

http://www.newsminer.com/business/hc-contractors-grows-to-become-familiar-name-in-fairbanks/article_78111600-1863-11e3-bd24-0019bb30f31a.html

HC Contractors grows to become familiar name in Fairbanks

Weston Morrow/wmorrow@newsminer.com

Sep 8, 2013

FAIRBANKS — When Bill Hoople walks through Fairbanks, he can point out building after building he helped create — from the iconic, the Rabinowitz Courthouse, to the mundane, the state parking garage downtown.

Hoople is the sole owner and president of HC Contractors, one of the few construction companies based in Fairbanks. Many Fairbanksans likely will recognize the company's name from the number of projects it is in the process of completing around town.

The contractors have been working this summer on projects on Wickersham Street, building bike paths on Chena Pump Road and installing more than 100 handicap ramps throughout the city.

"That's why you see us quite a bit," Hoople said with a laugh. "When you do 104 handicap ramps downtown, we're on every street corner."

Business hasn't always been this big for HC. When Hoople first started the company, there were only three employees: himself, a man named Daryl Rian and Rian's son, Troy. Rian has since retired, but his son still is there working with Hoople since the beginning.

Hoople was born in eastern Washington state. After graduating from Washington State University he moved to Alaska to get his masters degree in engineering at University of Alaska Fairbanks.

After working for several years with a contracting company, his employer decided to pull out of Fairbanks, but Hoople wanted to stay.

"I liked it so I stayed here," he said. "I hadn't ever planned on having a company."

Hoople said his wife and her family, who owned their own business, encouraged him to give it a try. And in 1993, HC contracting opened with three employees.

For years, the company served as a subcontractor for other companies, doing the ground work and site development. In 2005, it purchased an asphalt plant and paver and started doing road work for the city and borough.

Now it has the capacity to serve not only as subcontractors but as the primary contractor on an entire building project.

From the three employees with which it started, HC has grown to employ more than 186 people. It has constructed buildings ranging from hangars on Eielson Air Force Base and Fort Wainwright, to schools such as Pearl Creek.

“It’s very rewarding,” Hoople said. “I like to be a part of the projects that really improve Fairbanks and the area and the lives of people.”

Since starting in 1993, HC has grown steadily by about 25 percent each year, he said, doubling in size every four years. Through it all Hoople remains humble, though.

He doesn’t claim a secret for success, only that they found a good niche and stuck to it. If anything, he said, the people he works with have been his secret to success.

“I don’t want to sound like we brag on ourselves or we’re anything special,” Hoople said, “but we’re proud just being part of the community.”

Contact staff writer Weston Morrow at 459-7520.