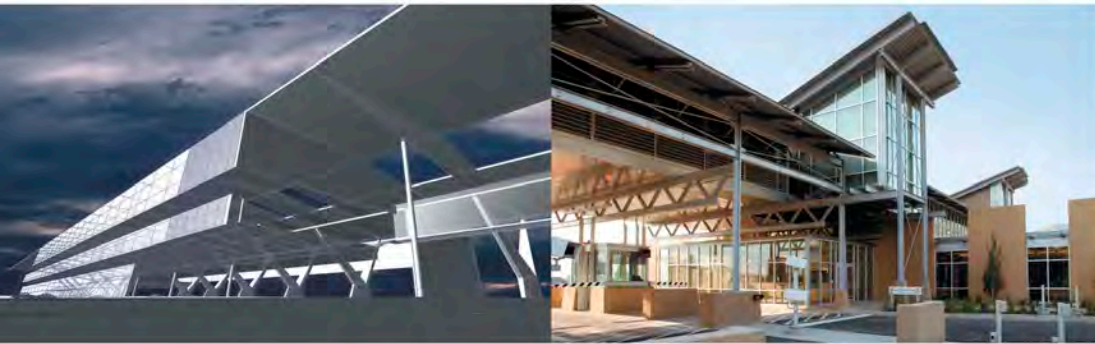


# NORTHERN UNITED STATES BORDER STATIONS





These Northern United States Border Stations were designed and constructed under the U.S. General Services Administration's Design Excellence Program, an initiative to create and preserve a legacy of outstanding public buildings that will be used and enjoyed now and by future generations of Americans.

December 2005

# **NORTHERN UNITED STATES BORDER STATIONS**

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## CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

The principles of American democracy and the legacy of the nation's history mandate that our frontier be open and welcoming at the same time that it is secure. It is a difficult balance but one that is creatively and successfully addressed by the border stations designed under the U.S. General Services Administration's Design Excellence Program on behalf of U.S. Customs and Border Protection in the Department of Homeland Security.

U.S. border stations respond to a broad range of priorities. Traditional tasks continue—monitoring trade, assuring the safety of agricultural and farm products, interdicting the flow of illegal goods, and processing the entry of citizens, visitors, and immigrants. Added to this is intense vigilance related to the threats posed by terrorists.

Lest this list give the wrong impression, however, the new border stations are not fortresses. They fulfill complex programmatic requirements, but they do it with design strategies that are responsive to their respective sites and regional context, and with architecture that is bold and transparent.

GSA's Design Excellence Program meets civilian federal agencies' facility and workplace needs by developing projects in partnership with distinguished architects, designers, and artists throughout the United States. For the border station program, the result is a portfolio of high quality buildings that, beyond being functional, contribute to the nation's architectural and cultural legacy.

## INTRODUCTION

With its pitched roofs and bold canopies, combined with wood, corrugated metal, and glass facades, the Pacific Highway U.S. Port of Entry in Blaine, Washington, represents a new era in the design and development of border stations in the United States. During the 19th century, customhouses—generally in communities with large ports—monitored commercial traffic and collected tolls and duties. In the second and third decades of the 20th century, the first actual “border stations” were constructed—modest structures with residential silhouettes (indeed, several in remote areas included housing) located along the roads that connected the United States with Canada and Mexico. During this era, the purpose was not simply to oversee commerce but also to stem the flow of illegal immigration and enforce Prohibition. Today, Prohibition is no longer an issue, but illegal immigration remains a concern, as does ballooning truck and automobile traffic on major north-south roadways and interstate highways. The response has been to build crossings like Blaine: unique, high-profile designs that address the ever more diverse realities of international trade and travel,

challenges that, since 9/11, include dealing with terrorism.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection, an agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, processes more than 350,000 vehicles and more than 1 million passengers and pedestrians each day. It evaluates all manner of products entering the country and, on a daily basis, collects \$74 million in revenue. The agency monitors for illegal drugs; carefully watches for prohibited plant and animal products, including agricultural pests; and checks the backgrounds of non-citizens and confirms they have the appropriate visas. It is a formidable job, one that is further complicated as it is dispersed at sites across the country.

Programmatically, border stations involve numerous functions. There are traffic lanes and officer booths for automobile and commercial traffic. There are secondary inspection areas for cars and trucks where vehicles can be off-loaded and thoroughly examined. There are processing areas for buses where passenger identities and luggage are checked. There are waiting and interview rooms as well as secure storage

for confiscated materials and holding cells for anyone arrested. There is office space for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection staff. There may be a lab and holding pens for agricultural and animal inspection staffed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Technologically, license plate readers are the norm at new stations, generating real-time information for officers as vehicles pass the booths. A growing number of crossings have radiation detectors for cars and trucks. Gamma scanning, which verifies cargo manifests by measuring the density of materials inside a truck or van, is increasingly common for commercial traffic.

Architecturally, border stations integrate many themes. Pragmatically, they are about security and control. Symbolically, they are about welcoming citizens, tourists, and guests. From a planning perspective, the challenge is to express these ideas under circumstances where the largest elements are inevitably vehicular circulation and parking spaces for cars and trucks rather

than buildings. In contrast to the more uniform and domestically-scaled crossings of the 1930s, the most recent generation of border stations is responsive to the uniqueness of each site. Especially on the northern border, many of the crossings are located in remote areas offering the opportunity to create a sculptural object in the landscape that establishes a distinctive sense of place. In addition, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. General Services Administration are committed to incorporating sustainable design strategies and including contemporary Art in Architecture commissions as facets of every project.

As design problems, border stations address the intersection of architecture, landscape, and traffic engineering. They are public buildings at the scale of the automobile. They are experienced by most as an approach and a portal through the windshield of a car or truck. As building projects, they require the coordination of the U.S. State Department, the Canadian government, state and federal highway agencies, and of course, the tenant, U.S. Customs and Border Protection. As the literal portal to

international commerce, they have a significant impact on innumerable industries and businesses.

This monograph focuses on the Northern frontier. From Washington state to Maine is where a significant number of border stations have been completed or are being developed. The goal of this publication is to document the diversity of this work and the priorities driving this important dimension of public architecture and planning.



**U.S. Border Station**  
Point Roberts, WA



## HISTORY

With the establishment of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2003, customs (oversight of what is crossing U.S. borders) and immigration (oversight of who is crossing U.S. borders) are now under the auspices of a single agency, U.S. Customs and Border Protection. This streamlines the administration and coordination of these two important functions, a strategy especially important in the post-9/11 era. Designs for the latest border stations reflect this unity, an important step in complementing and improving screening and security.

Interestingly, this need to control the borders so closely is a relatively recent phenomenon. In the eighteenth century, when the country was founded, borders were seen primarily as sources of revenue. The Customs Service was established in 1789 and placed under the control of the U.S. Department of the Treasury where the duties collected on imported goods represented a major stream of federal revenue. Architecturally, this reality was expressed in the design and construction of imposing customhouses, public landmarks in large shipping communities across the United States. Fees were also collected in

smaller trading centers and even along roads crossing the border, but in these cases, the Customs Service was located in other federal buildings such as post offices and courthouses or in commercial offices, rail depots or, on occasion, hotels, taverns, and private residences.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, with thousands of people coming to the United States from Europe and Asia, immigration emerged as an additional priority to be handled at the border. At first, this oversight was administered by the U.S. Department of State, later by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and after 1903, by the U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor. The concerns were to make sure those arriving were healthy, had some resources, and were able to work. Initially, this review was not applied to citizens of Canada and Mexico, but starting in 1917, immigrants from those nations had to pay a head tax and pass a literacy test. In 1921, controls were further tightened with the implementation of immigration quotas.

Overlaid on these border-related developments were two other factors. First, there was

a dramatic growth in land-based crossings and trade from Canada and Mexico due to the advent of inexpensive automobile transportation. In addition, Prohibition, which became the law of the land in 1919, made vehicle inspections more necessary. Congress responded to these trends by funding 48 border stations as part of the 1926 Public Buildings Act and related legislation that authorized over \$700 million of new federal construction. These stations were essentially a new building type designed to monitor both immigration and commerce. Most were located along the Canadian boundary line, with a handful in California and Arizona. The goal was to design “dignified and attractive surroundings...(to) produce enthusiasm and self-respect in the officers...(and to) convey to the public an impression of federal authority.” A few years later, the 1930 report of the Secretary of the Treasury noted that, “almost four times as many (persons) entered the U.S. by highway as by boat,” confirming the importance of the new border stations in overseeing the flow of goods and people.

The prototypical facility was a symmetrical building, one and a half or two stories high with a canopy extending from the main

elevation to form a porte-cochere over one to four traffic lanes. Within, the first floor was divided equally between customs and immigration in an arrangement where each half was the mirror image of the other. Long counters separated general office space from the public service area. If housing was part of the program, it was located on the back of the first floor and on the second. Alternatively, the second floor was reserved for storage and detention. Stations always incorporated garages, both for officer parking and inspection. Stylistically, a favorite design for northern stations was Colonial Revival with brick facades and frame clapboard garages. Several Montana stations had rustic log exteriors, while stucco, red clay roof tiles, and vigas lent a Spanish profile to stations in the Southwest.

