



WE value people. **WE** build dreams.

Betting Big on Baton Rouge

How We Preserved History and Delivered a Modern, Revenue-Ready Casino

PROJECT: Bally's Baton Rouge



CASE STUDY

Bally's

Bally's Baton Rouge (formerly Belle of Baton Rouge) is a landmark destination along the Mississippi River in downtown Baton Rouge. Following the successful completion of The Queen Baton Rouge in 2023, W.E. O'Neil was selected to deliver a 232,000 SF transformation of the property into a modern gaming destination. The scope included the landside relocation of the casino, conversion of a glass atrium into a reimagined gaming floor, a full interior and exterior renovation of the 242-key hotel, restoration of parking facilities, and the addition of contemporary amenities.



Gaming construction is complex, but O'Neil helped us navigate regulations, explain delays to the gaming board, and keep the project moving.

Stacy Stagg
Senior VP & Regional General Manager
Bally's Inc. (former)



THE CHALLENGE

This adaptive reuse project required balancing historic preservation with the integration of complex gaming infrastructure, mechanical systems, and modern amenities in a high-traffic, highly regulated environment.

Bally's Baton Rouge presented four key construction challenges:

- **Varied floor conditions:** Sections included a basement, depressed floors requiring raised flooring with underfloor rough-ins, and on-grade areas that needed saw-cut installations for gaming equipment.
- **Honoring Local Legacy:** Maintaining architectural integrity while integrating modern gaming layouts and utilities.
- **Aging glass roof leaks:** The over 30-year-old roof had persistent leaks that required safe, precise sealing without interfering with other construction activities.
- **Complex site conditions:** Construction was executed in close proximity to the Mississippi River, active rail lines, and century-old structures, requiring careful coordination and strict adherence to regulatory requirements.



The design team didn't hide the history—they embraced it. This casino pays homage to Baton Rouge's industrial roots and river culture. The easy solution was to knock it down. We chose the harder path: preserve the history and create something extraordinary.

Richard Davey
Vice President of Operations, W.E. O'Neil

THE SOLUTION

Built for the Endgame

W.E. O'Neil applied its deep expertise in adaptive reuse, casino, and complex construction to overcome the project's unique challenges. Our solutions combined innovative engineering, precise planning, and coordination with regulatory agencies and local subcontractors.

Approach Highlights:

- > **Custom flooring solutions:** Tailored raised-floor platforms and saw-cut installations to accommodate varied conditions.
- > **Mezzanine integration:** Cold-formed steel mezzanine installed above the gaming floor to house mechanical systems while preserving the atrium's character.



Photo of air handler installation at the mezzanine

- > **Roof restoration:** Specialized cable-and-rigging system allowed safe removal of select glass panes, installation of secure posts, and precise sealing of each mullion.
- > **Regulatory coordination:** Close collaboration with the Army Corps of Engineers, city utilities, and local subcontractors ensured safety, compliance, and operational efficiency.

THE RESULT

Reimagined Landmark Glass Atrium

Bally's Baton Rouge is now a fully modern, operational casino that honors its historic roots. Thoughtful engineering, precise planning, and collaborative problem-solving overcame complex challenges, delivering the project on time and on budget.



O'Neil will go into a market where they have no deep roots and leave it better than they found it. That's extraordinary. It's all about relationships.

Jim Baum,
Senior VP, Design & Construction
Gaming & Leisure Properties, Inc.

This redevelopment project serves as a benchmark for blending historic preservation with high-performance gaming infrastructure.

"O'Neil treated this project as their own, staying late and always finding solutions. When the state police told us this was the best compliance mark, they've ever seen, I knew we had done it—and O'Neil was right there with us. Their engagement and flexibility set them apart. They go above and beyond, even helping us find temporary workers

when we were short-staffed," said Stacy Stagg, Former Senior VP & Regional General Manager, Bally's Inc.

The finished casino features a 25,000 SF gaming floor with roughly 800 Vegas-style slots, 20–25 table games, a DraftKings Sportsbook with a 46-foot screen, and a variety of new dining and entertainment venues.

In March 2025, our team successfully delivered the first phase: a full renovation of the 10-story, 242-room hotel. The completion of the gaming floor, along with the key upgrades such as the restoration of a five-story parking garage, marked the full transformation of this historic landmark in time for the December 6, 2025 grand opening.

"O'Neil will go into a market where they have no deep roots and leave it better than they found it. That's extraordinary. It's all about relationships," said Jim Baum, Senior VP, Design & Construction, for Gaming & Leisure Properties, Inc. "When you have the faith and trust in your construction partner, everything else becomes intuitive. I've hired O'Neil for projects with four different gaming companies. They bring discipline, integrity, and cultural alignment every time."

This redevelopment sets a benchmark for blending historic preservation with high-performance gaming infrastructure, creating a vibrant entertainment destination for the community.



The teamwork is what I value most. O'Neil picks the right people and the right subs, and that makes all the difference. We've had challenges—drawings, budgets, schedules—but we worked through them together. The schedule didn't slip, and budget didn't go up.

Roger Charles,
Principal, Roger Charles Design

BUILDING SMARTER. GREATER CONTROL OF TIME AND COSTS.

Let's build something great together!

CONTACT

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OUR GAMING EXPERTISE

