Project Statement

The Crossroads of the Revolution Center in North Brunswick, New Jersey creates a design opportunity to completely reinvent the image of an entire state. Centrally located between New York and Philadelphia, two of the nations largest cities, the site serves as a major destination place within the heart of New Jersey. The center itself will be the major academic hub of the Crossroads of the Revolution proposed National Heritage Area.
Design Intent
The Crossroads of the American Revolution is more than just a massive building, but rather a declaration of visual identity and standard throughout the State of New Jersey. The success of the project will provide New Jersey with a new identifiable symbol, new signage and more aesthetically pleasing views for those who travel New Jersey’s roadways. Around the state an architectural standard along with uniformed markers will help people associate New Jersey with its War of Independence History.

Project Location
Located in the heart of the mega-metropolis stretching from Boston to Washington D.C. lies New Jersey. During the War for Independence, New Jersey played host to more battles and skirmishes than any other state. It is for this reason when New Jersey designed its state quarter, the Crossroads of the Revolution image was chosen to represent the State. New Jersey’s dedication to its own Revolutionary War history makes it a perfect decision for the National Crossroads of the Revolution Center. At the center of New Jersey is Middlesex County, which saw more battles within its boundaries than any other county in New Jersey. This criteria, along with Middlesex County being the geographic center of New Jersey, makes Middlesex County a desirable location for this center.

Site and Context
North Brunswick is not only a geographic center of this proposed National Heritage Area, but an area with great potential for commercial success. The site is located directly between US Route 1 and Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor line, providing connectivity to the larger mega-metropolis and Newark Liberty International Airport. These connection make the site easily accessible by road, by train and by airplane, basically from anywhere in the United States, or the World. Route 1 is also dotted with many businesses, shopping malls, restaurants and a large array of hotels. Also within miles of the site are the New Jersey Turnpike, Garden State Parkway, Route 287, Route 18 and Route 130. The conditions for a major hub are already in place.

Size and Scope
The former plant for pharmaceutical giant Johnson and Johnson was the site chosen for the design of the Center. This site is over 9 million square feet, just over 200 acres. The Crossroads of the Revolution Center will also be the centerpiece of the Crossroads of the Revolution National Heritage Area, currently being debated in Congress. The proposed heritage area spans much of North and Central New Jersey.

Design Program
The major piece of Architecture on the site is visioned to be a large, multipurpose venue. The main building itself will host a large area for a permanent museum, a 195,000 sq ft multi-purpose convention space along with areas for archival, conferences and educational theaters. Beneath the convention space are 3 parking levels holding a total of approximately 1,300 parking spots. Besides the Crossroads Center, there will be a brand new train station, stores, and housing for a new community to begin on the chosen site. The site will serve as tier 1 of a 3 tiered system of a larger regional design. The second tier will consist of sister visitor centers located at the sites of Fort Lee Historical Park, Morristown National Park, Washington’s Crossing of the Delaware, and the Battlefields of Monmouth and Princeton. The third tier will consist of interactive kiosks at many small skirmish and historically significant sites. The through-ways between the main and sattelite centers, as well as the highly traveled roads within the state, will be visually improved and fitted with a consistent signage system to signify its importance and to unify the sites.

Environmental Impact and Concerns
Careful consideration was taken to not encroach on existing wetlands and to develop a building footprint comparable in area to the footprint the Johnson and Johnson plant had.
Many people associate New Jersey with its three major toll roads, all of which act as pass throughs. For many people, the views that they experience along these roadways are the only impression they will ever receive of New Jersey.

Three professional sports teams who all call the state's largest venue, Giants Stadium home, yet all associate themselves as being New York franchises.

Three institutions all found in New Jersey, the New Jersey Nets however will soon be moving to Brooklyn, New York.

There are also many pop cultural associations with the state, some of which cause negative stereotypes.
A major problem for New Jersey is the scenery along its major roads and also around its largest airport. In the surrounding areas of the airport and at the road entrances from New York City and Philadelphia, there are numerous oil refineries, chemical plants and even a prison.
Throughout New Jersey there are several different styles of signage that mark historic Revolutionary War sites. However, there is an inconsistency of these markers, making them extremely hard to identify when visiting multiple sites.
A new symbol that is an attractive, positive representation of the state. Also, the symbol relates New Jersey back to its Revolutionary War history, with the emblem of the patriot inside the outline of New Jersey.

Consistant signage featuring the new emblem will be used repeatedly throughout the state in several different styles. The repetition of this signage will signify when a visitor has encountered a Revolutionary War site anywhere within the confines of New Jersey. The signs can mimic the markers currently in place so they are individual, yet because they all will conform to a single visual identity they will carry a symbolic unity among every site, regardless of site size.
Visual improvements will be made to high volume corridors that connect Philadelphia to New York City and Atlantic City.

The major roadways that connect historical war sites to the center will undergo improvements as well.

The sum of all improvements will help create a new visual identity to the travelers of New Jersey roadways.
The routes taken through the state of New Jersey by visitors will be improved to combat the current stereotype of industrialization.

Along driving routes, specific markers conforming to the visual identity will be placed along the highways. This will be done to aid motorists in both finding Revolutionary War sites and creating a certain character specific to New Jersey’s roadways.
Within the surrounding area of the site are numerous commercial amenities, such as restaurants, stores, and hotels already. The Northeast Corridor line, well as Routes 1 and 130, are adjacent to the site, with the Garden State Parkway and New Jersey Turnpike less than 10 miles away. The conditions are in place for a major hub to be put in place.

Located on the site are wetlands that will limit the amount of open space to design upon. Also, because of the importance of both U.S. Route 1 and the Northeast Corridor Line, expansion of our site either to the North West or South East becomes impossible.
Views of the Three Tiered System

The three tier system enforces the idea of visual identity by having each newly built structure throughout the state in the same architectural character and style. The Crossroads of the Revolution Center located in North Brunswick, serves as the Hub.

Several sites were chosen to make up tier 2, that could accommodate both a visitor center and large crowds or people. These visitor centers will all be located around in vital regions of the state serving as launching points for the tier 3 satellite sites.

The tier 3 sites will be outfitted with an interactive kiosk, whose architecture will mimic that of the first two centers.
The view from Route 1 is to be a welcoming landmark drawing people in from the highway.

The center will be a prominently form in the landscape. The focus of the design is to display The War for American Independence and the Crossroads of the American Revolution Center, which will educate the masses of its significance.
Image Citations

(2) Image courtesy of www.smelectric.com
(3) Image of Port Newark-Elizabeth courtesy of www.answers.com
(4) Image of the Meadowlands landfill courtesy of www.greenmuseum.org
(5) Image of signage courtesy of the Bergen County Parks Commission
(6) Image of Baylor Massacre Site courtesy of www.pascackvalleysoldhomesreport.com
(7) Image of Monmouth Battlefield courtesy of freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~smithandyoung/
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