

Category 7: Best Building Project – Specialty Contractor (Over \$10M)

Subcontractor: Weifield Group Contracting

Project Name: Project Rodeo Fulfillment Center

As the saying goes, necessity was the mother of invention on Weifield’s Project Rodeo—which began in January, 2020 with General Contractor, RC Andersen, and was a sprint to the finish, 16 months later. This project was comprised of a four million sq. ft., five-level warehouse and distribution center with robotics capabilities for a confidential client on 70 acres in Colorado Springs—built by over 1,000 total contractor team members on a lightning-fast schedule.

This was the largest building the client has in a seven-state area, and the first prototype the client had built of this facility type—so the client was adapting a high volume of changes into the facility, continuously and in real-time, based on discoveries coming in from its network of other distribution facilities being built, simultaneously. The sheer scale and complexity of this project catapulted Weifield to a new plane of agility and speed.

“This was a production job—anything of this magnitude comes down to how fast you can install it and how soon you can start,” said Taylor Huskey, Weifield Superintendent.

Scope of Work / Meeting the Challenges

Weifield’s scope included four 4,000-amp services, over 16,000 light fixtures, electrical for a large distribution facility and a small pump house and guard house—and over 205,000 man hours. During the course of the project, our team installed over 3.6M feet of wire and nearly 625,000 feet of EMT and PVC conduit. Navigating through the high volume of requested changes—beginning on Day 1—presented substantial challenges.

“We knew that changes would be coming on this large-scale project, yet meeting the opening date for the facility was critical,” said Taylor Nelson, Sr. Development Manager with the owner’s rep on the project, Trammell Crow. “Weifield was able to jump on those things immediately and incorporate the design as it came out, while pricing and negotiating, simultaneously.”

According to Mike Barron, Weifield Project Manager, only shell drawings were issued when the project began and power was designed as the project progressed.

“Weifield collaborated often with the GC who gave us direction on various phases; we then worked to re-plan on the fly, as needed,” said Barron.

The design ultimately fell so far behind construction that Weifield needed to innovate and develop workarounds to accommodate the new designs. Change orders were issued only a couple of days before they were needed—and included:

- A large-scale change order which came in on a Monday and needed to be completed within a week—so Weifield ran 2,600 feet of pipe over the weekend to have everything in place by the following Monday. Due to short timeframe and the large amount of congestion on the first floor where it needed to be installed, Weifield thought outside the box and ran this raceway on the second floor, coming down onto the first floor, where required.
- A request for Weifield to halt work halfway through the 5th floor as the client considered changing the whole floor to another type of product—requiring a change to the entire electrical layout
- A change to the side of the building the main telecom room would reside on—which came in just a week before Weifield’s crew began the underground phase; our team redesigned our plan so we could install pipe just five days later
- A request to have the entire Level 2 floor completed by the same date we were expected to turn over only the north half; the south half wasn’t even dried in but our team developed a new plan to power up the area as well

The five-story structure was built from top, down—so Weifield ran conduit vertically through the walls without concrete and had 100% of our riser feeder conduits installed before the slab

was ever poured. Accordingly, Weifield's crew used custom scissor lift baskets with material racks that could hold up to 50 light fixtures at a time; once the slabs and deck were poured, it was 'all systems go' for the installations.

"We were averaging 1,500 feet of reloc and 100 light fixtures per person, per day," Huskey said.

In addition to the schedule challenges, Mother Nature threw in a few curveballs, of her own. Two inches of rain fell on site within an hour, during one storm, causing a building column to collapse and delaying our schedule.

"We experienced some of the craziest storms I've seen and I've lived in Colorado my whole life," said Brad Chapman, Weifield Superintendent.

"Weifield's ability to start work prior to having change orders was huge on this project," said Nelson.

Excellence in Project Execution / Management & Team Approach

Weifield's nimbleness with changes was a true differentiator, with 178 changes issued during the project. Weifield had 100 crew members on site, on average, with 135 at the peak of the project. Our superintendents each took ownership of a certain area of the building and due to congestion on site, we ensured we had enough manpower to get in, complete our work in our areas, and get out before others started. We turned our building areas over to the client as we completed them so they could begin installing owner-furnished equipment.

Due to the numerous changes, Weifield helped the GC to schedule vital portions of the projects including other trades' work. We then stacked our internal crew with multiple layers of supervision; additional foremen came in from other projects to work as part of the crew.

"Weifield didn't have much communication coming their way, but jumped in head-first and made it their project," said Nelson.

Maintaining Effective Communication

Weifield's communication plan was simple: distribute information immediately via a streamlined process. When new drawings or changes came in, they were shared with the superintendents, who shared them with their foremen, who shared them with the crews. Weifield kept communication focused through a multitude of internal and GC meetings, as well as numerous conversations per day with the GC, trade partners, and field leaders.

“We were proactive with the GC and told them what we needed in order to hit their established timelines,” said Huskey.

Said Steve Sroka, RC Andersen Project Executive: “Across the board, Weifield had great communication, making sure we understood everything and developing solutions so we could properly coordinate the project.”

Safety Management

This project began just before the onset of the global pandemic and adapting to the new associated safety protocols was challenging for the holistic team—but by early March, 2020, Weifield assembled a COVID-19 Task Force and adapted CDC and industry protocols into our operations. Ensuring the safe delivery of material was another challenge, as an 85-foot forklift was needed to hoist the material through a small window, into the building.

Weifield employed a full-time safety resource on the project to ensure compliance on all phases, customized and followed a stringent Project Safety Plan, documented daily job hazards, and led/participated in daily and weekly safety meetings to prepare for upcoming safety events.

Perhaps most importantly, Weifield had no major incidents or accidents on this large-scale project across 146 crew members.

Innovation / Exceeding Client Expectations

This was the client's first time utilizing BIM technology but it proved beneficial to all parties—as due to incomplete drawings, we had to use BIM drawings as our guide.

“It was a stepping stone for the client to grow into their BIM capabilities, and we grew by using it on a project this large,” said Barron. “We also took our Bluebeam capabilities to a new level with preplanning and drawings.”

Weifield also utilized our in-house prefabrication capability for assemblies including plug-and-play modular lighting systems, rack panels, dock level assemblies, and more. Weifield’s attention to quality especially showed in the electrical rooms on Levels 2 – 5, where everything matched perfectly from floor to floor. According to Nelson, Weifield’s attention to detail caught a major error on the sortation mezzanine, as the prototype design did not include a design for robotics charging stations on this level.

“The client had several buildings being constructed of the same prototype, but Weifield was the first to identify this design issue,” said Nelson. “We created a system-wide solution based on Weifield’s findings.”

A Successful Finish

Project Rodeo was completed in June, 2021; as a result of our performance on this project, Weifield was awarded another distribution facility to construct for the same client in Aurora, CO—where lessons learned from Project Rodeo are being applied.

“Project Rodeo was the most successful project that we have ever done – it taught us a lot and equipped us to grow as a company,” said Barron.

“Our ability to staff a project of this size is something that the vast majority of electrical contractors couldn’t do,” said Chapman. “I was proud of our teamwork and ability to overcome the challenges.”

Said Sroka: “Weifield’s team was integral to completing this job with flying colors; they were hands-down an excellent partner to work with and key to our success on this project.”









