

When the Scope Never Stops Moving

How Southwest Glass kept a high-end biotech headquarters on track through constant owner-driven change.

Project Snapshot

Project	BioTech Headquarters
Location	Dallas/Fort Worth, TX
Contractor	Regional General Contractor
Project Size	50,000 SF
Scope	Interior storefront, all-glass doors and sidelights, sound-rated glazing, film, custom door hardware, decorative powder-coated aluminum trim, etched glass, glass marker board, recessed channel systems
Contract Value	\$235,000 original bid
Final Contract Value	\$460,000

The Challenge

Most commercial glazing scopes follow a predictable arc: plans come in, materials get specified, fabrication begins, installation follows. This job didn't work that way.

Southwest Glass was contracted in June 2024 to complete a standard interior glazing scope for a biotech company's new headquarters in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. The original bid covered frameless swing and sliding glass doors with butt-joint glass channel glazing, interior storefront doors, and framed sidelights. It was a clean, well-defined scope until that scope started moving.

A Scope That Evolved Daily

The owner outlined all the offices and areas they needed, but it wasn't clearly defined into what it would eventually become. As additional budget became available, requests came in after the contract was signed:

- Standard half-inch glass office fronts became sound-rated enclosures
- Standard locking doors became electrified



- Six openings redesigned to receive owner provided LED film, sized to the manufacturer's spec rather than the glass

Every week brought a new product and pricing request. Each issued narrative bulletin or ASI meant revisiting submitted work, re-pricing materials, and adjusting lead times. Product incompatibilities surfaced constantly: hardware that didn't function as specified, glazing systems that needed detailing, film dimensions that didn't align with glass already in fabrication. Southwest Glass was identifying and flagging these conflicts before they became orders. The project was contracted in June 2024 with a target move-in of February 2025. Installation didn't begin until May 2025, pushed by the volume of design changes still being resolved. The project remained active into May 2026.

Owner-driven change is one of the most expensive forces on a commercial job site. Not because the requests are unreasonable, but because they arrive after contracts are signed, material orders are queued and schedules are set. Every pivot costs time, and on a commercial project, every day has a price tag attached.

Problems Outside the Scope

The LED film installation created an unexpected heat problem. The electrical drivers required to power the film generated enough heat to warm the rooms where they were installed. Southwest Glass was asked to help source perforated metal panels to dissipate the heat (a material category well outside the core scope). We found a path forward anyway.

A planned large-format graphic wall, intended to function as both art and a writable surface, ran into scaling and logistical issues. The owner wanted a printed graphic coordinated with a marker board glass overlay. The graphics were produced by a third party, digitally scaled, and the resulting ratios didn't translate to the wall in the field. Southwest Glass identified the problem, communicated it clearly, and after attempts to resolve it, helped the client recognize the design wasn't executable as envisioned. The element was revised to a similar product that met parts of the design intent.

The Solution

Southwest Glass didn't wait for the architect or GC to resolve product questions. When the owner's requests outpaced what off-the-shelf products could deliver, the team sourced alternatives and came back with options: samples, pricing, and a clear explanation of what was achievable and what wasn't.



Sound Mitigation Without Sightlines

The C-suite offices were a representative example. What started as standard glass offices became a sound-mitigation challenge. The owner desired sound control and continuous glass without visible framing. A UL-rated acoustical glass system would have added months and six figures to the cost. Southwest Glass proposed an alternative: one-inch laminated glass fit into modified storefront framing. It delivered measurable sound reduction, met the aesthetic requirement, and kept the timeline intact.

Door Hardware, Resolved Scope by Scope

Every door in the building went through a hardware review. The owner wanted specific pull styles with specific locking functions – combinations that weren't always compatible. ADA clearance requirements added another layer, with layouts and some door swings needing to be revised before fabrication to avoid compliance issues on delivery. Southwest Glass worked through each conflict, submitted options, sent product literature, coordinated approvals, and made changes as the owner refined their preferences. The process was repeated across every scope on the project. Methodical, documented, and tracked.

Glass Matched to Film, Not the Other Way Around

When the client revealed they had already purchased LED film from an overseas supplier, sized to their dimensions, Southwest Glass reverse engineered the openings and glass sizes to the film order. Typically, film is measured to fit glass. This job reversed the sequence. The team made it work.

Etched Glass Over Reflective

The glass marker boards were specified as transparent low-iron in order to view the printed decorative wall graphics. Exterior windows created glare and reflection issues, hiding the graphics underneath. Southwest Glass proposed satin glazing to diffuse surface reflections while maintaining enough transparency to view the outline of the graphics beneath. The recommendation was accepted and installed.

The Results

- 17 change orders managed over the course of the project
- Glass scope grew from \$235,000 to \$460,000, driven entirely by OAC-initiated changes
- 50,000 SF of commercial glazing installed



- ADA compliance issues eliminated prior to construction
- LED film and glass sizes coordinated for successful install with no alternations
- Graphic marker board flagged as inexecutable and redesigned to capture parts of the original intent
- Project contracted June 2024; remained active through May 2026, over two years of continuous coordination driven by OAC-initiated scope changes

What This Means for Your Next Project

Mid-project changes are one of the most disruptive forces on a commercial job site. Schedules shift, scopes expand, and the finish-out trades absorb most of the pressure and schedule constraints. What Southwest Glass demonstrated on this project wasn't just technical range. It was the kind of operational flexibility that keeps a GC from being caught between an owner's evolving vision and a fixed schedule.

- Identified problems before they became change orders
- Sourced products that didn't exist in the original spec
- Communicated clearly through every pivot
- When something wasn't achievable, communicated early and came back with an alternative

That's the difference between a sub that creates friction and one that creates solutions.

Work with Southwest Glass

Southwest Glass serves general contractors and commercial owners across the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex. If your next project involves complex glazing, tight schedules, and an owner who's still making decisions, we've done this before.

[Contact us to discuss your scope.](#)

