

Balanced Doors Revive Boston's State Transportation Building

THE MASSACHUSETTS TRANSPORTATION BUILDING



Two dozen balanced doors revive Boston's State Transportation Building

The Massachusetts Transportation Building is a mixed-use facility in downtown Boston with independent tenant and state offices, parking for both state employees and the public, restaurants, a day care, as well as offices for nearby Emerson College and Beantown Trolley Tours of Boston. The eight-story, 902,000 sq. ft. building, located in the heart of Boston's theater district, was originally designed and built as a "showpiece of energy efficiency."

The building's construction was completed in 1984 and the original entrance doors were in use for more than 30 years until 2018. These doors were no longer performing as they should, causing issues related to ADA accessibility and

overall compliance with related standards. Aesthetically, the entrances looked dated because of scratches, chipped paint, and decades of use. What was once considered the symbol of energy efficiency in Boston, the State Transportation Building fell behind the times and building managers knew they needed an upgrade.

The building's main doors were replaced with a total of 24 stainless steel Ellison custom balanced doors, and select entryways were equipped with PowerNow® Stanley® Magic-Force™ low-energy concealed overhead power operators to meet the latest ADA standards. The doors feature 4" high top rails, 10" high bottom rails, and 4" wide stiles on each side.

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“The stainless steel balanced doors are installed at various high-usage areas, so quality and longevity were of utmost importance. Ellison was exactly what management was looking for,” says René Bouchard, Professional Specifier, President and CEO of Smoot Associates, Inc. “I think Ellison is becoming the standard of quality in the city of Boston.”

The building sees an abundance of visitors daily and experiences stretches of heavy foot traffic. Ellison balanced doors are ideal for transportation spaces because of their quality construction coupled with durable hardware components. This combination lends long-term performance to all Ellison entrance systems, allowing them to last through decades of use and ever-changing weather cycles.

Designed with precision, Ellison balanced doors and frames are formed and welded using durable sheet materials that give them a rigid, unitized structure and helps them last much longer than typical commercial entryways. The balanced hardware sets them apart even further, notably the inset pivot point located at two-thirds the width of the door. Compared to standard hinge doors, Ellison doors are much easier to operate even on the windiest days.

When opening, external and internal pressures are reduced at both sides of the door leaf. This is beneficial for areas of constant foot traffic because the doors are much easier to open and swing clearance requirements are reduced, providing a smooth pedestrian flow.

“I’ve been working with balanced doors for 28 years now and I always recommend Ellison,” says Frank Greatorex, Jr. of K&G Entrances, the glazing contractor who performed the installation. “It was a trouble-free installation process and the updated entrances look much more inviting now.”

The new balanced doors successfully modernize the State Transportation Building, shaping the first interaction for visitors at its main access points. The renovations provide the benefit of long-lasting doors for owners and management, but pedestrians reap the benefits too with an effortless transition upon entering and exiting the building.

Ellison provides detailed record keeping and full warranties, which is important when considering the extensive lifespan of an Ellison door. Every door made is imprinted with an individual project number to facilitate easy tracking and maintenance. In addition, all Ellison balanced hardware components are machined in-house, so replacement components are always readily available upon request.

Quality control and performance are paramount at Ellison Bronze, which is why each door – including all balanced hardware mechanisms – are cast, crafted, formed, and uniquely constructed from the finest choice of materials at Ellison’s ISO 9001:2015-certified facility in Falconer, NY.

The Massachusetts Transportation Building entrance renovations were completed in January 2018. The project team included Imai Keller Moore Architects, Smoot Associates, Inc., and K&G Entrances Inc.



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