

Category: 2 – Meeting the Challenge of a Difficult Job – Specialty Contractor

Specialty Contractor: Weifield Group Contracting

Project Name: The Cherry Creek Mall Project

For this large-scale project, Weifield Group installed new lighting throughout Denver’s prestigious Cherry Creek Mall; most of the fixtures were designed specifically for this project. The owner’s design incorporated new light blades (decorative fixtures that span high architectural features of the building) that Weifield installed within the mall courts, as well as numerous other custom fixtures. It was a complete lighting retrofit utilizing predominantly LED lights, throughout. Weifield won this project based on our successful performance on the Cherry Creek Mall garage project for the same owner.

The Cherry Creek Mall is a premier shopping environment; therefore, the owner had stringent lighting design requirements that required continual change management and coordination. Various other challenges added to the project difficulty, including the “unknowns,” work schedule and site logistics, fire alarm system difficulties, high lighting installs, custom fixture subcontractor coordination, equipment maneuvering and logistics—and, yes, even mall walkers.

Solutions of Special Projects: Managing Multiple Design Changes, an Off-Hours Schedule and Unexpected System Issues

It took Weifield’s six-person team nearly a year to complete this highly-specific project. One of the particular areas of focus was light color. It was important to the owner that the “right” light coloring was achieved; therefore, an expert lighting designer from HDLC was brought in to lead. This designer required on-call availability from Weifield, 24/7. Despite our workload, Project Manager Russell Tafoya and Superintendent Lee Wilson were always available, at any time of the day or night, to answer questions and troubleshoot issues.

To ensure a perfect installation, we completed an extensive array of pre-installation mockups for the owner. If an additional item was requested, our Superintendent made additional mockups in

order to be proactive per owner approvals. We went above and beyond with our quality control process to facilitate several of the subcontractor's custom fixture mockups; this meant putting the mockups into a plan, getting prototypes made and sent to the subcontractor's corporate office (in D.C.), getting approval/edits back, and making revised prototypes as required. Daily, there were multiple approvals on various prototypes that were occurring simultaneously.

Weifield continually reframed light coves as the project progressed and adhered to very specific requirements for lamp manufacturers, custom ballasts and LED driver manufacturers. If needed, real-time changes were made architecturally and to the fixture specifications to achieve the correct result. During the circuiting phase, we didn't know what was in the ceilings/behind walls—so we didn't know if our plans would work. We made recommendations, documented changes and revised our work plans as we uncovered hidden elements.

Because it is a retail mall, Weifield had to work off-peak hours. We worked 10-hour days and we had to be out by 8 a.m., as the mall opened at 10 a.m. The mall's security team also let in mall walkers at 5 a.m., who we had to work around and take precautionary measures for, each day. We cleaned during our last hour in order to leave the space better than we found it. Weifield wasn't able to stage our materials in the mall, so we mobilized our materials in and back from an offsite location every night.

The project completion date was challenging to hit it because of logistics, but it never changed. Weifield worked an occasional weekend night in order to keep pace.

A major coordination issue was the fire alarm system; it had to be taken offline every night before work began and brought back online every morning. A third-party (not at the mall during off-hours) coordinated the system, so Weifield completed all troubleshooting before the mall opened in order to get prior approval from the third party, that day, for the work the following night.

The system also didn't have up-to-date as-builts; the owner experienced a great deal of trouble because of this. Weifield's contract did not include fire alarm system work, but we ended up fixing this time-intensive component—to the owner's delight.

We also installed lighting 60-80 feet in the air, and each install had to be complete by the morning to take away overhead hazards from the public. We pushed it to the limit—working right up until we had to leave the premises.

Project Execution and Management Excellence: Effective Team Coordination and Expert Schedule / Implementation Navigation

The owner knew what they wanted and had allocated the appropriate budget, so value engineering options were not applicable. Due to the high degree of customization, Weifield had to manage this project with the greatest attention and agility starting on Day 1. We ensured smooth coordination across the entire project team, managed the factories to ensure new materials met the accelerated owner-driven schedule, and our Superintendent set nightly goals to ensure on-time completion and zero impact to the Mall's business.

