



2007 Award of Excellence
AIA Montana Design Awards Program

Honor Award



Photography by Shelly Saunders

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Gallatin Valley Food Bank Storage/Warehouse Addition

This 2,700 sf addition to the Gallatin Valley food Bank provides additional storage space to accommodate the food bank's various programs which serve the community. Plagued by persistent shortages of storage and food distribution space, the food bank facility had been storing food in on-site trailers and in off-site storage areas. In addition, the 1,700 pounds of donated perishable food delivered daily, consisting primarily of bread, fruits and vegetables were being distributed outside in the parking lot subject to varied weather conditions. To exacerbate this need for space, the food bank also runs a mobile soup kitchen, senior food program as well as a summer lunch program out of the existing facility.

The program called for additional short term and long term storage space, an enclosed space, or bread room, for fruits, vegetables and bread open to the public, an enclosed truck delivery area and a general reorganization of the existing facility to provide ease of movement.

The accounting method for the food bank is based on the weight of food that is taken in and donated to the community. Using this as a design concept, the multiple scales of pallets of food, delivery trucks as well as the Bridger range, visible from the site, were considered for the project. For the safety of the volunteers, pallets can only be stored up to 12' high while the delivery area requires a height of 18' to accommodate trailer deliveries. The design response was to keep the roof lower in the storage areas and raise the roof higher to accommodate truck deliveries. In this way the roof responds to the flow and storage of food while also responding to the site and views of the mountains to the north, creating its own topography. This topographic roof surface is articulated along the south edge and reveals the dimensions of the folded SIP's roof construction. Due to the location of the project to the property line, window openings were prohibited on the south elevation so one large window was placed in the storage room/receiving area to provide employees and volunteers with a bright day lit space to work. With the increased space, the food bank was also able to reorganize the interior by increasing the lobby space, having the bread room separate from the client shopping space and adopting a 'client choice' shopping model, which provides a better experience for its clients.

As a non-profit organization, the food bank was looking for an energy efficient building. Structural insulated panel (SIP's) were used on the roof while a radiant floor slab provides efficient heat for employees and volunteers. Dual switch florescent lighting as well as daylighting of the storage area, lessen the electrical of the building. Wherever possible, building materials were re-used including many of the doors and windows. Galvanized metal was chosen for the exterior of the addition to provide a durable, low maintenance surface that would patina with age. Prior to the addition, heat buildup in the morning hours on the delivery doors and the lack of ventilation produced an uncomfortable working environment. With the storage addition, as well as windows on the east and west elevations, through ventilation has made for a much more comfortable work space.

As a result of the expansion, the food bank can now house 116 additional pallets of food, increasing their inventory from 45,000 pounds to 230,000 pounds of food. This translates into an additional 3,000 families being served by the facility with no reduction in any of the other programs currently in place. Utilizing donated materials and labor as well as the design/build method, this 2,700 sf project was constructed for \$50/sf.