The next comprehensive border station construction program did not occur until 1988, when \$353 million was authorized to improve older facilities and build several new ones. These last projects broke from the tradition of using prototypes. Instead, each crossing was created to be a landmark. A flag motif celebrates the frontier at International Falls, Minnesota (1994).

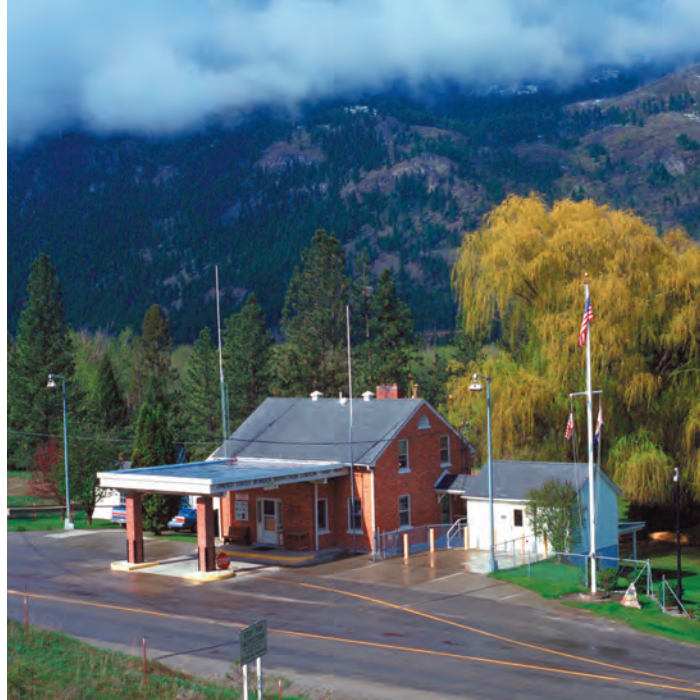
In Calexico, California, a series of tents establishes a dynamic silhouette at the crossing between the United States and Mexico (1996). At the Niagara Falls Rainbow Bridge station, a sculptural arc of offices hovers above the inspection booths, boldly marking the concept of threshold (1998).

The latest round of commissions continues this philosophy. Projects incorporate building systems, screening, and security mandated since 9/11. At the same time, they welcome citizens and visitors and convey the idea of openness essential to our democracy. The architecture is original and of high quality and, as an evolving chapter in the legacy of border station design, is a fitting expression of GSA's Design Excellence Program.

**Alexander Hamilton U.S. Customhouse**

New York, NY





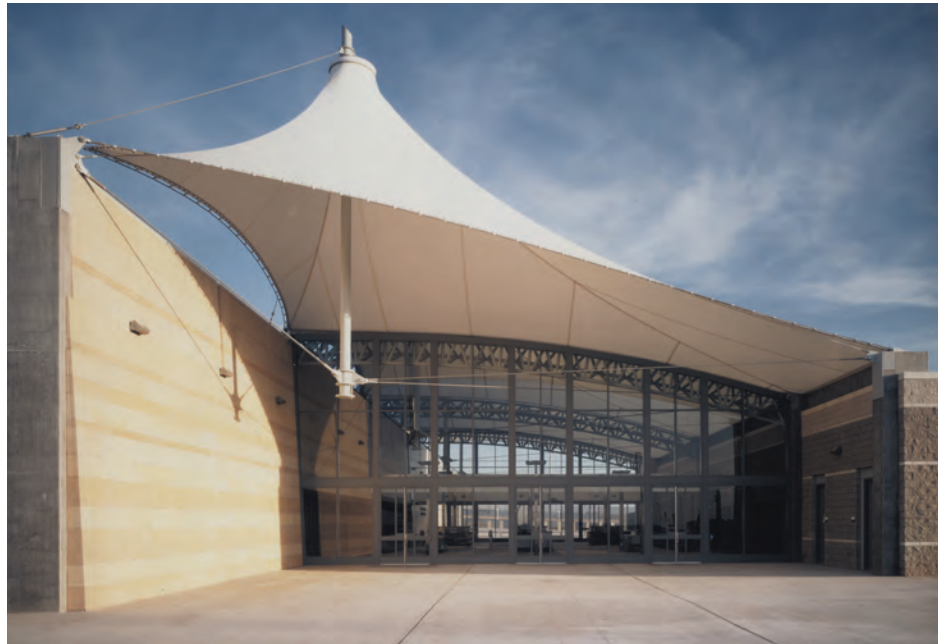
**U.S. Border Station**

Curlew, WA



**U.S. Customs and Immigration Center**  
Rainbow Bridge, Niagara Falls, NY

**U.S. Port of Entry**  
Calexico, CA



## THE NORTHERN BORDER

The border between the United States and Canada is 5,000 miles long. It crosses a diverse landscape from the Atlantic coast and lake country of northern Maine to the bridges and cities that dot the edges of the Great Lakes to the prairies of Montana to the Rockies and Cascade Mountains in the Northwest. The scenery and vistas can be stunning, and along this edge, U.S. Customs and Border Protection staffs 67 GSA-owned crossings. Some are major commercial crossings that, beyond passenger vehicles, oversee a steady stream of trucks carrying everything from lumber to farm animals. Some are tourist and seasonal crossings, busy during specific times of the year. Some are simply gateways on quiet two-lane roads that have, since the 19th century, connected the two countries. The diversity speaks to the economic and geographic richness of United States. It is a diversity that also finds expression in the unique character and design of each station, facilities that pragmatically support a demanding vigilance that is a 24-hour-a-day operation and that symbolically join two great nations.





**The skyline on the northern border in Montana**

## ART IN ARCHITECTURE AT THE BORDER STATIONS

Since the mid-nineteenth century, art has been an important dimension of federal architecture. In the case of border stations, this is a more recent reality, an aspect of projects developed during the past 25 years. The goal is to have installations that are truly public, a challenge in facilities where there are few visitors and where most people never get out of their cars or trucks.

Exterior works of art are one approach. *Penelopeia* (1998) by Caroline Blessing Bowne Court graces the front plaza of the U.S. Customs Cargo Inspection Facility at the Ambassador Bridge crossing in Detroit. Incorporating personalized bricks on the interior of a 12 1/2-foot-tall masonry arch, it is, in the words of the artist, a form “through which the eyes and thoughts can travel as the physical self has traveled over the Ambassador Bridge and the social, political self has traveled through U.S. Customs.” Tracy Linder’s *Forces of Labor* (2004) is a relief sculpture at the Sweetgrass, Montana, border station. Here, to recall the heritage of the northern plains, a sequence of repeated images has been molded into the panels of a long retaining wall on the site. The major difficulty in

these types of installations is making sure they are large enough and sited so the works can be seen and understood.

A second strategy is to place the art in border station lobbies where, although seen by fewer people, there is the opportunity to appreciate the work more completely. Three Native American carvings (1980) by Carmen Quinto Plunkett grace the facility at Haines, Alaska, and a stained glass work of a running figure called *Passage* (1988) by Maxine Martell is featured in the entrance space of the Kenneth G. Ward Border Station in Lynden, Washington. *Independence Crossing* (2005) by Terry Karpowicz is a recent installation in the processing center of the Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan, border station. It is a wooden framework, a fragment of a ship’s hull reminiscent of the nineteenth century boats that plied the waters of the Great Lakes.

The nature of art for the border stations continues to evolve. As it does, there is one primary goal: to have commissions that are valued examples of public art and contributions to GSA’s impressive Fine Arts Collection, a portfolio that includes

Beaux-Arts and Depression-era sculptures and paintings as well as contemporary works by such distinguished American artists as Alexander Calder, Isamu Noguchi, Louise Nevelson, George Segal, and Claes Oldenburg.



**The Thunderbirds**

Carmen Quinto Plunkett

U.S. Border Station, Haines, AK

**Forces of Labor**

Tracy Linder

U.S. Border Station, Sweetgrass, MT

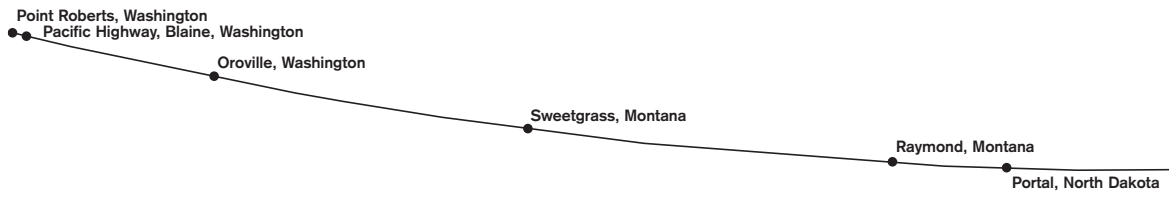




**Passage**

Maxine Martell

Kenneth G. Ward Border Station, Lynden, WA



**TEN NORTHERN BORDER STATIONS**







## PROJECT

### Point Roberts, Washington

The western-most port of entry along the 49th parallel, Point Roberts is the first border station commissioned under GSA's Design Excellence Program. Its profile—inspired by the maritime traditions of the Point Roberts area—is a dynamic combination of volumes and planes framed by steel piers. A long canopy, suspended with cables from two tall columns, is tilted upward over the primary inspection booths. It becomes a dramatic gateway announcing entry to the United States. It also shelters those who work at and pass through the station. To the south, another canopy for secondary inspection is detailed as a variation on the piers-and-cables architectural language.

