Northwest Concrete Masonry Association, helping put concrete masonry to work for you.

FEATURED PROJECTS

- Whole Foods Market Place
  Redmond, WA
- Whole Foods Market
  Tualatin, OR
- Penny Road Office Building
  Wenatchee, WA
- Roosevelt High School
  Seattle, WA

MAY, 2007
The Whole Foods Market Place retail center, completed in August 2006, is much more than another suburban shopping center with a high-end natural grocery store as the anchor tenant. The developer, architects, and contractors teamed up to establish an appealing community destination to meet the City of Redmond’s stringent design review process.

The largest building of the project houses Whole Foods Market with a footprint of 55,884 square feet. The other two buildings in the development are smaller at 19,207 square feet and 5,299 square feet and are currently home to restaurants and retail stores. All three of the buildings use similar concrete masonry units (CMU) and stained glu-lam and heavy timber beams with deep profile metal for roofing elements. Outdoor seating areas, concrete columns and trellises were included to develop the site as a place for people to gather, eat, and relax.

Structural load-bearing CMU was selected for the project in part because there were so many floor slab components required for the interior that there wasn’t sufficient room for casting tilt-up slabs. Tom Langton, project engineer with Engineers Northwest, said “The use of CMU exterior walls allowed for more construction flexibility as the floor slab did not have to be poured until after the walls and roof were in place.” He designed the block walls using 8-inch units for most of the project; for the wall piers in the front of the Whole Foods building he specified high-strength 10-inch units. The masonry wall strength was tested to be greater than 2300 psi. Langton added, “The mason contractor, R&D Masonry, did a fine job. This project is the showpiece of the neighborhood.”

Concrete block in three textures (smooth, ground and split-face) and three colors (khaki, sandstone and charcoal) are used to create the banded wall patterns while glazed block provides additional accent. “The block facade is inherently much richer and vibrant looking with the variety of block faces and colors we had available to work with. It afforded an easy way to use color and texture to satisfy Redmond’s requirements for new developments and it easily allowed us the design flexibility and versatility we were looking for in patterns,” said Jerry Fleet, project architect with Lance Mueller Architects.

Andy Sprague, project manager for general contractor J.R. Abbott Construction, appreciated using CMU on this project because the choice of structural materials “helped with the construction schedule and gave us flexibility with weather problems.” Sprague added, “The use of heavy timber canopies combined with architectural CMU elements like cornices make it a special building.”

CREDITS
OWNER TRF Equities Redmond, LLC, Redmond, WA
ARCHITECT Lance Mueller Architects, Seattle, WA
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER Engineers Northwest, Seattle, WA
GENERAL CONTRACTOR J.R. Abbott Construction, Inc., Seattle, WA
With 183 locations in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, natural foods giant and Fortune 500 company Whole Foods Market recently opened another new building last fall. And what a store it is. This is definitely not your average corner supermarket.

The building floor area is 56,000 square feet with exterior walls constructed of just under 30,000 castle white ground-face (honed) concrete block. According to Jim Riemschneider, project engineer with Kramer, Gehlen & Associates, a slender-wall design was used for the 23’-26’ tall 8-inch wide walls of concrete masonry units (CMU). The block walls were designed with a strength of 2,000 psi and serve both as bearing and shear walls.

Project architect, Ken Canavarro of Ankrom Moisan Associated Architects, Inc., took over from the initial designer with another firm and changed the look from all steel and glass to one including concrete masonry. Clean, modern roof lines trimmed in steel accent two-story green glass windows while ironwood panels set in CMU provide warmth and a high-end Northwest feel to the building.

An integral water repellent, DRY-BLOCK®, was specified for the block and mortar – an important element in an exposed single-wythe wall design along with a quality, post-applied sealer. “CMU is a nice material to use because of its weather-proof properties once properly sealed,” said Canavarro. “And it is versatile in color…it provided a nice contrast to the ironwood.” Other factors influencing Canavarro’s choice of CMU as a primary building material were for its fire safety and durability. “Concrete masonry is a low-maintenance option in the long-term,” added Canavarro.

By using two different sizes of ground-face block, 4-inch and 8-inch high, masons were able to integrate an interesting pattern in an “Ashlar-look design” according to Kurt Massey of mason contractor B&B Masonry of Vancouver, WA. The owner chose this particular block pattern after seeing it on another building.

Construction on the shell designed by Ankrom began in the fall of 2005 and had a budget of $5.4 million. Interior tenant improvements (TI) made for Whole Foods in conjunction with building owner Parkland Development were not included. TI called for leaving some areas of the concrete masonry wall exposed throughout the store. Whole Foods and Parkland Development had some input in the design process, especially regarding size requirements. However, Ankrom Moisan was given the creativity to come up with a unique look. “Whole Foods really likes the building,” said Canavarro.
North of downtown Wenatchee, with a stunning panoramic view of the nearby Cascade Mountains and Columbia River, the new three-level Penny Road Office Building in Olds Station could pass for a Pacific Northwest dream vacation destination. Completed in the fall of 2005, the 27,000 square foot Penny Road building took less than a year to build from ground-breaking. With its striking stone-like concrete masonry and fir-framed entrance leading to a foyer of slate and more fir, this classic structure is a departure from the typical two-story “box” building one finds in many suburban office parks.

