Fact Sheet: Washington Monument Visitor Entrance
Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners

LOCATION
Washington Monument
Washington, D.C.

CLIENT
National Park Service

PROJECT SCOPE
At the outset of the project, BBB and its team initiated full environmental and historic preservation compliance processes (pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 National Historic Preservation Act, respectively). The initial Project Scoping process informed the Purpose and Need of the project as well as the concept design parameters.

Due to the prominence of the building and its context, BBB’s concept design process generated more than 100 options in consideration of how to transition visitors appropriately into the Monument in a manner that met accessibility and security requirements, and also was befitting of this National Historic Landmark and NPS icon. Through the course of the Environmental Assessment (EA), Section 106, regulatory approvals BBB worked in collaboration with the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and the US Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) and Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to advance the preferred alternative into final design. BBB completed the EA, Section 106, and concept approvals in 2012.

Through public engagement and agency scoping, the NPS and BBB advanced the preferred alternative through Schematic Design. Due to its high visibility, the scope of work included a viewshed analysis for ten views and vistas that are either character-defining or contributing features of the cultural landscape as well as a Choosing By Advantages/Value Analysis (CBA/VA) workshop.

In 2013, at the completion of SD and outset of Design Development, BBB completed a Risk Analysis & Mitigation Management Plan to define the physical security levels in accordance with Interagency Security Committee’s “Physical Security Standards Criteria for Federal Facilities” and the DOI OLES and DHS recommendations for “National Icons.” As the design progressed, BBB completed an additional series of technical studies that advanced the engineering to
ensure that the VSF would meet and exceed safety and security performance requirements, including geoarchaeological and geotechnical studies, a risk assessment, and blast and ballistic analysis.

Late in the DD phase, the design was adapted several times and the delivery was expedited to coincide with earthquake elevator repairs and minimize public closures to the Monument. Throughout the process, BBB and the team applied a rigorous level of structural and architectural detailing to ensure the engineering and architecture worked together to conform to the design intent and achieve an aesthetic of the highest quality to welcome the millions of annual visitors the Monument.

In March 2017, BBB delivered final design documents and commenced Title III Construction Administration Services. Construction was complete in September 2019.

COST
$10.7 M

SCHEDULE
August 2016 – September 2019

OBJECTIVE
To improve the security and visitor flow at the Washington Monument in a manner that preserves the character and visitor experience of the Washington Monument and grounds. Requirements included:
- Improve public safety
- Improve visitor flow (i.e. the sequence of ticketing, queuing, security screening, and entry to and exit from the Monument)
- Protect the Monument from potential threats
- Restore the historic character and integrity of the base of the Monument
- Preserve the integrity of the Monument grounds cultural landscape current levels

BACKGROUND
Project Background
In 2002, the NPS completed a design for Washington Monument Permanent Security Improvements which included a comprehensive landscape solution for a perimeter vehicular barrier system and a new screening facility. However, only the vehicular barrier system and a portion of the landscape design were implemented. In 2008, NPS revisited the feasibility of constructing a new entrance and visitor screening facility and the removal of the existing temporary facility.

In 2010, BBB was engaged by the NPS NCRO to design a solution to improve security and visitor screening at the Washington Monument located on the Washington Monument grounds in Washington, D.C.
High Visibility
As the primary memorial to the nation’s first president, the Monument is one of the most prominent icons in the nation toured by approximately one million visitors annually with millions more visiting the surrounding grounds. Its popularity, combined with its status as an icon, makes it a potential target for terrorist attack.

Purpose and Need
A permanent perimeter vehicular barrier system was completed with landscape improvements in 2006. The project was necessary because the existing visitor screening station, constructed at the Monument’s base in 2001, was intended to be temporary and requires replacement in order to meet the long-term security and cultural resource management requirements at the Monument.

These long-term security and cultural resource management requirements at the Monument include:
- Visitor screening outside the walls of the Monument in order to ensure protection of human life and the structure in the event of a security breach
- Preservation of the fabric of the Monument, which is a historic property
- Consistency with the Washington Monument and Grounds cultural landscape with regard to views and vistas, buildings and structures, and circulation
- Visitor use that has, since 1888, included access to the top of the Monument for views of the city of Washington

PROJECT TEAM
Architect
Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners

Structural Engineer
Silman

Force Protection, Curtain Wall Design, Structural
Thornton Tomasetti

Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing
Setty Associates
James Posey Associates

Fire Protection
GHD
Civil Engineering
Soltesz

Geotechnical
Mueser Rutledge Consulting Engineers

Technical Security
M2H Protection

Hazardous Materials
Froehling & Robertson, Inc.

Lighting
MCLA Architectural Lighting Design

Cost Estimator
U.S. Cost, Inc.

Cost Estimator
CCS International, Inc.

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