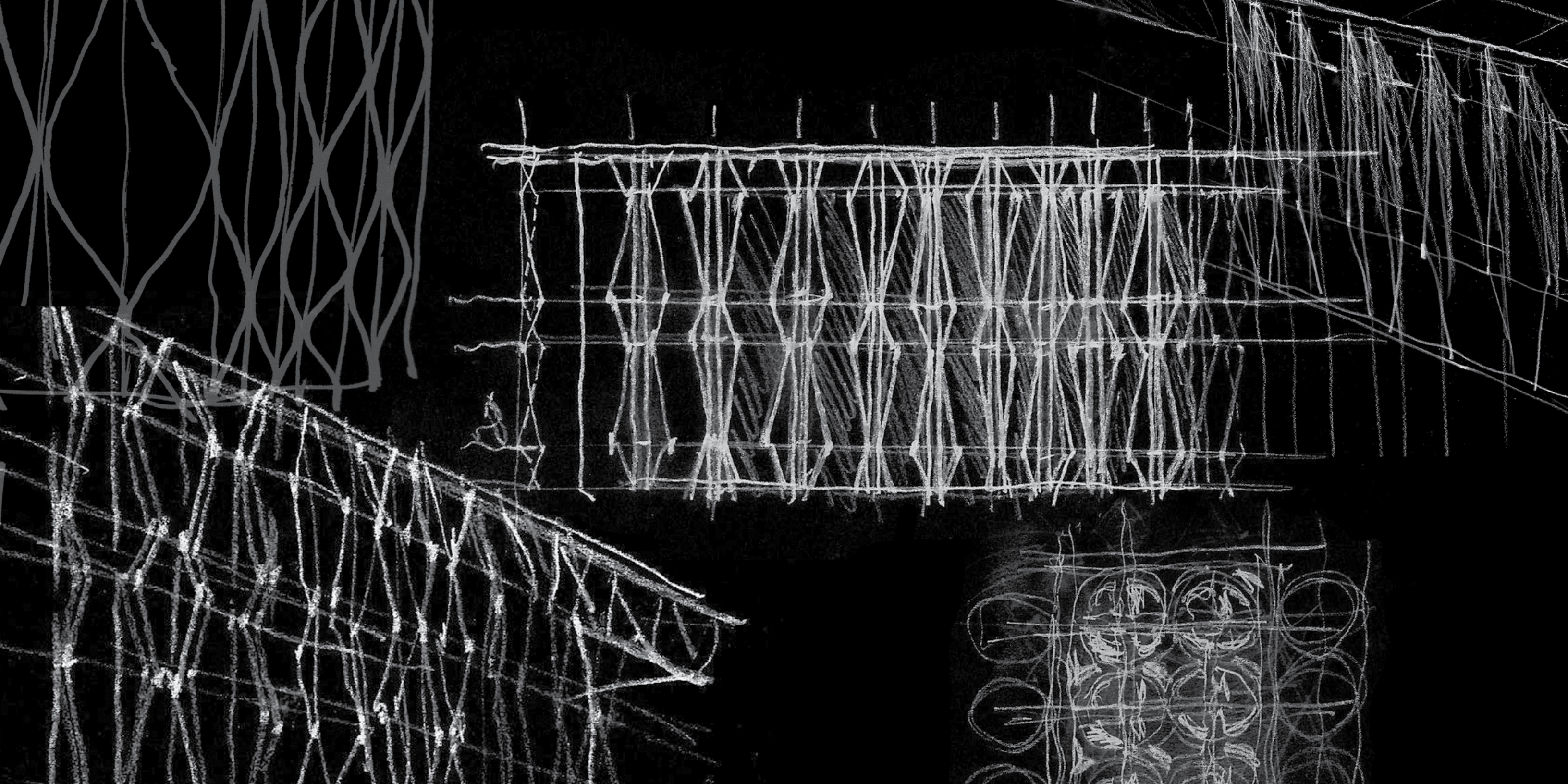


U.S.
DEPARTMENT
OF STATE

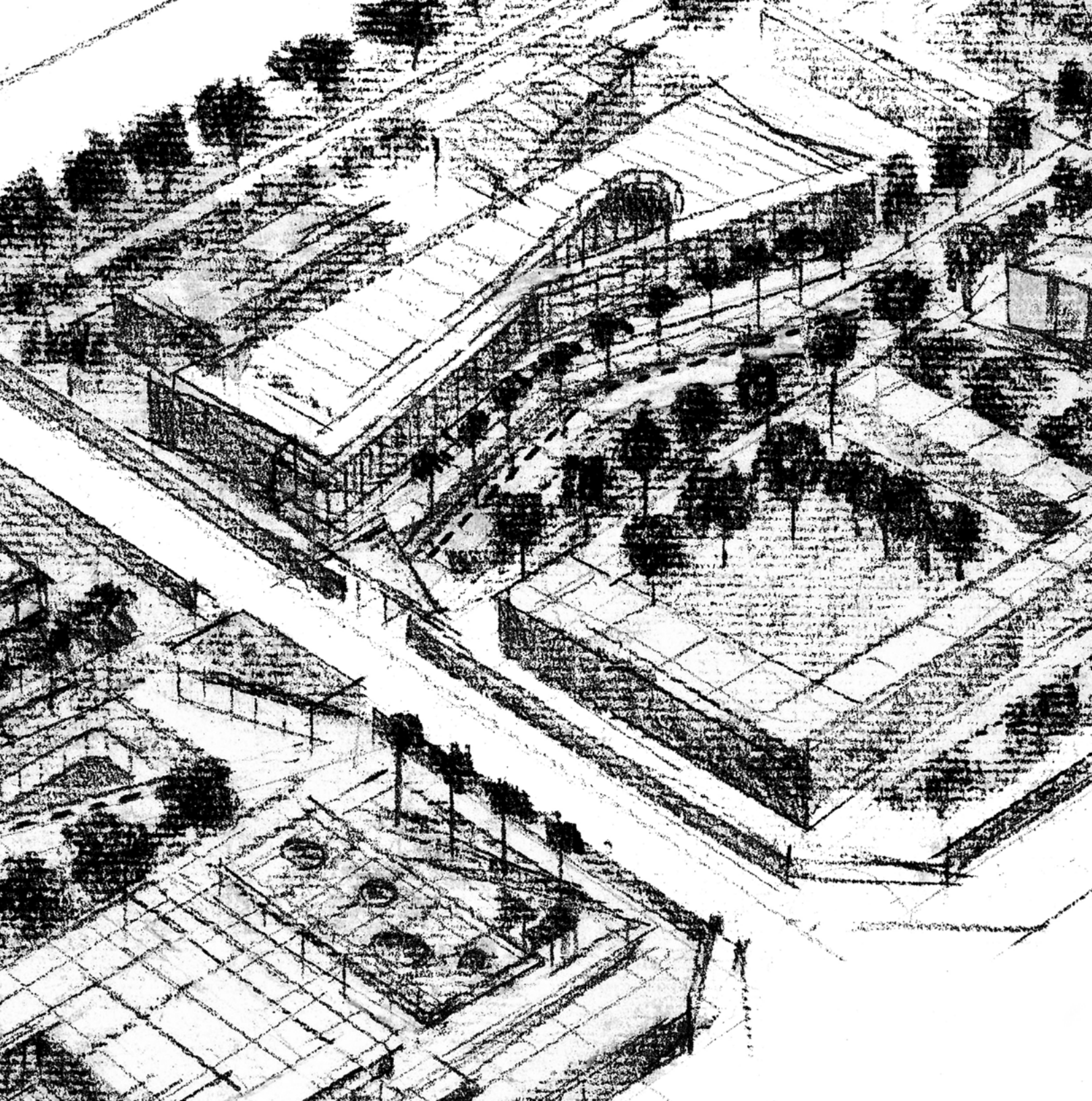


BUREAU OF
OVERSEAS BUILDINGS
OPERATIONS

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES
NEW DELHI, INDIA







BUILDING ON THE DIPLOMATIC LEGACY IN NEW DELHI

The United States Embassy in New Delhi is one of the largest and most active diplomatic missions in the world and represents the importance of the relationship between the world's oldest and largest democracies. Each day, the Embassy serves over a thousand consular visitors and is an important place of exchange between the United States and India. The Embassy currently represents thirteen U.S. federal agencies and coordinates the activities of four consulates: Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, and Hyderabad.

