

Set Your Building Apart

Strategic tenant amenities and improvements are becoming real differentiators in the marketplace



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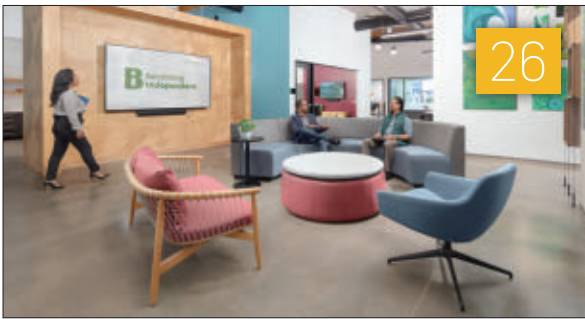
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This outdoor terrace was designed for EisnerAmper by FCA and Eisner Design.
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Photo courtesy: Frank Oudeman

Future-Focused Facilities



The meaning of “high performance” is evolving.

What does the next decade hold for commercial real estate and facility management? If this issue is any indication, today's buildings are paving the way for a future that's hyper-focused on operating efficiently and delivering what occupants need. The meaning of “high performance” is evolving, and buildings are adapting with it. On page 16, we profile 55 H Street NW—a student housing development on Georgetown University's growing downtown Capitol Campus in Washington, DC. Designed by Robert A.M. Stern Architects with interiors by Elkus Manfredi Architects, this super-sustainable destination is LEED Platinum and all-electric, with zero dependence on fossil fuels. Then, turn to page 8 to find out how property professionals can take advantage of the looming Class A office shortage by making strategic investments in Class B buildings. “The perfect storm of higher costs and lower revenue will end up eliminating a third of the supply of office space,” predicts author Kurt von Koch, who shares four straightforward, cost-effective changes owners can make to Class B properties.

A high-performance building isn't just at the top of its game behind the scenes—it also ensures tenants have what they need when they need it. We examine WiredScore and SmartScore—two certification programs for connected and smart buildings—on page 10, exploring how they can serve as a differentiator in the marketplace. Our exploration of 2024's top tenant amenities on page 20 and how to tell which amenities fit your building best further dives into ways you can set your building apart from its competitors today and in the future. “The common thread is that [tenants] want their employees surprised by how robust the amenity package is,” explained Grant Bollman, senior associate at Lee & Associates of Illinois, in our amenity roundup.

How are you improving your building's performance? Are you starting a retrofit project soon or remodeling an underutilized space? Let us know how you're upgrading your facilities for future readiness at jpenny@endeavorb2b.com!

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A First for the Meta Campus

Modular construction gets a thumbs up at the citizenM hotel, an affordable luxury destination at Meta's Menlo Park headquarters.

PROJECT PROFILE:

Project: citizenM hotel, Meta Menlo Park campus

Photography: Courtesy of citizenM

The exterior of the citizenM Menlo Park hotel is the result of modular construction and an architectural dialog with Frank Gehry designs at Meta's nearby headquarters.

What do hotel guests need when visiting Meta's Menlo Park campus? Fun, fast and fresh accommodations for innovators who are on the go with meetings and networking. Built with modular construction and energetic interiors, citizenM's Menlo Park hotel is the perfect recharging spot before a life-changing pitch.

The five-story, 79,400-square-foot hotel offers 240 guestrooms just blocks away from the Meta headquarters. Per the hotel's website, citizenM bills itself as "what Silicon Valley's been missing—a playful, tech-forward hotel that's an escape for worker bees and a haven for business travelers."

Claudia Abt, citizenM's chief design officer, discusses the hotel's unique facets.

WHY IS MODULAR CONSTRUCTION ADVANTAGEOUS FOR HOSPITALITY PROJECTS?

About 25% of citizenM's hotel portfolio has utilized modular construction. This method offers two main advantages: time to market and quality control. Both of these are critical factors because development speed is vital in enabling large projects to pencil out. The modular approach reduces the timeline by three to four

months compared to a hotel built using traditional onsite methods. Quality control is also a must for a global hotelier with a set of brand standards that are followed in a variety of regional construction contexts.

Prefabrication even had the benefit of reducing dust and noise on the worksite. Over 90% of the work on the modules are completed ahead of time by CIMC Modular Building Holding Company and then shipped to the site ready to assemble. Given this particular project's proximity to an active corporate workplace, modular construction helped us minimize disruption for other users of the Meta campus and surrounding communities.