The building and its interior are compact and thoughtfully articulated. The tall “wood” box at the center of the composition has a gently sloping roof and continuous skylight. It contains private offices and secure functions as well as support spaces below grade. Projecting forward from this core is a steel-framed glass volume that is the open office and public information space. It is oriented to a view of the trees and natural landscape to the west and

south. Aesthetically, it features exposed structure and ductwork that reflects the imagery of the sheds and other utilitarian structures along the Point Roberts waterfront.

**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Auburn, WA

**Architect**

David Miller  
The Miller/Hull Partnership  
Seattle, WA

**GSA Team**

John Bland, Project Manager  
Michael D. Rutter  
Carmie Simons  
Cynthia Tolentino

**Location**

The site is 3.2 acres on “The Point,” as it is referred to locally, a two and one-half mile peninsula extending south from the Canadian mainland. It can be accessed via land only by leaving the United States, driving around Boundary Bay through Canada, and re-entering the United States through this border station.

**Completed**

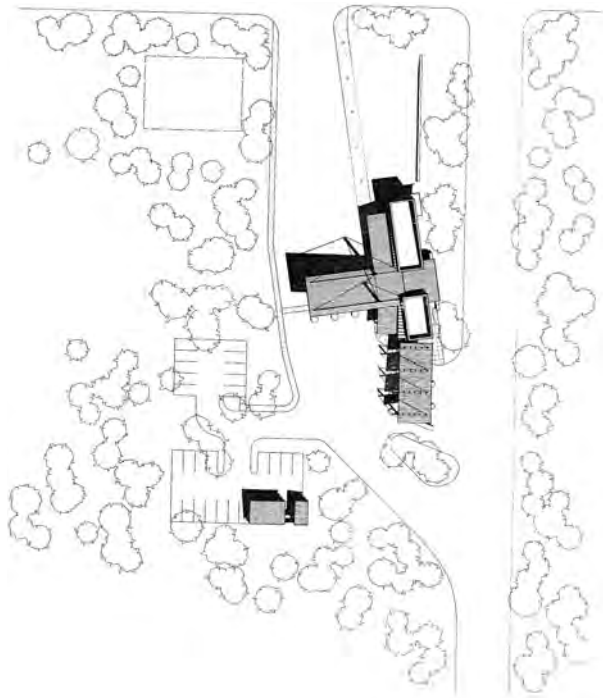
July 1997

**Size**

A small facility of 14,200 square feet.

**Materials**

Exposed steel structure and canopies; walls detailed in wood, concrete, and steel-framed glass; exposed interior ductwork and mechanical systems.









## PROJECT

### Pacific Highway, Blaine, Washington

Conceptually—with its overhanging roofs and large paneled volumes—this border station recalls the lines and massing of Japanese farmhouses called minka. More literally, the sloping lines, center clerestories, and blend of corrugated metal, wood, and glass siding in this three-building complex mimic the imagery of barns and industrial buildings found throughout the Pacific Northwest. The composition is lively, especially the juxtaposition of rooflines, which are at different heights and layered at right angles to one another.

The largest and most public building is the auto/bus facility. It has an expansive two-story hall with exposed interior framing. Its main façade is opened up with glass panels.

To the west, there is a three-story cargo building next to the truck lanes and a two-story warehouse/inspection building. These last two structures share the same visual qualities—a pitched roof and similarly proportioned bay system—as the auto/bus facility but are utilitarian in their function and details. The façades are asymmetrical. They are treated with corrugated metal

and translucent paneling rather than wood. Windows are small and intermittently spaced. Amplifying this informality, the warehouse has a covered exterior metal staircase to second floor offices.

Overall, “Pac Highway,” as this port of entry is known, demonstrates how an economical but thoughtful use of form and materials can yield a design that establishes a welcoming presence and vitality at the same time that it expresses the ideas of dignity and order.

**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Auburn, WA

**Architect**

Thomas Hacker  
Thomas Hacker Architects, Inc.  
Portland, OR

**GSA Team**

Michael Nuernberger, Project Manager  
Kimberly Coon  
Michael D. Rutter  
Kelly Sarver-Lenderink  
Carmie Simons

**Location**

This border station is on a 13-acre site developed as a crossing for commercial traffic on Interstate 5 as it connects Seattle and Vancouver. It is one of the busiest northern commercial ports of entry west of Detroit.

**Completed**

September 2000

**Size**

Three buildings with a total of 108,400 square feet.

**Materials**

Steel frame construction infilled with galvanized corrugated steel, glass, wood, and translucent wall panels; tile floors; oak paneling.











## PROJECT

### Oroville, Washington

The 49th parallel is a conceptual east-west line across the landscape that is the frontier between the United States and Canada. With similar intellectual elegance, this station—a shared United States-Canadian port of entry at Oroville, Washington, and Osoyoos, British Columbia—is a line perpendicular to that border. Elevated on crisply detailed steel columns, it hovers above the earth as it crosses into both countries. Completing this architectural orthogonal composition, two one-story buildings slide below the main structure as forms that embrace the 49th parallel—one in the United States extending to the east and one in Canada extending west. In yet another axial layer, rows of English oaks, filberts, and Australian black pine trees have been planted as a procession of points along both sides of the border.

Functionally, the second floor of the administration building, which is almost two football fields long, contains a variety of different offices and meeting rooms as well as a shared lunchroom, conference rooms, gym, and locker rooms. On the U.S. side, spaces for the Port Director and another port executive are distinguished

as great dormers that rise out of the otherwise downward sloping roof of the administration structure. These have expansive west-facing windows with views over the border station operations and the mountains beyond. A corridor, part of which is outside and suspended above the booths, connects the offices and other interior spaces. Secondary inspection for commercial vehicles is on the ground level at the north (Canada) and south (United States) ends of the station. All traffic is turned 90 degrees to move past booths that are under the administration level, giving travelers the experience of moving through the architecture. Bus passengers and their luggage pass through a ground floor waiting/inspection/processing space. The one-story structures are devoted to secondary non-commercial inspection, and a simple, stand-alone block has been constructed for animal inspection.

The port has many interesting details. The administration building has a steel roof that slopes down to the west so that the long edifice has two distinctive façades, one high and the other low. Its length is articulated as bays of stacked squares

with the upper level hallmarked by cross bracing. Windows and mullions are variations on a square geometry. Much of the steel structure is exposed, including columns and roof trusses as well as the cables, buckles, connections, and beams that carry the suspended corridor. Columns have a cruciform cross section. Most of the masonry walls are prefabricated concrete panels. Upper level office interiors have hung ceilings made from richly grained wooden planks. Public spaces on the first floor are finished with stainless steel, and the lobby ceiling is tongue-and-groove pine.

Consolidating and sharing facilities saves resources. In addition, the design has been detailed to ensure it is as efficient as possible. From a sustainability perspective, the notable feature is a ground source heat pump energy system that, through a network of pipes buried in the ground, extracts or disperses heat, depending on the season. This both conserves energy and reduces greenhouse emissions.

In terms of context, the Oroville/Osoyoos port of entry sits in a dramatic landscape with Osoyoos Lake to the east nestled in

a panorama of mountains, fields, and orchards. The architecture makes references to local building types. The prefabricated concrete walls recall cold storage units at the local fruit packing houses, and the sloping steel roofline reflects the imagery of hay sheds.



**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Auburn, WA

**Architect**

James Cutler  
Cutler Anderson Architects  
Bainbridge Island, WA

**GSA Project Team**

Michael Nuernberger,  
U.S. Project Manager, GSA  
Jerry Gluss,  
Canada Project Manager, CBSA  
Pat Brunner, GSA

**Location**

This is a long 23-acre site that crosses the 49th parallel international border. It is identified with the towns of Oroville, Washington, in the United States, and Osoyoos, British Columbia, in Canada.

