



Designed to fit in with the nearby Main Post Historic District, the forthcoming Army Lodge at Fort Benning will showcase Spanish Colonial Revival architecture.

Built to Fit

Planned Fort Benning lodge designed for synergy with surrounding community

By Brittany C. Williams

The Orlando office of VOA Associates, Inc., an international architecture, planning, and interior design firm, is serving as the architect for the design-build contract for a new four-story, 457,000-square-foot, 860-room hotel/Army Lodge at Fort Benning, Georgia. VOA, under contract with prime contract holder and general contractor Stellar Group, Inc., located in Jacksonville, Florida, is providing full architecture, interior design, and sustainable design services for the project.

"The project is the ideal convergence of VOA's strong expertise in design for hospitality facilities worldwide combined with extensive experience in DoD projects for military facilities throughout the Southeast," stated Ted G. Fery, AIA, LEED AP, VOA Partner, Southern Region.

A sense of history

Reminiscent of the Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission styles from the end of the 19th century popular in the nearby

Main Post Historic District, the hotel's design is expressed in the materials chosen and architectural elements used, including stucco, wrought iron, simple facades, projecting window sills, and overhanging eaves. The project also incorporates green strategies using sustainable techniques and materials that will qualify the hotel for LEED Silver status.

Fery explained that sensitivity to the adjacent single-family homes was a critical component in this award. "The massive scale of the building is effectively reduced by the deliberate shaping of the building footprint. The configuration of the building produces two semi-private courtyard areas for use by guests and also minimizes the impact of a much longer wall." Other strategies employed to mitigate the scale of the building included altering the massing of the building from three to four floors in areas closest to the residential area.

The front of the proposed lodge is the

true showcase for its Spanish Colonial Revival-like architecture. The entry presents two steps forward, with the final step terminating in a Spanish-style shaped parapet that will incorporate two cupolas. The *porte cochere* itself is connected to the lobby by an arcade that transitions to the arches along the first floor, which are reminiscent of the arches on the nearby historic Officer's Club.

All of that creates a synergy between the key public buildings within the historic district, the single-family residences, and this lodge that completes a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood. Construction is expected to begin in September 2011 and is slated for completion in the spring of 2013. ■

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