



**CASE STUDY
COMPOSITE CLADDING**

CUSTOMER

ROTH
SHEPPARD

www.rothsheppard.com

LOCATION

Denver, Colorado

FEATURED PROJECTS

**South Gessner Substation/Houston
Police Department
Houston, Texas**

**South Metro Fire Rescue Joint
Public Safety Facility
Cherry Hills Village, Colorado**

PROJECT TYPE

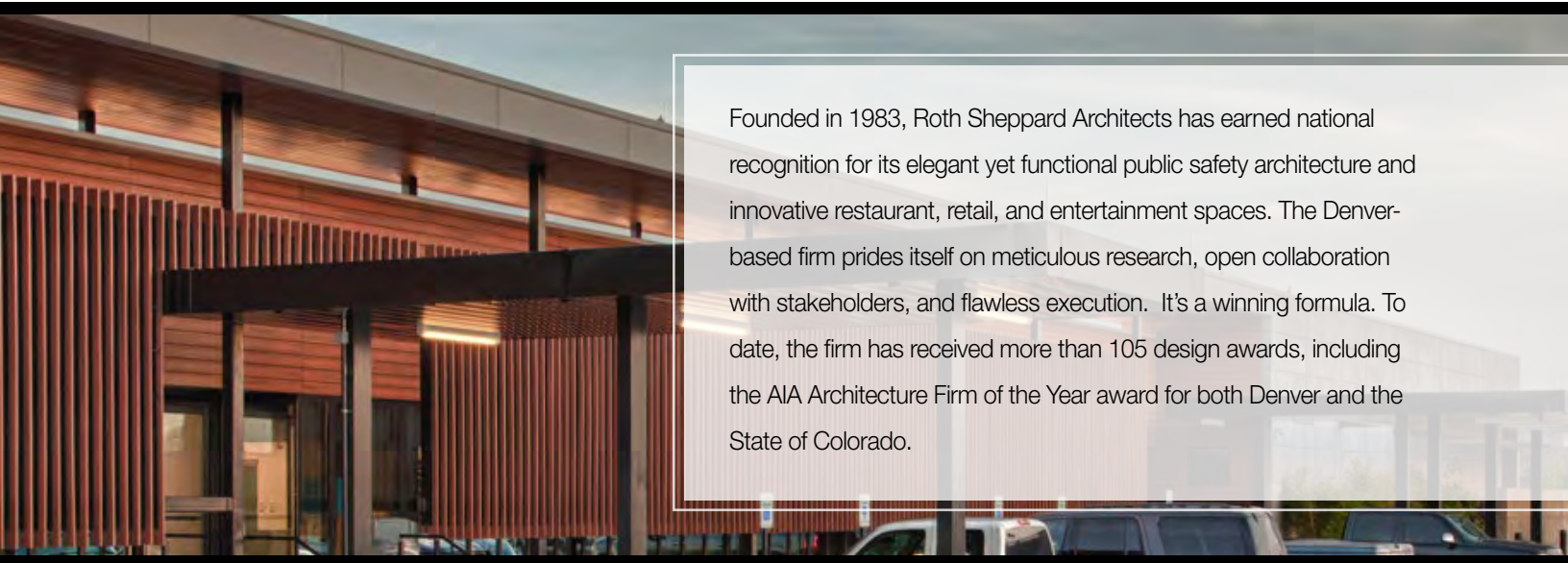
Public Safety and Government/New Builds

PRODUCT

Fiberson Composite Cladding: Horizon® Ipe



CUSTOMER PROFILE



Founded in 1983, Roth Sheppard Architects has earned national recognition for its elegant yet functional public safety architecture and innovative restaurant, retail, and entertainment spaces. The Denver-based firm prides itself on meticulous research, open collaboration with stakeholders, and flawless execution. It's a winning formula. To date, the firm has received more than 105 design awards, including the AIA Architecture Firm of the Year award for both Denver and the State of Colorado.

CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

There are many considerations when designing a municipal project; chief among them, budget constraints and the need to humanize buildings that too often end up resembling cold, lackluster warehouse spaces. Roth Sheppard Architects seeks to infuse enduring beauty into what it creates, co-founder Jeff Sheppard explains. Not necessarily more expensive, but rather, more thoughtfully considered relative to longevity and durability.

"Today, there is a lot of fast-built, low-cost, quick ROI, short-life, non-descript construction going on," Sheppard explains.

"We can do better."

For projects such as the Gessner Substation and Cherry Hills Village facility, designing with enduring beauty in mind meant finding a wood cladding substitute that offered the realistic warmth and color variability of hardwoods, coupled with superior long-term performance and lower maintenance costs.

"We were looking for materials that we did not have to paint or seal, that would withstand extreme climatic conditions, and that would not visually age," Sheppard explains. "And we definitely wanted materials that could be minimally detailed, so we didn't need extensive trim, flashing, or expansion joints to maintain the product's integrity."

