



LUCAS COUNTY ARENA

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MASONRY SOLUTION:

The Best System Beats the Clock

Masonry, craftsmanship offer the best for time, money and looks.



GOOD LOOKS and preferred materials sometimes have to take a back seat when schedules and budgets are tight, but Toledo's Lucas County Arena proves that it is possible to have it all.

When the \$105 million, 267,000-sq. ft. downtown project first started, planners thought that getting an affordable arena up by hockey season limited them to a concrete superstructure, with some decorative masonry.

Yet once they started looking into it, they were pleasantly surprised to learn that masonry—both structural and aesthetic—was the best solution for all of their objectives, including giving the city a handsome—

LUCAS COUNTY ARENA

TOLEDO, OHIO

Architects: HNTB Ohio Architects, The Collaborative, Inc.

Construction Managers: Lathrop Company

General/Masonry Contractor: The Mosser Group

Craftworkers: BAC Ohio Administrative District Council

New construction: 267,000 square feet

and enduring—new landmark. “It was the best of both worlds,” says Bridgette Kabat, chief of staff for the Lucas County Board of Commissioners. “We loved the materials selected and we love the end results.”



The 8,000-seat multi-purpose arena, which hosts sports events, concerts and more, has already been nominated a “Best New Major Concert Venue”.

IT’S ALL IN THE TIMING

While some stadium planners think precast at first, the Lucas County Arena team quickly realized that rising material prices and supply issues could hurt both schedules and costs. Masonry, on the other hand, offered readily available materials and manpower, plus design flexibility and budget control, with the added bonus of local jobs. IMI made the process even smoother with technical advice on the cavity wall system, drawing reviews, and masonry detailing assistance throughout the project.

GOOD LOOKING AND SMART

Structural masonry “turned out to be our preference,” says Martin Haynes, project designer for HNTB Ohio Architects, a national sports design firm. “The efficiency, economy and speed were the best way to do it.”

HNTB partnered with The Collaborative, Inc. in Toledo, where designers appreciated the city’s architectural heritage, including some “incredibly well built masonry buildings” with a three-level pattern of stone, brick and crown, says principal Ray Micham, AIA, LEED AP.



“We didn’t want it to be a modern building dropped into the middle of the neighborhood,” notes Collaborative senior architect Audie Bates, AIA, LEED AP. The masonry colors and textures “insert a modern image and energy, but also made it part of the downtown fabric,” says Haynes.

The exterior features 40,000-s.f. of Prairie Stone at the base, plus 60,000 utility brick above. Inside, stairwells and elevator shafts have cavity walls with brick and stone, and masonry partition walls on each level. Ground face block allowed a look that “is a little more dressed up, but still durable” for the hardworking building, says Bates.

County commissioners also wanted the arena to help set the tone for sustainable development. The regional availability of the masonry products—standard CMU, brick, ground face block, and Prairie Stone, with all-natural aggregates—were a big help, and the project is seeking Silver LEED certification.



THE KEY INGREDIENT: TEAMWORK

The Collaborative’s Micham says the project also benefitted from inclusion and professionalism. “It was just a great partnership.” Hiring architects and construction managers at the same time helped from the start, says Lathrop project manager Tim Meyer. “That’s very crucial. We had input into cost and constructability.” He praises general/masonry contractor The Mosser Group for being “very flexible and responsive” to those concerns. Mosser project manager Greg Drown appreciated having input at bid time, and good plans. He also credits a good work culture. “We pride ourselves on treating people right and safely.”

Last but not least were the BAC craftworkers who came from all over the state to work 30,000-plus hours on the special, fast track job, says Dan Huss, BAC Ohio Field Representative. The Prairie Stone was new to many, “but any skilled mechanic can pick it up quickly.” The Collaborative’s Bates agrees: **“We could not have achieved it without great masons.”**