

Commercial Finish-Out: When the Plans Don't Match the Field

How Southwest Glass adapted a high-end bank headquarters glazing scope in Frisco, TX, to conditions in the field.

Project Snapshot

Project	Bank Headquarters
Location	Frisco, TX
Contractor	General Contractor
Project Area	Three upper floors, plus part of the first floor
Scope	Interior aluminum storefront, automatic sliding entry door, ½-inch frameless all-glass doors and butt-joint sidelights, ¼-inch sidelights and door lites, satin-etched low-iron back-painted glass, switchable glass, illuminated signage integration, specialty door hardware, distraction film
Bid History	4 bid revisions with half dozen GCs before awarded
Change Orders	12

The Challenge

On this first-generation commercial finish-out for a bank headquarters in Frisco, the opening framed for the automatic entry slider didn't come in at the dimensions on the plans. It was one of several field conditions the drawings didn't show.

The building shell was already in place, and its floors were being finished out as they were occupied. The job came in as a standard bid request with plans. Southwest Glass priced the scope from those plans and submitted its exclusions and details.

An Angled Slider and an Out-of-Square Wall

The automatic sliding entry door had to be ordered as a stock-size unit, and the design called for it to operate at a specific angle. With the opening off its planned dimensions, that stock unit



now had to fit a space it wasn't sized for. The slider also carried a long lead time. The entry had to work before the unit arrived.

The coffee bar presented a similar condition. Its wall was out of square and flared at the base, with a thin notch around the table area. The glass designed for that wall couldn't follow a standard shape.

A Finish Level Above a Typical Office Build-Out

A bank headquarters is a relatively typical project type, but this was a high-end finish-out, with a glass package well above a standard office build-out. The scope combined satin-etched, low-iron, back-painted glass with switchable glass and a 55-pound illuminated sign mounted into the glass. Frameless all-glass doors with specialty hardware and butt-joint sidelights ran through portions of the project.

The Solution

Fitting the Slider to the Opening as Built

The team adjusted the installation so the stock-size slider would work in the existing opening and still look intentional when finished. The adjustment is visible today as a 3- to 4-inch glass sidelite on the right side of the metal frame. At the planned dimensions, that piece wouldn't have been needed.

To cover the slider's lead time, the team installed ½-inch glass as a temporary entryway so the building had a normal entrance in the meantime. When the slider arrived, the temporary glass came out and the sliding system went in. The slider specification was approved under Change Order #8.

Mounting a 55-Pound Sign into Glass

The bank's illuminated logo sign weighed about 55 pounds. Southwest Glass had to develop a solution for mounting it into the glass. The glass needed 55 to 60 cut holes to accommodate the sign's lighting and support bars. Some openings that read as one large hole are three individual holes combined to reach the required size.

Each hole had to clear the glass seams and keep an appropriate distance from the panel edges. Getting the glass and the sign installed correctly took close coordination between the glazing and signage work.



Custom Satin-Etched Glass for an Out-of-Square Wall

The lobby's signature blue feature is ¼-inch satin-etched, low-iron, back-painted glass. The same glass appears in other parts of the building, and it reads differently in each location depending on the light.

At the coffee bar, the team cut the glass into an irregular shape that follows the wall's flare and the notch around the table area. The original plans also carried the blue glass onto part of the ceiling and soffit. Southwest Glass explained what that section would require. The client chose not to proceed.

Privacy Glass That Changes on Demand

The conference rooms use switchable privacy glass: 9/16-inch clear tempered laminated glass that changes from clear to frosted at the push of a button. The installation included the power supplies and switches that operate it.

The same panel can look dramatically different depending on the lighting and viewing angle. When room light falls on the frosted surface, the glass can reflect the space around it and read almost like a frosted mirror.

The Results

- Stock-size automatic slider adjusted in the field to fit an off-plan opening
- Temporary ½-inch glass entry installed to bridge the slider's lead time, then replaced with the sliding system
- 55 to 60 holes cut into the glass to mount a 55-pound illuminated sign
- Satin-etched, back-painted glass cut to fit an out-of-square coffee bar wall
- Switchable glass installed in the conference rooms, operating in both clear and frosted states
- 12 change orders managed without bringing the project to a stop
- Zero safety incidents

What This Means for Your Next Project

On a commercial finish-out, glazing comes late in the sequence. By the time glass goes in, the openings are framed and the walls are built. Any gap between the drawings and the field becomes a problem for the glazing crew to solve.

Southwest Glass starts from the building as it stands. The crew works through field conditions on site, and when a design element raises questions, the client learns what it would require before



deciding how to proceed. For a GC managing a detailed finish-out, that means issues in the glazing scope arrive with a proposed fix.

You can see the finished work in the Bank Headquarters entry on our Projects page.

Work with Southwest Glass

Southwest Glass works with general contractors and commercial owners across the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex. If your next commercial finish-out calls for high-end decorative glass and precise coordination with other trades, contact our team to discuss your scope.

