PROJECT CASE STUDY / COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO · CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

Polinsky Children's Center Renovations

9400 Ruffin Court, San Diego, California · Owner: County of San Diego

Prime Contractor: Balfour Beatty Construction, LLC · Bid Package 13 — Metal Fencing



Anti-climb perforated mesh panels with outward-angled picket guard, hot-dip galvanized and painted, added on top of the existing wall. Six feet of new security built onto a structure that was already standing.

OWNER
County of San Diego

PRIME
Balfour Beatty Construction

SUBCONTRACT
$278,660.00 · March 2022

FINAL VALUE
$277,077.00

NEW BARRIER
354 linear feet, all retrofit

FINISH
Hot-dip galvanized, then painted

ADDING SECURITY TO BUILDINGS THAT WERE NEVER DESIGNED TO CARRY IT

The Polinsky Children's Center is where San Diego County takes children who cannot safely stay where they were. The County needed the campus perimeter raised and secured — and it needed that done without demolishing anything, without closing the facility, and without making the place look like somewhere children are being held.

In-Line Fence & Railing carried **Bid Package 13 — Metal Fencing** for Balfour Beatty Construction under subcontract 17040000-013, executed at **$278,660.00**. Not one foot of it was a fresh installation. Every item In-Line built went *on top of something that already existed*.

188 ft
Anti-climb panel on the existing fence line

88 ft
Barrier on top of an existing shade structure

78 ft
Barrier on top of an existing shipping container

Six-foot by four-foot anti-climb panels — 1½″ square frame, ¾″ pickets, 16-gauge perforated mesh — set along the existing fence line. Outward-angled guardian pickets on top. Two no-climb enclosures at the gates, built from channel and angle iron with perforated mesh infill. Lock boxes and dead bolts added to two existing gates. And barrier over the container and the shade structure, where a determined climber would otherwise have a ladder built into the campus.

Anyone can secure a site by building a new wall. Securing one by adding six feet to what is already there, while children live behind it, is a different job entirely.

WHY IT WAS HARD

Every attachment was to an existing structure

A shipping container and a shade structure were not built to take the wind load of a six-foot barrier bolted to their tops. In-Line detailed each connection — mounting plates, hex bolts and washers, extension bars, tabs with carriage bolts, sealant top and bottom — and specified backing where the existing structure could not take the load on its own. That detailing is In-Line's own work, submitted as shop drawings and approved before a single hole was drilled.

Dissimilar metals, on purpose

The shade structure connection carries **neoprene separation washers and sleeved fasteners** between the new galvanized steel and the existing structure. That is a small line on a take-off sheet and it is the difference between a connection that lasts twenty years and one that corrodes at the bolt in five.

Galvanized *and* painted — two finish systems, two trades

Every exterior metal on this package was hot-dip galvanized by In-Line, cold-galv touched up at the field welds, and then handed over **in a ready-for-paint condition** for the painting contractor, who had to formally accept it before In-Line's work was complete. Galvanizing under paint is what makes the green finish in the photograph a fifty-year system instead of a five-year one. Here is why we galvanize.

The welding had to be hidden from the children

The subcontract contains a requirement most fence contractors will never see in their careers: **"Shield all welding activity from view of campus occupants."** The occupants are children. In-Line planned the field welding around that clause — screens up, work sequenced, arc out of sight.

Live campus, screened crews

Fingerprinting was required for every worker under the County's provisions, and the work was phased around the owner's occupancy — activities could be restricted or stopped at the facility's direction, not the contractor's. Weekly certified payroll ran through LCP Tracker. Utility locating required potholing by hand or vacuum excavation only, in six-inch lifts.



The container run, going up. Seventy-eight feet of anti-climb barrier bolted to the top of a shipping container that was never engineered to carry it — detailed, plated, sleeved and sealed by In-Line before anyone climbed a ladder.