Located prominently within Chanakyapuri, New Delhi's diplomatic enclave, the original Embassy campus spans 28 acres and features internationally recognized buildings and landscapes designed over sixty years ago by Edward Durell Stone. Celebrated at the time for the fusion of modern principles of design with traditions of Indian architecture, the original Chancery and the Roosevelt House are now listed on the Secretary of State's Register of Historically Significant Properties.

In 2015, the U.S. Department of State commissioned Weiss/Manfredi to develop a master plan for the Embassy in New Delhi and to begin the design for new facilities that recognize the legacy of this important site while establishing a foundation for the future of Indian and U.S. diplomacy. With a connecting central green, and series of cast stone screens, canopies, and garden walls, the new Embassy design reflects historic and modern traditions in New Delhi, while introducing a resilient design language that brings the campus into the twenty-first century.

HISTORY OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN NEW DELHI

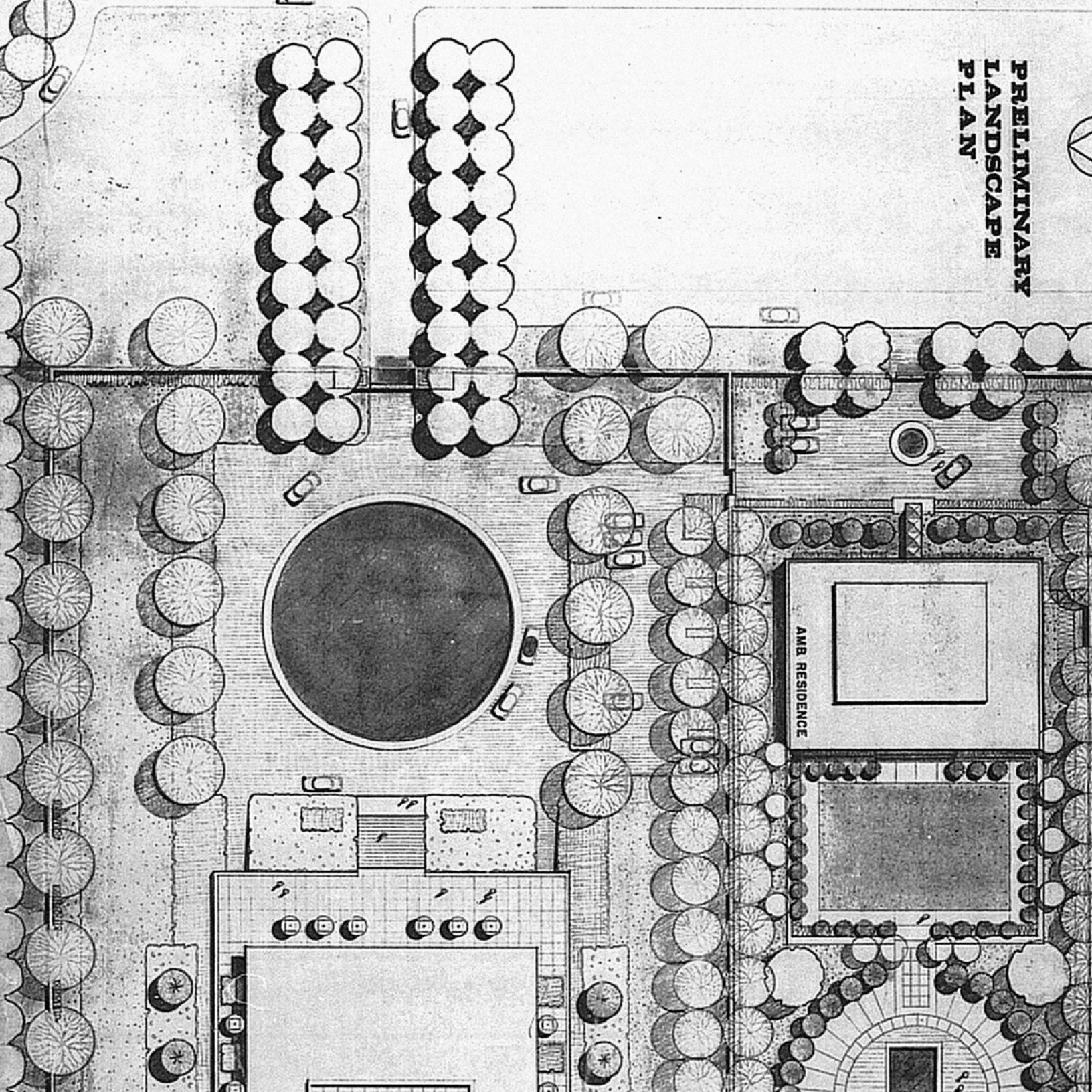
In the decades following World War II, the United States worked to strengthen its relationship with India, with an increased diplomatic presence that included visits from Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. In the 1950s, the Indian government established a new diplomatic enclave for foreign embassies in the Chanakyapuri neighborhood of New Delhi, providing a 28-acre site along the Shantipath, or Peace Road, for the United States Embassy. China, Australia, France, and Switzerland also built embassies on neighboring plots.

In 1954, the American architect Edward Durell Stone was commissioned to design the new U.S. Embassy in New Delhi. Drawing inspiration from the Taj Mahal in Agra and the civic architecture of Washington, D.C., Stone created a low rectangular pavilion wrapped in a delicate screen, elevated on a podium. Slender gilded columns surround the pavilion and support a thin, cantilevered roof. Temple-like and serene, the references to the Taj Mahal and Mughal architecture can be seen in both the use of a podium and the placement of a reflecting pool in front.



The current Chancery was designed by architect Edward D. Stone and opened in 1959

U.S. EMBASSY NEW DELHI





U.S. EMBASSY NEW DELHI

To build the Embassy, Stone partnered with Indian master-builder Mohan Singh and his team of over 1,500 craftsmen. More than 80 percent of the Embassy was constructed from materials made in India, and as Stone describes in his autobiography, it was largely built by hand. At the dedication, American Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker remarked that, “Nothing was standardized about the design and ‘do-it-yourself’ became the daily watchword of the builder.”¹ The iconic screens were made of a mixture of concrete and marble and fabricated on site. The podium paving contained small stones that the craftsmen collected from the sacred Ganges river.

