

RK Specialties, Inc. (DBA: RK Steel)
Foothills Mall Shopping Center
Best Building Project (\$2-\$6 Million – Subcontractor)

FORT COLLINS' PAST SETS THE PACE FOR ITS FUTURE

The thriving city of Fort Collins, Colorado was established as Camp Collins in 1862, built to protect the 9th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry and early settlers traveling along the Overland Trail. The fort was abandoned in 1867, but a few years later, the remaining community grew into a small town consisting of a hotel, general store, post office, school and brick yard. In 1877, the Colorado Central Railroad arrived and put the small town as a noteworthy stop on the Colorado map.

Today, thanks to the efforts of citizens and a historic preservation program, visitors get a glimpse of Fort Collins' past in the city's celebrated Old Town district. The majority of the buildings in this area are national and locally designated historic districts and the city was named a Preserve America city by the White House in 2005.

Residents see the city's successful future as an important nod to its famous past.

Resting at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, Fort Collins is now home to 625,309 residents. As part of the city's economic development plan, the Foothills Fashion Mall opened in 1973 as the premier shopping location for northern Colorado and Wyoming. For over a century, the mall was a local hot spot offering residents and travelers the opportunity to gather for shopping, dining and entertainment accommodations.

MINIMAL UPGRADES LEAD TO LOW FOOT TRAFFIC

Due to inadequate upkeep over the last twenty years, the mall had spiraled downward from a local attraction to the city's sore thumb. In the beginning of the 21st century, mall traffic significantly declined as residents became increasingly unhappy with the shopping center's outdated design and limited offerings. At the end of 2013, the mall had become desolate and largely abandoned as a shopping destination.

In 2014, Fort Collins' City Manager, Darin Atteberry, was desperate to bring the mall back to life. He partnered with Alberta Development Partners to make the mall's revitalization a top priority, envisioning a transformed venue including a cinema, parking structure, activity center and major renovations to the mall.

RENOVATING A DEAD MALL WITH A TOP-NOTCH TEAM

The project kicked off in June of 2014 and included over 600,000 square feet of re-imagined space. RK Steel was hired to fabricate and erect the structural steel and miscellaneous steel components for the facilities. RK Steel's in-house, end-to-end management of the design, fabrication, detailing and installation helped to streamline this project.

Foothills Mall: RK Steel worked with the project team to increase the height of the mall by adding columns and beams to the top of the existing structure. This "pop-top" design gave the mall an increase in height and a much more visually appealing interior. The large Grand Court, several new entries and the addition of clearstory windows allow for light to shine throughout the facility. RK Steel also fabricated and installed structural steel for the porte cohere.

Foothills Cinemark Theater: RK Steel fabricated and installed all structural and miscellaneous steel including the AESS main entry steel, roof structure, the mezzanine as well as auditorium steel for the theater seating. RK Steel also fabricated the auditorium's rails, ladders and compactor gates.

Foothills Activity Center: RK Steel erected this three-story structural steel building that serves as a recreation center for the community. This project incorporated castellated beams below the main sports court, spanning across the road, linking the facility to the parking structure. The RK Steel team also fabricated the two main stair cores and rails.

Foothills Parking Structure: This building consists of a five-story pre-cast structure. RK Steel built the four stair towers, light walls, roof structures and fabricated the rails and canopies.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO ZERO INCIDENTS ON EVERY PROJECT.

One of RK Steel's greatest accomplishments is our history of workplace safety. This legacy is at the core of our safety approach on every project, including the Foothills Mall Shopping Center. Our site-specific safety plans ensure our employees go home to their families every night, giving them the responsibility and power to stop work any time they feel working conditions are unsafe. RK Steel's Project Manager, Sean Crumplar, is passionate about safety stating, "Safety is our top priority without question. Not only do each of our employees have a family to get home to each night, at RK Steel, they are part of another family that cares about their well-being."

We welcome quality control testing because its one of our top priorities.

RK Steel is an ISO 9001:2008, ASME and AISC certified contractor. Quality is rooted in our culture and tested through our processes designed to deliver reliable results. We host annual third-party ISO audits to maintain company-wide accountability, validating our desire for continuous improvement and policy enhancement.

Quality starts the minute we are in contact with our customer. By setting goals and expectations early, the Foothills Mall Shopping Center project team established a strong rapport and open dialog with on-site field and operations personnel.

As part of RK's promised quality control, a full-time Quality Manager is assigned to each project to execute a job site specific quality control plan including:

- Develop quality assurance and test plans prior to project start.
- Identify / document possible high risk activities prior to project start.
- Verify that the project team was properly trained.
- Schedule instructional meetings for specialized products and procedures.
- Inspect work to ensure finished products meet requirements.
- Conduct pre start-up, start-up, pre-commissioning and commissioning meetings.

TOUGH OBSTACLES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

Reducing business disruption was critical: This multi-phased project challenged the team as the mall remained open for business during construction. The project team found innovative ways to limit the noise generated by scheduling work during odd hours and monitoring laydown areas to avoid disrupting pedestrians.

Prepped for anything: The mall, almost 44 years old, presented unforeseen structural challenges for the team daily. Essentially, the team took on the mall renovation blindly as previous renovation documentation over the past four decades was unavailable. RK Steel prepared for this through daily logs and took extreme precautions to ensure the project was completed safely.

A long commute didn't slow us down: This project was more than a one-hour drive from RK's Henderson facility where the project's steel was prefabricated to allow for quick and seamless installations on-site. Although this could have slowed progress, the communication between the RK Steel project team and shops allowed on-time transportation of materials without disruption.

EFFECTIVE PLANNING KEPT THE PROJECT ON TRACK DESPITE THE RAIN

Planning for a complex structure: The Foothills Activity Center includes fitness rooms, classrooms, lockers rooms, meeting spaces, fitness areas and a large gymnasium. The 24,000 sq. ft. gymnasium acts as a bridge, sitting over the road below, connecting the mall and activity center to the new parking structure. RK Steel conducted careful project planning before erecting the three-story structural steel building and worked closely with the architect and engineer to ensure project components and responsibilities were established prior to starting work.

Mother Nature and strict deadlines couldn't stop our team: The start of the project was slow due to a large amount of rain over the course of two months. The weather impacted construction as work areas were flooded. RK Steel's prefabrication capabilities allowed the team to make up lost time. In addition, the owner had promised the community that this project would be open for Black Friday, the biggest shopping day of the year. RK Steel used inventive scheduling and labor resource planning to overcome all obstacles, completing the project well in advance.

A "RENAISSANCE ON THE FRONT RANGE"

The rebirth of the Foothills Mall offers a place for residents and visitors to gather and enjoy a modern facility with adequate, up-to-date amenities. The shopping center now provides shopping, entertainment and community gathering spaces featuring architecture that celebrates the city's colorful character and outdoor community.

Community offerings:	Shopping center amenities:	Sustainability initiatives:
Bike Path	Foothills Activity Center	Building design to allow for natural light
Pedestrian walkway	Cinemark Theatre	Long-life LED lighting
Outdoor east and west gatherings areas	Outdoor cafes, restaurants, coffee shops	Reuse construction materials
Foothills Activity Center	Skating pond	Water consumption control
	Event venue	Electric car charging stations

A shopping center for the next generation.

Recapturing its popularity, the Foothill Mall Shopping Center is a creative mix of indoor, up-scale shopping offerings and outdoor, wide-open dining and lounging spaces. A true community gathering place once again, you can't help but think Fort Collins' famous past is proud of its bright future.









