

300 East Randolph (Blue Cross and Blue Shield Tower)

Chicago, United States of America

300 East Randolph is a unique combination of a build-to-suit headquarters and a multi-tenant office tower in downtown Chicago. The design concept defined an initial building to serve a company's immediate needs and planned for vertical expansion in the future. Thus the building was constructed in two phases, with the second phase of construction occurring on top of the fully operational phase one, without interrupting existing tenant operations.

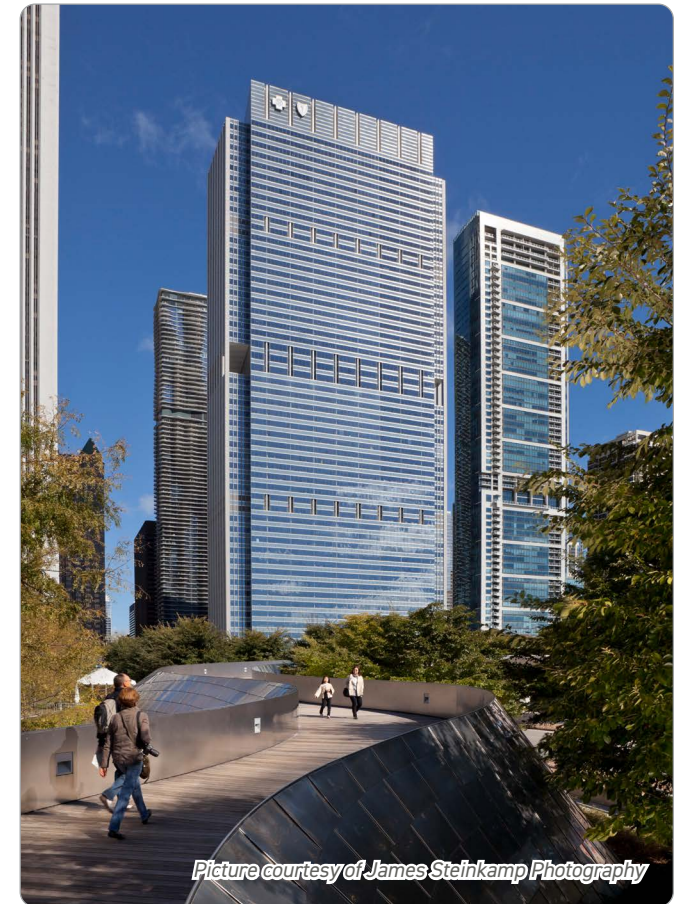
Environment:	urban
Use:	clad façade
Material:	316 for the lower part and 304 for the upper part, with a linen-finish
Fabricator:	Permasteelisa
Manufacturer:	Outokumpu
Architects:	Goettsch Partners
Photographs:	James Steinkamp Photography
More information:	gpchicago.com outokumpu.com

The project's 33-story, first phase was completed in 1997 and in 2006 the decision was made to proceed with the initial plan and add 24 stories on top of the existing building. Nearly a decade separated the two phases of construction.

The initial foundations and structure were designed and constructed to support the fully expanded building. Additional riser space also was provided to accommodate independent mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems for the expansion floors. In order to allow the cooling towers on the roof of phase one to continue to serve the building during construction, a three-story gap from the 30th to the 33rd levels was left during construction. Once the new cooling towers were in place, 24 floors above the originals, the old cooling towers were removed, and cladding was applied. This space now serves as a mid-building conference center, providing necessary additional meeting and training space.

Vertical shafts to accommodate the high-zone elevators that service phase two of the project were accommodated in phase one as large atrium spaces that ran the height of the building alongside the low-zone elevator banks along the north wall. Local open stair cases are also located along the northern wall to promote inter-floor interactions without dependency on the elevators.

The entire exterior of the building is clad in glass, stainless steel and stone, all materials that both aged well and were easily matched as the building expanded. As a result of this design planning, there is no visible distinction between the old and new portions of the building, providing a seamless,



Picture courtesy of James Steinkamp Photography

integrated expression that now achieves its full height and appropriately fits into the Chicago skyline.



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