



STRUCTURA, Inc.

General Contractors

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

August, 2009—Austin, Texas — In partnership with Mitchell Historic Properties of Galveston, Structura, Inc., a major general contracting firm based in Austin, Texas, helped restore properties, many of them historical, that were badly battered and damaged a year ago by Hurricane Ike. Today, the downtown area of the popular seaport resort city is on its way to being fully restored and more lively than ever.

Structura, Inc. employees and people from Texas and all over the world watched the fifth Atlantic hurricane of the season set its sights on the Gulf of Mexico island of Galveston, Texas, and ravage it with winds hitting as high as 145 miles an hour in the early morning hours on Sept. 13th, 2008. The most intense storm of the 2008 hurricane season, Hurricane Ike was the third most destructive hurricane to make U.S. landfall, and left the island in a shambles that's been costly to repair.

But the 200 year old city's building owners made preserving and restoring its renowned, southern charm and architectural integrity a priority in the rebuilding efforts that ensued once the city's power was restored. Most of the buildings in the area are late 1800's, early 1900's structures. For instance, the Marine building was built in 1876. And all of them survived the tragic, unparalleled storm of 1900.

Galveston Native Helps Head Restoration

Gary Schilling, Regional Manager for Structura, is a Galveston native and resident who hails from a long line of carpenters and craftsmen based in Galveston since the 1800's. Schilling has 35 years of experience in highly

technical construction, and headed the renovation and restoration projects by Mitchell Historic Properties (MHP), owned by George and Cynthia Mitchell.

Mitchell Historic Properties

The Mitchell family began purchasing blighted and abandoned buildings in Galveston's downtown area back in 1976. Today, thanks to their efforts and those of the Galveston Historical Foundation, Galveston's downtown is recognized as a National Historic Landmark District by the National Park Service. Mitchell Historic Properties again led the effort to rehabilitate the historic district, which is now back in business. In total, Mitchell property buildings encompass approximately one-fourth of the developed buildings on The Strand National Historic Landmark District. (For more information, see the website @ <http://www.mithchellhistoricproperties.com>).

Structura's Role

Schilling is not only charged up about seeing the end results of his team's efforts, he is proud. "This has been a challenge from the start. In one year, my team has cut no corners to ensure that the historical and architectural integrity of the buildings restored were recreated to maintain their authentic character."

Structura is currently wrapping up projects on the Strand that include several retail spaces, the Old Galveston Square Commons, the Dargan & Tobyn Building, and the Heidenheimer Hunter Building. Also included in their efforts are several retail and office interior spaces including the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, The Kincaid Art Gallery and the Merrill Lynch offices. Additionally, Structura's rebuild efforts include the re-construction of the renowned Spa at Hotel Galvez and the hotel's executive offices. "Some of these buildings had over eight feet of standing water in them for several days," says Schilling. "This was a challenge I enjoyed taking on – but not an easy one! All the original drawings for the buildings were destroyed during the hurricane, so Structura was given the task of recreating everything to the best of our ability. We went into the shells of these structures and did our best to duplicate the original structure – right down to the custom moldings, milling and fixtures." Schilling says that some weeks his team spent over 32 hours in meetings because they had so many projects ongoing at once where manpower had to be coordinated, materials had to be shipped in.

The Spa at Hotel Galvez had all custom mahogany trim and doors that had to be replaced and custom built. "We removed all the ruined mahogany flooring and put in travertine to protect the floors from future flooding damage, since the spa is on the seawall. It's more practical since the Strand

National Historic Landmark District area floods often, and we imported mahogany trims and replaced granite where needed, all the while, keeping the hotel open for business!”

In Old Galveston Square, when the demolition companies came in, they demolished the electrical systems without marking anything. All the electrical wiring and configuration had to be completely redrawn – they didn’t mark any circuits – so we had to retrace all the circuitry and wiring. We still somehow met time expectations!”

“Thousands of permits and permit requests with the city were necessary, and inspections throughout the process were a work in progress,” says Schilling, who was responsible for the remodel of city hall in 2006. “I grew up with a lot of the guys on the island, so thankfully, that helped!”

Heidenheimer - Marine Building

Built on Galveston Island in 1876 by Samson Heidenheimer, this two-story Victorian-era styled structure includes Victorian-era styling, with Italianate hood molds on the second level and ogee arches on the first story. “We were hired to return the building to its former splendor. Therefore, we replaced the drywall with paperless drywall, and replaced wanes coating by installing tongue and groove bead board that would match the original woodwork,” says Schilling. Structura also matched the antique slate tile and refinished the wood flooring, in addition to upgrading all mechanical and electrical systems. Custom interior wood doors were manufactured and installed, and exterior glass was replaced.

Structura crafted custom rosettes to match existing historical pieces, and modernized the restrooms to meet ADA compliance. “It was as important to us as it was to the owners of the building to maintain the architectural excellence of this beautiful, 3700 sq ft. building,” emphasizes Schilling.

Harbor House Marina

“The damage to the Pier 21 marina where the 2000 sq. ft. Harbor House hotel stands was astounding,” recalls Schilling. “We began to re-build the dock, and had to work without plans because the original plans were destroyed in the storm.” Structura conducted sonar scans to verify any underwater hazards and then build floating slips with marine-rated, pressure treated wood. The dock and railing were all custom built, as well.

“We did a complete remodel of the Heidenheimer Hunter Building, and the Galveston Parks Board Plaza,” says Schilling.

In Conclusion

“The big challenge was that there were 13 projects going on at once, and finding craftsmen and workers was difficult because the demand in the area was so high. We had to import manpower from other regions, and put them up in the town so that work could continue uninterrupted.”

“This project was unlike any I’d ever encountered before,” explains Schilling. “I’ve done flood projects before, but the fact that we had no drawings made this a moving target. We didn’t have the luxury of being able to go in and order materials up front because people had no way to know how they were originally.”

Structura is currently bidding several Parks Board projects as well as a flood control project with the Hotel Galvez that includes moveable flood walls. **Structura, Inc.** remains on call 24 hours a day for any emergency needs of these buildings in the area. Please visit the website @ <http://www.structurainc.com> for more information. (High resolution project-finish photos available upon request.)

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