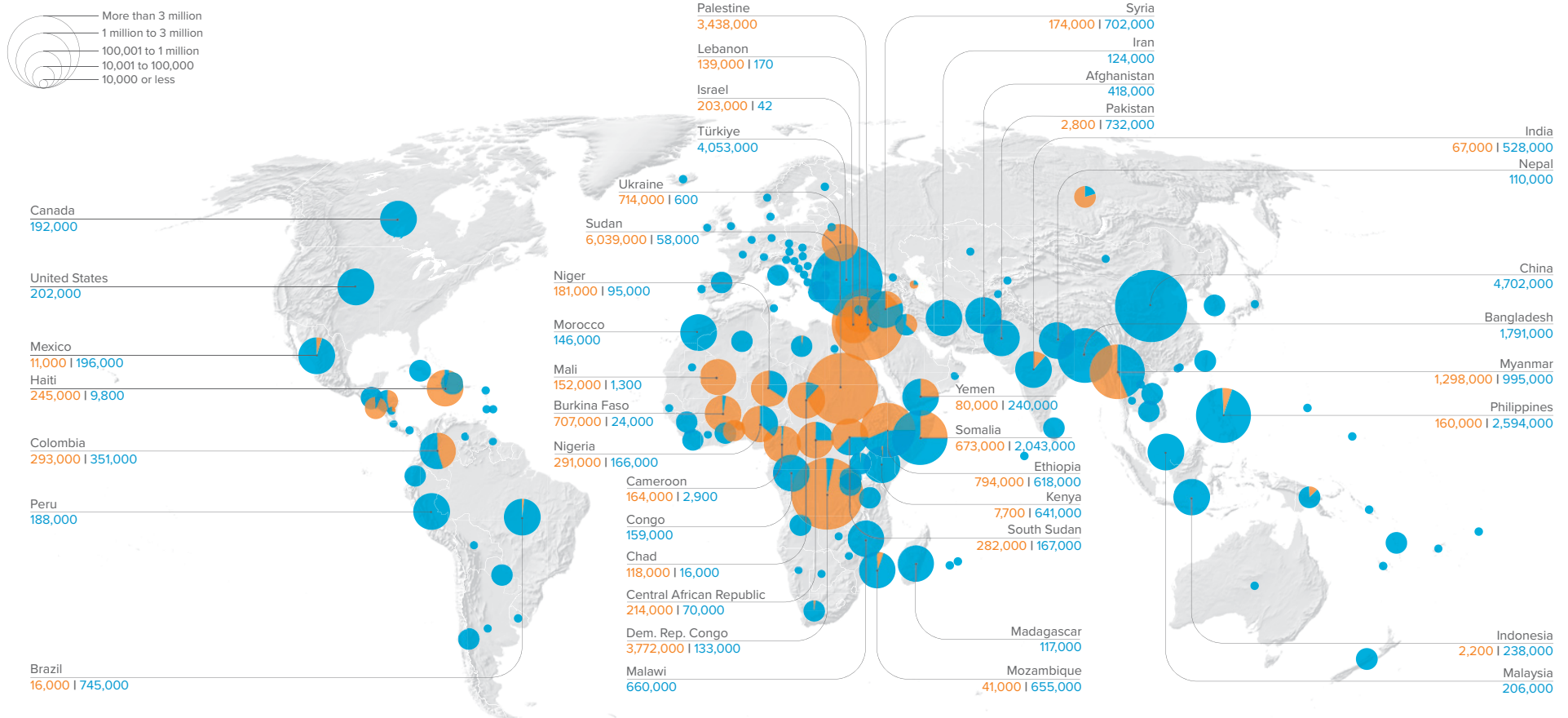
I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

Lauren Lockett, External Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

“Curtis Clay’s participation in advanced design studios at Yale had a significant positive impact on our students. Through his insightful design criticism they learned the complexities of designing overseas embassy campuses to represent the United States. His impressive career also demonstrated opportunities for a meaningful career as an architect in public service. We were honored to have him with us.”