Fiber cement didn't deliver the wood-like appearance that Sheppard's team wanted. Other leading composite brands "didn't measure up," appearance-wise. "We really liked the wider variation in color of Fiberon Horizon Cladding," Sheppard notes. Fiberon cladding met all of Roth Sheppard's objectives. The firm has been using it on

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While the firm had used other composite materials in the past, most were "difficult to work with, required a lot to execute, and ultimately, we were disappointed with the end result," he says. Some materials were difficult to install in a manner consistent with warranty requirements, and still didn't provide the sought-after end result.

projects for more than five years, including a new police department and municipal court facility in Firestone, Colorado, slated for construction in mid-2018.

“We have found that Fiberon is aesthetically pleasing, has much better long-term performance, and offers a real advantage relative to maintenance cost.”

- Jeff Sheppard, AIA, Principal/Founder



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Gessner Substation, Houston Police Department, Houston, Texas

2013 AIA Denver Merit Award and the 2013 AIA Colorado Citation Award

Located in a busy, diverse section of Houston, the Gessner Substation is a 29,000 square-foot facility designed to promote community-based crime prevention. The expansive space includes both public and private areas; among them, an inviting public lobby and large meeting room as well as secure spaces for patrol operations, investigations, fitness, and locker facilities.



South Metro Fire Rescue Joint Public Safety Facility, Cherry Hills Village, Colorado

2013 AIA Colorado Honor Award Winner

The 21,000 square-foot facility includes dedicated spaces for fire and police department functions, along with a community meeting space. Located in an area with a proud equestrian history, the building pays homage to its local roots via the thoughtful material choices.



CHALLENGE

For both the Gessner Substation and the Cherry Hills Public Safety Complex, the ultimate goal was to design a space that would encourage greater interaction between police and fire personnel and the publics they serve. Inviting, welcoming, collaborative – each space needed to embody these qualities while staying within budgetary guidelines and providing a positive ROI for local taxpayers.

“A public project like the South Gessner substation needed to employ low cost and familiar construction methods to meet the project budget goals,” explains Sheppard.

“In this case, we used tilt-up concrete as the enclosure system. This gave us the opportunity to insert warmer materials in all entry areas. For us, it was critical to figure out how to get the biggest bang for the buck so that the end result would be not only functional but also beautiful.”

In addition to meeting budgetary and functional requirements, it was imperative that the Cherry Hills project respect and honor the area’s equestrian heritage.

“When one thinks of horses and farmland,” Sheppard says, “one thinks of barns made

of stone foundations and wood and metal.” The team used this historical reference as inspiration, which is artfully reflected in the agrarian look of the structures as well as the chosen materials.

A rainscreen system was installed at the Cherry Hills Village project to enable effective moisture management. The cladding material had to be durable, stable, aesthetically pleasing, and able to drain, deflect, and dry moisture. Fiberon composite cladding was the clear choice.

SOLUTION

Fiberon cladding offered the architectural team a range of benefits; among them, superior moisture management, reduced long-term maintenance, durability, and a wood-like aesthetic. Fiberon cladding, Sheppard noted, “has a more refined look than real wood, while maintaining its appearance and dimensional stability over time.”

For the Houston project, “Compared to the austere concrete walls, the front entry area, which is all Fiberon cladding, looks like art,” he says. “The colors are warm and inviting. The juxtaposition of the warm golden hue of the Fiberon cladding with the raw concrete makes both materials richer feeling,” Sheppard adds.

