

CATEGORY 4:

BEST BUILDING PROJECT – SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR (UNDER \$2 MILLION)

SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR: Intermountain Electric, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Fort Logan Suicide Risk Mitigation Center



SPARKING SAFETY AND SPECIALIZED CARE FOR AT-RISK PATIENTS

Strengthening the natural resiliency and mental wellness of adult patients is the charge of the Fort Logan Suicide Risk Mitigation Center in southwest Denver. This mental health institution has provided inpatient behavioral health treatment services for adults in the same facility since its doors first opened in the mid 1960s. When the State of Colorado determined the time had to come to revive and reinvent this outdated building, Intermountain Electric, Inc. (IME) staff were requested by name to lead the electrical updates and install the new fire alarm system. As long time partners with the State of Colorado, IME had worked on the campus for many years and our certified technicians were the only people trusted by the State to carry out the complex work of updating the medical institution's systems while the building remain actively serving patients.

IME has an impressive track record for executing medical facility renovations in the Denver metro area, delivering expertly within the project's scope, schedule, and budget all by the original deadline. In order to efficiently tackle the highly technical task of updating the Fort Logan Suicide Risk Mitigation Center, IME would exercise our time-tested processes, pioneering spirit of innovation, and collaborative nature.





As the project got underway, IME team leads worked closely with the other trade supervisors, to understand and work with all trades schedule needs. This promoted everyone working together as one team, with the shared goal of delivering a completely transformed building without any interruption to the support services offered. IME does more than simply partner; our team builds strong relationships with each other and all the crew members on the site. Our role on this project, updating electrical and installing LED lighting, power circuits, and an entirely new fire alarm system, required our team to be the first in and last out, as all our conduits ran along the ceilings above all ductwork and plumbing. The scale of the renovation required a large coordination effort, all our planning and scheduling was done with extreme care, person to person. As coordinating with all other contractors was key, IME laid out on the floor, the placement of every fixture in the ceiling above. This allowed all other trades to calculate exactly where to install their systems and avoid interfering with previously completed work. Our team used this and other tried and true techniques, which may appear simple but can't be underestimated for their ability to avoid wasting materials and time doing rework.

Even with in-depth planning and coordinated teamwork across trades, there were several challenges that the IME team faced. The outdated building posed considerably more issues than originally anticipated. During demolition, existing conduits concealed in the masonry walls became exposed, so our team jumped into action to figure out what they were trying to, how to reroute them, and redirected them out of the wall so construction could continue. The height of the electrical switches in patient rooms needed to be lowered after installation, due to a redesign, and though dimmer



switches were originally included in the design, IME insisted they be removed and replaced with basic switches to better meet the patient needs.

Throughout the project, IME was highly sensitive to the unique needs of the mental health patients using the facility. Our team pulled all the cable for the in-house security and data systems, crafting special door drops for the key locks of each patient room. In each room we installed suicide mitigation fixtures, coordinating closely with the drywall contractors to make sure the openings for their ceiling measurements would match exactly with our step-downs. These fixtures have lenses that can't be broken and once installed, no part of them is visible below the ceiling. In order to install the eighty-pound fixtures in the rock ceilings, IME rolled in a specialized drywall lift, which allowed one team member to prepare the fixture and lift it into the ceiling while the other aligned and connected. With the right equipment, skilled collaboration across trades, and simple processes, our team efficiently and safely completed installation of systems in all patient rooms and throughout the level.

When performing work in any high-risk environment, IME takes safety precautions very seriously. Our close-knit team functions more like a family than cohort of coworkers, trusting each other with their daily safety and holding each other accountable for crafting quality work. The second floor of the building maintained normal operations, so patients, doctors, nurses, and administrative staff were on site throughout the renovations. In order to establish a safe work



environment for our crews, patients, and staff, our teams inventoried and secured their tools in an enclosed area, inaccessible to patients or the public before entering occupied work areas. Daily job hazard analysis review with each team member about safety procedures, weekly project safety assessments and safety walk-throughs, allowed the foremen of all trades to keep a pulse on the culture of safety on the site. IME carried extra safety equipment from gloves and eyewear to extra hard hats so no team member was ever without personal safety gear. When working in different areas of the building, IME used teams to prepare all necessary tools on a cart that would be rolled to the new work area and monitored at all times. Team members were escorted by leads to these different areas and provided special entry to the basement using an elevator accessed only by key.

Not only did IME collaborate closely with all other trades, the State of Colorado, and the general contractor on this project, but also with the staff and personnel of the facility. Our team partnered with nurses and administrative staff to learn more about the functionality of various spaces in the renovation. Late in the timeline of the project, the nurses joined our team to walk through areas and share their feedback. IME responded nimbly to all their requests and included more emergency outlets in the nurse stations, exam rooms, and for the crash carts.

An incredible highlight on the project for the IME team was our successful installation of an updated fire alarm system throughout the facility. Our technicians worked on the existing system and were very familiar with its intricacies, including deficiencies like its absence on service doors and lack of



releases for entrances and exits. The State trusted our team to install the system upgrades. Our IME fire alarm system was ready to go on schedule and passed inspection the first time.

The State of Colorado's Project Manager shared this feedback about working with IME on this project, "We have an open and trusting relationship with IME, which made it easy to talk about unforeseen challenges on the project and ideas for improving efficiencies. IME knows more about the electrical and fire alarm systems on this campus than anyone else. Their team installed the original fire alarm system and we trust them completely with this work. Also, the IME team figured out several areas where we can cut costs for the next phases of this project, which highlights their ability to work efficiently and bring innovative thinking to all aspects of a project's execution."

At the project's completion, the Fort Logan Suicide Risk Mitigation Center was handed over to the State of Colorado and the community of Fort Logan by our original deadline. Despite plenty of unforeseen obstacles, a late start date, and a plethora of codes that needed to be met, IME collaborated with all other trades to reimagine the Fort Logan Suicide Prevention Center as a modern, compliant, healthcare facility. With updated systems and the state-of-the-art equipment, patients will have access to the highest quality of care while staff can enjoy an enormously improved work environment that's engineered for safety. IME powered the transformation with our team of caring experts, culture of safety, and commitment to innovating everyday.