Deborah Berke, FAIA, LEED AP, 2025 AIA Gold Medal
Edward P. Bass Dean of the Yale School of Architecture

3.8 | CLIMATE SECURITY & RESILIENCE PROGRAM (CS&R)



2024 Global Internal Displacements Map. Climate Disasters (blue) vs Conflict and violence (orange)

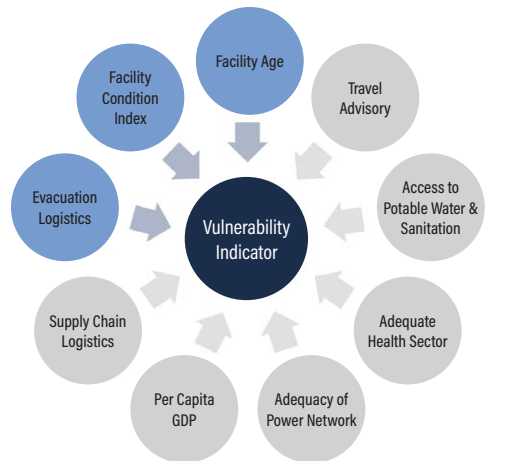
ROLE

Director of Architecture, OBO, U.S. Department of State

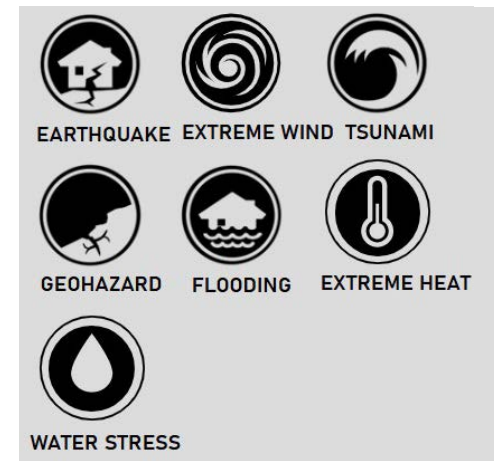
COMPLETION 2020-present

CHALLENGE

Natural hazards threaten diplomatic safety and security. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center reports that the number of global locations affected by natural hazards has risen exponentially over the past decade, putting several U.S. diplomatic missions at economic and physical risk. OBO contained a small natural hazards program that primarily focused on earthquakes and flooding but did not address expanding threats to diplomatic missions.



Climate Security and Resilience Program strategic framework



3.8 | CLIMATE SECURITY & RESILIENCE PROGRAM (CS&R)

ROLE

Curtis expanded and integrated the Climate Security & Resilience (CS&R) program into the design process, starting with assessing a site acquisition's resilience to natural hazards. In 2022 he lobbied for the State Department to incorporate Objective 1.2: Build and implement a Climate Security & Resilience (CS&R) program into its annual publication, *Functional Bureau Strategies*.

Capitalizing on presidential *Executive Order 14008*, "Tackling the Climate crisis at Home and Abroad," his goal was to ensure missions are more resilient and secure against current and projected natural hazards, making climate resilience essential to U.S. foreign policy and national security. He engaged CS&R to produce a single source for the data—the Climate Security & Resilience Dashboard—in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NASA, USGS, and the Department of Defense.