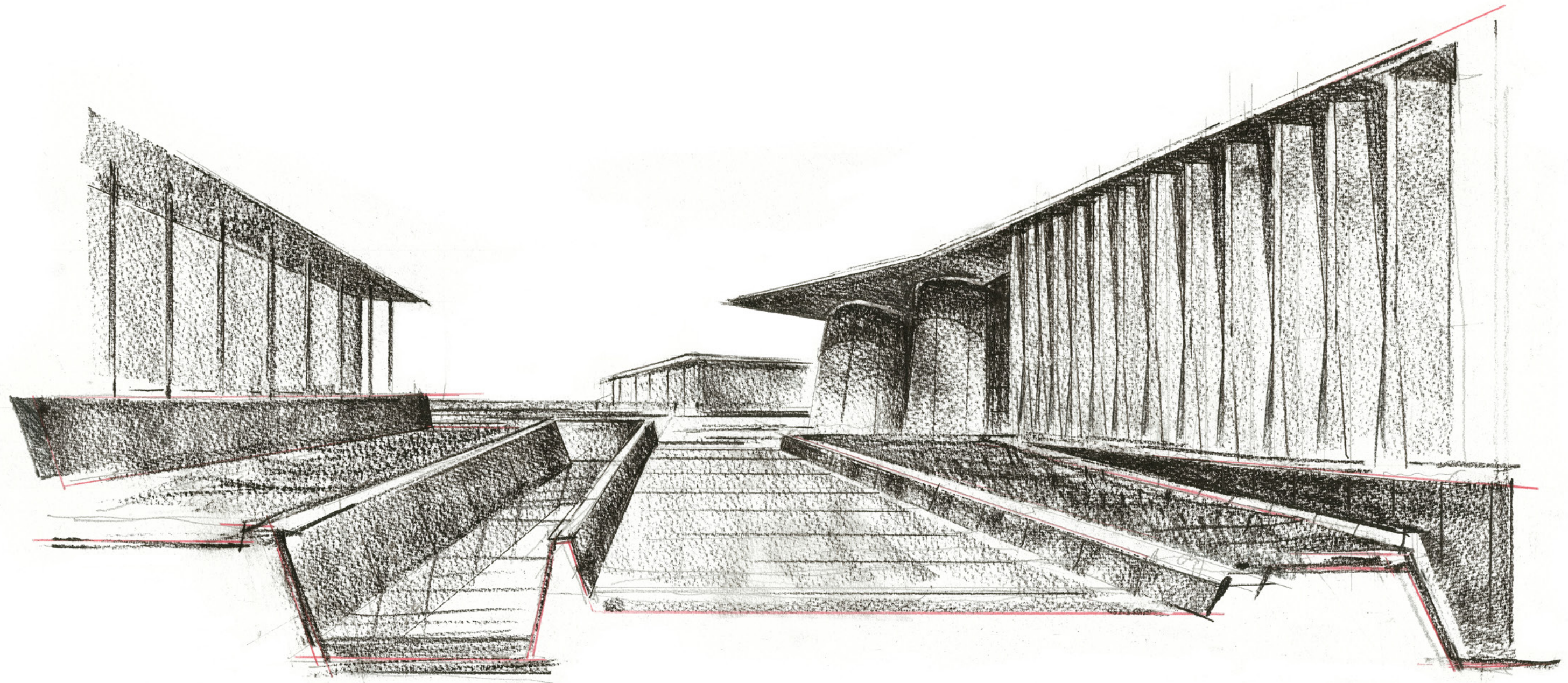
Stone’s design for the first U.S. Embassy in India was extremely well-received by the American public, buoyed by the U.S. government’s deployment of a new media campaign to promote American values abroad. On January 5, 1959, the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi opened to a throng of visitors and media fanfare. Major independent news features gave high praise to the Embassy. As he laid the cornerstone in 1956, Chief Justice Earl Warren declared that he hoped the Embassy would be a “temple of peace,” and his words were echoed through the media world.² When First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy visited the Chancery in 1962, photos of her graceful walk across the concrete pads of the interior water garden helped further launch the Embassy—and the Department of State’s foreign buildings program—as a success.



Jacqueline Kennedy with Ambassador Galbraith in the water garden, 1962
Left: The Ambassador’s residence and additional staff housing are both nearing completion when this photograph was taken, around 1962

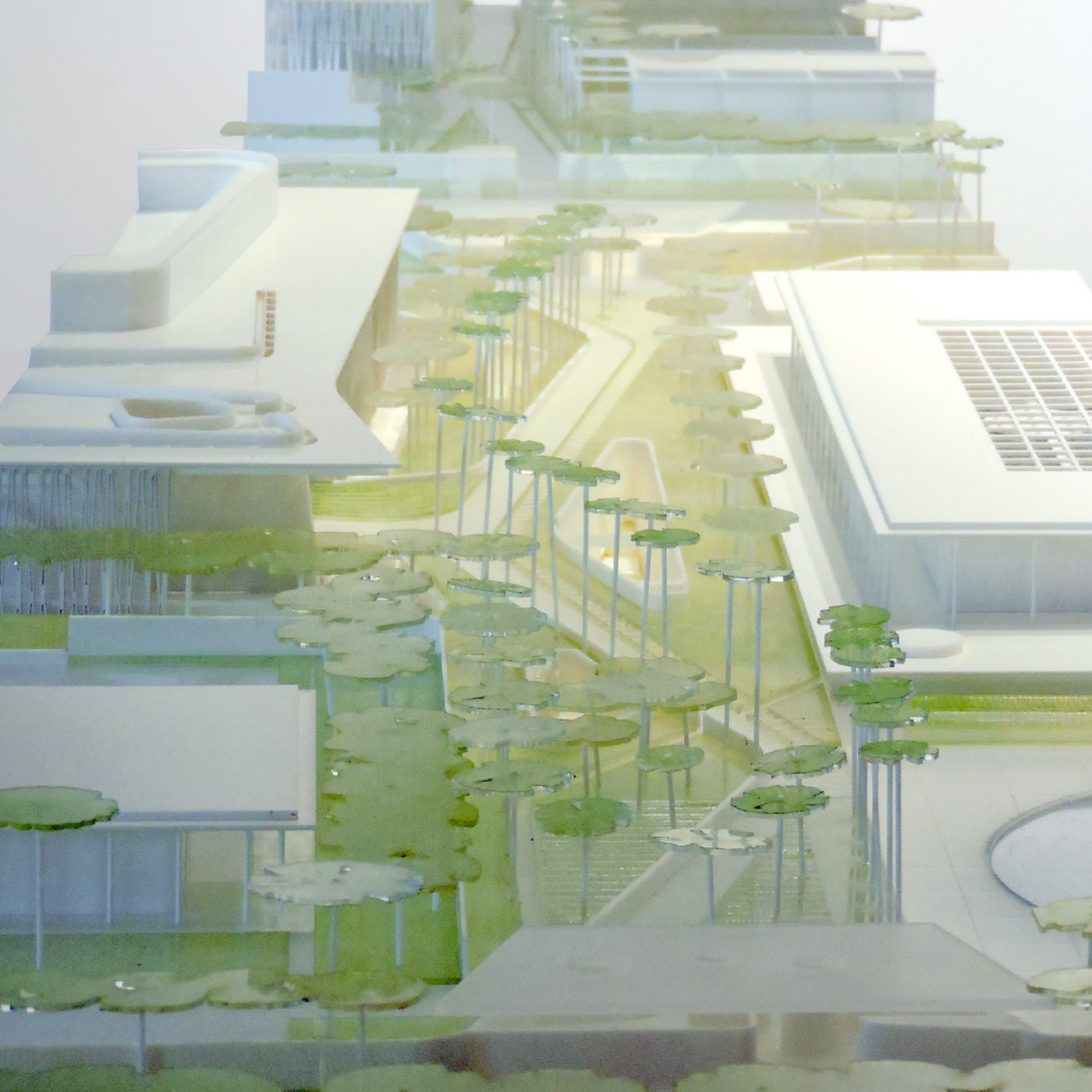
¹ United States Information Service (USIS), “Remarks by Ambassador Bunker: Dedication of New American Embassy Building,” January 3, 1959

² United States Information Service “The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi,” 1959



