Why EPIC ??

A goal of the US Department of State:
To demonstrate openness and optimism of the United States Government in new Embassy campuses.

Who are we?
The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO)

Learning Objectives

1. Learn about Design Excellence as an objective and expectation that includes the demonstration of social equity, artfulness, and sustainability, while providing protection for both diplomats and local residents.

2. Learn how the EPIC system can be applied to diverse cultural, physical, and ecological environments to integrate protective features into the landscape of a site and its surrounding urban environment.

3. Learn specific techniques and strategies for diplomatic facilities that can be utilized widely by landscape architects designing other projects, including municipal, state, and local government facilities, museums and public spaces, as well as high-tech industrial sites.

4. Explore case studies focusing on the new US Embassy in London, England, and others, in which this progressive approach is being used to elevate America’s role as a leader in landscape architectural design, and to reflect respect for a host country, its history, culture, and environment.
The bombings: Embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi

Embassies became closed to general public, walls go up.

Early attempts toward more open design

Embassy Park, US Embassy, Montevideo, Uruguay

Embassy Sofia, Bulgaria

Early attempts toward more open design
The EPIC Process: From Context to Strategy

- New Approaches to Defining Context
- Embracing local urban fabric, ecology, and culture
- Understanding the risk
- Anti-climb and Anti-ram: part of the security tool kit.

Design for Diplomacy: Visual gestures have a psychological effect of welcome or intimidation

- First Impressions Count.
- Positive public diplomacy for America begins with the first contact visitors have with the United States.
- For many, the introduction to our country is the arrival at our embassies.
Defining Risk

- Anti-Ram: protection from attack by vehicles
- Anti-Climb: protection from attack by pedestrians

Perimeter Design – Barrier Selection

1. Streetscape & Immediate Site Perimeter
2. Main Entrance Pavilion & NOB Plaza
3. Parking
4. Consular Entrance & Consular Garden
5. Service Entrance
6. Perimeter along Adjacent Properties

Perimeter Design – Barrier Selection

- Spatial Organization
- Softscape
- Native/Naturalized Plantings
- Shade Trees/Gardens
- Hardscape
- Steps/Paths/Furniture
- Lighting
- Rain and Sun Shelters
New Strategies

- Place-making and Diplomacy – Creating a welcoming setting – site amenity, comfort, and human dignity
- Archaeology, history and culture as design
- Local materials, works of art and craft

A New Concept of Representational Space: Outside the Edge

Representational space really begins with the edges – the first impression for visitors.

Embassy Perimeter Improvement Concepts (EPIC)
A new way of looking at the edge

The visitor's first contact should be:
- Comfortable – offering protection from the elements
- Welcoming
- As beautiful as the spaces within the embassy compound

Art and Artfulness

- In furnishings and amenity
- Making every object, every design gesture count
- Developing the layers of security – to hide or not to hide – plantings and water
Sustainability is not only about LEED, Ecology, and metrics
Sustainability is not a 'line item' – it is a basis for design throughout
Sustainability includes the perception of the US overseas presence

- American Soil
- Presentation of National Identity
- Freedom and Liberty
- Cultural Precedent in Host Country
- Historic and Contemporary Landscapes
- Sense of Security and Welcome

Lighting for Security and Amenity
Reducing 'Dark Sky': Lighting Design to Combine Functions

Integrate various types of lighting to:
- Provide Security
- Create a welcoming, attractive atmosphere
- Control light spill-over
Project Goals

Diplomacy
Create an iconic, timeless design that symbolizes democracy and the strength of the US-UK relationship

Environment
Establish leading edge international standards for energy efficiency and environmental sustainability

Excellence
Demonstrate US leadership in design and construction excellence

Place
Respect British culture and context; establish paradigm for Nine Elms development

Security
Ensure a safe, secure landscape and building, while minimizing visual presence of security measures

Welcome
Design an open, engaging landscape and transparent building that welcome visitors and staff

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
A WELCOMING EXPERIENCE
PERFORMATIVE LANDSCAPE
PLACES OF EXCHANGE
Broad Applications for EPIC Principles

• Security Criteria vary widely among jurisdictions and agencies -- but the EPIC approach to the problem is transferable
• Techniques can be applied to a wide range of projects:
  • Municipal, State, Local
  • Institutions, Museums
  • Commercial and High-tech installations
• The EPIC Study is available to the public at www.state.gov/obo