



Getchell Street Garage, Helena, Montana

Parking was an important consideration during planning for the Great Northern Town Center. The shopping mall needed spaces for monthly patrons working in nearby businesses and transient shoppers. Helena is a historic mining community where people like big vehicles for outdoor recreation and for getting around in heavy winter snow. For this reason, the 3-1/2-level structure was designed with unusually large stalls. In addition to parking spaces, the facility has a 900 square foot control room and staff break nook.

The site is difficult, requiring the structure be built into a steep hillside. This impacted the foundation system which formed from clusters of driven steel piles. An abandoned mine was discovered on the site, requiring creative engineering to insure a good foundation. The hillside location provided an opportunity to allow access to Getchell Street on the top level while the entry/exit to the lower level was several feet below off two narrow streets, 14th and Shoofly Way.



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Footprint	Spaces	SF/space	Superstructure		
120' x 396'	413	350	Post-Tensioned	3.5-Levels	2-Bays

“The Helena Parking Commission provided a master-plan and good guidance on whom they wanted their garage to serve, how big it should be, where it was to be sited, and how important it was to have it fit into the town’s history. In conjunction with Paul Mack, who was responsible for structural and functional design of the garage, we worked out a way to accommodate a severely sloped site with efficient access at two different levels. When an abandoned mine was discovered during construction, we appreciated a quick response to the situation and the creativity shown in solving the problem.”

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Founder Paul Mack, P.E. had significant involvement in phases of this project while at another firm