**Completed**

October 2004

**Size**

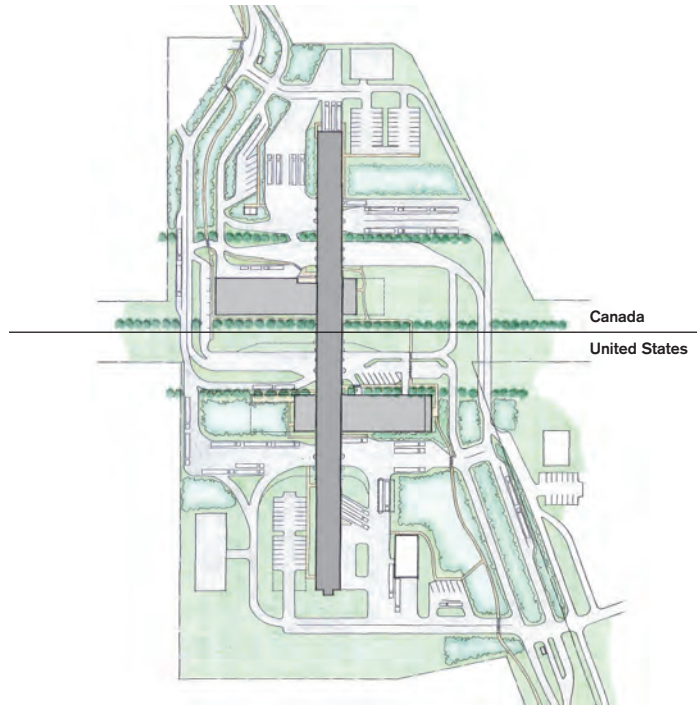
A 89,000 square-foot-facility shared by both the United States (about 60 percent

of the space) and Canada (about 40 percent of the space). The spaces that are jointly used represent about 1,000 square feet.

**Materials**

Steel frame structure with prefabricated concrete and aluminum-framed glazed wall panels; corrugated metal roof; oak interior furnishings and suspended oak ceilings.







## PROJECT

### Sweetgrass, Montana

Sweetgrass/Coutts is a joint U.S./Canadian port of entry whose design evokes the materials and forms of the silos and barns that rise across the Northern prairie as well as the gambrel roof of the historic Customhouse adjacent to the site. It is a large, 100,000-square-foot facility on Interstate 15 that processes over one million travelers and more than 400,000 commercial shipments annually. Architecturally, it is a complex of six buildings on a long 23-acre site that emerges visually as elements of the agricultural/railroad center and namesake U.S. and Canadian towns that mark this point along the frontier. In terms of materials, the vocabulary juxtaposes galvanized corrugated metal, sandstone and concrete, steel trusses, and glass.

The main port building straddles the border and has a shared fitness center, men's and women's locker facilities, a lunch and kitchen area, and meeting/training rooms. A glass-enclosed pedestrian walkway and bridge just inside and paralleling the U.S. border separate the two halves of the administrative building. The walkway is articulated as a narrow atrium. With corrugated metal walls and a red metal

staircase, the space serves as a light-filled transition between the U.S and Canadian offices. The bridge is a secure interior connection to the U.S. commercial inspection station to the west as well as a public passageway to an enclave of nearby import/export brokers. Other port buildings on the U.S. side include one for secondary inspection of automobiles and vans and a firing range/armory. On the Canadian side, there is a structure for automobile inspection and another for commercial inspection.

At Sweetgrass/Coutts, vehicular circulation is segregated into several routes. Traffic going north into Canada is on the east side of the main building, one level below that of traffic headed south. At the crossing into the United States, the two lanes for trucks and the three lanes for cars are separated by the commercial inspection building. Each country has ample truck parking for drivers completing paperwork or waiting for inspections, and the U.S. has a building dedicated to scanning trucks.

The Art in Architecture commission for this station is a work called *Forces of Labor*

by Montana artist Tracy Linder. It is a series of four different relief panels that are repeated and incorporated into the blocks that form the I-15 retaining wall on the west side of the site. Each pattern is framed in a plowshare contour. This is a reference to the agricultural history of the region, the connection between human beings and the land, and the idea of peace as swords are beaten into plowshares. Within this pattern, Linder has developed four images. Gloves are used to represent hard labor and the human struggle to survive in this desolate landscape. A backbone suggests a life cycle and the strength of community members. Roots convey the idea of deep connections and are identified with crops and native grasses. Cattle legs recognize the significance of open grazing and livestock trading.



**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Denver, CO

**Architect**

Kate Diamond, Design Architect  
Los Angeles, CA

Tim Felchlin, Architect  
Los Angeles, CA

**Artist**

Tracy Linder  
Molt, Montana

**GSA Team**

J. Lach, Project Manager, GSA  
Dane Ashlie, Canada Project Manager, CBSA  
Diane Crowder, GSA  
Kim Encinias, GSA  
Vista Gifford, GSA  
Julie Milner, GSA

**Location**

The site is 23 acres, a former oil refinery, which was decontaminated for the construction of the border station. It is long and narrow and located between Sweetgrass, Montana, and Coutts, Alberta.

**Completed**

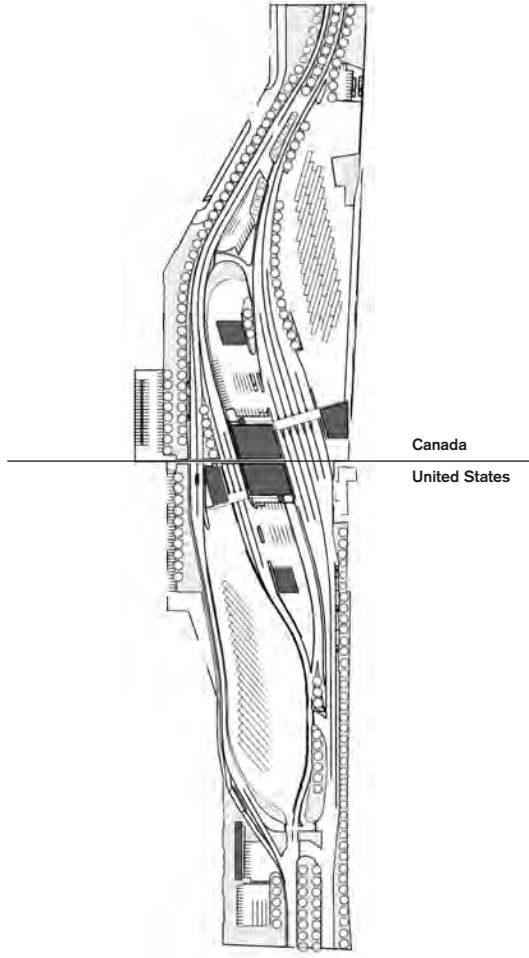
September 2003

**Size**

A joint U.S./Canadian station with about 100,000 square feet of space in six buildings. Shared facilities include training areas, break rooms, and a fitness center. The United States has slightly more than 50 percent of the space.

**Materials**

Galvanized corrugated metal; sandstone; curtainwalls.







## PROJECT

# Raymond, Montana

In this remote agricultural center with miles of rolling hills, the bold, orthogonal geometry of this border station is a distinctive emblem. Its monumental concrete frame outlines panoramas in the landscape and, entering from Canada, this form creates a powerful horizontal line that unambiguously marks the crossing into the United States. Facing south, two open bays on the right with three inspection booths under a protective roof define the vehicular route. To the left of these traffic lanes are two enclosed bays and one open bay. The first, clad with glass and translucent panels, is a public lobby and two floors of offices around a narrow atrium. The second, clad in concrete panels, is dedicated to storage and other utilitarian uses. The last open bay is for monitoring cars and trucks entering Canada.

Beyond this main building are two smaller structures. With the region's extreme climate—high winds and hot summers where temperatures can reach 100 degrees Fahrenheit and frigid winters where they can fall to below zero—these utilitarian metal units are used for interior secondary inspection and other border station

functions, including commercial vehicle scanning, a firing range, and parking. Because of the short construction season, the design mandated a prefabricated structure. Wall panels, many of which were made locally, were shipped to the site, and erected in a single day.

Conscious of the need to conserve resources, rainwater is collected and stored for later use. Trees are being planted to serve as a natural windbreak, and reflective materials on the roof and walls help reduce the impact of the hot summer sun.

**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Denver, CO

**Architect**

Thomas Beeby and Craig Brandt  
Hammond Beeby Rupert Ainge Architects  
Chicago, IL

**GSA Team**

Scott McCollough, Project Manager  
Stephanie Downs  
Craig Johnson  
Lynda Sena-Hunt

**Location**

This is a 9-acre site in the Northern prairie, a vast agricultural center of rolling hills in northeastern Montana.

**Completed**

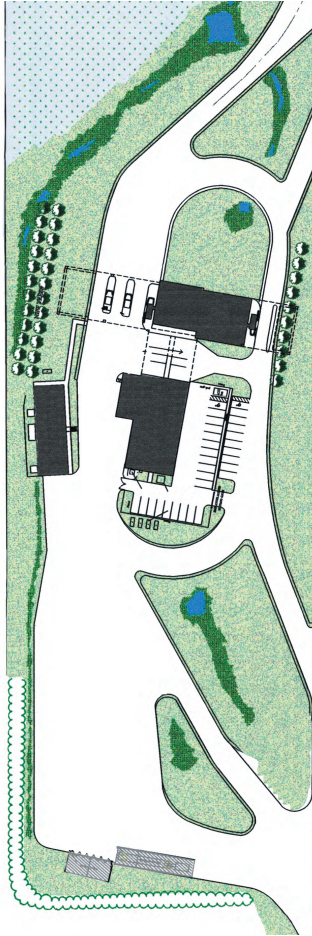
Summer 2005

**Size**

This station is made up of three buildings. The office and initial inspection facility is 11,500 square feet. Two smaller prefabricated metal buildings for secondary inspection, parking, and other functions are 5,600 square feet and 4,900 square feet, respectively.

