



Photography by J.K. Lawrence Photography, Inc.

**AIA Montana 2002
Design Award of Excellence
Merit Recipient**

**A & E Architects, P.C.
608 North 29th Street
Billings, Montana
406-248-2633
jbos@aearchitects.com**

The new 165,000 square foot Operations Center is located on a 15 acre site in Billings, Montana. The design challenge was to design a building with a large single story footprint on a very open site that could offer external views, natural day lighting and a sense of place for employees within the expansive open office environment. The building design allows for required flexibility as banking operations and technology evolve and change in the future.

The palette of building materials emulates regional materials from corrugated metal to native stone of the surrounding river valley and then contrasts it with glass, translucent fiberglass wall panels and anodized aluminum wall panels that hint at the high tech nature of the buildings function and systems within. Building forms are low parapet walls in conjunction with shed roofs and a north wall that functions to bring day lighting into the working spaces as well as give a glimpse to passersby of the function of the building within. The elongated east west orientation of the open office allows maximum exposure to desirable north light for the workspaces. It also offers all employees a connection to the outside that was requested

Wells Fargo Operations Center

by all staff to remedy their condition of little to no outside windows or day lighting in their previous location. Offices and conferences rooms were pulled to the middle of the building to maximize everyone's opportunity to a connection to the outside. Cafeteria, filing, mechanical room, conference rooms and training rooms are assigned to the perpendicular element of the building with a north south orientation. This offers a protected outdoor entry procession as well as outdoor seating for the cafeteria protected from prevailing northwest winds and hot summer afternoons.

The building implements an air displacement system utilizing underslab ductwork and access floor that serves as a supply plenum that feeds diffusers located every 100 square feet. This amenity offers lower air volumes in individual workspaces. This system has produces a much higher satisfaction rate for comfort with occupants of the building.

The interior of the office areas is broken down into specific areas by "Main Street" and secondary "streets" and hard walled office groupings in different color schemes that define the areas architecturally.

The building provides flexibility through a single floor plate that let's various work groups expand and change as needed, open office work environment of modular work stations as well the access floor system that provides technology flexibility as new systems in computer, phone and data are developed.