IMPACT

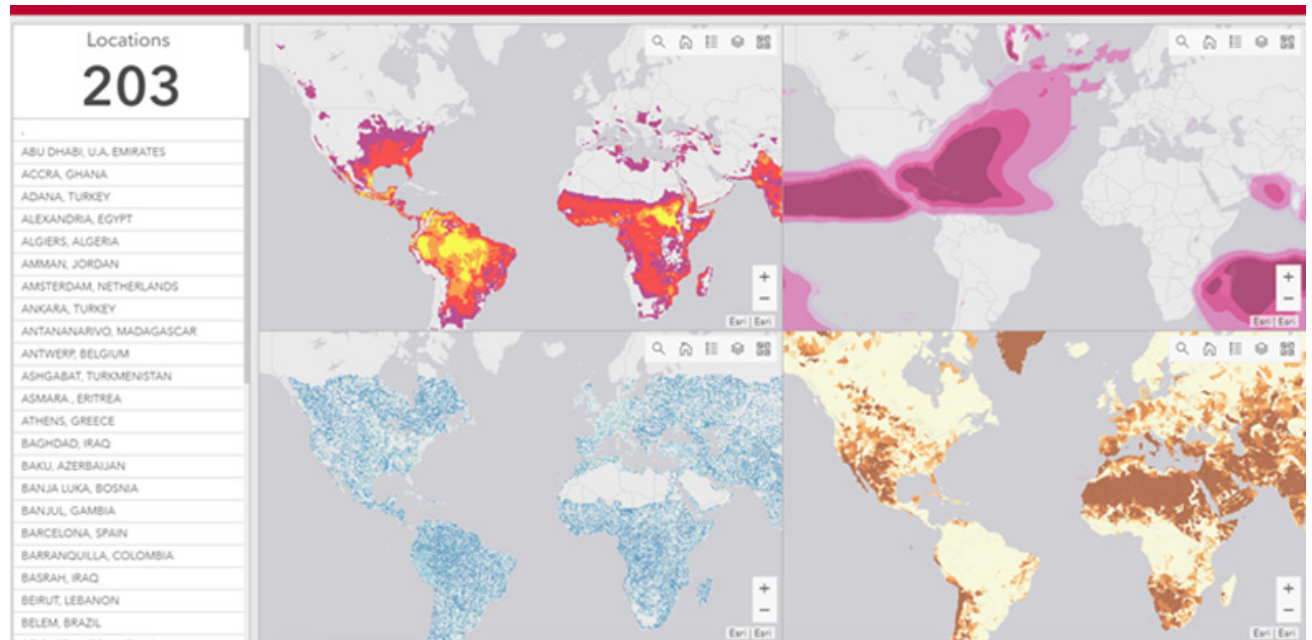
Every new diplomatic site acquisition now undergoes rigorous analysis against the CS&R dashboard for extreme wind, heat, flooding, landslide, tsunami, earthquake, and water stress before approval.

The dashboard ends investment in existing properties vulnerable to natural hazards, prompting relocation to new facilities. Curtis became a contributing author to the State Department's annual *Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan*, published annually during the Biden administration.

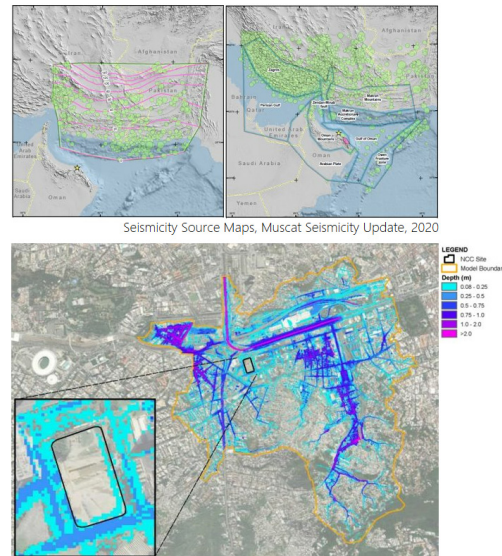
DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

David Keller, Natural Hazards Adaptation Program Manager, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations



Climate Security & Resilience program dashboard



Sample flooding risk assessment

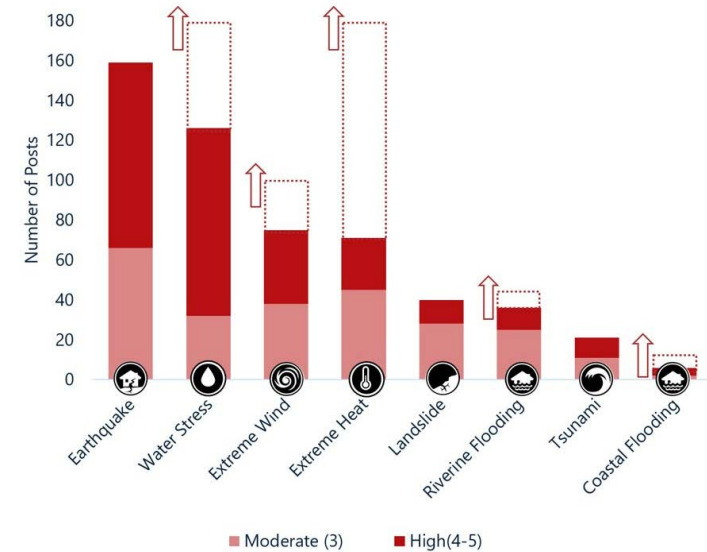


Diagram displaying the magnitude of extreme climate risks at diplomatic locations worldwide

