

Charter Communications

Adolfson & Peterson Construction

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11 - Best Building Project – General Contractor (Over \$70 Million)

Why this project should win an ACE Award and why this project is unique

Despite an incredibly tight turnaround, Charter Communications was completed 20% faster than a typical building of its size. This ground-up, 600,000-sf, 12-story office tower and parking structure totaled \$108 million, which included a core/shell contracted through Shea Properties and a tenant finish completed with Charter Communications, the tenant.

The incredibly fast-tracked schedule meant that this jobsite's activity never leveled off. From the time the team broke ground to the time they turned it over, speed and quality remained the focus. As the general contractor, Adolfson & Peterson Construction (AP) understood when awarded this project that missing the turnover deadline was not an option. Shea Properties, the owner, had made a commitment to their tenant, Charter Communications, and it needed to be honored.

Excellence in Project Execution and Management/Team Approach:

Despite complications of the true zero lot line, proximity to a nearby light rail, bus station, and major interstate, the team met their goal and handed over the state-of-the-art workplace on time. "From the very beginning, we had to consider an overall strategy to get us to the finish line on time," said Ryan Anderson, AP's Senior Project Manager. "It came down to phasing, early sub involvement, extensive coordination and communication. These things may sound simple but each one had to be done with perfection to make it happen." In the end, the project team completed in 22 months a building that should have taken closer to 26.

The project's location, yards from both a light rail and interstate, meant nothing could swing over the tracks or highway. The zero-lot line complicated common site tasks like coordinating

deliveries and moving heavy machinery, such as the three 300-ton cranes. Mandatory daily coordination meetings with our subcontractor partners were imperative to communicating details that affected schedule and workability. In these meetings the team scheduled precise delivery times and displayed them where they could be referenced by team members at any moment. Trades would communicate deliveries, working locations and any changes in schedule daily. This allowed for 100% buy-in by all subcontractor partners, which allowed everyone on site to have a hand in creating and managing this fast-paced schedule.

“The nature of this project required a higher level of attention and focus,” said Anderson. “It has raised our standards of what an organized, efficient site looks like and what it means to be a collaborative partner, not only with the design and ownership team, but all our subcontractor partners.. It changed the way we approach projects to ensure that everyone is successful at the end of the project.”

Solutions of Special Projects:

This project was delivered under a CM/GC model and AP recognized the importance of involving key subcontractors early in the design and preconstruction process to achieve the aggressive schedule. Denver’s ongoing skilled labor shortage meant AP wanted to receive design input and secure resources needed to achieve the schedule and minimize changes. This early partnering with key subs saved time and eliminated the traditional value engineering process—subs provided cost input as well as many design charrettes for critical systems as the design developed and helped guide the design team to the most cost-effective solutions.

Early on AP was able to show the owner and architect that the schedule could not be accomplished without awarding both the core/shell (CS) and tenant improvements (TI) to one general contractor. Although this was not Charter’s original plan, they were able to see the overall schedule benefit of this approach for their project. With the award of the CS and TI AP was able to push the schedule by not having to install temporary systems for CS and then replace those temporary systems for the TI buildout. AP was also able to award many of the same subs

the CS and TI scope. This allowed for the project phasing and schedule to flow as one project without having to re-acquaint a new set of subs to the building for the TI portion.

Construction Innovations/State-of-the-Art Advancement:

Charter Communications was the first project where Wells Concrete (formerly RMP) used their new grouting procedures. Wells Concrete has since shown this procedure to many precast companies at a precast conference in Denver and it has been widely adapted.

The procurement and installation of 3D zinc stamped paneling that protruded from the main lobby walls were one-of-a-kind and so rare that the design team had limited experience with the product. The millworker who designed the zinc patterns – a year-long task – did so in CAD before working in 3D. Procuring the material alone was a feat. Team members went to Nashville, where the structure's zinc was produced, to visit the only facility in America that stamps pennies. With a full workload focused on pennies, there was a very small timeframe to have the zinc for the building stamped. The design deadline had to be met or the team risked potentially losing their place in line and having to wait another year for production of the building material.

Environmental/Safety:

On the Charter Communications site, safety was culture rather than a box to check.

The role that full-time, on-site Safety Manager Jeremy Hakes took was one of teacher rather than enforcer. He introduced a “buddy” system in which workers watched out for each other rather than strictly themselves, finding the safest approach together. This philosophy was put into practice regularly: an electrician making sure the plumber sees a hole in his work area, a foreman making sure a mason's ladder is stable.

This way of working became the touchstone for the site's culture, changing the safety approach from aggressive to collaborative. The culture was possible because of the belief that everybody

was empowered and had a voice in the process. Regardless of what the concern was or who was stating it (be it carpenter or owner) everybody there worked for and with everybody else.

Contribution to the Community:

With the award of the CS and TI on the project, AP knew a phased move-in was the only option for reaching the owner's occupancy and schedule needs. AP worked closely with the municipalities in the Greenwood Village community including (the City of Greenwood Village [GWV] and South Metro Fire [SMFD]). This allowed phased occupancy, meaning that Charter could start moving their employees in on completed floors while work continued on other floors until the project was complete. "Phased occupancy is not common practice for the municipalities," said Anderson. "Our team leveraged the relationship we built with GWV and SMFD on the CoBank project and invited both to be an active part of the construction team again."

From start to finish, SMFD and GWV attended monthly meetings. The number of attendees in each meeting (often over 50 people) was a testament to the level of support and investment from the community that aided in finishing the project on time.

Excellence in Client Service

Charter Communications is the third and final building of Village Center Station – a campus largely built by AP that has changed the dynamic of the Denver Tech Center. This is Charter's only major source of representation in the region, which meant that they had a large-scale, ambitious vision for what the facility would represent.

In order to achieve this vision, Charter employed two architects: Davis Partnership offered expertise on the core/shell portion, while BurketteEUA offered a client-focused relationship and handled the TI. For AP, collaborating with two design partners is uncommon and required adaptability and strong communication. As Davis's design evolved, it provided the foundation for BurketteEUA to set up their design. While this model is ideal for a constantly evolving design, it meant that AP often estimated off sketch up models, bootleg drawings, and even hand sketches, so the cost could be continually monitored and reported back to the client.

Photos:









