

Project Name: Denver Dumb Friends League Expansion

Category: 4 - Best Building Project—Specialty Contractor (Under \$2 million)

Contractor: Metropolitan Glass, Inc.

Denver Dumb Friends League Expansion – The Build to a Better Way Home

Since its inception in 1974, the Denver Dumb Friends League Quebec Street shelter has served as the standard for state-of-the-art animal sheltering and adoption. The Denver Dumb Friends League (DDFL) organization, founded in 1910 and named for animals who “lacked the power of human speech,” is the largest community-based animal welfare organization in the Rocky Mountain region, “providing a strong, compassionate and steadfast voice for those who cannot speak for themselves.”

The Quebec Street shelter has undergone numerous renovations over past 40+ years. However, despite housing nearly one million dogs since 1974, the dog adoption and housing areas have not been updated. DDFL knew a major renovation was needed to improve quality of life for the shelter’s dogs.

After a successful “Building a Better Way Home” fundraising campaign that garnered \$40 million in grants and donations, DDFL contracted with Animal Arts Design Studios and Calcon Construction to create an improved dog housing area to enrich the housing and adoption environment. Additionally, DDFL needed renovations in the form of expansion, relocation and upgrades to several other areas of the shelter. The finished product would be in line with DDFL’s brand standard of providing “the best possible care to the animals that depend on us now and in the future.”

Calcon Construction hired Metropolitan Glass, Inc. (MGI) as the specialty glazing contractor to complete this community project.

Communication was Key in Coordinating this Multi-phased Project

Frequent communication and expert coordination were keys to success for the DDFL Expansion project. The shelter remained open during construction, necessitating that the project be

completed in multiple phases. MGI's construction team faced and embraced the significant challenges that come with a multi-phased project like this one and took great care in mitigating noise and minimizing disruptions to business operations throughout the project's duration.

"Metro Glass executed a difficult, multi-phased project which kept the Denver Dumb Friends League in operations while construction was ongoing," said Calcon Project Manager Casey Mills. "There were limited access and noise considerations for animals, staff and volunteers during construction. MGI provided the customer experience that ownership required."

MGI installed more than 40 doors for this expansion project, completing the task on schedule and without disturbing other trades' schedules. This feat required skillful coordination with other trades on the jobsite and strategic team planning to assure MGI got in, meticulously completed their work, and got out. To prepare, the team carefully inspected the interior door frames and took precise measurements, assuring openings were the right size for hardware and that the door swings lined up in the project's concrete masonry unit (CMU) facility. The preconstruction team assured that accurately-sized parts were ordered for each door thickness and delivered to the jobsite on schedule.

The door installation portion of the project was at a great risk for errors, but thanks to MGI's communications efforts and quality control standards, the install was 100% successful the first time.

Innovative Solutions for a Diverse Audience

This expansion project serves a diverse audience of pets, staff, volunteers and potential pet adopters, so MGI implemented innovative glazing solutions to meet a sundry of requirements.

For example, animal holding areas needed to include "pick proof" caulking, window assemblies that would accommodate heavy cleaning and frequent "hose-downs," as well as aluminum frames to prevent future rust and deterioration.

MGI delivered the natural lighting needed for the pet population by installing 48 clerestory windows. And, the main adoption pod space included a frosted "wave-like" design on the glazing for aesthetics.

MGI also developed an innovative solution through value engineering services. Since the main lobby was being renovated with new flooring, MGI retrofitted the existing aluminum storefront to accommodate a +/- 1" build-up in flooring products.

Safety is Paramount for Contractors, Shelter Residents, Staff, Volunteers and Patrons

MGI follows a stringent safety program for each project. For DDFL's expansion project, the construction team used spotters in areas populated with shelter staff, volunteers and patrons. All heavy products and tools were used with controlled access zones in place, reducing the risk of injury for passers-by.

When the team needed to access occupied areas of the existing shelter, MGI cordoned off the main building to assure no animals, staff, volunteers or patrons came in contact with the construction area. MGI also coordinated most material deliveries outside of the shelter's business hours to mitigate traffic disruptions and decrease risk of injury to others.

MGI's project management team met frequently to assure weather patterns did not affect the project timeline or quality of work. Any cold, rainy or snowy days posed typical safety challenges for workers, but also posed quality issues for the glass installation. Watertight seals on the glass and frame were critical to prevent mold issues.

The MGI team completed the shelter expansion project in 4,016 hours and with zero lost-time accidents.

Since it began over 50 years ago, MGI has embraced a culture of honesty, exemplary coordination and high-quality glazing work for all projects and business operations. The Denver Dumb Friends League Quebec Street Shelter expansion project was a challenge and MGI embraced this project with the same energy that has made the company a successful and reliable specialty contractor for all these years.

"MGI ensured a successful project from the initial stages of this mission," recalls Mills. "Metro Glass maintained the project schedule and executed a flawless installation. The Denver Dumb Friends League and Calcon Construction greatly value their performance."