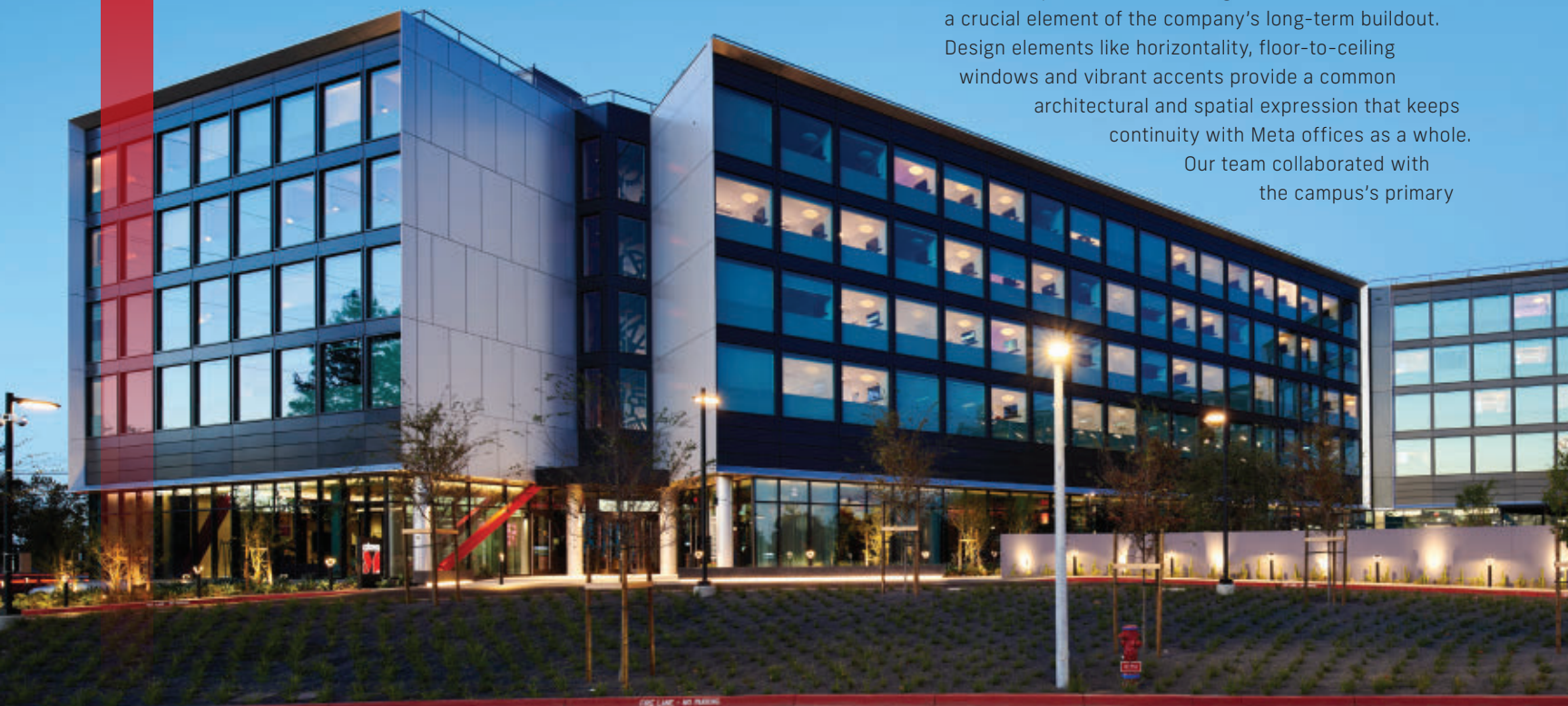
The modular construction also complied with California's seismic requirements as well as stipulations by the International Seismic Application Technologies (ISAT) and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Through the building's modules themselves and accounting for inter-story displacement, they are able to withstand lateral forces based on their proximity to major fault lines.

WHAT DIRECTED THE BUILDING'S ORIENTATION AND WINGED STRUCTURE?

This hotel resulted from an open competition initiated by Meta in 2015 to create the first-ever hotel at its Menlo Park headquarters. The building itself was conceived as a crucial element of the company's long-term buildout. Design elements like horizontality, floor-to-ceiling windows and vibrant accents provide a common

architectural and spatial expression that keeps continuity with Meta offices as a whole.

Our team collaborated with the campus's primary





This red fire escape is transformed into a standout feature through branded colors at the citizenM Menlo Park hotel. The adjacent mural is by area artist Alexandra Bowman and represents the neighborhood's "diverse community and wildlife sanctuary," according to her website.



ABOVE: Rather than a traditional lobby with a reception desk, Menlo Park hotel guest use kiosks to check in. They can then flow to a welcoming living room. With artwork by local creatives and Instagram-worthy backdrops, these reimagined foyers are a hallmark of each citizenM location.



