

FULLERTON BRINGS INNOVATIVE 'SPEED-TO-MARKET' CONSTRUCTION SYSTEM TO BAKKEN REGION

They seem to be popping up all over the region: new retail, office, fast food, senior housing and apartment projects that seem to rise out of the ground magically, in a matter of days or weeks rather than months. What do they all have in common? They have all been built in record time using the innovative pre-fabricated construction processes developed by Fullerton Building Systems (FBS), a subsidiary of Plymouth, Minnesota-based Fullerton Companies.

Pre-fab construction is hardly a new concept in the building industry, but Fullerton's patented "quick-build" system has turned it into high art. And the fast-expanding facilities and housing construction needs of the Bakken basin--and a good share of the rest of the state--have been the beneficiaries of the savings in time and money FBS's system provides.

Fullerton's roster of recently completed projects reads like a laundry list of building types and locations. Among them: five new Holiday Stationstores in as many cities (Williston, Stanley, Watford City, Minot, and Bismarck)... Williston's multi-building Badlands Retail Center... the KLJ office complex and a new McDonald's, both located in Williston...the Boulder III apartment complex in Bismarck...Somerset Court Manor Retirement Community in Minot...a Bayside Tesoro Convenience store in Mandan...and others to come in the construction pipeline.

"The FBS system is perfectly tailored to meet the 'speed-to-market' demands of owners, developers and investors dealing with a rapidly expanding market like the one that exists in the Bakken region," says Dave Walock, President and CEO of Fullerton Companies. "Our building process, using factory-fabricated panels and our highly specialized installation techniques,



is perfectly matched to the rapidly expanding business needs of Williston and the rest of the region."

Cost Savings—in Time and Money—Are Significant

The savings in time and money over traditional stick-built construction—framing and finishing a building shell on-site—can be substantial. By doing the framing and panelizing in an enclosed factory setting, Fullerton eliminates the problems that often plague new construction in a northern climate--snow, rain or other inclement weather, late deliveries of building materials--and most serious in the Bakken region, the critical shortage of carpenters, other skilled tradesmen and subcontractors.

A building exterior shell, for example on a typical quick serve restaurant, can be erected on site in just three or four days, contrasted with the three or four weeks traditional framing might require.

Because Fullerton builds the panels in a highly controlled environment, it can also manage the workmanship involved for consistent quality and accuracy of fit. It also factory-applies finished exterior veneers manufactured either in its plant or by a sister company, Fullerton Finish Systems, depending on the selection..

"We use the same exact exterior finish materials—brick, stone or stucco—that you would see being added in the field, except that we apply them in a controlled environment in our plant," says Walock.

Many of Fullerton's customers choose to use its quick-build system for speed- to-market reasons,

rather than to reduce costs. In the Bakken region especially, time is of the essence in terms of finding and building out great retail locations and then grabbing market share well ahead of the competition.

Holiday Stationstores

That was the case for Holiday Stationstores. The firm selected Fullerton Building Systems for its five new North Dakota stores primarily for speed-to-market reasons. John Baregi, Vice President-Engineering of the Midwestern chain, says that "Although there can be savings on some projects, we primarily use FBS in situations where traditional stick construction would not make sense or would face significant delays—in places where the labor market is tight, we find ourselves in a time crunch, or likely weather conditions would make stick building difficult and slow." Baregi said Holiday has used Fullerton for more than 15 years, for stores ranging in size from 6,000-9,000 square feet. "We chose them again for Williston and our other new Bakken region stores because of our long and satisfactory history with them."

Somerset Court Manor Retirement Community

For Robert Hale, President of Spectrum Care, the owner of Somerset Court Manor in Minot, the challenge was a combination of costs and conditions. "We selected FBS for our expansion project because we were coping with a boom economy, one where every cost is inflated and skilled labor is in short supply, combined with harsh winter conditions that could have dragged out construction times." FBS' package for the 100,000 square foot, three-story, 70-unit expansion of the complex included wall panels, floors and roof trusses.

Badlands Town Center

The developers of another recent FBS project, the Badlands Town Center, a 31,000 square foot retail center in Williston, were faced with a schedule that would have taken construction on the project deep into a potentially severe winter. "We chose Fullerton Building Systems not only for its ability to speed construction but also to perform in very severe weather," says Jeff Korish, project manager for Petra, Inc., the general contractor.

"Fullerton's overall process allowed us to get the project into production in a very timely way, in about six weeks."

Korish, who says he has been doing commercial construction "all of my life," had never seen Fullerton's system in operation before. "It was an awesome performance," he said. "The fit and finishes were really good, and I love their process."

For Badlands Town Center, FBS provided the exterior wall panels, with factory applied finishes, the steel package for the structure, roof trusses, and the assembly needed to set the entire building shell. The package was erected quickly without having to cope with local labor shortages, inflated material costs resulting from high regional demand, or high construction costs due to the need for tenting and heating during one of the worst winters on record.

Walock says his company is seeing demand for his firm's innovative factory-built building exteriors grow steadily, "particularly from corporate clients, who are increasingly choosing the time and cost savings and the speed-to-market advantages they offer, compared to more traditional building methods."

"In the final analysis," he says, "it's all about how quickly can you make the cash register ring."