WHAT IN-LINE DELIVERED

- **188 linear feet of anti-climb fence** on the existing fence line — 6′ × 4′ panels, 1½″ square frame, ¾″ pickets, 16-gauge perforated mesh.
- **Outward-angled guardian picket guard** along the top.
- **Two no-climb enclosures at the gates** — channel and angle iron frames with perforated mesh, 2′ wide by 8′ tall.
- **78 linear feet of barrier on top of an existing shipping container.**
- **88 linear feet of barrier on top of an existing shade structure**, with neoprene separation washers and sleeved fasteners.
- **Lock boxes and dead bolts** added to two existing gates.
- **All demolition, footings, welding, galvanizing, cold-galv touch-up, caulking and sealants** for its own work, plus certified welders and architect-approved welding procedures submitted in advance.
- **A $6,500 allowance** carried for unforeseen repair or modification to existing fencing, at the construction manager's direction.

SCOPE AT A GLANCE

Anti-climb retrofit | Perforated mesh panel | Outward picket guard | No-climb gate enclosures | Structural attachment detailing | Hot-dip galvanized | Certified welding | Occupied children's facility

THE CONTRACT WENT DOWN, NOT UP

Three change orders were executed on this job. The last one took money out of In-Line's contract.

EXECUTED CHANGE ORDERS — SUBCONTRACT 17040000-013

- **CO 001 · +$9,000.00.** Added fence, May 2022.
- **CO 002 · $0.00.** Administrative — In-Line's address corrected on the agreement.
- **CO 003 · −$10,583.00. Credit for no-climb fencing** that came out of the scope, August 2023.

Original contract $278,660.00. Final contract **$277,077.00** — **$1,583 less than In-Line signed for**, on a job that ran eighteen months on an occupied County campus.

Four contracts in this book finished below the number we signed. That is not an accident of estimating. It is a decision we make every time scope comes out.

The other three: **Palm Desert High School, −$18,092.20. Chollas Heights Child Development Center, −$2,870.63. Monroe Clark Middle School, −$1,266.** Four different general contractors, across fourteen years.

354 ft
Of new anti-climb barrier, all of it retrofit

0
Days the facility closed for the work

−$1,583
Final contract against the executed price

100%

Hot-dip galvanized before paint

County of San Diego · Balfour Beatty Construction, LLC · Subcontract 17040000-013, Bid Package 13 Metal Fencing · Prevailing wage with weekly certified payroll through LCP Tracker · Fingerprinting required · 5% retainage · Certified welders and architect-approved welding procedures.

THE RESULT

A County children's facility whose perimeter now does what it has to do. The barrier is six feet higher than it was. The container and the shade structure are no longer a way over the wall. The gates lock. And from inside the campus it reads as a green painted screen against the sky — not as bars.

That distinction matters more here than on any other page in this book. The people living behind this fence are children in the County's care. **Security that protects them without announcing itself is the entire brief**, and it is the same brief In-Line answered at the East County Crisis Stabilization Unit with resin panel and non-aggressive anti-climb.

WHY INSTITUTIONAL BUILDERS CALL IN-LINE

- **We do anti-climb retrofit.** Adding secure barrier to existing walls, fences, containers, shade structures and rooflines — detailed, engineered at the connection, and submitted for approval before we drill.
- **We build security that does not read as security.** Perforated mesh, outward picket, non-aggressive anti-climb, architectural panel — specified for behavioural health, children's, custodial and school facilities.
- **We galvanize before we paint.** Every exterior metal, hot-dipped and touched up at the welds, handed to the painter in accepted condition.
- **We work occupied facilities with vulnerable occupants.** Fingerprinted crews, phased around the owner, welding shielded from view.
- **We give the money back.** Scope that comes out gets credited, in writing, on a signed change order.

The County of San Diego, the County of Los Angeles, the U.S. Navy, the Air Force, the Coast Guard, the FAA, Caltrans, SANDAG, MTS, the University of California and a dozen school districts. One standard.

HAVE A PROJECT LIKE THIS?

In-Line Fence & Railing has built fence, railing, and guardrail for Southern California public works, utilities, school districts, and government agencies since 1990.

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