



All Signs Say “Home”: Overcoming Technical Challenges in Residential Design

Bridgewater-based Callahan Construction Management came to us with a challenge: Actually, several hundred of them – of varying sizes.

Maxwell’s Green, an exciting “lifestyle amenity center,” needed **interior and exterior signage** to suit its style and budget – all designed and fabricated according to architectural specifications, installed in time to appeal to prospective tenants, and beautiful and sturdy enough to look good while performing well in the bustling apartment complex.

Rustic Style, Seamless Appearance



The first big challenge was Maxwell’s Green exterior sign: a 24-foot-long, curved metal sign, with watercut letters and backlit with LED illumination. Because the architectural drawings called for a rusted, industrial aesthetic, Metro Sign & Awning designers knew Cor-Ten steel would be an ideal material. Of course, the client wanted to maintain visual continuity in the sign - but Cor-Ten comes in 12-foot panels. To make the 24-foot-long sign, Metro’s fabricators had to take great care when welding the panels

together to ensure not only a safe installation, but also to minimize the visual disruption of the welding seam, which was right in-between the words *Maxwell’s* and *Green*.

In addition to making sure the sign would appear seamless once it was installed, Metro Sign’s design team and fabricators also needed to match the radius curve of the building. Metro’s design and fabrication employees worked to craft the sign to meet all safety requirements and also to guarantee that the sign met the client’s expectations.

Adding to the complexity of the exterior sign: the sign weighed **nearly half a ton**. Red Gate Residential Properties relied on Metro Sign & Awning and Callahan Construction to ensure the hefty sign was installed properly, making code-compliance and safety considerations top priorities.

The result was another on time, on budget job – and another satisfied client. But that’s not the end of the story. Remember, Maxwell’s Green is a new, lifestyle residence. The exterior signage is important, but inside, it’s home to hundreds of families.

Home, Sweet-looking Home: An Inside Job

Maxwell's Green designers naturally wanted the interior to reflect the same rustic, industrial look - so again, Cor-Ten steel made sense. Because interior signs withstand different demands than those outdoors, Metro designers and fabricators worked together to make sure all of the signs, from elevators and stairwells to the fitness center and electric car-charging stations - had the right look *and* functionality.



To accomplish the task, Metro's team applied acrylic to the metal, using appliqué raised lettering and Braille for "front of house" signage and specialty rooms. One cost-saving move Metro suggested: using acrylic alone (no metal) for "back of house" rooms where the signage will be seen by only a few people, most of whom are employees.

Material Matters: Weathered, Brown, and Green

Cor-Ten steel has been featured in high-end design projects and style publications, thanks to its tremendous aesthetic and architectural appeal. Made by US Steel Corporation, Cor-Ten is often called "**weathering steel**," a term that refers to its thin, stable rust layer.

The rust layer is both good-looking and practical, providing the look of weathered steel while protecting the underlying steel from further oxidation. Copper, which also offers some weathered characteristics, tends to take on green hues over time, while Cor-Ten maintains its copper and browntones. It's a tad ironic, then, that Cor-Ten is attractive to designers for its "green" side (meaning its relatively small environmental impact) because Cor-Ten does not require any priming or painting and the material itself is **100% recyclable**.



What's next?

Stay tuned for more stories about stylish, smart sign design projects in the residential space! We're working with Gate Residential again, this time on the S-shaped, 230-apartment complex One North of Boston in Chelsea.

Residential project? Work with signage experts. Contact Metro today.



Metro Sign & Awning strives to be sensitive to our client's needs, their image and their budget, while ensuring safety and quality are never compromised.

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