US EMBASSY • NEW DELHI INDIA • 12/2016

Sharon Weiss Maitland Maitland



A NEW VISION FOR THE EMBASSY

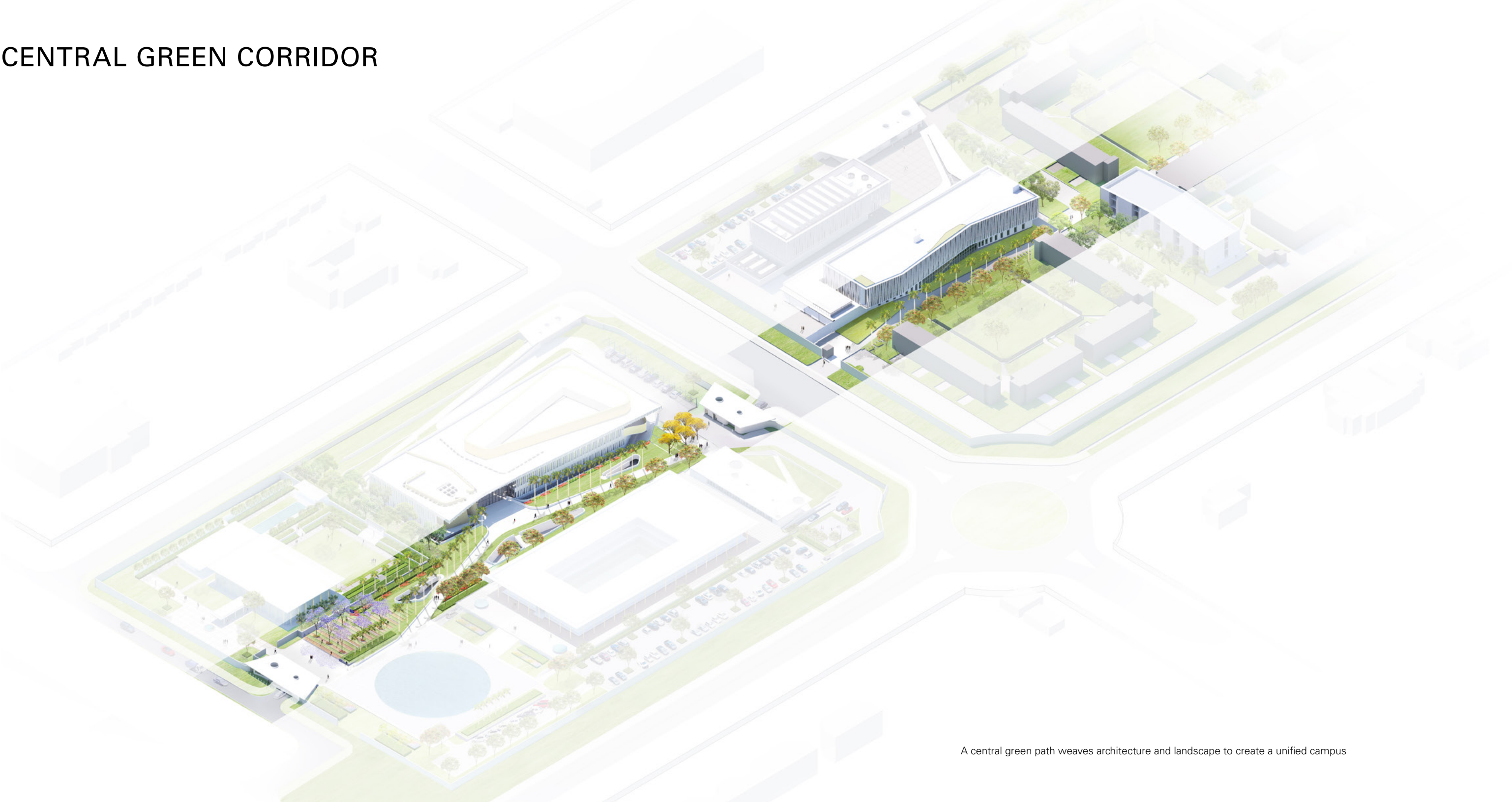
The new design recasts the 28-acre campus, presenting a new stage for diplomacy in the twenty-first century. It builds on research on traditional Indian architecture and landscape while also considering the Embassy’s current needs for space, security, and sustainability. In Edward Durell Stone’s vision, the Embassy was characterized by distinct, temple-like buildings set within a garden. To strengthen the connections between buildings and between the two blocks of the campus, Weiss/Manfredi envisioned a garden promenade, the new Central Green. A wide, linear garden path at the heart of the campus, the path is lined with royal palms, flowering Delonix trees, and other indigenous plantings. The Central Green provides each historic and new building with an address within an interconnected campus.

A walk down the Central Green reveals the series of new structures, each sharing a common architectural language of interwoven stone screens, extensive stone walls, and canopies. Once through the main entrance pavilion, the Central Green leads one to the historic reflecting pool and Roosevelt House, which are improved with new support buildings and service pavilions. Within the Central Green, a winding stone path reveals each building on the oblique. The historic Chancery is seen in a new light, approached from the side rather than from the center.

The screened facades of the new buildings angle in relationship to the stone path: like folding garden trellises, the screens organize exterior space. The landscape strategy also brings a vertical dimension to the site, with sunken gardens that illuminate office passages underneath the landscape. Rounding at the perimeter and guiding circulation on the Central Green, the stone walls create an expressive geometry throughout the campus.

Continuing down the path, a new Chancery building is located directly across from the historic Chancery, creating a dialogue between the two buildings. The new Chancery offers three levels of office space and consular services for the public. Further down the path, new residential facilities and a second new office building, the Support Annex, broaden the functionality of the Embassy. The desire to retain and celebrate the Embassy’s existing structures while updating the campus for twenty-first century requirements creates unique conditions for each new building.

CENTRAL GREEN CORRIDOR



A central green path weaves architecture and landscape to create a unified campus



REFLECTING POOL

The new design for the reflecting pool eliminates the use of potable water and reduces overall water use throughout the campus. Capturing storm water, the pool is sponge-like during the monsoon season, storing one million gallons of water for treatment and reuse in a below-grade cistern. Like traditional stepwells of India, the pool is designed to run for a majority of the year but will be empty in dry seasons. In the absence of water, the polished surface continues to create a reflection of the Chancery, maintaining Edward Durrell Stone's vision while adapting to current environmental conditions.