3.9 | NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND, NOGALES, MEXICO



Curtis consistently encourages all architects in the OBO program to see design as a tool of diplomacy. He emphasizes that U.S. facilities should be not only safe and secure, but also culturally responsive and inspirational. His influence has left a lasting mark on the State Department's portfolio, advancing architecture as a powerful expression of democracy.

Felicia A. Berger AIA, LEED AP
Principal, ENNEAD ARCHITECTS LLP

ROLE

Design Advocate • Director of Architecture
OBO, U.S. Department of State

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Ennead Architects, LLP

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Page Southerland Page, Inc.

COMPLETION DATE 2024

AWARDS Design Award, AIA Washington DC, 2025

CHALLENGE

The existing consulate failed to meet security standards at its location in a refurbished warehouse. The site had no street presence or value as a representation of the U.S. diplomatic mission in Mexico. High H1B visa traffic led to visitors spilling into nearby streets and becoming victims of crime. Balancing programmatic needs and strict security standards for staff and visitor safety with connecting the building to its site and community presented significant challenges.

The Sonoran Desert location also required strategies to mitigate intensive sun exposure and heat gain.

CURTIS CLAY AIA • OBJECT 4 • GOVERNMENT



The contemporary expression of the ramada connects the building to local aesthetics



The ramada shade structure reduces heat gain on the façade reducing energy costs



Local ramada shade structure in Nogales, Mexico

3.9 | NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND, NOGALES, MEXICO

ROLE

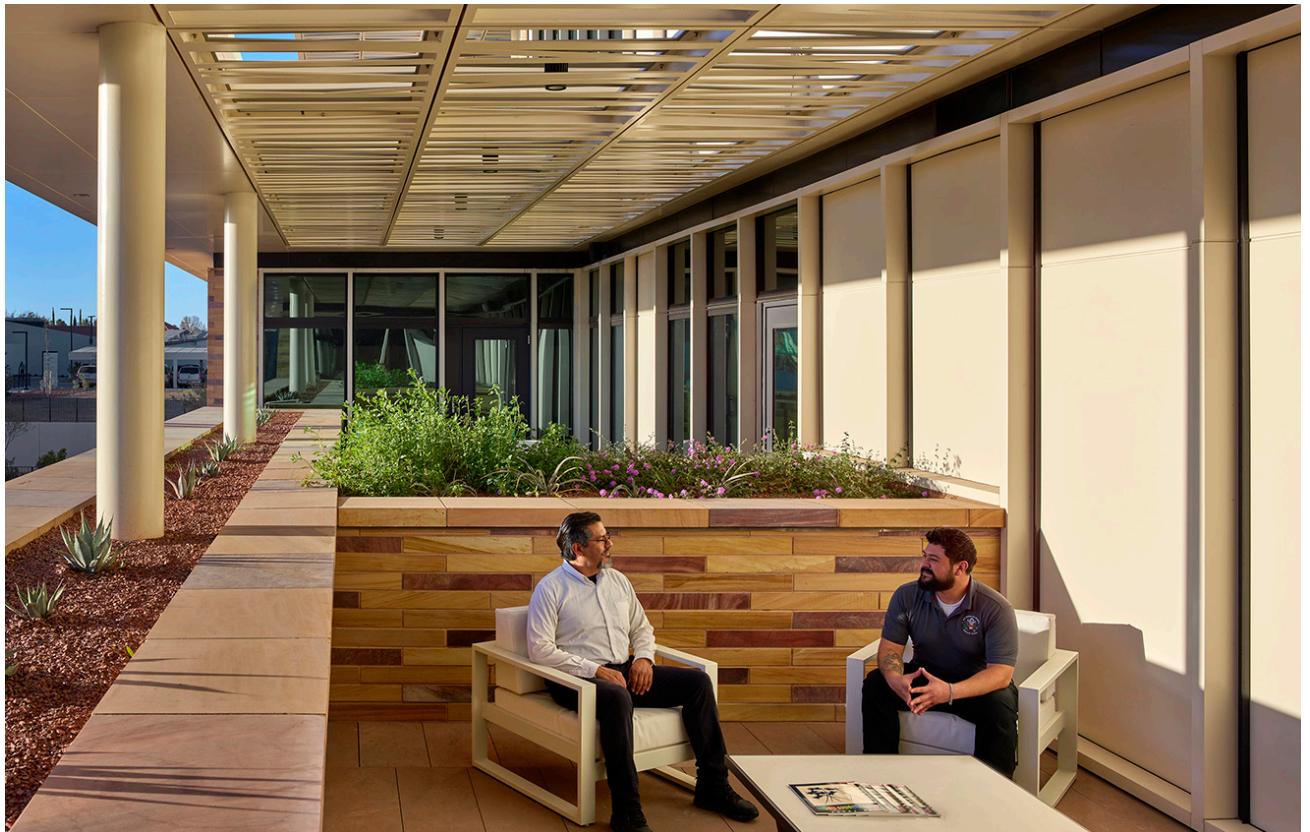
After observing nearby roadside shade structures—ramadas—of stacked ocotillo cacti branches, Curtis required incorporating this local precedent into the project. He requested new solar studies to enhance the ramada's design and validate reduced solar gain and energy use. His approach also extends the feature to interior spaces, ensuring natural lighting strategies and the ramada motif occur throughout the complex.

