



# Breathtaking Views, Exquisite Finishes Highlight LHM Corporate Office Remodel

Construction crews were challenged by the installation of a dynamic atrium in the lobby, with a new 30 ft. x 30 ft. curtain wall section featuring 12 panels of vision glass.

By Brad Fullmer



Dramatic views of the recent renovation of the LHM Corporate & Family Offices on the 9th and 10th floors of the Jordan Commons office tower in Sandy. Photos show the high level of detail in spaces like the corporate boardroom, the atrium (top right) and a 10th floor lobby. (all photos courtesy Method Studio)



**As far as tenant improvement projects go, the recently completed two-story remodel of the Larry H. Miller Corporate & Family Offices offered some interesting challenges to the design and construction team, particularly having to carve out a significant section of the curtain wall on the top two floors of the 10-story building in Sandy's Jordan Commons development.**

The fact that the work occurred at night only added to the level of difficulty, said Nathan Marsala, Principal for general contractor Marsala & Co. of Draper.

"We literally took out the 10th floor – we cut it out in place at night," said Marsala. "We cut out three concrete beams and a concrete floor deck. We had to work at night because of the noise and vibrations that run through the building

from cutting concrete. We've cut decks out and done atriums like this before. I'd say this is on a different level because we only had a 2 ½-week window with a hole in the side of the building 30 ft. by 30 ft., ten stories up in the spring with weather (conditions)."

In order to create the two-story atrium and support it structurally, after the concrete beams and floor were cut out, two 45 ft. long steel beams (W-18) were installed, and the beams, the floor plate and existing concrete beams were wrapped with a carbon fiber mesh for extra reinforcement and to control deflection.

In addition, because 6 ft.-wide concrete beams that support floor plates cannot be penetrated, careful space planning was needed for necessary core

drills and plumbing line placement.

To ensure occupant and worker safety during construction, scaffolding with a protective canopy was built at the main entryway, and a full plywood enclosure installed at the floor opening.

"That was a stressful time, to have it right at the entrance of our office," said Brad Holmes, Sr. Vice President of Real Estate and Construction for Larry H. Miller Real Estate. "We had to make sure the contractors were dialed in. We had to do some engineering to make it work regarding structural support below us. It impacted floors 7-10. Contractors were meticulously cutting out the floor in 12-in. chunks at a time. There was a lot of patience on our part, but it was critical to making the project what it is." >>





Twelve new panels of vision glass were installed during constructing of the challenging atrium, which also required crews to cut out part of the concrete floor and install two 45 ft. long steel beams for structural reinforcement.

According to Holden Page, Project Manager for Salt Lake-based Steel Encounters, Inc., his firm was commissioned to remove and replace two stories of curtain wall glass and framing on floors 9-10. To keep design consistent and allow the modification to blend seamlessly into the building, Steel Encounters provided the same glazing product original to the building when it was constructed from 1998-99.

The viewing area of the atrium was expanded from 7 ft. to 12 ft. by removing one row and modifying a second row of (non-vision) spandrel glass and installing 12 panels of Viracon vision glass with an EFCO 5600 curtain wall system.

#### **Not Your Typical Office Remodel**

The offices on the 9th and 10th floors had not been remodeled or updated since it was finished in November 1999, and family matriarch Gail Miller wanted a space that was warm, well lit, and inviting to

all who visited, according to Marbe Agee, Principal with Salt Lake-based Method Studio, Inc. Agee was actually on the original Jordan Commons design team of the building's core and shell (while at FFKR Architects) and had gotten to know members of the Miller family, including Gail, on that project and knew the building's history.

Agee said Larry Miller's original vision for the office tower was to capture the dramatic, breathtaking views of the mountains to both the east and west, and the atrium captures those incredible views on an even grander scale.

"For Gail, it was important for her to have those views preserved and opening up floors 9 and 10," said Agee. "It was her idea – that's how we got the atrium."

The design team helped various decision makers from the owner's side (Gail's son, Steve, was the most actively involved family member in the design and construction process) navigated to a more

transitional design with a modern feel.

The 10th floor houses the family's personal offices and has a completely enclosed perimeter with transparent glass fronts to allow all inhabitants access to spectacular views.

"We ended up doing a lot of glass – more than anyone anticipated," said Agee. "We kept with a traditional approach with offices on the perimeters having almost 100% glass fronts. Even the family conference room on the west side is full butt glazing with minimal aluminum trim."

Steve Miller, Vice Chairman of the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies, was intimately involved throughout the design and construction process and said changes in the company's leadership structure in recent years precipitated the building remodel. The firm wanted to have a clearer delineation between offices for the business (floor nine) and the family (floor ten), while having the atrium connect the two spaces in a dramatic yet functional way.



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– Steve Miller, Vice Chairman,  
Larry H. Miller Group of Companies

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“A couple of years ago we got into this whole design phase, and the remodel for us happened to coincide with our corporate governance,” said Miller. “We created a board of directors and did a significant overhaul to our company’s organization... and we were intent on separating out business and family, but we didn’t want to have such a bright line that we felt like there was a firewall between the family and the company. That’s where the atrium came into play – it’s symbolic in that it connects the 9th and 10th floors both literally and figuratively. There is no separation; we flow freely from nine to ten.”