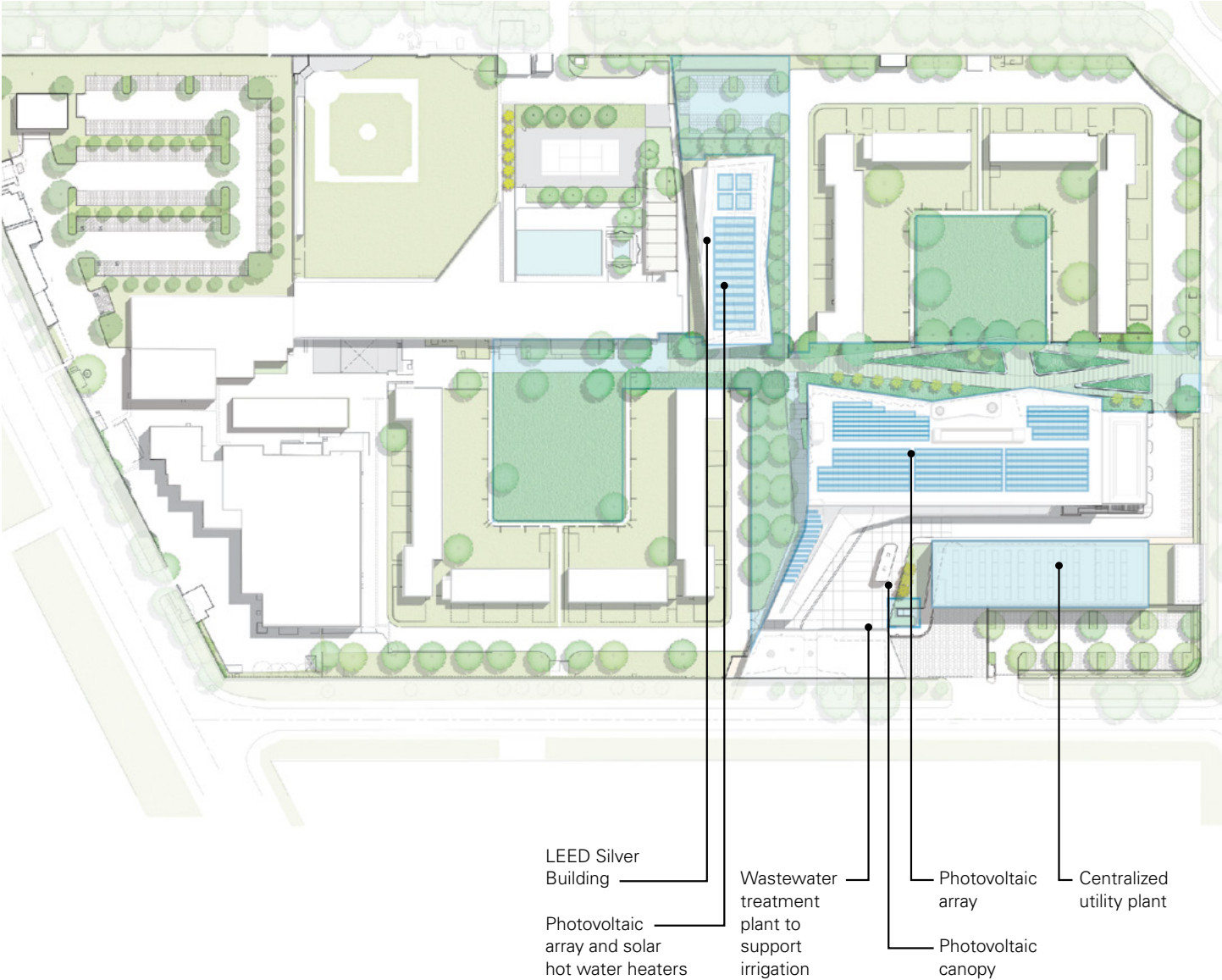
Inspiration for the Chancery building came from the Taj Mahal: reflecting pools, avenues of trees, a podium as a base, delicacy and richness of texture

Right: Cistern below the reflecting pool

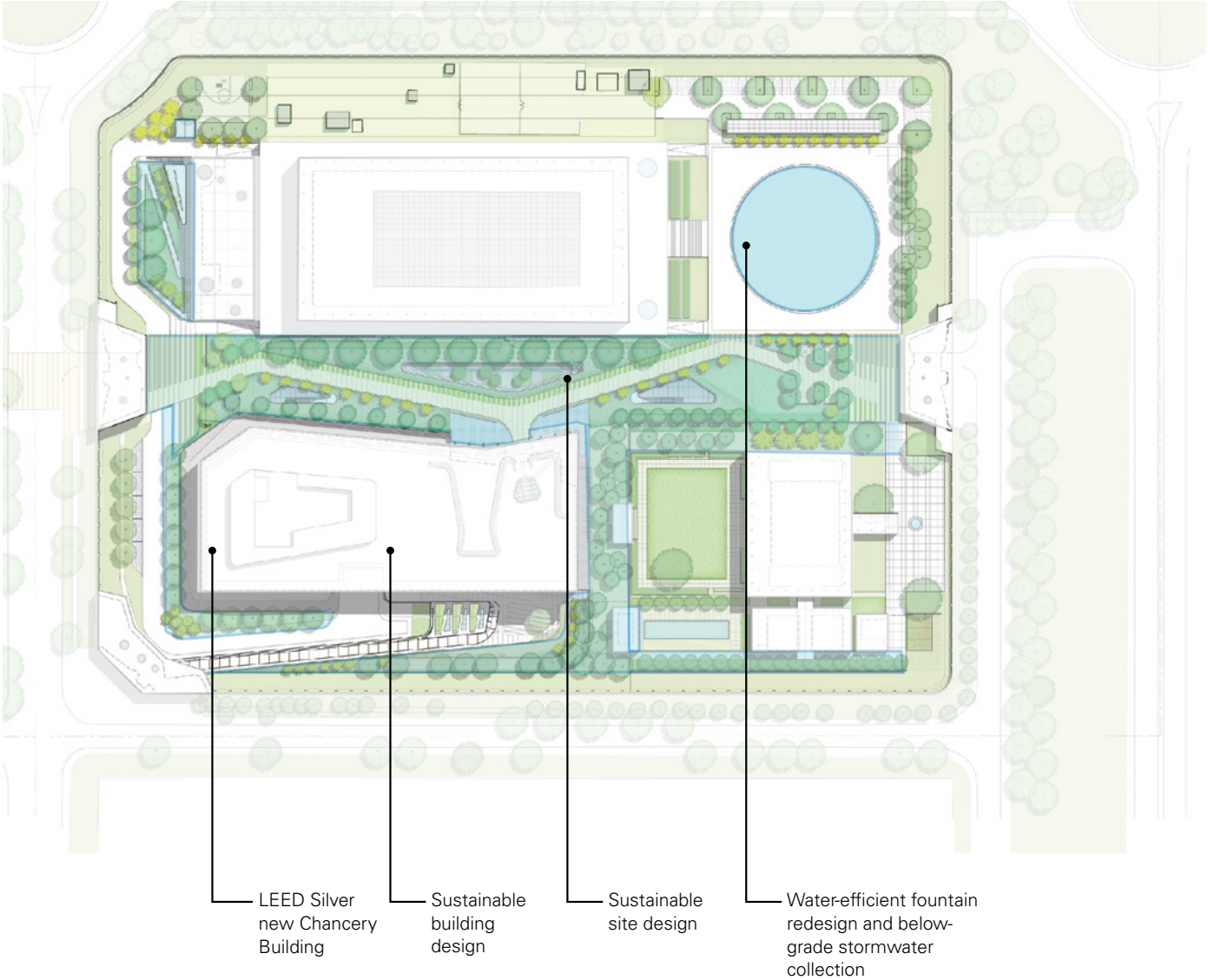


AN INTEGRATED, SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS

“With increasingly pressing climate issues, it has become imperative to deploy ecologically resilient design strategies. The full project and new campus utility design share a sustainable vision which limits requirements for irrigation and overall maintenance. It decreases demand on potable water and increases the collection and recycling of storm water and wastewater. In addition, the campus includes on site renewable power generation with roof-mounted photovoltaic arrays,” says Director of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) Tad Davis.



U.S. EMBASSY NEW DELHI



A REVITALIZED LANDSCAPE

In Indian architectural traditions, the garden is a major protagonist. The new Embassy landscape is saturated with the deep reds of flowering Delonix regia trees, the purple of Ruellia shrubs, and warm green palm fronds. Along the path, stone pavers and grasses braid together to soften the edge between hardscape and softscape.

Over 400 new trees help to clean the air by absorbing pollutant gasses and filtering particulates. Titanium dioxide coatings on the building facade elements will also help remove particulates from the air. Drought-tolerant plants reduce the impact on water consumption.