Recognizing the need to examine the feature over the facility's life led Curtis to perform the analysis worldwide via the *Embassy 2050* initiative [Exhibit 3.1]. He sought architecture to express shared values and experiences between the United States and Mexico; finding shade is a uniquely common experience for everyone in the desert climate. His efforts to lead the design architect through deep anthropological research served as the basis for incorporation of Design Anthropologist requirements [Exhibit 3.4].

IMPACT

A three-story ramada extends over the entry plaza and portions of the building, offering welcome shade and a monumental community presence. The canopy form unifies the two cultures and the compound. Diffuse daylight fills workspaces while minimizing heat gain. Other Design Diplomacy strategies include xeriscape landscaping for no irrigation.

Despite Nogales's desert climate, early fall rains can flood streets. Curtis required the project mitigate flooding, as the city lacks stormwater infrastructure. A stormwater detention tank, which Curtis advocated be funded, allows collected stormwater to recirculate across the campus into curated paths called 'arroyos' with native flowering plantings that bloom in the rainy season. Curtis collaborated with GGN landscape architects to produce a xeriscape that uses native plants, shrubs, and trees, providing food and habitat for migratory monarch butterflies and other migratory species each winter.



Shaded outdoor work areas create additional flexible and functional space for staff



DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

Felicia Berge, AIA, Principal, Ennead Architects



Curtis collaborated with Art in Embassies to incorporate local artists into the project (above + left)

3.10 | NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND, GUADALAJARA, MEXICO



The completion of the new U.S. consulate general in Guadalajara marks a major milestone in OBO's broader Mission Mexico efforts of a tangible and permanent commitment to the relationship between our nations. U.S. Consulate Guadalajara demonstrates our dedication to sustainability, customer service, and cross-cultural dialogue."