**Materials**

Concrete and precast concrete frames;  
modular glass, translucent, and metal panels.









## PROJECT

### Portal, North Dakota

Still in the concept development stage, this port of entry is inspired by the “loafing sheds” or open-front pasture shelters that dot this Northern prairie landscape. This form—notable for its low-pitched roof—is repeated to form a cluster of buildings and canopies that serve the many port functions and direct vehicles through the site. A tower and sloped triangular canopy form a gateway that announces the primary inspection booths. Reinterpreting the openness of the loafing sheds, the long southern side of the main administration building is detailed with window walls articulated as long horizontal bands of glass, while the northern façade is a wall of masonry that protects against the snow and prevailing winds. The same architectural vocabulary is used in a separate structure for scanning trucks and secondary commercial inspection, as well as for border patrol offices and a garage. Passenger and commercial circulation is separated at the initial inspection booths to efficiently move traffic through the port.

A dense band of trees and other landscape features define the boundaries of the complex and act as valuable barriers to wind and

noise. Rainwater is collected for irrigation and evaporative cooling. Responding to its environmental context, within the buildings, masonry walls absorb the heat during the day and release it at night to mitigate dramatic swings in temperature.

**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Denver, CO

**Architect**

Don McLaughlin  
Place Architecture  
Bozeman, MT

**GSA Project Team**

Craig Johnson, Project Manager  
Stephanie Downs  
Nancy Gertler  
Brian Hodde  
Bryan Saylor

**Location**

This is an 11-acre site in western North Dakota where U.S. Route 52 crosses into Canada, an area of expansive farms interspersed with aspen groves and dramatic prairie pot holes.

**Anticipated Completion**

Fall 2007

**Size**

A 58,500-square-foot facility with multiple structures, including a main building for

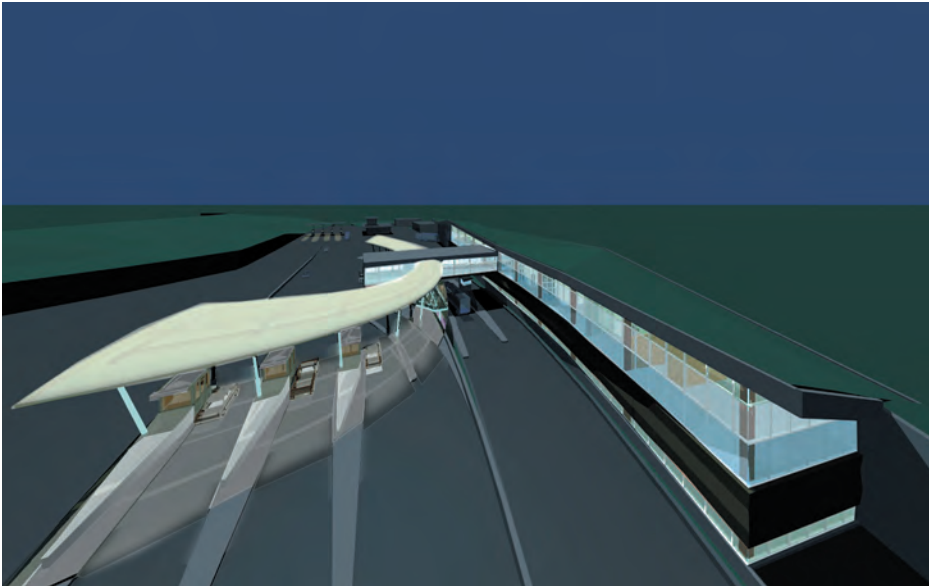
administration and initial inspection, a garage, a truck screening and secondary commercial inspection building, a border patrol office, and a veterinary services facility constructed on a nearby parcel adjacent to the stockyards.

**Materials**

Masonry brick walls and south-facing window walls in the main port building; standing seam metal roofs; pre-engineered metal secondary buildings.







## PROJECT

### Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan

Descending from the International Bridge as it arches over the St. Mary's River into the United States, two unique aspects of this port of entry stand out—the facility's faceted vegetative roof and the curved canopy over the booths. In the evening, the canopy glows with light, becoming a luminescent gateway. The site is a sliver of land along the northern terminus of Interstate 75. Since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, the border station is increasingly busy. The traffic is divided into two zones to facilitate inspection. Commercial vehicles move down a ramp on the right to a lower two-booth plaza under a bridge. Cars and buses stay in the three left lanes under the canopy. The bridge connects the canopy with the main border building and serves as the station's public lobby.

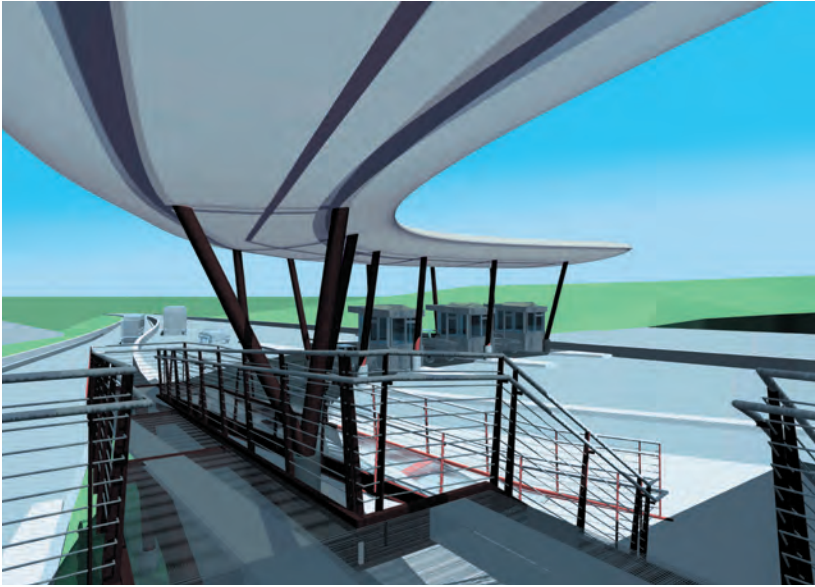
The composition articulates major functions. Echoing a hill that originally defined the western part of the site, two office floors and enclosed parking are tucked under an undulating vegetative roof. Light pours in from windows on the east and west sides of this building. On the uppermost level, most walls are well below the ceiling,

a high plane that reflects the angular forms of the green roof. This creates a sense of openness and dynamic interior volumes. On the east, window walls in the Port Director's office provide excellent site lines for overseeing activities. The bridge/lobby shelters the commercial booths below. Conceptually, this element extends through the main building and is developed as a glass-enclosed employee lounge on the west. The middle floor includes space for secure storage and, at the south end of the building, four bays for secondary truck inspection. The lowest level is largely set aside for covered parking, a necessity given the snowy, windy climate and small site. A last design feature is the curved canopy. This protects the non-commercial inspection booths and secondary inspection for those vehicles. With respect to materials, native stone and copper siding have been selected to recall the rich natural resources of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, which at one time included copper mines.

The design also emphasizes sustainability. The green roof minimizes storm runoff and increases thermal performance. Light shelves help illuminate interior spaces with

reflected daylight. Locating air supply in the interstitial space between the middle and upper floors enhances the efficiency of the mechanical systems by minimizing ductwork and transmission energy losses.

The art commission for this building is a sculpture, *Independence Crossing*, by Terry Karpowicz. He used timbers from a 155-year-old-barn and a shipwreck from Lake Superior to create a 75-foot-long sculpture. Recalling the nineteenth century ships that transported goods and people across the Great Lakes, the profile of the piece is a wooden framework that looks like structural members in the hull of one of these boats. Adding a functional dimension to the sculpture, the skeletal form is infilled with stainless steel screens and counters as workspaces for the inspectors in the bridge/lobby.



**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Chicago, IL

**Architect**

Carol Ross Barney  
Ross Barney + Jankowski  
Chicago, IL

**Artist**

Terry Karpowicz  
Karpowicz Studios  
Chicago, IL

**GSA Team**

Donald Melcher, Project Manager  
Elizabeth Brown  
Dan Fenner  
Dana M. Pionke-Garcia  
Charles Stormer  
Alan Frappier, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Location**

This border station occupies a 3.2-acre site at the northern termination of Interstate 75 and the southern end of the International Bridge connecting Canada and the United States.

