

Name of Project: Denver Premium Outlets

Category:

5 - Best Building Project – Specialty Contractor (\$2 - \$6 Million) 2.3 Million

Company: Colorado Hardscapes

**Solutions of Special Projects:**

*Overcoming a 2-month delay and ultra-lux objectives on a strict budget without compromising aesthetics or premium quality takes planning, flexibility and teamwork.*

Denver Premium Outlets (DPO) envisioned an engaging, texture-rich experience designed to compel patrons to linger longer among a throng of top-shelf retailers. The design sought to blend crisp straight lines with an abundance of modern materials and natural Colorado-cues in the form of textures, colors, and geology. Colorado Hardscapes installed the flatwork, rockwork, seat walls and water features that tie it all together seamlessly. In working with the design team Colorado Hardscapes was able to provide small changes and adjustments that allowed additional room in the budget for all the premium designs and materials they were looking to integrate.

Right out of the gate there was a delay in starting construction lasting a total of two months. With a set opening date this created a need for special planning, teamwork and flexibility. The condensed schedule left Colorado Hardscapes to complete the entire scope across a 94-acre site between April and August of 2018. In order to meet the scheduling needs Colorado Hardscapes actually took on additional work from the original scope, including drain work, dirt work and sub slab work. Additionally, as many as three separate crews worked simultaneously on the site coordinating complicated installations of decorative flatwork, seat walls, large, hand-made shotcrete boulders, and planter curbs. We also caulked well-over a mile of expansion joints across the massive site.

Meeting the needs of both the budget and time table was a key as the subcontractor responsible for the site's 60,000 square feet of flatwork concrete but it could not come at the expense of the craftsmanship or end result. Colorado Hardscapes integrated a broad combination of seven different techniques and finishes to respond to diverse purposes while laying the foundation for a premium pedestrian experience. Key illustrations of exemplary craftsmanship within our scope of work include the site's two water features, multiple large faux-rock formations, and the handsomely detailed passages and plazas linking everything together.

**Excellence in Project Execution and Management/Team Approach:**

*Collaboration makes magic. Thinking broadly about client expectations, Colorado Hardscapes took the first steps to go the extra mile right from the start.*

Thoughtful collaboration with Kimley Horn (LA / Civil), Whiting-Turner (GC) and Simon Premium Outlets (the client) began with the team's familiarity with Colorado Hardscapes' performance and proprietary licensed products. Preconstruction services around material selection involved several showroom visits and sample iterations.

With a massive volume of hardscape surfaces spread across a substantial site, as originally specified, most of the concrete in the plazas and retail pavilions would have been broom finished with integral color and limited SandScape highlights. Our thorough value analysis identified an alternative coloring agent that would match the quality of the original product but cost significantly less. This substitution allowed the ratio of SandScape to broom finished to be inverted. SandScape was incorporated judiciously across the 60,000-SF flatwork program in three tones - Sierra, Cobblestone, and uncolored - making premium concrete the standard and standard concrete the accent.

Particularly tedious from a preconstruction point of view was the need for precision in lining up the many beveled saw cuts crisscrossing the concrete. Some cuts visually stretch more than 500 feet yet are physically truncated by play structures. Lining these cuts up perfectly, over multiple, non-sequential concrete pours and achieving exactitude required a lot of checking, rechecking, and triple-checking by the PM, Superintendent, and Foremen.

Colorado Hardscapes was also responsible for the sleek concrete planters that dot plaza areas with shade trees and ornamental grasses. Set 18”-deep, these smooth concrete fixtures feature hand-troweled radius edges that add luster and sparkle to the hardscape program.

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

*Keeping people in place was fundamental to the client’s vision. Blurring the lines between natural and synthetic, our skilled concrete craftsmen rendered artistry almost indistinguishable from reality in a series of settings that compel pleasurable loitering.*

Among many innovative elements the construction of the central water feature, the magnificent playscapes with the faux rock features, and the incorporation of sedimentary walls as decorative, functional respites all greatly increase the site’s capacity to retain even the most restless children and husbands.

