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Lighting's Many Roles Shown In Retail Renovation

Display, security, landscaping, and decorative lighting come together to help update shopping mall

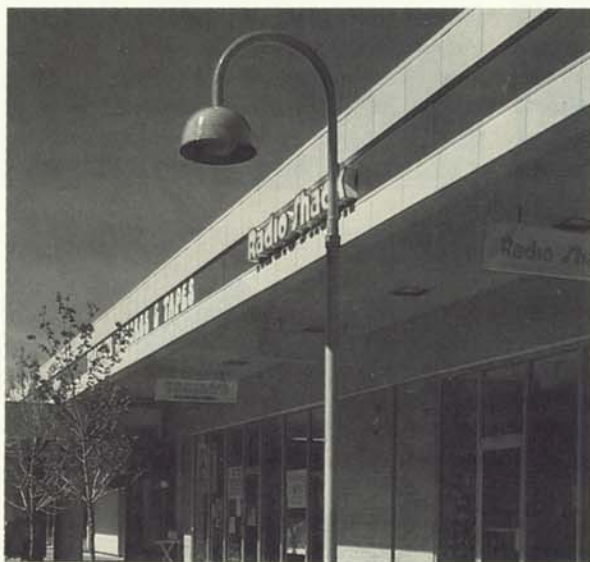
Lighting is an important element in updating the look of a retail center, as it plays many different roles in the overall scheme. Its uses include security in parking lots, display in window areas, atmosphere in walkways, and decoration throughout.

An example of all these needs can be seen in the Ansley Mall in Atlanta. A 173,500-square-foot, 11-acre facility built in the mid 1960s, it was in desperate need of a new look. Thus, developer Selig Enterprises in 1983 hired the local architectural firm of Warren Epstein & Associates Inc. to provide the center with a unified image that retained its open-air atmosphere.

The \$1-million renovation included adding to food stores, creating a new signage program, replanning parking spaces, and renovating the facade and concourse areas. In each of these, lighting was a major element.

Architect Warren Epstein devised a four-pronged illumination program to cover all required aspects, and each needed a separate approach. To achieve necessary levels for security lighting in the parking lot, for example, existing poles were refit with new high-pressure sodium fixtures. Landscape lighting in tree gradings and other spaces also was added in order to highlight new plantings and detail features around the center.

The most dramatic change occurred in the under-canopy area above the stores, which front two major thoroughfares in midtown Atlanta. New overhangs were installed on one side, and existing ones were lengthened on the



Ansley Mall in Atlanta used a variety of lighting fixtures to highlight its renovated image. They included decorative lighting in the form of custom-made arched standards and 175-watt mercury fixtures from TrimbleHouse Inc. Improved soffit lighting was achieved with metal-halide fixtures from Guth, while Prescolite fixtures were used for landscaping, and Nu-Art Lighting Co.'s bracketed lights were installed in the renovated arched arcade.

other. Metal-halide recessed fixtures were placed in this soffit area to more than double footcandle levels and provide the color rendition required by the retailers. "The public areas had been very nondescript and underplayed," Epstein said. "Now they are very cheerful and active."

Decorative units also improved

Another eye-catching improvement was made in the decorative lighting throughout the mall. Selected for their visual aesthetics, these units were composed of a bright red, custom-cast aluminum post featuring a high arch that ended in an 18-inch diameter plastic globe housing a 175-watt mercury fixture. The red arched standard recalls the arched ceiling in new concourses as well as the red neon lighting that now outlines the mall's entry. These areas were further highlighted

with new benches and plantings.

The extensive lighting work, which was handled by general contractor VWC Inc. and electrical contractor Electrical Constructors Co., helped emphasize the other updating work, which centered on redesigning the 2,400 linear feet of facade with bold horizontal bands and canopies over each store and refacing concrete columns with steel tubing to make them blend with the surroundings.

The project has proven a success on all fronts. The center is now 100% occupied and offers a unified and pleasant atmosphere for shoppers. In addition, it was presented a 1984 Aurora Merit Award for design by the Southeastern Builders Conference and recently was nominated for a civic design award. Without doubt, the complete approach to its lighting challenges played a major role in making this goal a reality. **CR**