

Battleship Cove

Fall River, Massachusetts

Role: Concept Architect & Museum Planner for New Visitor Center & Museum

Program: lobby, permanent & changing exhibits, cafe, gift shop, library, archives, classrooms

Building Area: 35,000 sf

Status: Pending funding

Description: Verner Johnson was commissioned by Battleship Cove, a well-respected veterans' memorial and a regional museum for maritime heritage, to provide professional services to develop a Comprehensive Master Plan for a new world-class institution to showcase the world's largest collection of historic World War II naval ships. Declining attendance and revenue created the necessity to develop short and long term initiatives and planning strategies to move the institution forward towards as a premier local and national educational and tourist attraction, and the cultural hub for the Fall River waterfront.

The Comprehensive Master Plan Verner Johnson created gives credibility to and builds support for the future vision of the Project. An initial Feasibility Study analyzed the existing conditions - institutional, physical, and economic - and defined the breadth of the Project. The Conceptual Master Plan built on this study and explored an architectural concept design, producing renderings and descriptions suitable for fundraising.

To produce this document, VJI led a series of visioning sessions with Battleship Cove's executive leadership, Museum Board, Staff and Stakeholders designed to result in clear recommendations of how Battleship Cove could better expand its mission and be economically viable for the long term. The Comprehensive Master Plan began with an analysis of the existing conditions in relation to comparable facilities that have pursued similar expansions. It also included a comprehensive market analysis and site analysis, where four potential museum site locations were diagrammed, analyzed, and reviewed, indicating pros and cons for each.

The architectural goal was to create a new and exciting land-based, year-round museum institution, advancing its scholarly and professional standards while simultaneously being entertaining and compelling to compete with its audience's other numerous leisure-time options. The architectural concept is to develop a dramatic iconic museum in the image of an aircraft carrier to "complete" the naval fleet, cantilevered over the boardwalk and offering a panoramic view of the historic ships.



