



## Design Description

### THE SITE

The recommended site for the Alexandria Police Fallen Officers Memorial is located adjacent to the Alexandria Police Headquarters at 3600 Wheeler Avenue. During the design and construction of the headquarters facility, this 4,800 ft<sup>2</sup> parcel of land situated at the south end of the public plaza was reserved for the future installation of a police memorial. It is bounded by low-lying seat walls to the north, a retaining wall along the east, a security fence along the south and the headquarters structure to the west. The site is currently landscaped with a bosque of sweetbay magnolia trees coupled with a combination of native grasses and ground cover plantings.

The proposed Memorial design respects the limits of the site and responds to the existing conditions. Several site and environmental considerations such as solar control, pedestrian movement, light patterns, tree preservation, and sightlines have influenced the placement and characteristics of the Memorial features. For instance, design elements that benefit from high exposure are positioned near existing pedestrian pathways, while features requiring a more intimate setting are pushed deeper into the site. The Memorial will have a strong connection to the site context, and the materiality will be derived from the existing architectural and landscape palette.

### THE PROGRAM

The design of the Alexandria Police Fallen Officers Memorial shall consider and implement the following four objectives:

1. Honor Fallen Alexandria Police Officers, Past and Future
2. Provide an Appropriate Setting for Ceremonial Activities
3. Commemorate the History of the Alexandria Police Department
4. Recognize the Contributions of Public and Private Donors

The project goals & objectives were identified in collaborative sessions attended by the project stakeholders and approved by the Chief of Police. They are listed in descending order according to priority and level of importance.



## THE CONCEPT

The design for the Alexandria Police Fallen Officers Memorial draws inspiration from the innovative spirit and collaborative culture of the Alexandria Police Department. It expresses the way in which multiple parts work in concert with each other to form a cohesive whole and produce a result much greater than one unit alone. It reflects the progressive attitude to push boundaries and cross thresholds that lead to expanded capabilities and new possibilities. It reminds us all that each component holds value, and an immeasurable impact is felt when a link in the chain is broken.

The design is intended to celebrate life, to honor the brave men and women who serve and protect, and to salute those that have given the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. The Memorial is a four-part composition that allows visitors to choose their own journey. It will be a place to learn, to share and to remember. As a transitional space, it is intended to change with time, movement and light.

## COMPONENT I: RECOGNITION

The RECOGNITION component serves as a symbolic gateway for the Memorial experience, and as a means for acknowledging those that have contributed to its creation. It is strategically located along the northern edge of the site, adjacent to an active pathway that supports pedestrian movement between the visitor parking area and the headquarters facility. The placement of this component is integrated within the existing circulation pattern, where it announces its presence to passersby and gives pause to those wanting a comprehensive view of the Memorial.

An existing seat wall will become the platform for this dual-purpose endeavor. The north half of the wall facing toward the public plaza will greet visitors with a written statement that embodies the essence of the Memorial. The words inscribed on the wall will be selected by the Alexandria Police Department. Prior to exiting the Memorial grounds, visitors are left with a reminder of the public and private donors that have generously given financial support for the Memorial, as well as the determined stakeholders that have dedicated their time and energy toward the project. The donor names will be presented as a collective group on the south face of the seat wall, and the names will vary in size according to their level of support. Both features of the RECOGNITION wall are envisioned to be artificially illuminated during the late evening and early morning hours.



## COMPONENT 2: CEREMONY

The CEREMONY component is a multifunction space that exhibits characteristics of both path and place. Its primary purpose is to host police activities in a public, outdoor setting that can accommodate an assembled group. Designed as an open hardscape and flanked by two existing seat walls, the east-west configuration stretches from the headquarters facility toward the visitor parking area. It provides flexibility for a variety of uses, from a small gathering to a moderate celebration. For the occasional large event, the surrounding plaza provides contiguous overflow space with uncompromised sightlines.

The CEREMONY component doubles as a passage for visitors who wish to continue their journey through the Memorial. A transitional experience begins within this intermediate space as the pace slows and visitors begin to focus on the features that lie ahead. In an effort to reinforce this transition, the new hardscape will initially blend with the existing patterning established during the headquarters design, and then morph into a different paving vocabulary as visitors move deeper into the Memorial site. The physical separation between RECOGNITION and TIMELINE provides ample distance for individual exploration and group queuing.

## COMPONENT 3: TIMELINE

The TIMELINE component incorporates select dates from the 144-year history of the Alexandria Police Department. Each of the milestone dates are chronologically ordered along a seat wall that extends eastward from a point denoted by an existing monumental column. The significance of this origination point is its coexistence with the vertical *Thin Blue Line*. At the opposite end, the TIMELINE wall terminates prior to reaching the east boundary of the site. Though the wall comes to an end and the historic milestones are recorded from the past to the present, a subtle gesture suggests that time continues into the future and beyond the physical limitations of the site.

*End of Watch* dates are reflected as an interruption in time, and signified by a shift in alignment. Each year that witnessed a fallen officer will be stamped along the TIMELINE and correspond to a void in the seat wall. The void represents the stoppage of time caused by the loss of life, while the shifted block symbolizes the officers' displacement in time as well as the impact felt by the Police community. These eighteen incidents allow visitors to move beyond the TIMELINE and enter into a more intimate part of the Memorial.



#### COMPONENT 4: REFLECTION

The REFLECTION component is intended to evoke a more personal connection with those that are memorialized on this site. It is the sacred destination that family and friends will seek most during their visit. For without the fallen officer, there is no REFLECTION. But due to the fallen officer, there is an immediate desire and need for REFLECTION.

This fourth and final component is the most intimate and remote. It maintains the greatest distance from the routine activities that take place on the public plaza, and possesses a more secluded ambiance. A vegetative screen is employed to enclose three sides of the space and mitigate external sources of distraction. Within this protective buffer are five vertical panels that stretch skyward. The individual panels are aligned in a single row and staggered in an overlapping manner that represents order and unity. The configuration is oriented toward the headquarters facility and symbolizes the way in which the Alexandria Police Department is a sum of its various parts.

The five panels will honor the names of the fallen officers and include imagery symbolic of their sacrifice. The first panel, which is positioned closest to the headquarters facility, depicts the Alexandria Police badge adorned with a horizontal mourning band. This panel represents the Department and the collective mission that the fallen officers stand for. The following three panels fall in line behind the badge and reflect the names of the eighteen fallen officers who bravely gave their life serving the Alexandria Police Department. The names will be listed in chronological order and visually layered between panels to display a unified appearance. The fifth panel contains imagery of a saluting officer, figuratively showing respect and standing behind the officers who have fallen before him. The saluting officer and the badge insignia effectively serve as bookends for the panels containing the names of the fallen officers.

Each panel will be constructed of laminated glass and illuminated during periods of darkness. The glass material was selected due to its inherent physical characteristics and its expressive qualities. While the material is hard and bold, it can also be fractured, and thus, symbolize the fragility of life. The transparent and reflective qualities of glass mimic the way in which the police officer blends into the fabric of society. And much like the officer makes his or her presence known in times of need or distress, so too will the illuminating glow of the glass become the focal point of the Memorial scene.