

CNL Center

Architectural precast concrete panels, with a distinctive salmon/beige granite color, provided a beautiful façade for this 14-story office building in Orlando, Florida

A major challenge facing the architect was to design the exterior façade of this high rise building, which had to complement a neighboring structure's architectural precast concrete skin and copper dome while at the same time create a building with its own distinctive character. The \$24 million CNL Center is a 14-story reinforced concrete framed building situated in Orlando, Florida. The facility covers a floor area of 363,100 sq ft (33768 m²). Founded in 1973, CNL is an industry leader in real estate, finance and development.

The architect's solution was to adopt a contemporary design by using architectural precast concrete panels with a salmon/beige granite color. Floor-to-ceiling glass windows placed in precast concrete frames emphasize the building's long-term endurance and stability.

A dominating exterior feature of the building is the semi-circular "tower within a tower" that rises from the plaza level along the north face of the building, rising above the

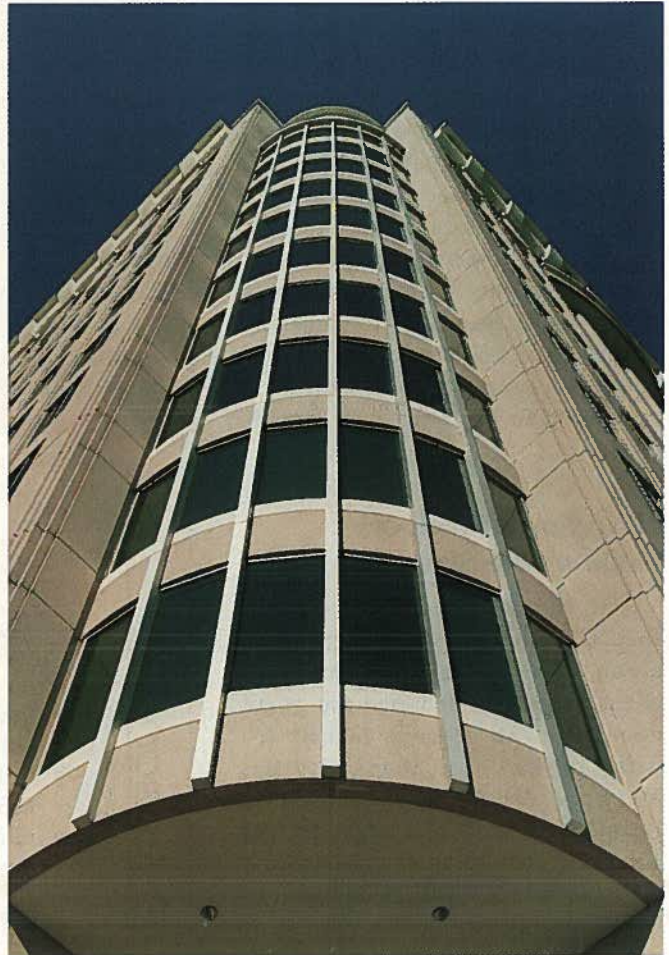
roof and culminating into an open, circular cupola. Visually, this element is an effective focal point, especially at dusk with the building's dramatic night lighting.

The facility is a blend of traditional architecture and state-of-the-art technology. The center itself offers many amenities including state-of-the-art, 24-hour security, on-site banking, online concierge service, a full-service restaurant, covered parking and a prime location.

Both the first and second floor common areas of the tower offer access to and from the second floor air-conditioned skybridge which connects to a newly constructed seven-level parking structure with approximately 1700 vehicular spaces.

The rotunda is capped with a sculptured ceiling. Escalators provide easy access from the lobby rotunda to the second floor, which features open balcony views into the rotunda and the plaza area.

A total of 1574 precast concrete panels, comprising a wall



area of 125,320 sq ft (11655 m²), were used to clad the building. There were two concrete mixes for the building, the majority of which was the "rose" color comprised of pink and salt and pepper granites, white cement and dyes.

The precast concrete panels were manufactured by Gate Precast Company at their plant in Monroeville, Alabama. In addition to the precast panels for the building, the precaster furnished architectural precast covers for the column bases of the parking structure. The panels were shipped by truck trailer to the project site, a distance of about 500 miles (800 km). Transportation and erection of the panels were the responsibility of the precaster. Gate used Precon Construction of Tampa, Florida, to erect the panels.

Construction of the project began in late 1998 with the foundations and structural frame. After about seven stories had been constructed, the precast panels were erected during a four-month period. The entire building was completed in November 1999.

When the project was bid, the architect stated that "Architectural precast concrete provides a consistent manufactured product that can include forms, reveals and is quick to erect. The product coloration and consistency had to be compatible with a neighboring building's palette." In retrospect, the successful completion of this building demonstrated that the above statement was spoken correctly. The new CNL Center stands proudly as a magnificent addition to the Orlando skyline.

CREDITS

Owner: CNL Plaza Ltd., Orlando, Florida (Vice President: Jim Kersey)

Architect: HKS Inc., Dallas, Texas (Project Manager: Jeff Vandersall, AIA)

Structural Engineer: Brockett, Davis & Drake, Dallas, Texas (Project Manager: Robert Hill)

General Contractor: Brasfield & Gorrie, Maitland, Florida

Precaster: Gate Precast Company, Monroeville, Alabama

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