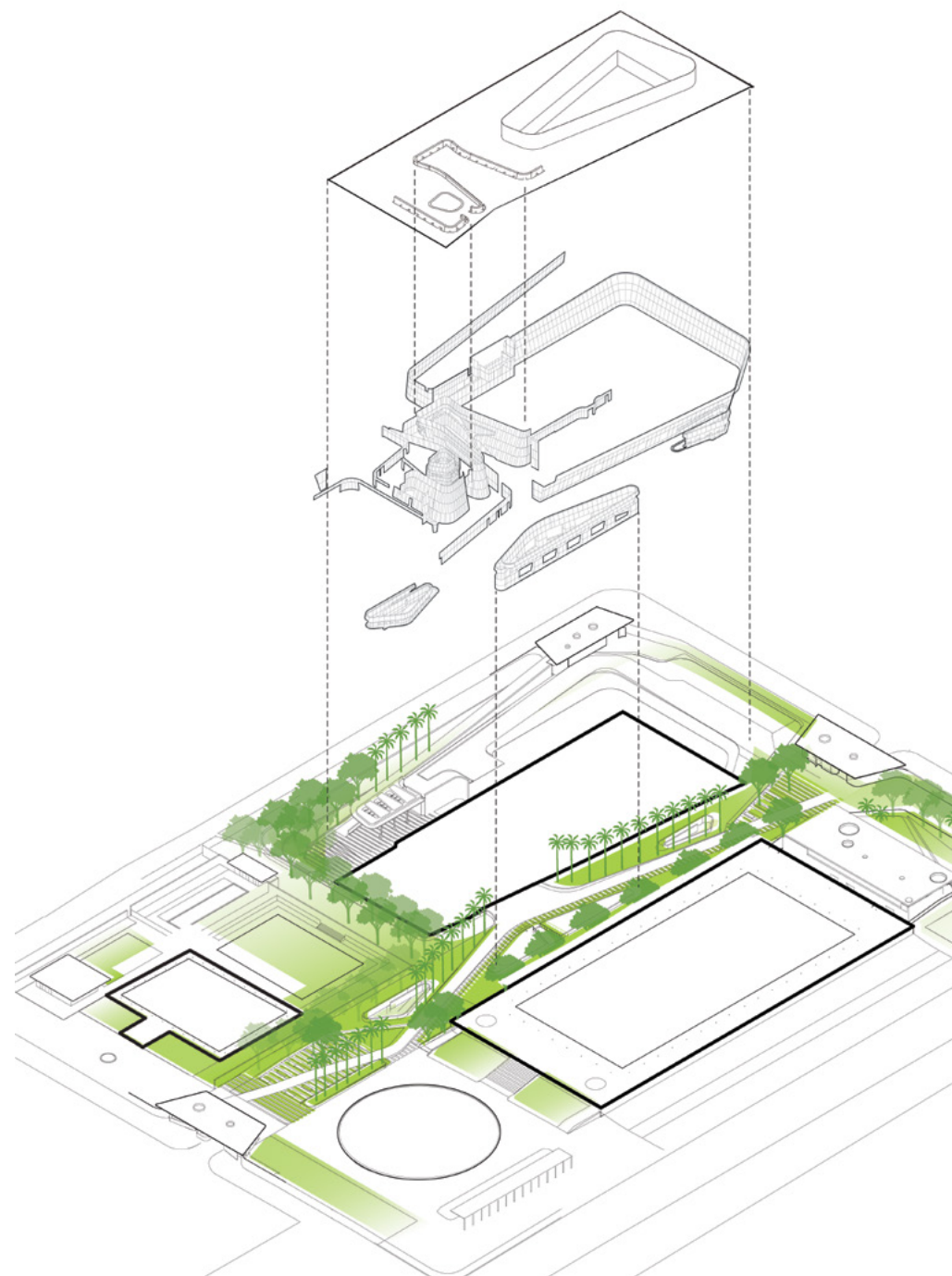


The revitalized landscape will display the full vibrancy of Indian flora









U.S. EMBASSY NEW DELHI

STONE WALLS

The Embassy houses a range of activities; some spaces are ceremonial, while others are utilitarian. Site walls, a necessity of Embassy security, are also an opportunity to create a sense of protection and tranquility through placement of generous gardens. Starting from the perimeter, access pavilions draw visitors inside the Embassy campus with curving walls that gently suggest an inward flow of movement.

Once inside, the garden walls define a series of Embassy zones and create a procession of experiences, drawing from traditional Indian fortifications such as the Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri. The rounding or angling of the stone walls at key points introduces a soft and inviting geometry to the Embassy campus. Stone walls also extend from outside to inside buildings, drawing together architecture and landscape in a uniform language.

The new Embassy features a large amount of locally-sourced stone, including Kota limestone, Golden Teak sandstone, and Ambaji white marble. Along the Central Green, the walkway is a banding of two shades of granite and a sandstone, all sourced in India. At the Campus Access Pavilions, Golden Teak sandstone gives the walls a warm hue. The extensive use of Indian stone in the new buildings and landscape reduces the heavy environmental toll of transporting materials across continents, while also connecting the buildings and walkways to the local context.



Stone selection at yard in India

ARRIVAL PATH AND NEW CHANCERY BUILDING

A shallow pool at the arrival of the new building continues the use of water on the Embassy campus to create a tranquil, reflective space. Walking on the bridge across the pool to the entrance, the air is cooled by the canopy's shade and evaporating water. The location of the arrival plaza at the ground level, rather than up on a podium, increases the accessibility of the main entrance.

Curved stone drums frame the building's entry. Although the drums reference Indian fortifications such as the Agra Fort, which traditionally present a defensive stonewall front, the new Chancery creates a sense of openness with an expansive glass facade.

A series of canopies offers new connections to both the history of the Embassy and the greater Indian context. The deep overhang of the roof creates a dramatic canopy over the entrance and responds to the historic Chancery across the way. Several other canopies, such as the shade trellis along the garden wall of the Roosevelt House and canopy roofs of the entrance pavilions, signify a meeting place and enhance the functionality of the outdoor areas. The canopies produce patterns of light and shade, both animating the ground with shadow and diffusing the intensity of the subtropical sun.



U.S. EMBASSY NEW DELHI



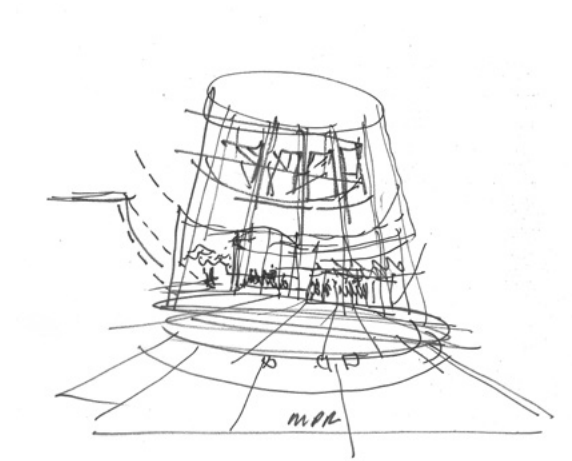
NEW CHANCERY BUILDING LOBBY AND GALLERY

From the lobby, one enters the gallery—the central circulation space of the building. A gathering space and area for visitors, the gallery contains art installations by Indian artists and a café. Set on the same level as the outdoor plaza, the stone-clad gallery welcomes light and landscape into the building. The gallery continues the procession to the ambassador's office with a monumental stair flanked by curving stone walls.