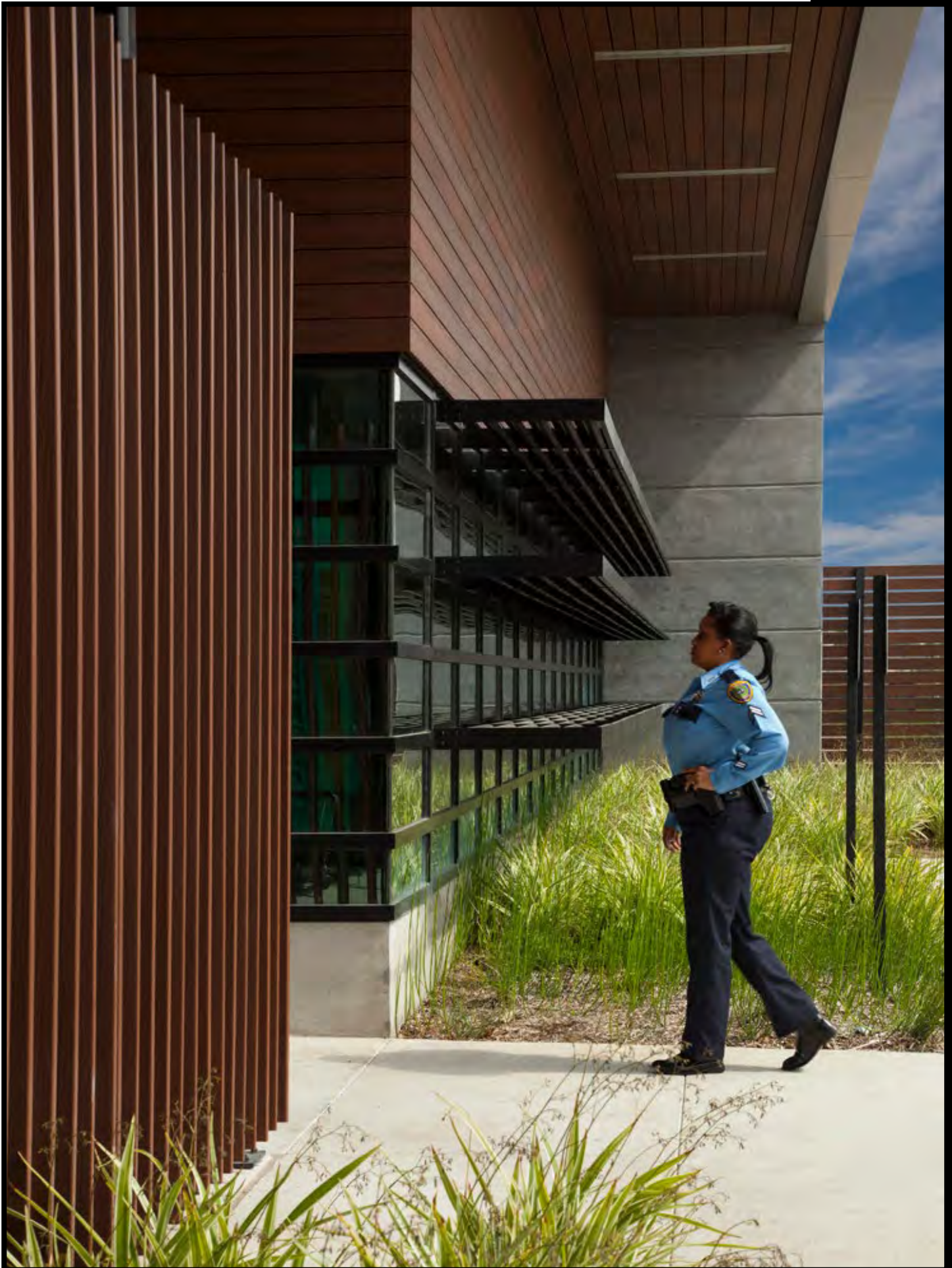
“Combine this with the scale of the Fiberon board and you have a textured wall that exudes warmth and natural appeal. It reinforces entry and helps direct people where we want them to go, operating at a subconscious level,” he adds.

**“The front entry area,
which is all Fiberon
cladding, looks like art.”**

To extend the warmth of the material palette from the public zone into the more secure, staff-oriented areas, Roth Sheppard used the Fiberon boards as wainscoting and as a multi-purpose screen facade. The screen served several practical functions. It

provided shade, which improved the inside environment; it controlled external visibility and provided a level of security; and it offered an attractive low maintenance aesthetic, which was a key design goal.

And while the team initially feared the cost of the added sunscreen might be met with resistance, “we were pretty sure we had a story here,” Sheppard recalls. That story revolved around potential savings on cooling and heating costs. Their instincts were spot-on. Installing the composite screen decreased cooling and heating requirements on the west side of the building by more than 50%, Sheppard reports.



RESULTS





In addition, Fiberon cladding was installed within the Gessner Substation to ease stress and create an atmosphere more conducive to collaboration and interaction. “The warmth and natural look of the material creates a more informal environment that stimulates chance encounter; thus, enhancing collaboration and communication,”

Sheppard explains. “Interventions within long hallways were purposefully clad in Fiberon material to create scaled-down niches and respite zones, humanizing the overall feel of the interior.”

For the Cherry Hills project, Fiberon composite cladding afforded the architectural team the aesthetic benefits of wood with significantly greater durability and significantly lower maintenance requirements (and costs). The cladding offered “wood-like good looks, realism at the important 10- to 20-foot range, and good color variability,” Sheppard notes.

He selected Horizon Ipe on both projects for its inherent dramatic look and warm golden color. Another plus: the cladding’s ability to resist inadvertent dents and dings, as well as the casual damage that visitors inflict upon a new product while trying to figure out what it is, he adds.

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Regarding the substation sunscreen, Sheppard acknowledges that getting the decision makers to look beyond the initial price tag could have been a hurdle. However, the potential energy savings -- as well as the favorable lifecycle cost -- made the Fiberon cladding screen a cost-effective solution that provided multiple collateral benefits as well.

Both projects have garnered accolades from the architectural community. Perhaps more significantly, they have received praise from their most important critics: the local citizens and first responders who call these spaces their own. Of the Houston project, Sheppard reports that “the city, police, and

the community love the look.” And, he adds, “They had the vision to consider both the immediate value of a better-looking building for the community as well as the superior ROI for the taxpayer.”

And in Colorado, “neighbors saw and embraced the barn vision,” Sheppard says. “They love the look.”



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