

ACE AGE Awards Submission 2021 Entry Form

Category: Category 3: Meeting the Challenge of a Difficult Job – General Contractor

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Project Name: Aspen Square Condominium Hotel Renovation

Overview Statement

For nearly 45 years, PCL has worked with long-term partner, and Aspen Square Condominium owner, Don Love, who, in 1975, was PCL's first U.S. construction client. Through the many years of partnership, we have built numerous notable projects in and around Colorado together, including the Aspen Square Condominium Hotel Renovation project.

In May 2020, amid a global pandemic, shutdowns, and new safety regulations, PCL began the construction and modernization of the iconic Aspen Square Condominium Hotel. Working closely with the owner, PCL was engaged to complete a full modernization of the hotel and condominium buildings. The iconic property saw aesthetic improvements to both the interior and exterior, installation of new life safety systems, elevator modernization, upgrades to the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, and the addition of a digital access control system for the property and individual guest rooms. Once finished, the historic property's new look quickly caught the attention of Aspen residents and vacationing guests alike. Known for its array of amenity offerings, including a pool, hot tubs, co-working space with conference rooms, and wellness facilities, PCL was tasked with developing a construction schedule that didn't interfere with rental operations, while staying within the tight budget. A result of PCL's commitment to cost and schedule certainty, the team was able to incorporate additional scope of work items while maintaining cost and schedule objectives. PCL also streamlined an approach to Pitkin County's COVID-19 construction protocol plan.

Solutions of Special Projects

Nestled on a tight site at the base of Aspen Mountain, the Aspen Square Condominium Hotel Renovation project was planned to be completed in a single phase, with work scheduled to start in early April and finish in time for Aspen's busy summer season. This plan was foiled as the

COVID-19 pandemic swept through Colorado in early March, with Pitkin County seeing many of the State's first confirmed cases.

On March 31st, the County issued a shutdown of all non-essential construction activity and it extended until May, well past the original project start date. With a new planned completion of mid-July and knowing the importance of having Aspen Square open and fully operational for the 4th of July weekend, PCL proposed a plan to break the project into two phases. Phase One (May 4th - July 2nd), would be exterior improvements. PCL would then demobilize for the remainder of the summer season and begin Phase Two of interior improvements in late September with a completion of mid-December.

Breaking the project into two phases came with logistical and manpower challenges. However, PCL suggested an approach that allowed the owner to generate revenue by remaining open during the peak summer season, and PCL to stay engaged and incorporate numerous additional enhancements without driving up the project budget.

The project was located on a tight site, surrounded by 11 open businesses. Traffic control was coordinated around the site permitter with consistent communication to business owners to ensure no impact to business operations. Signage was implemented to advise on open business hours to ensure tourists and residents knew the businesses were still open.

Excellence in Project Execution and Management/Team Approach

After the decision to break the project into two phases to ensure no impact to operations or revenue during busy seasons, PCL remained diligent about ensuring the project approach was executed to the highest possible standard. The ownership group and PCL worked as partners to maintain a steady level of trust and transparency throughout the entire process and, because the owner was onsite, PCL was able collaborate closely with the owner, providing weekly (sometimes daily) hands-on and interactive site tours to address issues and propose solutions. The value engineering on this project was untraditional and demanded a high level of effort during estimating to ensure the project was delivered on budget and to the standard of quality Aspen visitors expect. PCL worked with the owner to understand their budget and high priority

items, allowing the team to determine the scope they could address within the determined budget.

Phase one required extensive pre-planning with the exterior work subcontractors, including providing necessary resources, scheduling material movement, and coordinating the efficient flow of material in and out of the buildings. PCL's close relationships and communication with the subcontractor team enabled a streamlined approach to this process.

“The Aspen Square project presented a number of unique challenges, but PCL's strong leadership, willingness to listen to suggestions and great teamwork fostered a collaborative environment and resulted in the development of creative solutions to save the owner time and money. We truly felt like a partner throughout the entire process and look forward to future work with the PCL team.”

- Travis Peterson, Project Manager R&A Enterprises

Construction Innovations/State-of-the-Art Advancement

PCL has been at the forefront of innovative solutions and tried and true construction processes surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. This project put those processes to the test. In May, before construction operations could proceed, contractors were required to submit their COVID-19 response plan. PCL worked closely with the City of Aspen to ensure all protocols were understood, resulting in PCL being one of the first contractors in the county to receive approval to proceed. In fact, PCL submitted a more thorough plan than requested, and the plan served as the basis document for the City to develop their COVID-19 specific policies for construction sites. PCL's innovative approach to this plan was acknowledged by the owner, stated below by General Manager, Dana Thompson.

“[...] when the City of Aspen announced that they would start accepting and processing applications from construction professionals seeking to start jobs that were shut down due to Covid-19 public health orders, PCL was front and center and ready to submit their safety protocol plan which adhered to the Covid-19 guidelines, subsequently receiving approval to begin our project. While we all understood that we were in uncharted territory, PCL was committed to moving ahead thoughtfully and responsibly.”

Environmental/Safety

PCL is proud of our ability to work with local businesses, City residents, and tourists to ensure no impact to operations, especially in places with high volumes of tourism, like Aspen. Given the project's location, proximity to local businesses, and tourists that frequent the City, safety was a top priority. With 11 local businesses located on the project site, PCL went above and beyond to develop comprehensive signage and pedestrian routes to guide the tourism crowds. The team also conducted signage and safety trainings to educate onsite workers how to safely guide pedestrians around the site. Because Pitkin County was host to one of the first confirmed COVID-19 cases in Colorado, jobsites were closely monitored to ensure proper safety measures were being followed, a responsibility PCL did not take lightly. The PCL team worked closely with subcontractors to ensure pandemic protocols were understood at every level and despite construction activities taking place at the height of the pandemic, the project was completed without any outbreaks. A testament to PCL's commitment to safety, in the 25,000 hours work there were zero lost time hours, and the Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) was also zero.

As part of PCL's commitment to sustainable buildings, all systems and supporting utilities were upgraded to improve energy efficiencies.

Excellence in Client Service and/or Contribution to Community

The challenges of COVID-19 have affected the way construction teams operate, and PCL's commitment to taking care of their own took on a new meaning. PCL's determination to acquire work approval from Pitkin County spanned beyond just project objectives. Receiving approval of the team's submitted COVID-19 Response Plan directly affected the local subcontractors' ability to continue earning a paycheck.

The modernization of the Aspen Square Condominium Hotel into an updated, must-stay, mountain destination, required a team of dedicated, collaborative and determined individuals who understood how to work under tight site constraints, while working under the uncharted territory of a global pandemic. Visitors have recognized the improved spaces, referencing the

stylish and cozy rooms, lobby, and amenities. Below is a testimonial from General Manager, Dana Thompson.

“Completing a project like ours was no easy feat as a building that is 50+ years old can present significant challenges once the work begins. We truly appreciate the care, expertise and communication that were instrumental in addressing the challenges we encountered. We recognize the amount of work that was necessary to maintain schedules and costs while at the same time ensuring a safe work environment was provided for all those involved in this project. PCL was successful in all areas and more.”

Photo Credit: MKM Build Photography









