



THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BUILDING BALUSTERS Washington, DC



Client/Owner
General Services Administration (GSA)

Location
Washington, DC

Project Dates
2008

Materials
Limestone

Services Provided
Conservation Treatment

The Department of Veterans Affairs building, located in Washington, DC, is a limestone clad structure built in 1916. Conservation Solutions, Inc. (CSI) performed stabilization and restoration work on the damaged and broken balusters and coping on the building's parapet. After surveying the conditions and identifying the causes and necessary treatment, CSI implemented the work.

Iron pins centered on each of the balusters had deteriorated and expanded, splitting a number of the massive limestone turnings. The most urgent goal was the removal of any life/safety threats posed by the balusters. Each damaged baluster was carefully cut out by raking and saw cutting of the mortar. Next, the sources of the damage, embedded iron pins and failed skyward facing coping joints, were replaced or restored. New limestone balusters, exactly matching the originals, were carved and either replaced in total or fitted to the originals as partial repairs. Restored balusters were then replaced in the parapet using new stainless steel custom fabricated drop anchors. The joints were then painted to match the existing historical mortar and lead caps were installed atop the upper joints to eliminate further water infiltration.