The design team at M.J. Neal Associates, which included Carson Lutz, AIA, selected ground-face concrete masonry units (CMU) for this project rather than wood siding because of its durability, low-maintenance, and the initial, as well as long-term, cost benefits. CMU is not commonly used for office building design in the northwest, however, it is one of the most imaginative and practical construction materials available for a variety of commercial applications.

“Architectural CMU is more versatile than traditional gray concrete block. With smooth, ground-face, and split-face block we were able to get the aesthetic appeal desired in a high-end building,” said Mark Neal, AIA, principal of M.J. Neal Associates. “CMU helps balance the budget while getting the nice masonry appearance. It gave the polished yet warm look our clients were seeking.”

Neal added that, with the Penny Road Office Building project, they were given creative freedom by the owners to pursue what they envisioned — something “grand in scale to evoke the big lodge, but with a more professional, less rustic, feel.” Stone veneer accents were used in combination with the block to contribute to this desired aesthetic and a warm color scheme that included plum block was chosen to bring out the natural colors in the stone. Green glass in the dramatic windows complements the green roof and, as an added benefit, reduces heat gain. Metal-wrapped fascias offer a finishing detail in the building’s modern take on Northwest tradition.

“We wanted a building that would last, both in the quality of construction and with a timeless quality; a building design that will still be appealing 20 years into the future,” said Jeff Neher, managing member of building owner Penny Properties, LLC. “The concrete masonry along with wood and steel accents creates a solid, beautiful building with low future maintenance costs and, hopefully, a look that will set a high-quality standard in our area.”

CREDITS
OWNER Penny Properties, LLC, Wenatchee, WA
ARCHITECT M.J. Neal Associates, Wenatchee, WA
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER Pacific Engineering and Design, Wenatchee, WA
GENERAL CONTRACTOR G.G. Richardson, Inc., Wenatchee, WA
Prior to its recent major $93.8 million renovation and addition, historic Roosevelt High School was an aging 1922 masonry landmark in the heart of an older urban Seattle neighborhood between the University of Washington and Green Lake. Rather than tear down the old school the Seattle School District (SSD) chose to preserve and renovate what they could of the existing building while adding roughly 116,000 square feet of new space.

The SSD wanted masonry used for the new portions of the school. The architects chose concrete masonry units (CMU) for their durability and compatibility with the existing building, according to Greg Iten, AIA, project architect with Bassetti Architects of Seattle. Bassetti specializes in historic renovations and was one of the first firms to use blending of several different colors in CMU to achieve colored blends and texture compatible with historic masonry buildings.

“We used two different color blends plus accent colors to achieve textures and colors to complement the old part of the building,” said Iten. “CMU allowed us to achieve a modern interpretation of the historic building.” Don Gillmore, construction program manager for SSD, added, “The use of blended CMU satisfied concerns of the immediate neighborhood and Roosevelt community that the additions be sympathetic to the old buildings. The whole community is very pleased with the results.”

One of the other reasons CMU was selected according to Gilmore is that it “provides a lasting material that is low maintenance.” CMU was used for the exterior walls on the newly added gymnasium, student commons, and theater. Interior masonry walls were left exposed in much of these areas for acoustic and aesthetic reasons. Block in color blends were used in random and intricate patterns in six different colors in both smooth and split-face in 4-inch and 8-inch units with part of the accent banding including a 4 and 8-inch glazed-face block. The Masonry Institute of Washington awarded the completed project a “merit” award in their 2006 Excellence in Masonry Design Awards Program.

According to Trevor Thies, project operations manager for Hoffman Construction Co., “The Roosevelt High School project used the full palette of architectural possibilities with the use of concrete masonry units. It is a highly detailed and intricate mix of sizes, bonding, and colors that creates a very pleasing finished product that complements the original historic brick veneer building. Fairweather Masonry did an outstanding job in bringing the architect’s vision to life with their high quality masonry work.” Lorne McConachie, a principal with Bassetti Architects added, “We have praise for masonry in terms of how it functions as a current building system and also as we look forward to future generations.”

Roosevelt High School

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CREDITS

OWNER Seattle School District, Seattle, WA
ARCHITECT Bassetti Architects, Seattle, WA
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER Magnusson Klemencic Associates, Seattle, WA
GENERAL CONTRACTOR Hoffman Construction Co., Seattle, WA
Call for Entries!
Seeking northwest commercial, residential, and landscape project submissions.

The 2007 National Concrete Masonry Association Design Awards of Excellence

Timeline:
- June 15, 2007 Entry forms due
- August 17, 2007 Completed submission binders due
- August 24, 2007 Project judging
- February 2008 Winners honored at the 2008 NCMA Annual Convention in Denver

Entry forms and program details available at www.ncma.org or by calling 703-713-1900.

Please contact the Northwest Concrete Masonry Association office at 425-697-5298, if you would like assistance with the program entry fee.

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