NEW CHANCERY BUILDING GALLERY

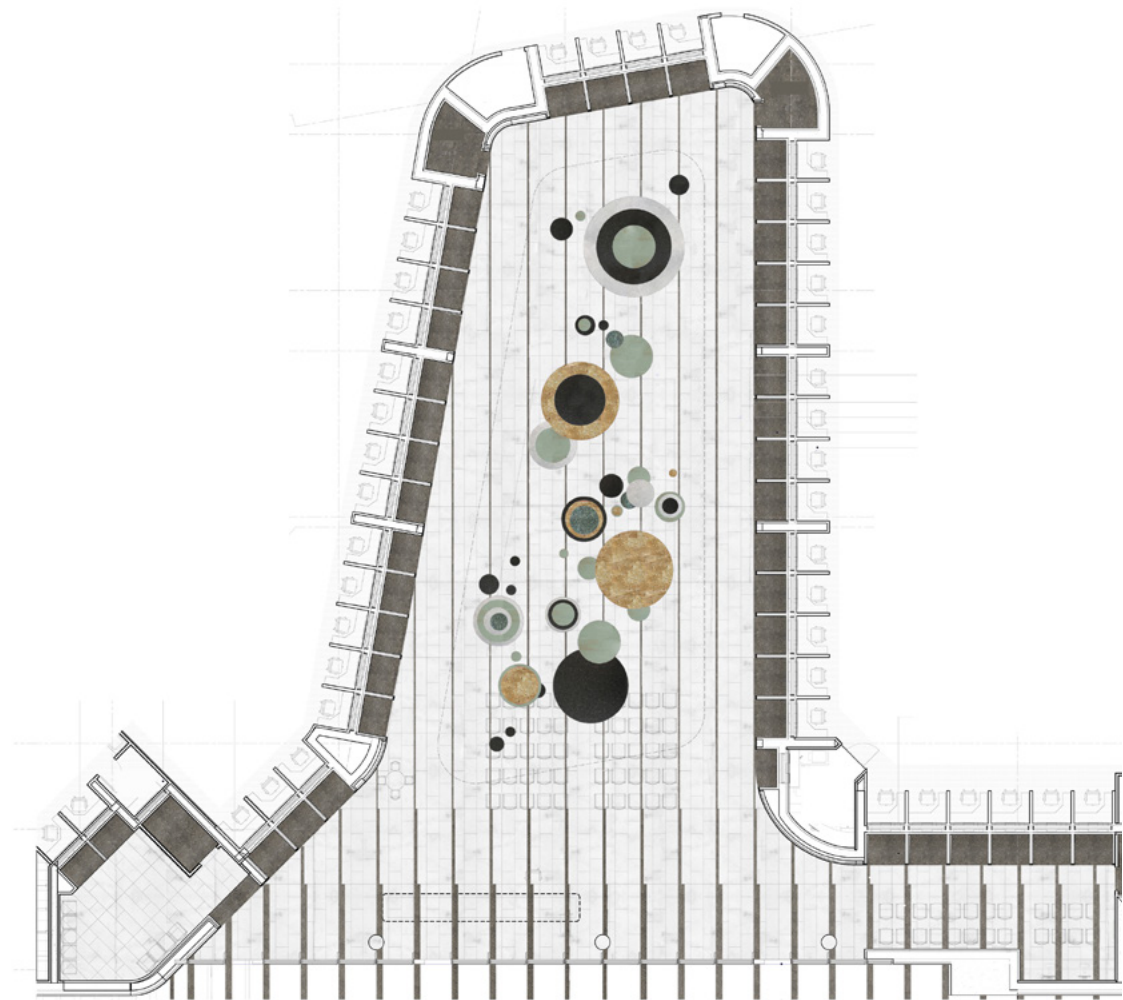
A glass installation by American artist Spencer Finch, positioned below the skylight, adds a contemporary art language to the Embassy with dappling colorful shadows.





NEW CHANCERY BUILDING CONSULAR SERVICES

Inside the consular public area, stone inlay artwork by Indian contemporary artist Bharti Kher defines a sense of place. For the realization of this piece, Weiss/Manfredi worked with Kher to specify Indian stones that match the design.



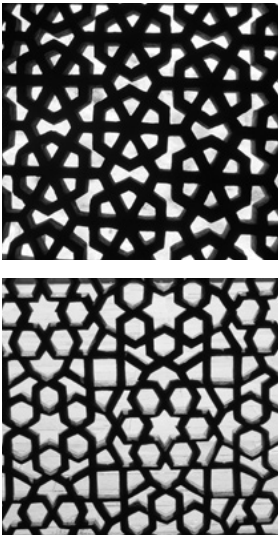
NEW CHANCERY BUILDING CONSULAR GARDEN

At the south side of the new Chancery, a descending covered walkway leads to a terraced garden in front of consular services. Visitors enter through the Consular Pavilion at the corner of the campus. New shaded outdoor waiting areas better accommodate the large number of visitors. The terraced garden beds on the side of the plaza feature palms, shade trees, layers of drought-tolerant shrubs, and vibrant flowering plants.

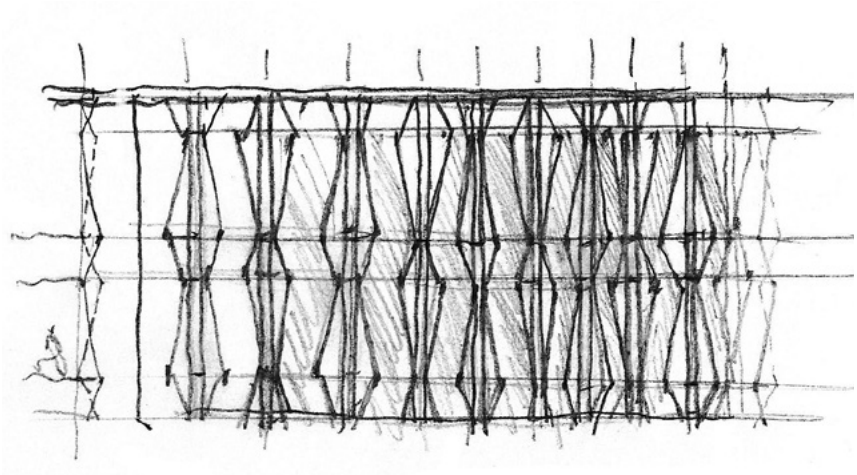


SCREENS

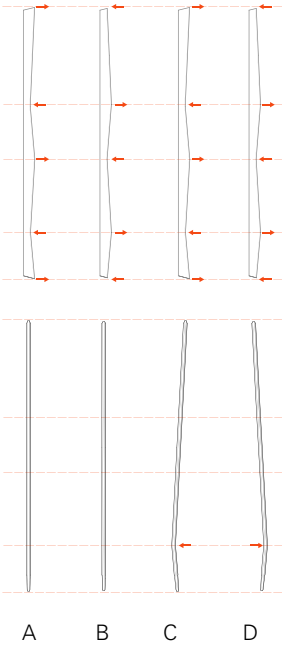
The screen wall on the new Chancery and Support Annex takes cues from the jali screen, a perforated stone or latticed screen, using similar passive strategies to lower the intensity of the New Delhi sun. The screen is composed of a series of repeating precast fins, which function as a brise-soleil, shading the interiors. Like the jali screen, the cladding, the outer layer of material covering the building, balances daylighting with requirements for privacy. The indirect light filtered through the screen enhances the working environment. The profile of each fin slopes with multiple folds. The alternation of the fins, once assembled together, creates an oscillating, woven pattern across the facade.