On the central, three-nozzle water feature, Colorado Hardscapes provided comprehensive services including installing all the mechanical and plumbing, connecting to the vault room and assuring all lines were connected, pressurized, tested, and leak-free before being covered by subgrade. From preconstruction through start-up, all angles and attributes of the installation plan were closely controlled through a single-source delivery to assure complication-free construction and long-term operations.

On the smaller, secondary water feature, the granite fountain’s components required a dead-level concrete slab for the water to flow perfectly over the vanishing edge to dramatic effect. Laser scanning and an overabundance of caution in set up delivered perfection.

Throughout the site, real rocks and hand-articulated, artificial boulders are blended so deftly that only the most observant would even notice the distinctions. Creating the large, natural-looking rock formations is part science, part art. The precision of geometric proportions and placement of the base-layer formwork are closely followed by the keen-eye and steady hand it takes to shape,

color, and tint concrete to look exactly like the smaller, but real Telluride Gold boulders next to it.

The design also called for more than 500 linear feet of multi-layered sedimentary walls installed to frame landscape areas. Poured in undulating, four-inch lifts, each lift is then independently stained to create unique, discernible strata in the finished surface.

**Environmental/Safety:**

*Nobody gets hurt is the way we work and installing beautiful, long-lasting, premium-quality concrete with care and consideration is what we do.*

At Colorado Hardscapes safety is part of our company culture and an important part of the team atmosphere on the job. Our crews work methodically, following specific processes developed to limit the potential for injury. Crews watch each other's back, up and down the line. Senior employees spot check and mentor juniors and everybody takes the time to work safely and surely every step of the way. We are happy to report Colorado Hardscapes incurred no safety incidents or violations on this project.

Among the designed features, the large faux rock boulders did present concerns regarding possibly dangerous heights. Fall zones beneath the boulders and other playground apparatus were created by increasing the depth of protective padding around each element in proportion to the height of the element. The largest faux boulder we created reaches a height of nearly 7' requiring additional padding around the base of the rock compared to the padding used in non-fall zones. Within the playscape, the 22,000-SF of Capitol Hill Sandscape was finished with a deep-surface etch to reveal a high-friction surface that helps little one keep their feet under them rain or shine.

Denver Premium Outlets has achieved LEED certification from the USGBC by incorporating solar panels, low-water plantings, use of local materials, access to views and daylight, and public art. Colorado Hardscapes took special care to ensure our work and work products left no unwanted traces on the site. Our Sandscape product, used liberally throughout the retail

pavilion's walking paths, produces a slurry. Rather than wash this off into the subgrade, Colorado Hardscapes vacuumed it up by hand, keeping the unwanted residues out of the site as part of every installation.

**Excellence in Client Service and/or Contribution to Community:**

*The client's expectations and forward-thinking vision of a better outlet experience was delivered. With family or friends, light shopping or heavy, DPO makes the journey worth the trip.*

Denver Premium Outlets presents 375,000-SF of family-friendly, environmentally conscious retail in a lively, open-air atmosphere that feels like a place surrounded by shopping rather than stores connected by sidewalks and parking lots. Pedestrian circulation among the stores is filled with gathering, playing, resting, waiting, and meeting spots of every sort and size, all of it connected by the hardscape. Colorado Hardscapes' premium products and daily oversight allowed us to deliver a consistent, high-quality, durable and beautiful finish across a wide range of materials despite Colorado's notoriously unpredictable and rapidly changing weather. General contractor, Whiting-Turner, noted our pride of performance and subsequently awarded additional scopes to account for schedule deficiencies and resource shortages elsewhere.

The DPO project is estimated to have created some 700 jobs during construction and brought some 500 new retail positions to Thornton, which earned it the honor of the 2019 City of Thornton Retailer of the Year Award.









