The colorful, Venetian-style Bayfront Marketplace is in Naples, Fla.

Photo by William Kildow

The new Bayfront Marketplace is a high-profile, mixed-use project with a Venetian flare set in the heart of downtown Naples, Fla. The five-story, four-building condominium complex has multiple archways, a lower-level colonnade with restaurants and retail shops, and a stucco exterior finished in 11 different textures.

The exterior for the job was awarded to AA Stucco & Drywall Inc.,
a Naples-based contractor founded in 1975 by Larry R Andrews. When they began construction of the upscale development, company management desired an exterior sheathing that "was tough and durable. They wanted to make sure that the substrate backing the stucco finish would be durable and water-resistant.

To meet these objectives, AA Stucco & Drywall decided to use FIBEROCK® Brand Sheathing with AQUATOUGH™ from USG.

This innovative new sheathing features integral water-resistance and built-in drainage channels. The patented gypsum/cellulose fiber formulation makes the sheathing water-resistant. As a result, no facing layer is needed to add strength or provide a primary water barrier.

This was the first time AA Stucco’s crews used the
sheathing. According to Jay La Sage, AA Stucco superintendent, the installation went smoothly.

“I personally like the FIBEROCK board,” La Sage says. “It’s a nice, strong, durable product. It’s a little harder to cut than regular gypsum drywall, but we used the proper tools, which made it easy. We had a lot of arched details, so there was a lot of scoring and cutting on the job.”

AA Stucco had the contract for both interior and exterior wall construction, which included all metal stud layout and framing, the hanging of all interior gypsum wallboard and the exterior sheathing, wire lath and stucco finish applications.

Masonry block was installed throughout the buildings, both for structural support and to build out the window and door wells. As such, AA Stucco’s crews framed the exterior with 20-gauge, 6-inch steel studs about three quarters of an inch back from the masonry block.
Metal framing was set back three quarters of an inch, so the half-inch sheathing panels topped with lath would butt evenly with the exterior masonry.

This installation allowed the \( \frac{1}{4} \)-inch-thick, 4- by 8-foot FIBEROCK panels and conventional stucco assembly to be applied flush with the block. Both the masonry and sheathing sections were covered with a scratch coat, brown coat and finish texture, so that the transitions between the FIBEROCK panels and masonry were seamless.

“The sheathing was used on all of the exterior framing on the vertical faces. We staggered the vertical joints every 4 feet, just like you would hang plywood or interior drywall,” La Sage says. “But there was a lot of special work to be done. It’s an unusual series of buildings
because there’s exterior detail featuring archways and special build-outs above the windows.

The Bayfront Market required close to 50,000 square feet of sheathing. Despite the project’s large size, AA Stucco’s wall construction stayed on schedule. The general contractor, architects and, most importantly, the owners are pleased with the results.

“I think the walls came out a lot truer. The board just lays real flat on the framing,” La Sage says. “Other products can get a little warped during storage, and such warps don’t always come out when you apply them to studs.”

Indeed, the owners of the Bayfront Marketplace will have few worries in the years to come. The five buildings in the development have tough, weather-resistant exteriors.

AA Stucco recently completed its work on the Bayfront Marketplace, and residents, restaurants and retail tenants have already taken occupancy.