Ambassador William H. Moser

Director, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

ROLE

Design Advocate • Director of Architecture
OBO, U.S. Department of State

DESIGN ARCHITECT

The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Integrus Architects

COMPLETION DATE 2024

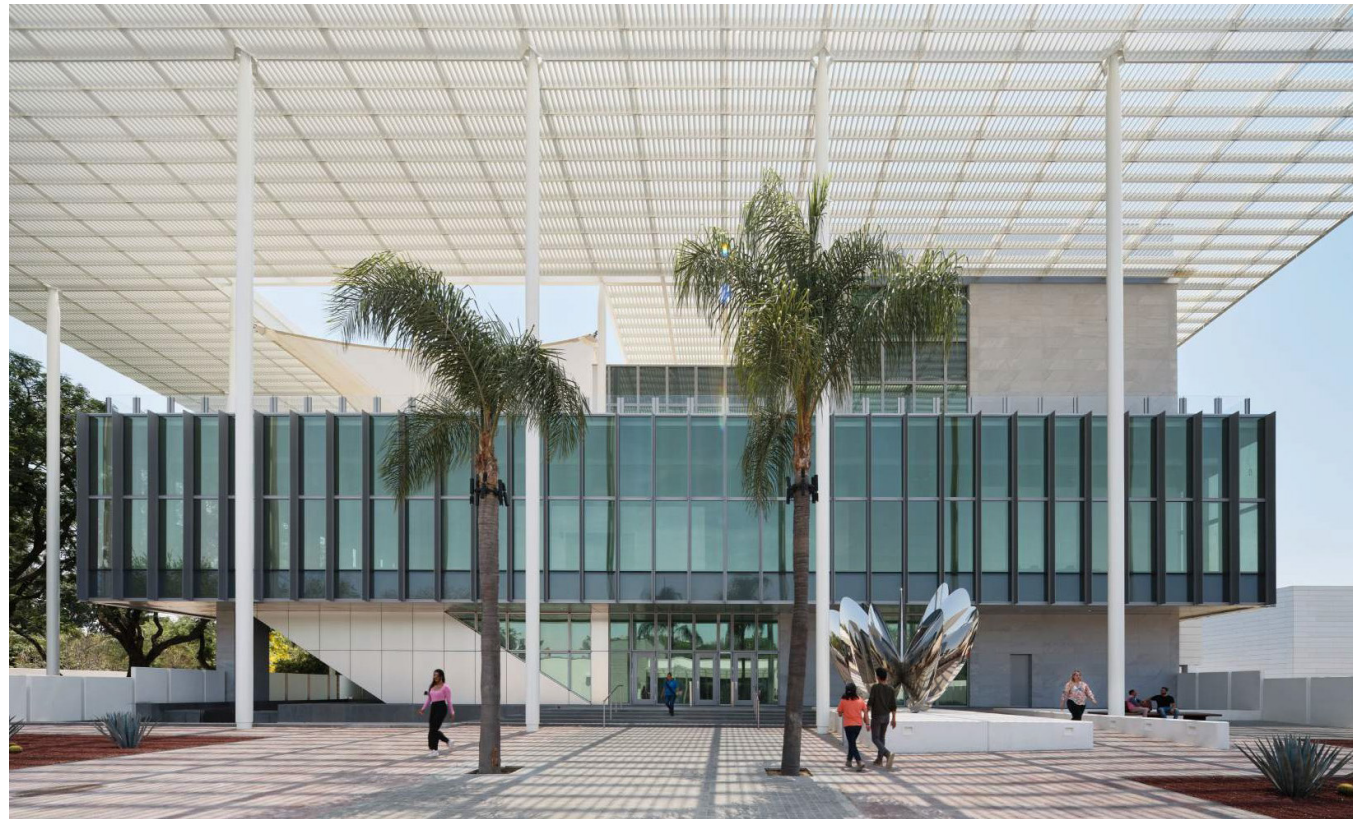
AWARDS

Architecture Award, AIA National, 2025

CHALLENGE

With over 1,200 visitors per day, with an expected increase to 100 visitors every 15 minutes (2000 per day), developing a design that would function efficiently was critical as was providing a calm and welcoming environment during what is a potentially stressful experience. The scheme also had to answer the need to respect the neighborhood and keep the impact of so many visitors on residents to a minimum.

The region faces significant urbanization and deforestation challenges, making it imperative that workspaces take advantage of the temperate climate and alleviate the high-pressure work environment for consulate staff.



