

Construction in Northern Colorado

By: Doug Johnson, Director of Preconstruction Services, Adolfson & Peterson Construction

Many Reasons for Growth

Whether one enjoys the city or county, plains or mountains, Colorado offers a place for everyone. But, one place in Colorado was recently named the Best Place to Live by *Money Magazine*. That place was Fort Collins, located right in Northern Colorado.

With this type of national attention, a lower than average cost of living, and low unemployment rate it is no wonder why the population, and construction market, of Northern Colorado is growing.

According to recent data, the commercial construction market (non-infrastructure or residential) of Weld and Larimer Counties is just about equivalent to that of Colorado Springs (El Paso and Teller Counties) at about \$700 million per year. And, this figure is projected to continue to grow by almost fifteen percent through 2011.

With regards to specific markets, Weld and Larimer Counties are seeing construction growth in many areas. The school districts are growing, leading to the need for new schools. And, with the growth of biotechnology departments at the research institutions there is an increased need for higher education facilities. Increased population also leads to the need for new facilities at hospitals, and recreation and library districts. This community growth leads to a greater demand for retail and office facilities as well. Many retail, office and medical developments are springing up all over Northern Colorado.

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The need for additional facilities in Larimer and Weld counties is good news for the developers and builders in the region. "NoCo" (Northern Colorado) offers some distinct advantages to builders over some other regions of the state. It has an excellent subcontractor base. There are high-quality sheet metal, drywall, electrical, masonry, and other subs located in the area that are capable of successfully delivering large, complex projects. This means that a general contractor can draw from the local subcontractor base and not need to be overly concerned for potential schedule, quality and/or cost issues because of underperformance.

But, as projects continue to grow in size and complexity in the region, an owner needs to ensure that the general contractor and architect team are sophisticated enough to deliver a quality project that exceeds their needs of schedule, budget and quality. For example, the entitlement process in the different communities in Northern Colorado can vary greatly, and negatively impact project schedule if it is not completely understood. All team members involved must understand the differences between procedures in the different communities of Northern Colorado. Having a team with the experience, adequate resources, and cutting-edge technology is vital to the success of a project.

Conclusion

The future of Northern Colorado looks promising. The region is currently growing, and with the increasing population and diverse businesses populating the area construction in Larimer and Weld counties should continue to prosper.

Doug is the Director of Preconstruction Services for Adolfson & Peterson Construction. He oversees all preconstruction activities. Doug has lived in Greeley his entire life, and has been involved in the construction of more than 10 projects in Northern Colorado over the past 17 years ranging from recreational centers to schools to retail. He can be reached at 303-363-7101.