Concrete Masonry Association of California and Nevada

October 2010

CMU Profiles in Architecture

Why Masonry?
www.whymasonry.org

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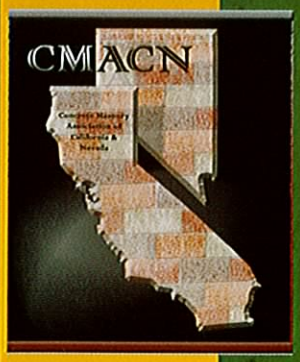

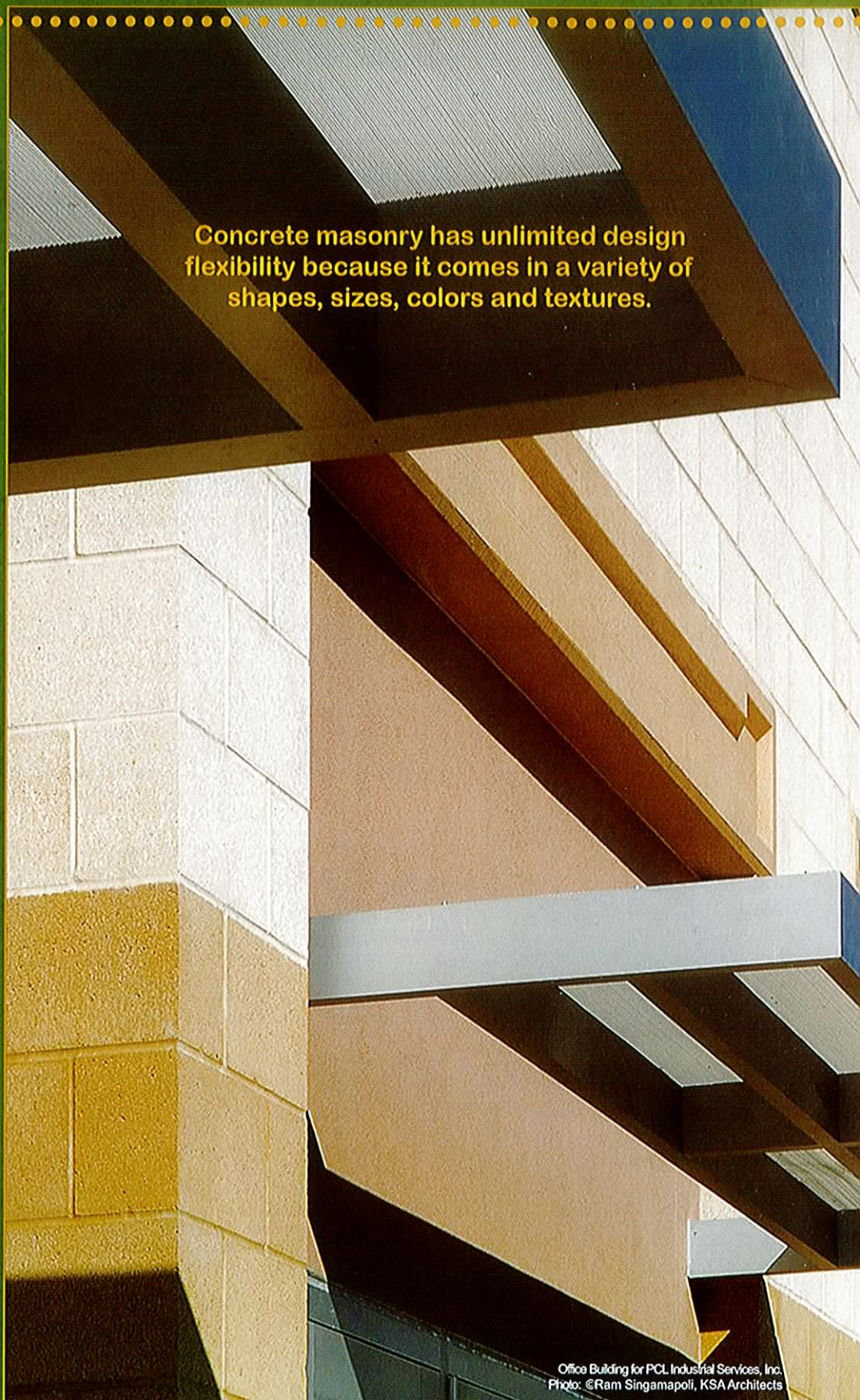

Concrete masonry has unlimited design flexibility because it comes in a variety of shapes, sizes, colors and textures.

Office Building for PCL Industrial Services, Inc.
Photo: ©Ram Singamapoli, KSA Architects

Office Building for PCL Industrial Services, Inc.

Bakersfield, California

Architect:
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4660 American Avenue
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Principal

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Project Architect

Structural Engineer:
Parrish Hansen, Inc.
General Contractor:
Colombo Construction Company, Inc.
Masonry Contractor:
Kern Masonry Structures
Block Producer:
Desert Block Company, Inc.
Owner:
PCL Industrial Services, Inc.

Architect's Commentary: PCL Industrial Services Inc. operates a successful industrial fabrication business on a 12-acre campus. This project provides a new building to accommodate their office staff and training activities under one roof. The project needed to fit within the context of a decades old industrial zone while demonstrating PCL's environmental commitments.

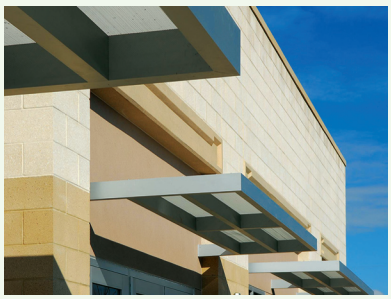
Among the goals were a LEED certified building with low initial and long term costs and an expedited construction time. An early review indicated that the design would meet those objectives and achieve Gold level LEED certification without a large cost penalty. The Owner supported that premise and the design team and Contractor worked diligently to make sure it all came together.

Why Masonry? Concrete masonry was selected for its appearance, permanence and economy. The exposed masonry serves as the finished exterior surface, the primary load-bearing elements and the lateral bracing system. Split face, precision and ground face CMU are used in bands around the building. Precast concrete lintels in these walls eliminated shoring, allowing work below the openings to continue without delay.

Aluminum awnings provide shade and visual interest. On the west exposure, a generous recess adds more shading. Here, the porch awning and other exterior elements extend into the lobby where ground face CMU, stainless steel, and exposed concrete all provide reminders of the Owner's industrial enterprise.

Use of a simple building form and efficient structural system provided the opportunity to supplement sustainable features to achieve LEED Gold certification. In every LEED-NC 2.2 category, the project earned more than half the available points. Although many LEED points are earned by simply following California law, others required special attention. Relatively small enhancements to landscaping, irrigation, parking, wood usage, roofing, glazing, HVAC, and lighting systems were enough for each to receive LEED credits. The Contractor was especially diligent, recycling over 90% of construction waste for an exemplary performance point.

The completed building is a good demonstration of how an attractive and economical building can fit into a tough neighborhood while meeting ambitious environmental goals.



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Large Photo, Insets 1 and 4
Ram Singamapoli, KSA, Insets 2 and 3