**Completed**

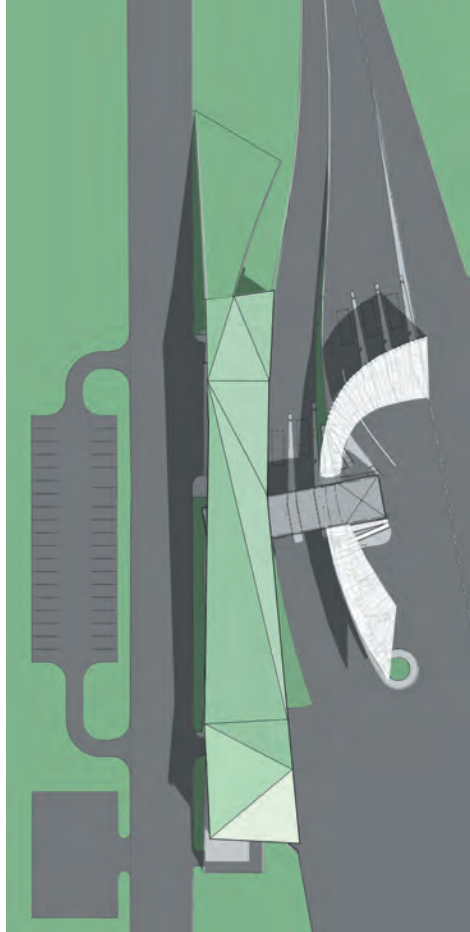
Fall 2005

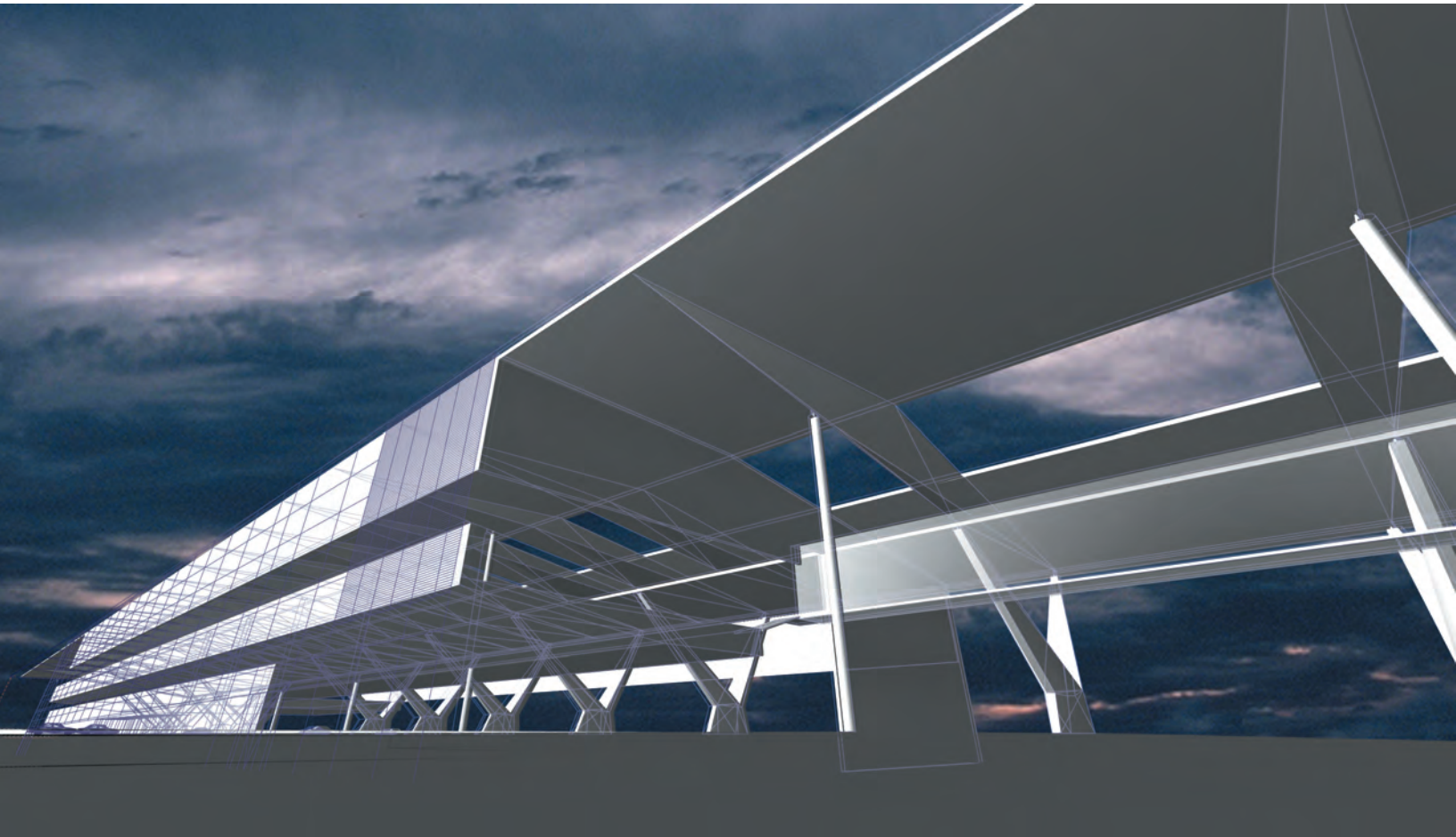
**Size**

There is 38,750 square feet of space for offices, lobby and public space, truck docks, warehouse space, inspection garages, and other related port-of-entry facilities. In addition, there is 20,000 square feet of covered parking for employees and government vehicles.

**Materials**

Concrete and steel structure; thermal glazing; copper sheathing; native stone; a vegetative roof; curved translucent plastic canopy over the non-commercial inspection booths and secondary inspection.







## PROJECT

### Massena, New York

Located where State Route 37 meets the Seaway International Bridge and inspired by the design of an airplane wing, this border station is a lean metal canopy over 600 feet long lifted above the roadways and main port building. Where the structure is enclosed, the north-facing façade is a pattern of clear and translucent glass panels that reflect the sunlight during the day and glow from within at night. On the same scale as the bridge itself, the scheme is an iconic landmark that integrates architecture, the landscape, and passing vehicles.

The main building includes administrative offices and a cargo inspection space. To accommodate the flow of traffic, a maintenance garage, secondary inspection, and commercial scanning facility are located further away. These smaller buildings are integrated into the site with planted berms and contoured roofs. They use the same materials as the “gateway” structure—glass panels, clerestory windows, corrugated metal cladding and louvers, poured-in-place concrete, skylit corridors, and site-scaled signage.

**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: New York, NY

**Architect**

Laurie Hawkinson  
Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects  
New York, NY

**GSA Team**

Barbara Kalish, Project Manager  
Rico Liu

**Location**

This port of entry is located south of Ottawa, Canada, on the northwest border of New York state, adjacent to the lands of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. The site is bounded to the south by State Route 37 and the Raquette River and to the north by the St. Lawrence River. Access to the port is via the Seaway International Bridge on the north and Route 37 on the south.

