

Category 8: – Best Building Project – Specialty Contractor Non-MEP (Under \$2 Million)

Contractor: ICI, LLC

Project Name: Chung Tai Zen Center

Located in the quiet countryside outside of Boulder, Colorado, this 35-acre site is now home to the Chung Tai Zen Center, a Buddhist Monastery. The calming surroundings will help play a role in the overall goal for the Monastery, which is to serve people from all walks of life and allow everyone to learn about Buddhist culture. The building was designed to be “Net Zero Energy.” It is projected to produce more energy than what it will use. This was important to the Monastery’s design team as it would encourage mindfulness and a well-balanced relationship with the environment. They will offer Buddhist teachings to future monks, weekly public services, and a monthly ceremonial service.

There are two buildings on the property. The main building is a 20,000 square foot Buddhist Monastery. It has two tall wings, the Meditation Hall and Dining Hall and then a residential building. ICI installed the metal framing, drywall, insulation, and finishing scopes. The Central Hall is a wood framed Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) structure, which our team then covered with insulation and drywall. The second building is a 5,000 square foot residential building where the Monks will live. ICI’s contract total, with Adolfson and Peterson Construction, came in just shy of \$525,000.

On this project, ICI utilized its high efficiency Panel Max Prefabrication System. The Panel Max is a portable milling machine that prefabricates drywall assemblies off-site in order to save on installation time, finishing cost, and improve quality on corners. These prefabricated parts can then be sent to the jobsite immediately ready for install and requires less finishing. It is clean, fast, and cost-effective, which made it perfect for the details that were needed at the Zen center. Our scope included framing a 300-foot soffit that enclosed a duct that ran the $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of both the Meditation and Dining Halls, from the north end to the south end. The architectural details had drywall capping the framing and was used as a substrate for a high-end acoustical panel. The Panel Max was used to fabricate L-Shape pieces of drywall to have a flat finished surface so the acoustical panels could be flush with one another. The team had to frame these walls perfectly because the Panel Max drywall was already in production. Therefore, extra

attention was given to make sure the walls were held to exact dimensions for when the panels arrived. ICI's Panel Max Operator Heraclio Medina was excited to use cutting edge technology on this project. He stated, "The Panel Max is perfect for a high detail project such as the Zen Center. Utilizing this system will also reduce waste lowering our environmental footprint"

The process of hanging the drywall was unique within the tall, wide-open rooms. It took 3 workers to stand up the 14' x 4' by 5/8" sheets of drywall. Once it was positioned in the right area, two people then held it into place while someone located on the scaffolding would screw it into place. It was crucial on this smaller project to have leadership putting product into place, as well as making sure a quality product was being delivered. ICI's Leadman, Trever Davis, was key to this project. Both Trever and Eric Oliver, ICI's Superintendent, were putting product in place right along with their crew day in and day out.

Exact measurements and quality control were essential in this building. ICI was at the mercy of the wood team and had to take extra steps to ensure our work blended with theirs. The walls had to be exactly the same between the mullions, which is the vertical bar between the panes of glass in a window. Eric was constantly measuring and verifying that all corners and edges were perfect. The building used many high-end wood finishes that were in most cases applied over the drywall that was installed. All-natural wood with no finishes was used, so extra care was taken when doing work around it. Due to these details, our team had to make sure their finishes were done so the next trade could come through with the final touches and not be delayed.

Our team enjoyed watching the job evolved while going through all the seasons in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The scenery set the tone for the job every day and the crew fed off of the positive energy that nature was constantly displaying. Trevor stated, "It was no mistake that this would be the location for a Zen Center. The setting was beautiful no matter what season we were in the middle of, and the crew really took that in every day we came to work."

In a world full of chaos and uncertainty, the Chung Tai Zen Center will offer peace and serenity to the people throughout this community. The calming environment outside and the beautiful details inside are sure to impress all the center's visitors.