Consular visitor entry with sculpture that references the local monarch butterfly population



Temperate weather allows for expansive outdoor flexible work space with cooling reflective pool

3.10 | NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND, GUADALAJARA, MEXICO

ROLE

Curtis made respecting the neighborhood a priority and led an effort to provide on-site underground parking for visitors, which was not included in the program. He led the design reviews to select the scheme that provided a large outdoor space for staff to take advantage of the temperate environment.

To address the region's deforestation challenges, Curtis advocated for retaining as many existing trees as possible, including a large grove of Jacaranda trees inside the compound. He chose the design scheme that also provided a reinterpretation of the local 'palapa' shading device and justified aesthetic decisions using design anthropological principles drawn from the local vernacular [Exhibit 3.4].

IMPACT

A byproduct of Curtis' advocacy for the on-site, underground parking garage is a large welcome and gathering courtyard that alleviates pressure on neighborhood streets. An inviting central stair encourages social interaction and minimizes elevator use, while connecting staff to the large outdoor space.

The preserved trees provide shade for staff and are the center of a native planting strategy to create a habitat for local wildlife.

The canopy has led to a 23% energy use reduction across the campus over baseline, with renewable energy sources contributing an additional 15% of total energy used.

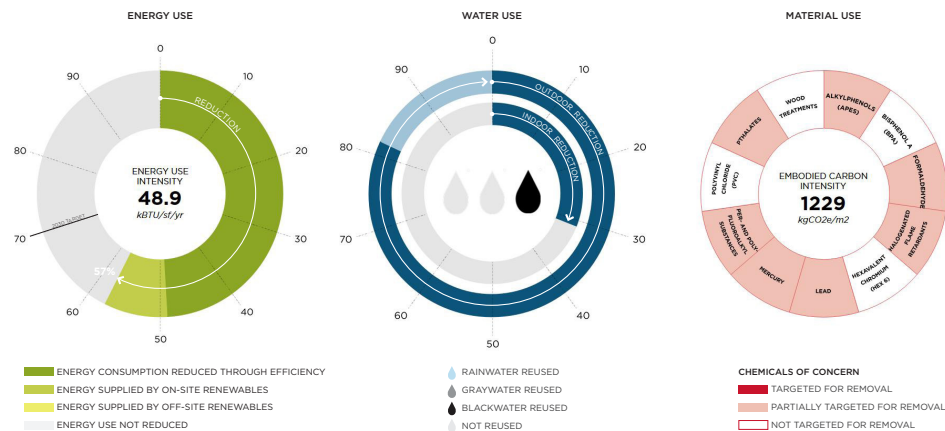
DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility as the project under direction of nominee.

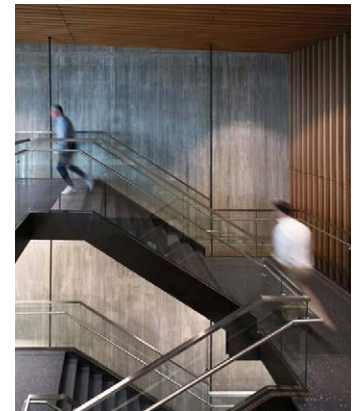
Brian Court, FAIA, Principal, The Miller Hull Partnership



Interior atrium space for large meetings



Significant energy and water savings were captured through smart design features



Connecting stair encourages mobility for staff rather than elevator use

4.0 | REFERENCES



DOUGLAS M. BRINKLEY, FAIA | Sponsor
Design Manager | Office of Design & Engineering
Creative IT Solutions, LLC



BRIAN COURT, FAIA
Principal | The Miller Hull Partnership
2019 - present



ADDISON "TAD" DAVIS IV
Former Director | Bureau of Overseas
Buildings Operations at U.S.
Department of State
2018 - 2021



RICHARD MAIMON, FAIA
Senior Principal | KieranTimberlake
2019 - present



RICHARD OLCOTT, FAIA
Design Partner | Ennead Architects
2014 - present



SHARON PRINCE
CEO & Founder |
Grace Farms Foundation
2021 - present



JAMES RICHÄRD, FAIA
Partner | Richärd Kennedy Architects
2018 - present



MARK SEXTON, FAIA
Founder | Krueck Sexton Partners
2015 - present