**Anticipated Completion**

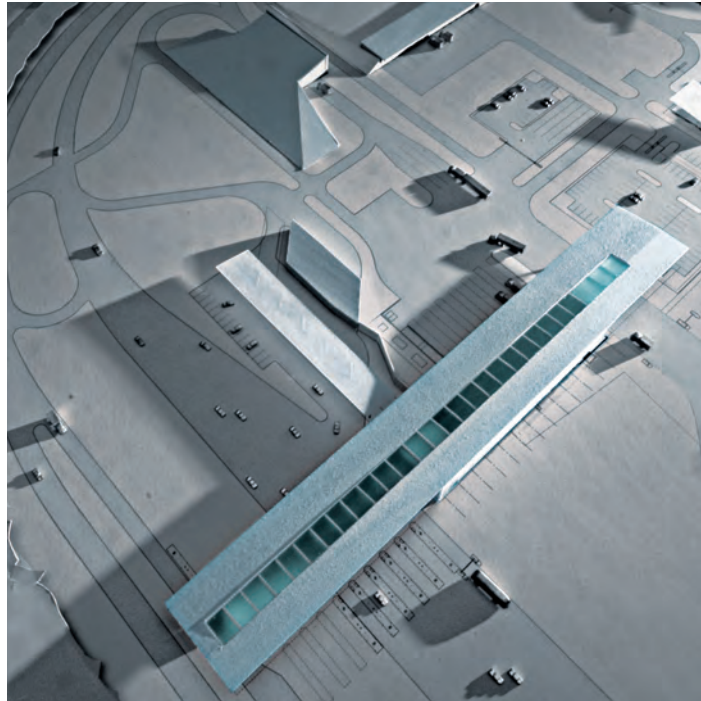
Spring 2009

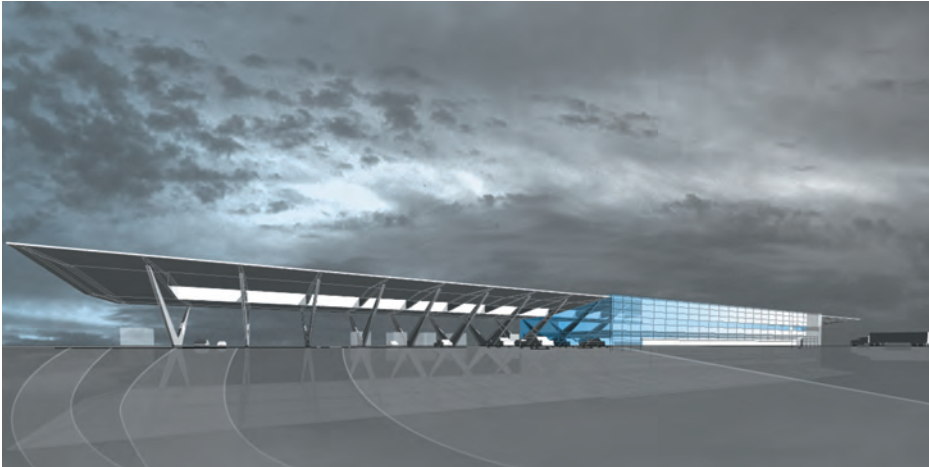
**Size**

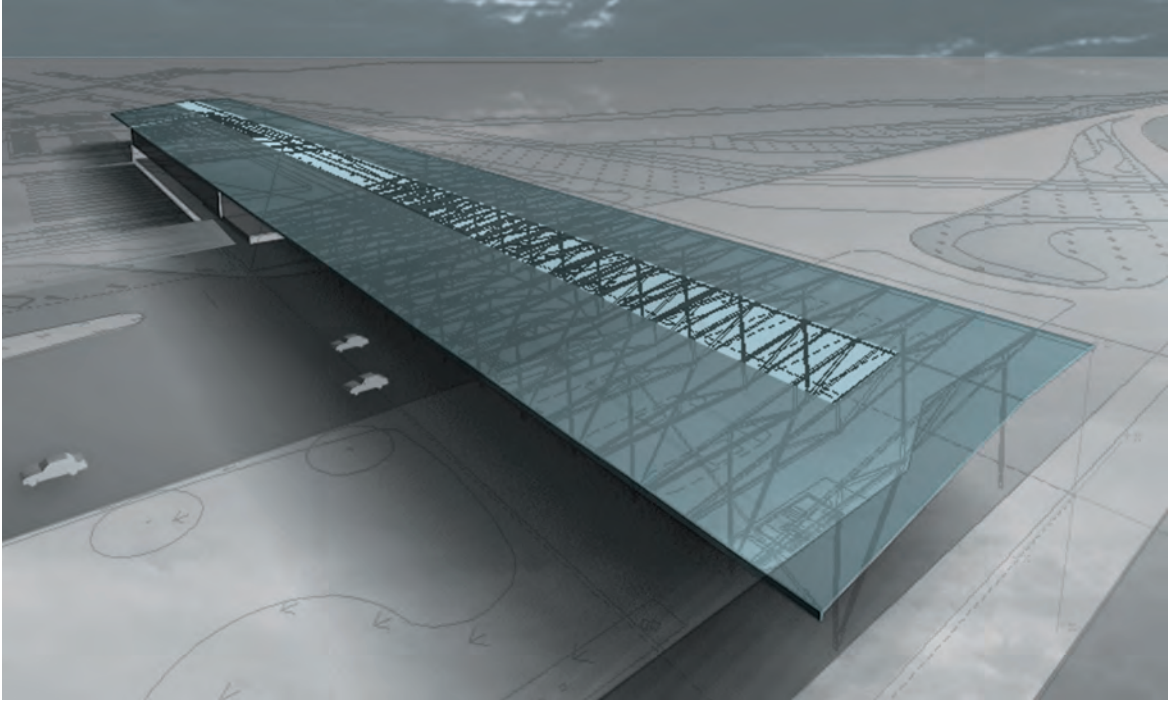
Approximately 66,000 square feet in four buildings.

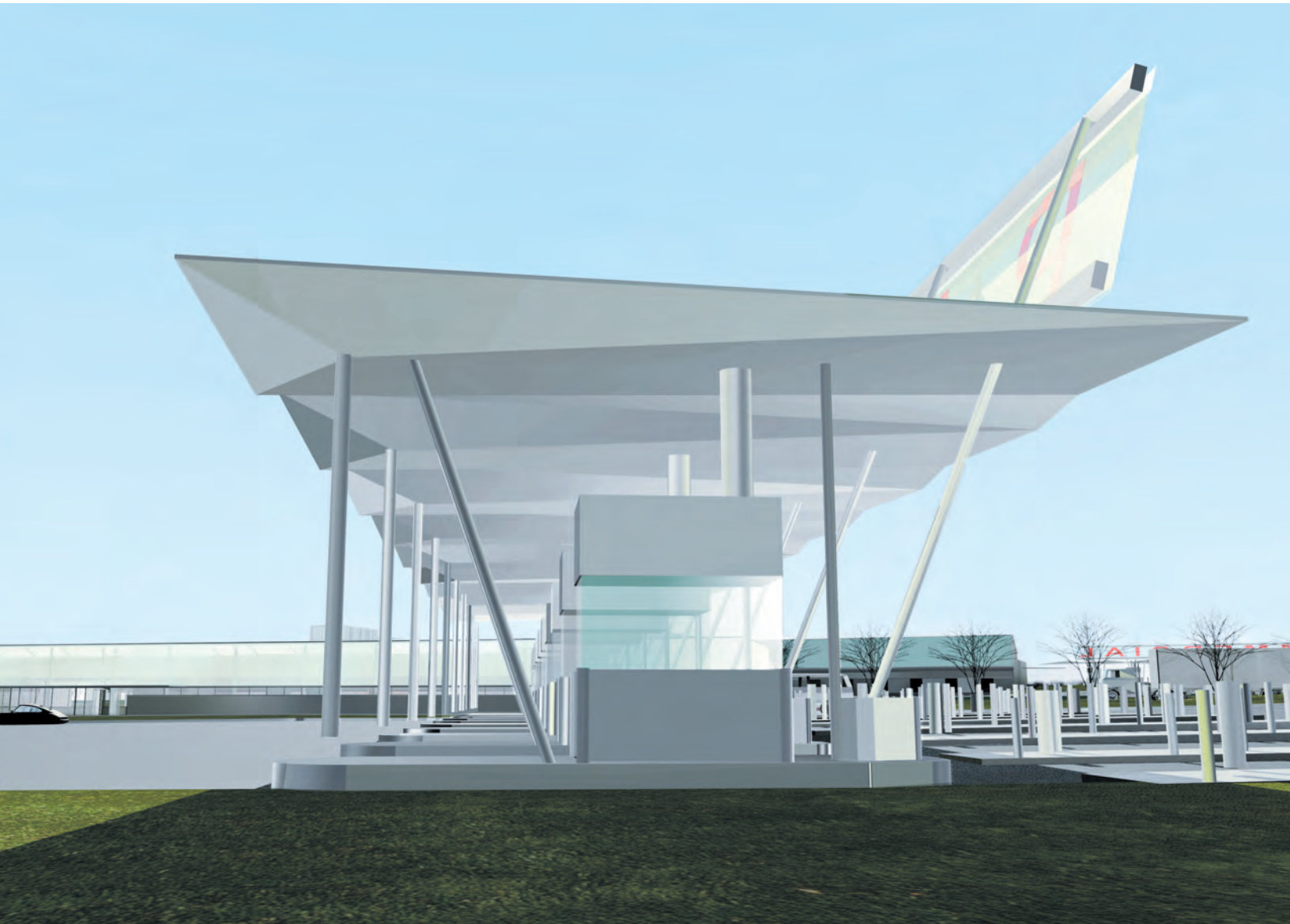
**Materials**

Curtainwalls with clear and translucent panels; corrugated metal cladding and louvers; poured-in-place concrete; site-scaled signage.









## PROJECT

### Champlain, New York

As a “front door” to the United States, the port of entry at Champlain primarily serves transient passenger vehicles. In this context, movement and time shape the port’s design. The plan clearly separates routes for commercial and non-commercial traffic. As visitors move through the site in their vehicles, changing views animate the architecture. A dynamic use of light, form, siting, surface, and structure emphasize the ideas of arrival and passage.

The scheme is both functional and inspiring. The primary inspection plaza is conceived of as a vehicular lobby. Canopies are modular and fabricated of folded steel plates. Above, stainless steel screens with monumental lettering announce the passenger and commercial thresholds. On its north and east façades, the administration building, while being fully responsive to security requirements, is wrapped in a wall of glass and glass channels. This allows natural light to fill offices during the day, while at night, they appear as a welcoming beacon. The cargo building incorporates a metal fabric scrim with monumental signage designating its purpose. This layering shades the structure from the sun during summer but allows the winter’s warming rays inside.

