

Category: 9 – Best Building Project – Specialty Contractor Non-MEP (Over \$2 Million)

Contractor: Metropolitan Glass, Inc.

Project Name: McGregor Square

Building a legacy project takes a cohesive and collaborative team, and McGregor Square, the former surface parking lot known as the Coors Field West Lot, was no exception. However, after more than a year of planning and pre-purchasing of critical prefabrication and installation materials began, life in Denver, and throughout the world, went on a type of lockdown as the COVID-19 pandemic started impacting life as we knew it. Overnight, continued installation of their scope of work for this trendy, condo-hotel-office-retail project rising from a former surface parking lot at the corner of 20th and Wazee streets stopped, while the world figured out how to move forward. Metropolitan Glass stepped up to the plate at a crucial time in the schedule to provide more than 60,000 square feet of custom fabricated glass including 106 sliding doors, 207 total operable windows, 13 storefront doors, 23 terrace doors, and rooftop glass handrail.

In addition to the impact that COVID-19 had on the health and safety of the entire project, the Metropolitan Glass team was able to staff the project at the appropriate level without any loss in manhours. Allowing for appropriate protocols while working alongside other scheduled trades required another level of coordination to keep the project on track. Metropolitan Glass developed and implemented new safety measures in accordance with, what seemed to be daily changing guidelines, prioritizing their employees' health and safety.

While many factors contributed to our successful execution of this project, collaboration among the key trade partners along with our prefabricator were key elements to the achievement of this unique revitalization project, named for the Colorado Rockies' late president, Keli S. McGregor, and were at the top of the list. Metro took part in design meetings during the shop drawing development phase and collaborated with the design team as well as the exterior envelope consultant with visits to the fabrication shop, as well as on site.

With the design vision for the project almost complete, Metropolitan Glass joined the Hensel Phelps team, along with the rest of the early trade partners, to provide project materials and samples for design and price options. Metropolitan Glass worked with Hensel Phelps, Stantec

and the development group, West Lot, LLC, for their scope of the project by providing immediate trend pricing during preconstruction with the goal of utilizing the collaborative process to get those components aligned and reconcile project construction costs.

By joining the project planning and coordination meetings during design, much earlier than they typically would even for a project of this magnitude, it allowed Metropolitan Glass to maintain their schedule and staff loading while responding to the pandemic's impact. Fortunately, the prefabricated window systems were able to be delivered on-site in Fall 2019, prior to COVID-19 impacting the project.

The foresight of early collaboration allowed Metropolitan Glass's prefabrication plant to stay on track and adjust as minor alterations to the design were implemented to meet code and COVID-19 pandemic protocols and safety upgrades to the project. Prefabrication of over 60,000 square feet of window wall, curtain wall, sliding doors, operable windows, storefront, and terrace doors at their fabricator's facility in Aurora, allowed the Metropolitan Glass team to deliver utilizing an "on-demand" delivery process.

With the completion date set for New Year's 2021, all the trades were moving at the optimum speed for safety and quality, which required an enhanced focus on collaboration and coordination by the team. As with any downtown project, laydown and deliveries were challenging and given that there were essentially four projects going on at one time (hotel, residences, office, plaza) it took it to another level.

Because of this tight site, selection by the design team of a structural tape window system was serendipitous. The structural tape window systems were pre-glazed and crated and were delivered to the jobsite via flatbed trucks as needed, to allow for pre-loading to the appropriate floors for installation. Crates were hoisted with the tower crane directly from the truck to each floor of the building using loading platforms.

The alternative to this staging plan would have been storing the fabricated window systems and materials on or near the jobsite, which was impossible due to the limited laydown area of this urban development site. The time savings achieved by utilizing this structural tape window system, from both the prefabrication and installation perspectives, were measurable and documented. This unique system allowed for time savings from both a logistics and a construction quality perspective. By stocking the building with materials ahead of time, Metropolitan Glass was able to mitigate many of the installation delays typically encountered on

other projects. In addition to providing a dependable installation schedule by having the window systems at hand, an enhanced level of quality assurance was able to be provided knowing there would be no installation delays or impacts due to materials not being on-site when needed.

At McGregor Square Residences, the third leg of this three-building development and a 103-unit residential building pursuing WELL building certification, the operable window systems were a key element in this somewhat new, independent, accreditation program that measures building features focused on the well-being of the people that live there. There is only one other project in Denver, designed by the same architectural firm, that is WELL building certified. Even McGregor Square's developer, Colorado Rockies co-owner Dick Monfort, an owner of one of the upper floors of the residence building, is representative of a trend. Sports franchises and their owners are getting involved in developing entertainment districts and projects around stadiums across the country.

To support the unique goals of both buildings, Metropolitan Glass was able to adhere to, and sometimes push, the mason's schedule while allowing for their proprietary seamless and leak reducing window installation of low E coated Optiblue glass on the third floors to the top floors of the hotel and residence buildings. It was necessary for Metropolitan Glass to coordinate and work around the masonry scaffolding, which was set up around most of the exterior skin on both buildings.

This family-friendly entertainment hub, a dream of the visionary's namesake, Kelly McGregor, includes one of the hotel's most enticing features, the bridgeway connecting it to the residential tower. Under a separate work order, Metropolitan Glass worked with the development team's designers and trade partners to prefabricate and install a distinctive curtain wall system for the pedestrian bridge walkway. This unique walkway overlooks Coors Field, but also is outfitted with a rooftop deck with a pool and hot tub, and a large fitness center with floor-to-ceiling windows that look all the way out to the Rockies. The bridgeway design was completed towards the end of the design process, which required Metropolitan Glass to integrate the prefabrication and installation into an already constrained construction schedule.

Safety of both the prefabrication team as well as the on-site installation team members was of paramount importance to Metropolitan Glass' leadership in the plant and on the jobsite. MGI preformed daily temperature and well-being checks each day and followed and informed their team members of CDC, Local and General Contractor protocols as they changed.

Prefabrication of this variety of windows, with the final design, prefabrication material procurement, and final window system assembly was a formidable endeavor. With more than 340 window assemblies and a unique rooftop glass handrail system, staying on schedule was paramount for a project of this magnitude. While Metropolitan Glass had been awarded this project and started prefabrication and installation prior to the pandemic, the differentiator was that the prefabrication plant was located in Aurora, Colorado, less than 14 miles from the project jobsite. This opportune location for the prefabrication plant allowed Metropolitan Glass to support one of the project's sustainability goals for LEED certification. With the Optibule glass used on the project, the window wall and curtain wall systems meet an overall system U-Value of 0.375 and 0.36, respectively.

McGregor Square, a jewel sitting across the street from Coors Field, is a celebration of Denver and Colorado, and Metropolitan Glass was fortunate to have the opportunity to contribute to the project's success. Their contribution to this project and their client, Hensel Phelps', success is easily evidenced by the beautiful expressions of awe from visitors, and pride of place expressions of locals to McGregor Square and are reflected in the surrounding neighborhood. Clearly stated by Brandon VandeLaar, Project Manager for Hensel Phelps Construction, *"I believe the McGregor Square project was so successful because of the great relationships we have with key Trade Partners. Metropolitan Glass, Inc. for example was brought on early, prior to design completion, and was instrumental in helping finalize the Construction Documents from an exterior envelope standpoint. Metro's ability to provide prompt samples and immediate trend pricing made material selections for the Architect and Owner seamless. We are extremely grateful for key Trade Partners like Metro who make projects like this so successful."*