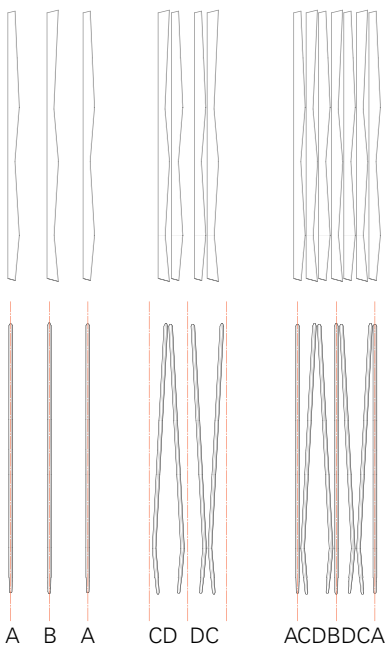
Jali screens



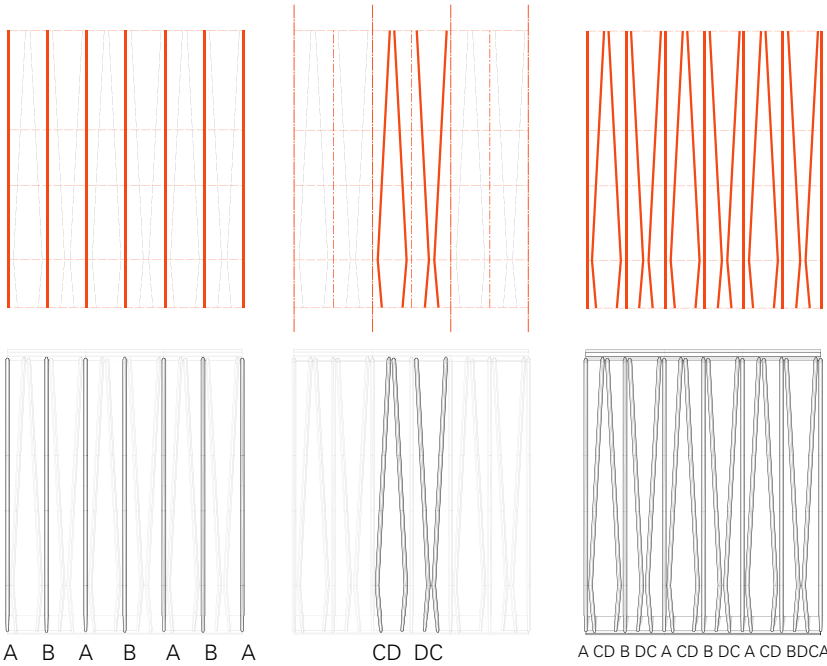
Early sketch study for new Chancery screen



Four unique precast elements



Pattern of repeated elements

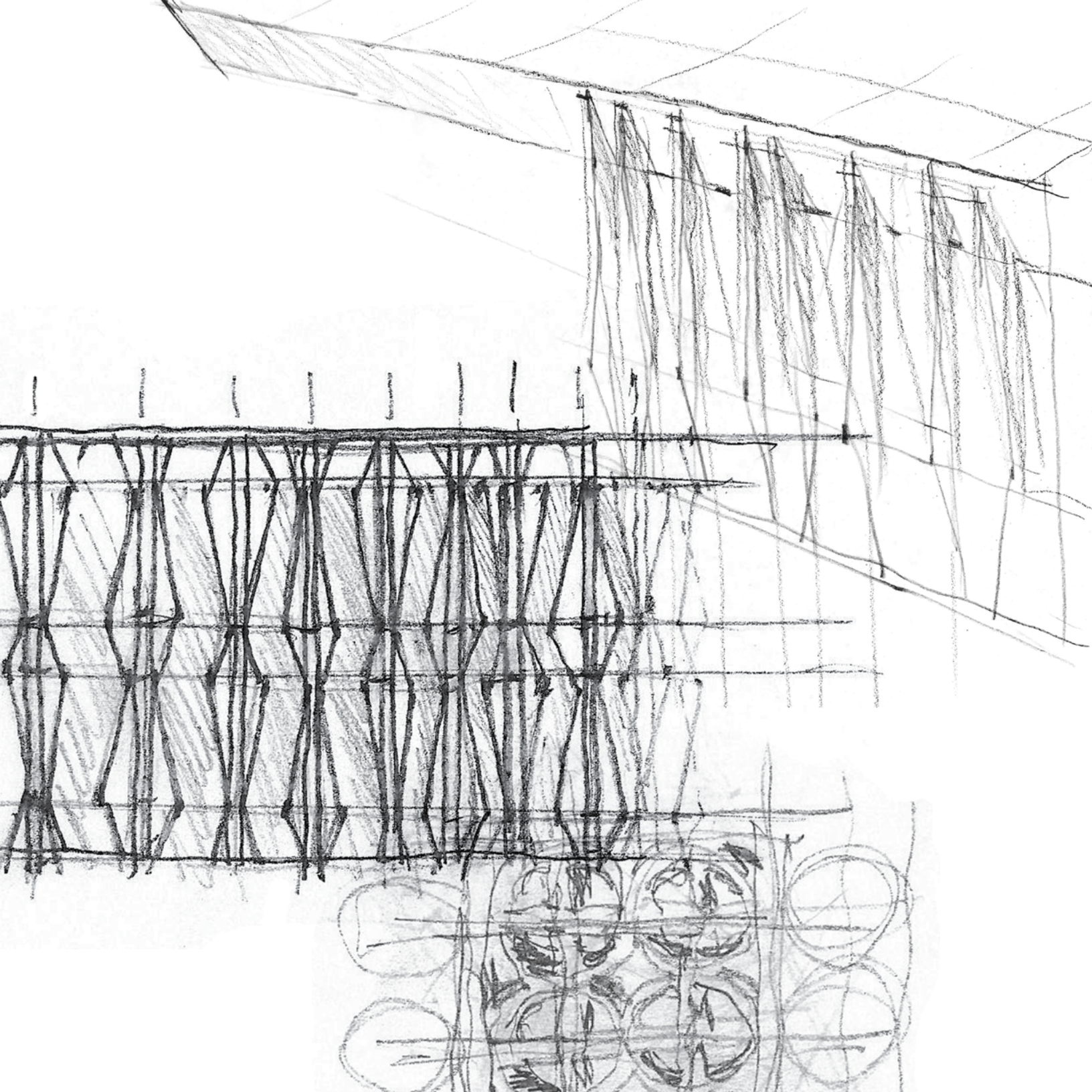


Pattern as facade

SUPPORT ANNEX



The Support Annex extends the architectural language of the new Chancery, with stone screens and a stone-clad lobby. In a similar way to the new Chancery, the Support Annex is clad in interwoven precast screens and its lobby is lined with stone. The Support Annex facilitates different activities over the phased construction period of the new campus. In the first phase, the building will house consular services on the ground floor and Embassy offices on the second and third floors. In the second phase, the Support Annex will support multiple uses, with the north half of the building dedicated to the staff/community and the southern portion hosting various Embassy services.



A CAMPUS FOR DIPLOMACY

The new design for the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi presents a vision of the architecture and landscape that reimagines the historic Embassy campus to meet evolving diplomatic needs. In its true meaning, an Embassy is a group of people, not a building, and the constituents and needs of the delegation change over time. Ambassadors retire or are reassigned, and new agencies are added or removed from the post. Diplomats return home and political administrations shift. While the United States' commitment to its relationship with India has remained constant since the original construction of the Embassy, the mission and delegation has been ever-evolving.

As representations of these fluid transitions, screens, stone walls, and canopies create temporal and ephemeral affects in relation to nature. Light and shade ripple beneath canopies and dapple through screens. The earthen quality of stone, mixed with flecks of sparkling Makrana marble, creates many unique and tactile moments along the garden walls. The dynamism of New Delhi weather, with its monsoons and searing sun, is celebrated as a resource in the restored fountain and solar panels of the new campus.

Rather than a discreet set of buildings, the transformed campus is connected through the language of screens, stone walls, and canopies. The Central Green further unifies the campus, creating a procession of angled views towards each building. Through these strategic and carefully designed interventions and additions, Weiss/Manfredi's revitalized plan creates a rich and textured framework for the current and future development of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi.

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