

## Houston Area Safety Council

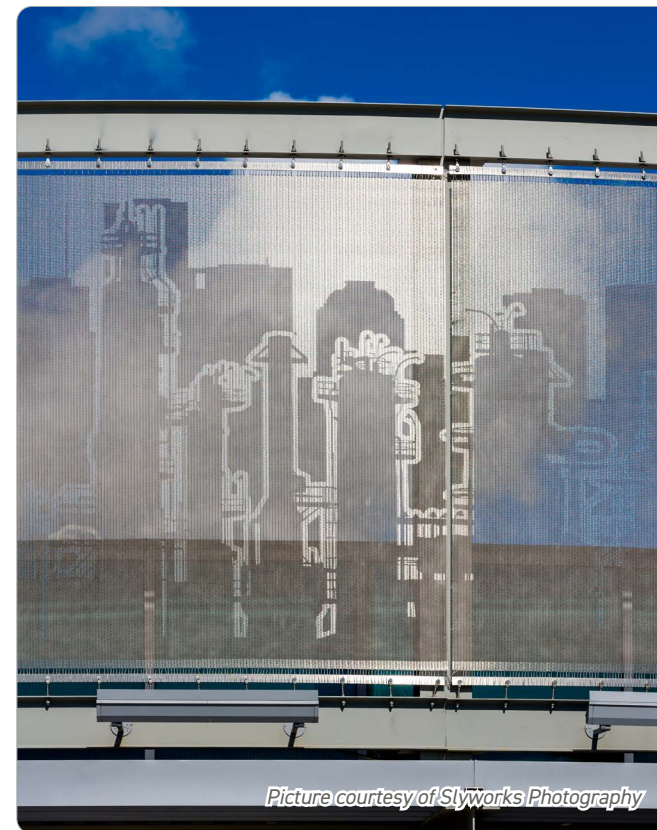
### Pasadena, USA

Starting in 2009, the new campus of the Houston Area Safety Council was created in three construction stages. It was constructed on a 34 hectare site in Pasadena, just 15 kilometers from Houston, that was acquired one year previously. Local architecture firm Kirksey, which specializes in green buildings for industrial operations, planned the entire project. It was opened in 2013 as the new HQ of the HASC. All buildings were equipped to the latest technical standards. They also set standards in ecological and energy-usage terms and are all LEED-certified.

A fully-glazed semicircular entrance area underlines the building's welcoming effect. Its raised canopy bears the clinic's name and also creates the stage for one of the rooftop parapets made of stainless steel mesh that follow the semicircular building form. The shimmering texture combines technical aesthetics with a large number of functional performance characteristics. The mesh thereby guarantees efficient solar protection for the recessed windows on the top floor, while granting unrestricted views of the beautifully sculpted green spaces on the campus. Despite its sophisticated appearance, it also offers reliable protection from the hurricanes regularly encountered in the region. Low maintenance, durable and almost completely recyclable at the end of its useful life, the mesh supports the LEED-certified sustainability of the building.

For the architects the decisive impetus for selecting this material came from the specific mesh design, which facilitates imaging by etching. Their design included an illustrated balustrade as an identity-creating element of the clinic that visualizes working life in the region and thereby also the focus of the HASC. The image developed by Kirksey shows the skyline of Houston with skyscrapers, drilling rigs, chimneys and cranes together with the people that work there. This complex perspective was applied to the stainless steel mesh in a silhouette-like form using a special etching process developed in-house by GKD-USA.

In comprehensive tests, GKD therefore developed a process with which the design template could be blasted with the desired level of detail and spatial effect. This led to a visually seamless panoramic view of the hustle and bustle in the region over a total area of 100 square meters, comprising seven panels – each measuring 3.4 x 4.3 meters. Without any further surface treatment, this imagery is both permanently weather-proof and UV-resistant. Depending on the incidence of light and the viewing angle, the images can appear either transparent or opaque. At night, spotlights lend the scenery the appearance of a shadow theater using targeted light accents.



*Picture courtesy of Slyworks Photography*

|                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Environment:      | urban                   |
| Use:              | mesh façade             |
| Material:         | 316 Omax-1520           |
| Manufacturer:     | GKD                     |
| Architects:       | Kirksey Architecture    |
| Photographs:      | Slyworks Photography    |
| More information: | gkd.de or impetus-pr.de |



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