

Facility Manager Project Profile

Kim Battle

A Seat at the Table

Pluckers' director of facilities explains the importance of having a voice in the construction and design process

What is your official title and how long have you been at Pluckers Wing Bar? I'm a native to Austin, Texas, and have a BBA from Concordia University Austin. I've been with the company for 11 years, and I'm now Director of Facilities for Pluckers Wing Bar, a restaurant and sports bar concept that started in Austin and has locations in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, Houston and the greater Austin area.

How many restaurants does Pluckers operate? Are there any franchise locations? We have 16 locations in the greater Texas area and two franchise locations in Baton Rouge, La. We are slated to open eight new locations over the next 18 months.

How is the Pluckers facilities department structured? We have a director of facilities and two facilities coordinators—and we all wear many hats! Collectively, it's our responsibility to ensure that all building components and equipment are in good working condition. We divide and conquer by managing preventive maintenance programs and demand work requests through our CMMS program, ensuring the right providers show up in a timely manner and work is satisfactorily completed.

Does Pluckers use internal resources for new store design and drawings? We've been working with the same architectural firm since 2008. Over the years, we have been able to modify and improve our plans as a cohesive team.

What is your approach to process improvements for future builds? The way we operate translates down to the guest experience. If we can't efficiently run our restaurants, we can't deliver that top-notch service our guests know and love. We are always open to criticism and input as we design new locations.

Do you have direct input in design and construction decisions concerning new stores? I'm able to articulate to our operations team the challenges associated with finish selections based on maintenance and upkeep post-construction. We may try something new on a future project to see how it works for us and either adopt the change or go back to where we were. Sometimes you won't know if the change is beneficial until you try it. This is something we recognize and are willing to put into practice.

What specific design changes have you made to your facility to improve customer experience? We are continually striving to make our restaurants inviting and comfortable for our guests.

What changes have been made to make the restaurant easier to maintain? We protect all of our drains and try to specify only easily cleanable products. We also focus on materials that are able to withstand the wear and tear of our industry.

What equipment changes, if any, have been made to save valuable utility dollars? All of our equipment is purchased new from the manufacturer.

How many different prototypes does Pluckers have? We have about three prototypes we work from, but as with any new location, there are always unique challenges. With new sites, there are so many considerations, such as parking, right of ways and site utilities, to name a few.

What type of different designs are used for the varying sites? You'll always find a dining room and bar inside our restaurants in a typical layout. What may change is the size or layout of the patio and exterior building elevations.

Does Pluckers leverage any sustainable or green items in their new builds? All lighting is LED.

In your opinion, what is the biggest takeaway from being involved with store design decisions? I believe our facilities team can do a better job at managing their service providers and work flow when they understand why and how design decisions were made. We've specified everything for a reason, so being able to articulate that to my team and make the drawings available for each location enables them to maintain our facilities congruent with what we specified when we built the store.

Kim Battle is the Director of Facilities at Pluckers Wing Bar.