Construction for the Long Haul: The Cline's Landing Restoration

Port Aransas sits on Mustang Island, just off of the Gulf of Mexico near Corpus Christi, Texas. In August 2017, Hurricane Harvey battered this coastal region, wreaking havoc on area structures, including the Cline's Landing condominium complex.

Initially erected in 1983, Cline's Landing consists of two eight-story buildings with over 100 residences and shared spaces. Harvey's 130 mph winds and water resulted in damage that would challenge builders to make repairs while working within the existing concrete structure's confines.

The Cline's Landing project provided unique challenges and opportunities for suppliers and contractors to restore this multi-unit structure to a safe and beautiful state and ensure lasting durability.

One of the challenges of the Clines Landing project, as it pertains to the balcony railing, was the ability to withstand the demands of being a coastal structure. For this, a TDI / Texas Department of Insurance certificate product evaluation is required. The Ultralox® railing is able to meet the demands of a coastal structure as the railing has been evaluated for compliance with the wind loads specified in the International Residential Code (IRC) and the International Building Code (IBC). Whiting-Turner called upon Texas Railing to secure the optimal product for the railing redo. General contractor White Construction Company of Austin called upon Texas Railing Systems to choose the optimal product for replacing damaged railings throughout the structure.

Texas Railing Systems was established in 2009 out of the desire to become a market leader in contemporary architectural railing. Founders Wayne and Hollis Uecker bring over 35 years of experience and leadership in commercial, residential, and manufacturing environments. Since its inception, the company has participated in over 1,000 installs statewide, increasing each year in volume and miles traveled. From small projects to those valuing over $1 million, their home base in the Texas Hill Country allows them to serve clients anywhere in the state. Texas Railing needed a solution that allowed the flexibility to build the railing as needed and to the desired size. Pre-built railing was not a viable solution due to the warehouse space needed for a project the size of Clines Landing.

The Ultralox Interlocking® Machine was able to fit the need to build railing on demand and to the desired size all the while not taking up valuable warehouse space with pre-built railing panels. Becoming an Ultralox® dealer was the perfect solution to solving this problem.. All of these factors made Texas Railing Systems the optimal choice for the Cline's Landing restoration.

Design requirements in coastal areas have a unique set of considerations when it comes to choosing materials. Durability is paramount, as the salt and humidity in the air intensify corrosion in metals and disintegrate wooden structures. Another factor is a material's resistance to damage from the harsh, prolonged UV exposure of bright sunny days. Products made of wood and vinyl can shrink, crack, and twist.

And because the Cline's Landing property rises above the Port Aransas skyline, there is little to shield it from the gale-force winds coming off the Gulf. So exterior railings had to be up to the task, yet light enough so that moving them into place was did not require extra work.

With these factors in mind, Texas Railing Systems chose Ultralox Interlocking® Technology's aluminum railing for the project. Engineered and Approved to ICC-ES and AC273 commercial and residential building codes, the interlocking railing system was just what was needed to make quick work of this massive project. Aluminum is more resistant to the ravages of a coastal atmosphere than ferrous metals. The addition of a powder-coating further enhances this resistance. Strong but lightweight, aluminum railings can withstand heavy winds while being easy to lift into place.

To enhance the resistance railings need next to saltwater, Ultralox®'s Coastal Formula powder-coating amps up the strength. This AAMA 2605 finish is engineered to meet the ravages of humid, salty air. It provides a thick, durable finish that is more weather-resistant than conventional liquid coatings for coastal applications. Coast Formula powder-coating does not flake or fade as quickly as paint or stain, resulting in a product that only requires an occasional wipe down. Ultralox® guarantees its railing not to crack, chip, blister, or peel for 20 years of typical use and weathering.

The bronze color of the Coastal Formula powder coating on Ultralox®'s railings is as stately as it is protective, giving the Cline's Landing condominium restoration a sophisticated look.

Ultralox® aluminum railings provide durability against the unique considerations of coastal applications. The panels are custom-built to design specifications, making them easy to fit into existing structures.

Because they are designed for each project's specifications, Ultralox® railing systems are as easy to install in existing structures as they are in new construction. The pre-assembled panels come with standard mounting hardware, eliminating the need for special tools or welding. And local dealers have the ability to assemble the panels in-house, minimizing delivery or replacement time.

Installing the 7500 linear feet of railing throughout Cline's Landing was the responsibility of a four-person crew. However, because panels are custom-built to design measurements, there is no cutting or welding. It can take as little as five minutes to hang a single section, although the average install rate is 12 panels an hour. The four-person installation crew completed the railing install in eight months.

Today, the Cline's Landing property project boasts an updated façade thanks to the continuous-top mission-style rails on its exterior balconies and grounds. The sleek lines coupled with the bronze powder-coating brings a sedate yet sophisticated look to the building, which is just what you want in a vacation getaway.

While it has taken a great deal of time and effort to restore Cline's Landing to its former glory, rest assured that with sound design choices such as the inclusion of Ultralox® railings, this landmark will be ready to face Mother Nature's trials.

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ULTRALOX INTERLOCKING® TECHNOLOGY provides aluminum railing systems nationwide and is based in Eagan, Minn. For more information, visit www.Ultralox.com.