Miller said he “initially blanched” when he saw the final cost of the project once the atrium was factored in, but said the family is thrilled with the final result.

“We could see the end result, see in our minds eye what it was going to be and we took a flyer on it,” he said. “We’re really proud of it and happy the way things turned out.”

The corporate board room is as impressive a space as one will find in any modern corporate office, highlighted by state-of-the-art A/V systems and a massive 16-seat, 17-ft. diameter, 3,000 lb. table designed by Method Studio and fabricated by Fetzer Architectural Woodwork of West Valley City. The table has a solid eased knife wood edge with veneer top with hand selected stone slab inlays, wireless microphones and power/USB connections at each seat, and custom leather blotters from Geneva, Switzerland embossed with the trademarked Larry H. Miller signature.

Salt Lake-based Spectrum Engineers provided MEP design, with extra attention paid to the boardrooms. High-tech lighting controls allows for automatic dimming, photocells for daylighting control, along with vacancy and occupancy sensors in all spaces. An ultra-quiet, fan-powered VAV system is an example of the extra acoustical considerations.

To improve acoustics in the room, a dome ceiling was designed that correctly amplifies and transmits voices clearly and cleanly while sitting on opposite sides of the giant table. BASWAphon, a sound absorbing plaster, was used on the dome ceiling to achieve the compound radius design while providing a seamless aesthetic with high performance.

Another phenomenal room is the Roger L. Miller Auditorium, named for one of the Millers’ sons who passed away in August 2013. It has motorized chalkboards

that mirror a much-loved installation from the Harvard Business School and were finished with a beautiful custom wood shroud fabricated by Salt Lake-based Contempo Cabinet & Mill.

“The beauty of that room is that the family had gone to Harvard Business School and they loved the electronic chalkboards...and we had to duplicate those rooms,” said Agee. “It’s been such an influential thing for their family.

“It turned out to be everything we hoped it would be,” said Miller. “It’s where we hold our family meetings for extended generations, and for extended types of learning and activities. Every single space was done with a purpose. It took us almost a year just to design the space and another year to build it out. We wanted to be methodical.”

Architectural details and interior finishes on door jambs, light fixtures, recessed sprinkler heads, modern wood-framed cased openings, flush flooring transitions, radiused walls, and recessed butt glazing had to appear effortlessly seamless. Elements that fell within wood ceiling treatments were faux painted so they would disappear. Subcontractors were challenged to bring their best, and it shows in the finished product.

“The family was very involved in every detail,” Agee added. “We pushed them to make it more contemporary and modern than anything they had done in the past. Gail said she wanted (the design) to be »





Signage pays homage to company founder Larry H. Miller, including his recognizable signature behind the front desk and a wall photo of the first LHM car dealership from 1979.

pushed, to be fresh, to be different, and to leave that legacy. There certainly are touches of wood, marble, granite that tie back to the more traditional history of the Miller Group.”

“Everything had to be dialed in and perfect – our subs have to know exactly where things go,” said Marsala. “We pushed our subs to give us their best and there were times we had to rip something out and do it again. The Miller’s built

this for themselves and they care about the attention to detail, and that level of quality. I want people, whether it’s contractors, designers, architects, owners... to appreciate and feel the same thing we feel when we walk into any space we’ve built, that sense of ‘wow, people care.’”

“There are subs that will try and B.S. you on what’s possible and what’s not,” said Duane Marsala, Founder of Marsala & Co. “We had issues on a couple of glass

doors...I said (to the contractor) ‘you better figure out how to order a door that works because the way it is, something is wrong. I can see it, Ms. Miller can see it, you’re going to do whatever it takes until nobody sees it. There are contractors over the years that have actually thanked us for pushing them to a level they didn’t know they could do.’ ■

**Larry H. Miller**  
**Corporate & Family Offices**

**Owner:** The Larry H. Miller  
Group of Companies

**Architect/Interior Design:**  
Method Studio, Inc.

**GC:** Marsala & Co.

**Electrical:** Spectrum Engineers

**Mechanical:** Spectrum Engineers

**Structural:** BHB Structural Engineers

**Subcontractors:** Steel Encounters; Taylor Electric; Cache Valley Electric; Johnson Quality Air; Zarbock Plumbing; Midwest D-Vision; Finn-Wall; Lacem Construction; Four Seasons Glass; RP Paint; Razors Edge; Creative West; Contempo Cabinet & Mill; Finish Specialties; Fetzer’s; Apollo Granite & Marble Company; Craftsman Upholstery; Architectural Building Supply; Finish Specialties; Amfab Steel; Penhall; TID Demolition; RBM Services; Modern Craftsmen; Rocky Mountain Masonry; Henriksen Butler Design Group; Certified Fire; Simplex Grinnell; Mountain Land Design; Restruction Corporation; Rex Williams & Sons; Houghton Plaster