



Allsteel®

PROJECT PROFILE

HILLSBORO CIVIC CENTER
{ HILLSBORO, OREGON }

HILLSBORO CIVIC CENTER

“Allsteel provided innovative, high-quality products that fulfilled the sustainable mission of Hillsboro’s new government center. Their service surpassed everyone’s expectations.”

D. Michael Jones, Associate, LRS Architects

CHALLENGE

When the City of Hillsboro, Oregon, began planning a new city hall, they started by asking residents what they wanted. “After a very thorough citizen participation process, they said the City should build environmentally responsible buildings,” says Marion Hemphill, Director of Capital Planning and Development for the City of Hillsboro, Oregon. When planning the mixed-use development, which includes offices, retail, public plazas, and housing, Hillsboro’s City Council committed to meet the requirements of the U.S. Green Building Council LEED® certification program. “We wanted this building to meet LEED standards,” says Hemphill, “and we felt strongly that the project needed to be environmentally responsible inside as well as outside. We didn’t want to have a ‘sick’ building,” he notes, referring to the problem of furniture, carpeting, and other interior building materials that can off-gas chemical substances, affecting indoor air quality and making people ill. The Hillsboro Civic Center ultimately achieved LEED-NC (new construction) Gold certification.

96,000 sq. ft. of office space in main office building, another 5,500 sq. ft. of retail space, and 17,000 sq. ft. of common space

Consolidation of 10 departments and 200 employees that had previously been scattered around the City of Hillsboro

Most City employees now work in open offices, improving communication and teamwork

LEED-NC Gold certified building



SOLUTION

“What Allsteel provided,” says Hemphill, “were products that were not going to off-gas high levels of formaldehyde into our offices.” While most office furniture is made with materials that emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and formaldehyde, Allsteel used only wheatboard in the worksurfaces, which has reduced levels of VOCs and formaldehyde. According to Hemphill, “Allsteel was also able to utilize a special, environmentally friendly, low-formaldehyde fiberglass acoustical material inside the panel system.”

In addition, Allsteel provided workstations customized to specific staff needs. “When we designed various workstations, we fit them to the function instead of the organizational hierarchy,” notes Hemphill. “For example, in plan examiners’ workstations, we were able to get 36” deep worksurfaces, the size of a full set of plans. And we were able to give our employees the sit/stand option so they can vary their position throughout the day.” Lower panel walls also ensured that light from the many windows made it past the first workstation and into the center of the building, reducing energy consumption and providing employees access to daylight.



ALLSTEEL PRODUCTS

Terrace® 3.4 frame-and-tile system, Mulberry Paper Landscape™ surface, Terrace Freestanding, Get Set™ tables and chairs, Persona™ storage, #19®, Sum™, Tolleson Side, and Gunlocke® Multi® seating. Fiberglass acoustical batting with reduced VOCs and formaldehyde, bio-based panel fabric, and wheatboard substrate in worksurfaces and Get Set tables. #19 is high in recycled content and features a take-back program at the end of its useful life.

EXPERIENCE

In addition to building workstations from recycled and recyclable materials, Allsteel also set up a full-size workstation in a lighting lab, which allowed Hemphill to find the means to reduce the electrical demand of standard lights, but still provide adequate illumination. "We kept experimenting with the lights and changing colors of material to create a soft, but well-lit environment for people who spend most of their time on computers."

The City sent Hemphill and the Facilities Maintenance staff to the Allsteel factory for training. "One of the things we really liked about the Terrace panel system is that it goes together easily," he says, "so very early on we decided our team could do our own add-ons, changes, and moves. The factory supported us in this by offering training and being tremendously responsive as our folks got up to speed."



GAINS

According to D. Michael Jones, Associate at LRS Architects, "The product choices presented by Allsteel made integrating systems furniture into the built environment easy. The materials and finishes blend beautifully with the architecture throughout a variety of spaces." Allsteel also assisted with the LEED certification process. "The City of Hillsboro's desire to create an environment that met all requirements of LEED for indoor air quality and recycled and rapidly renewable materials was highly dependent on participation by Allsteel," Jones adds. "I found their people to be extremely knowledgeable and helpful. They even helped procure information and draft summaries for the LEED certification submission."

To help educate staff and visitors, the City has put together a demonstration workstation. "We use this workstation to talk about how environmentally sensitive this building is," Hemphill notes. "People are impressed by the fact that the bio-based panel fabric is made of non-food grade corn, a rapidly renewable resource that is biodegradable after use. One of the tiles on the panel wall is made of Mulberry Paper, which comes from the castings of silkworms. It makes a huge impact."

Office furniture made from innovative, recycled, and recyclable materials, such as environmentally friendly panel acoustical batting, bio-based panel fabric, and wheatboard worksurface substrate

Workstations customized to specific functional needs rather than hierarchical standards

Lower panel heights so natural light reaches all the way to interior workstations

Task lighting that reduces energy consumption while still providing adequate and appropriate illumination for computer work and other tasks

A #19 chair donated for the time capsule that was buried in the plaza square as part of the grand-opening celebration



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The City's commitment to Allsteel products began six years ago. "I put together an RFP," Hemphill explains, "because I'd never bought office furniture before and I'm very analytical. I included matrices that went on forever and ranked all these products on everything from recycled content to ease of construction and price. We had 12 manufacturers bid, and Allsteel won, hands down, from a qualitative and quantitative perspective. So we said we'd buy their product for the next five years and now we're ready to renew that contract."

“Allsteel made a commitment that if we were going to go full-out to make this an environmentally sensitive building, then they were going to go full-out to support our efforts.”

Marion Hemphill, Director of Capital Planning and Development, City of Hillsboro, Oregon

For more information about Allsteel solutions, please visit allsteeloffice.com.

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Designed to work. Built to last.

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