**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: New York, NY

**Architect**

Henry Smith-Miller  
Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects  
New York, NY

**GSA Project Team**

Thomas King, Project Manager  
Maria DiFedele  
Mark Johnson  
Charles Leoni  
David Rymniak  
Gayle Schuster  
Kathy Simpson

**Location**

This 105-acre site at the intersection of Canada Highway 15 and U.S. Interstate 87 in Clinton County, the northernmost county of New York, is a major and rapidly growing trade corridor between the Port of Montreal and the northeast United States and New York City.

**Anticipated Completion**

Commercial Phase: Fall 2006

Administration and Non-Commercial  
Phase: Fall 2008

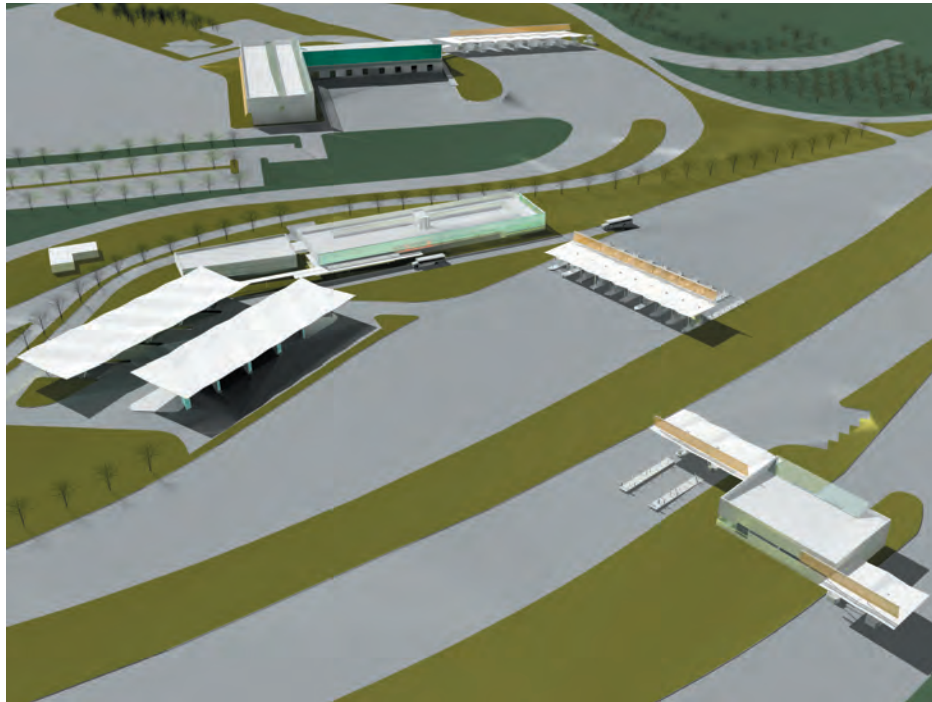
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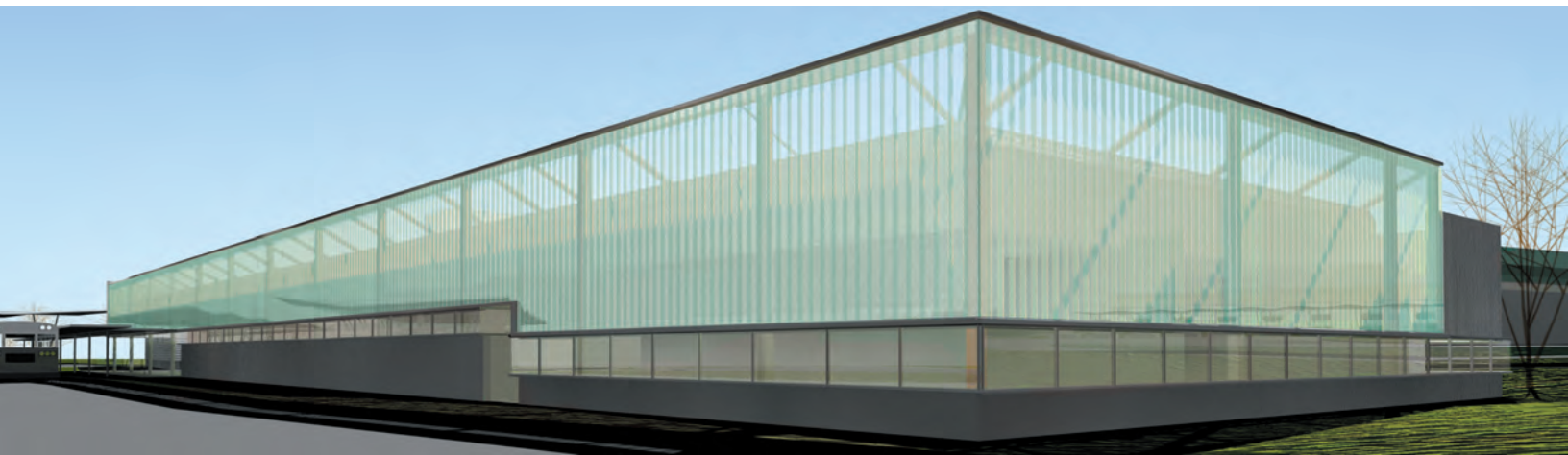
This is a 105,000-square-foot facility in five buildings—administration, export, cargo, secondary commercial inspection, and veterinary services.

**Materials**

Glass curtainwalls; stainless steel woven mesh screens; architectural tinted concrete; corrugated metal cladding; bent steel plate canopies.











## PROJECT

### Jackman, Maine

Located at the low point of a wooded ridge, this border station marks its site as the dividing line between southbound and northbound traffic. The layers of its façades are distinguished by different materials—glass, terracotta, zinc-coated copper, and slate. Projecting canopies welcome cars and trucks as they move past the appropriate inspection booths. The lobby and offices are detailed with curtainwalls with vistas to the surrounding landscape. In addition to the main port building, the project includes a garage, facilities for secondary inspection, off-loading and vehicle scanning, a warehouse, and a maintenance area.

**Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Boston, MA

**Architect**

Gary Coccoluto  
Orcutt Associates  
Yarmouth, ME

**GSA Team**

Jim O'Doherty, Project Manager  
Alan Kirby  
Aline Poulin  
Sarah Robinson  
Ralph Scalise

**Location**

The international border in this area has been defined by treaty as the ridgeline and this port of entry is set on Route 201 in a wooded dip in that ridge.

**Anticipated Completion**

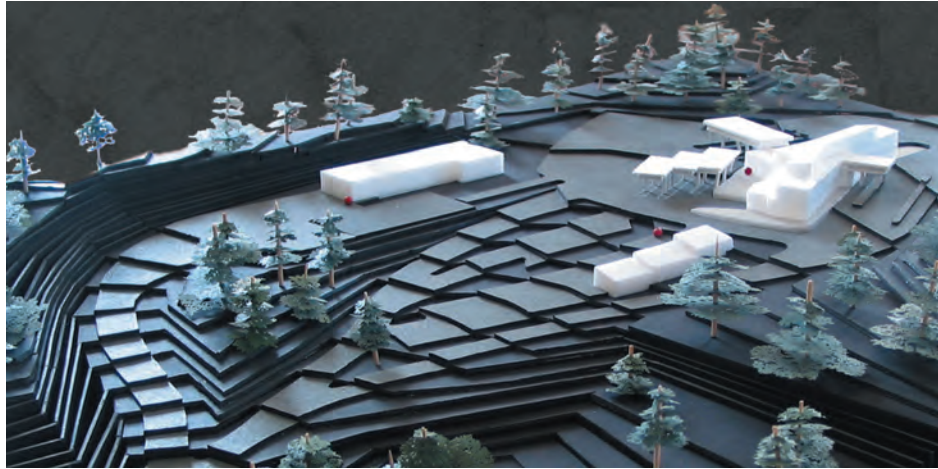
Winter 2008

**Size**

This border station has a total of 57,600 square feet in three buildings.

**Materials**

Curtainwalls; terracotta, zinc-coated copper, and wood siding.







**U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
AND THE DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROGRAM**

*Public buildings are part of a nation's legacy. They are symbolic of what government is about, not just places where public business is conducted.*

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is responsible for providing work environments and all the products and services necessary to make these environments healthy and productive for federal employees and cost-effective for the American taxpayers. As builder for the federal civilian government and steward of many of our nation's most valued architectural treasures that house federal employees, GSA is committed to preserving and adding to America's architectural and artistic legacy.

GSA established the Design Excellence Program in 1994 to change the course of public architecture in the federal government. Under this program, administered by the Office of the Chief Architect, GSA has engaged many of the finest architects, designers, engineers, and artists working in America today to design the future landmarks of our nation. Through collaborative partnerships, GSA is implementing the goals of the 1962 *Guiding Principles for Federal*

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The Design Excellence Program is the recipient of a 2003 National Design Award from the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, and the 2004 Keystone Award from the American Architectural Foundation.

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