An especially challenging phase occurred when we had to re-circuit 3,000 feet of wiring, which was achieved by crawling through the ceiling crawlspaces in order to provide new access points. Weifield installed new lighting circuits within the crawlspaces; this took several months but we were able to provide the owner a cleaner installation because of that effort. The crawlspaces were between 18" and 24" tall, and our guys literally army-crawled through metal studs and around screws—taking care to mitigate any cuts or scratches.

Each day, we worked as long as we could—thankfully, we had excellent project management and layout capabilities that allowed us to stay on-schedule.

Construction Innovations/State-of-the-Art Advancement: Managing the Challenges of Implementation through to Success!

Weifield installed 6,544 linear feet (over a mile) of cove lighting for the project, far exceeding what is normative in installed distance on a typical project. Most notably, this cove lighting was entirely LED, in lieu of T5 or T8 lighting.

Sixteen arching blade lights were installed at various areas of the mall, ranging from 9' to 36' in length but installed in smaller sections due to weights starting at 150 lbs., each. The biggest task was getting the 80-ft. electric boom lifts in mall after hours. Each blade light required two lifts to install it—and we had one garage door—so, we had to very carefully maneuver two lifts through the center of the mall to the areas we had to work in, move the mall kiosks and not damage storefronts as they came through. A normal 10-hour day turned into seven hours of productivity because of these logistics.

The team also utilized video scoping for this project. An example: in one corridor, the owner wanted no access doors and we had to redo circuits and wall sconces—so we used scopes to view the pipe runs and see where they went, because the access points they provided were hampered by structural beams. We uncovered multiple issues in the ceilings—no good cable pathways in places, broken raceway systems—so we had to get in via existing access points and pull new wiring system through the ceilings. We did not have to put in a new access door, which thrilled the owner because we didn't hamper the aesthetics of the finished product.

Environmental/Safety: Ensuring Public Safety Was #1

For the last three hours of every day, mall walkers entered the facility—so Weifield ensured public safety by appointing a “spotter” to keep an eye on their activity near our job areas, put up caution tape around equipment lifts, etc.

Weifield had no safety incidents or lost hours for the project. Weifield's goal of our Project Safety Plan (PSP) is to foster the concept of “Target Zero,” which is a goal of experiencing zero incidents and no zero injuries with work tasks. Our PSP outlines

safety and health requirements developed by Weifield, focusing on relevant issues at the project. For the purposes of this project, most work was done on scissor lifts which required special attention to lift safety regulations. Weifield also adhered to our own as well as The Weitz Company's strict safety practices.

The owner required compliance with their design code, which encouraged the use of the use of sustainable practices as much as possible. Therefore, the lighting for the project was mostly LED.

Excellence in Client Service and/or Contribution to Community: A Beautiful Finished Mall in the Premier Cherry Creek Shopping District

The Cherry Creek Mall project delivered a highly pleasing lighting design for the public to enjoy within the retail mall, while ensuring public safety during the project's completion. The Weitz Company (General Contractor) had high expectations per quality/effort and Weifield met them all.

This excerpt from The Weitz Company reference letter sums up their opinion of Weifield: *“From budgetary work and pre-planning, and throughout construction, the Weifield project team, specifically Russell Tafoya, and Lee Wilson, Superintendent, have shown tremendous dedication and professionalism in meeting project goals. Specifically, Weifield is to be commended for their outstanding coordination with the mall facilities and ownership, procurement and material/vendor management, and timely and high quality installation of custom lighting fixtures, including mock-ups. Weifield was vital toward ensuring the success of the Cherry Creek Shopping Center projects.”*



01 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



02 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



03 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



04 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



05 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



06 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



07 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



08 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



09 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project



10 – Weifield Group Contracting – The Cherry Creek Mall Project