LEFT: Guestrooms at the citizenM Menlo Park are 150 square feet, including one bed and a full bath. The dimensions, which are about half the size of a traditional hotel room, are based on traveler demographics and stay expectations. Their smaller footprint also frees up more space for communal amenities, including self-service ironing rooms on every floor.

architect, Frank O. Gehry, during the initial design stages.

WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION FOR THE SIGNATURE RED STAIRCASE ON THE EXTERIOR?

This is a great instance of a mundane code requirement evolving into a real design statement thanks to a creative project team. The red stairs started as necessary external egress, but it ultimately became a distinctive feature of the building. We realized that we could enrich this piece of infrastructure with citizenM's red color scheme, integrating a powerful brand message. Alexandra Bowman, mural artist, then intentionally extended the color palette into her work.

HOW IS SUSTAINABILITY INCORPORATED INTO THE PROJECT?


At citizenM, we are constantly setting more ambitious ESG goals for every facet of the company, including our design team. It is the goal of citizenM's international brand for all hotels to hold either BREEAM-NC Excellent or LEED-BD+C Gold accreditation.

In particular, modular construction offered numerous environmental advantages, notably reducing construction

waste by up to 60% over conventional methods. It also improved thermal performance and energy consumption through a tight and well-insulated envelope.

WHAT WAS THE STRATEGY BEHIND THE RATIO OF GUEST ROOMS TO COMMON AREAS?

The citizenM concept is the same across its portfolio of over 30 locations. Offering a range of comfortable, flexible and inspiring work environments outside of the individual hotel room has always been important to the citizenM experience. We've found that our guests gravitate towards common spaces and social areas.

For example, it's why the large "living rooms" are intentionally designed to feel more like home than a traditional lobby. Additionally, Menlo Park's living room opens to a patio with plentiful cafe tables and chairs for a flexible indoor-outdoor experience that's ideal for its California location. Visitors also appreciate the societyM meeting spaces for remote work or offsite networking, which supports this era of remote-hybrid work. 

A former BUILDINGS editor, Jennie Morton is a writer specializing in commercial architecture, IoT and proptech.



Now is the Time to Upgrade Class B Office Space

by Kurt von Koch

The last few years have presented significant challenges for office real estate stakeholders, and the near term outlook remains daunting. Despite many companies experiencing in-office utilization rates closer to pre-pandemic levels, overall office vacancy rates hit a record high of 19.6% in the fourth quarter of 2023, according to Moody's Analytics, and are expected to peak at almost 21% later in 2024. That's putting downward pressure on rents at the same time many building owners are having to refinance maturing mortgages at much higher interest rates.

At least one industry leader has predicted that this perfect storm of higher costs and lower revenue will end up

eliminating a third of the supply of office space. However, a recent CoStar study indicates that this dire prediction may not uniformly apply to every type of office building.

Office buildings are categorized into three classes, based on certain characteristics, including appearance, equipment and technology:

- **Class C**, the lowest tier, includes older buildings with outdated technology that are in need of extensive renovations.
- **Class B** office buildings tend to be 10 to 20 years old, with many on the older end of that scale showing their age in terms of appearance, equipment and technology.



- **Class A** office buildings are newer structures in prime locations with top-notch management and cutting-edge technology.

It's this last category of buildings that is bucking the conventional wisdom. The reason?

Construction of Class A properties has slowed to record lows, while demand continues to rise. The CoStar study found that buildings aged 0-3 years represent 2.4% of office inventory in the U.S., in line with pre-pandemic averages. However, last year was the slowest period for Class A construction starts since 2011, putting these premier facilities on track to make up only about 1% of inventory by 2027.

As the availability of Class A office space shrinks, owners and operators of Class B spaces can tap into the high demand by introducing features that typically attract tenants to these premium properties. Here are four straightforward and cost-effective changes property owners can make to get their Class B or C offices punching above their weight.

1. PUT SUSTAINABILITY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The number of U.S. jurisdictions adopting building performance standards has nearly doubled since 2020, according to a report by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE). As these climate-related regulations proliferate, organizations are being forced to get more serious about their carbon footprint. In fact, 57% of respondents to FM:Systems' 2023 Inside the Workplace survey said that sustainability will be a higher priority this year than it was in the past. This is adding to the appeal of Class A spaces, which are typically more energy-efficient.

"With more employees returning to the office, the shortage of Class A space is expected to intensify, presenting a greater opportunity for Class B owners and operators to elevate their buildings above the rest of the pack."

Class B spaces can enhance their sustainability bona fides by integrating technology solutions that facilitate greenhouse gas emissions reporting and enable occupants to monitor and manage sustainability performance. Furthermore, while sustainability initiatives are increasingly becoming compulsory, there remains considerable marketing and brand-enhancement value in setting and achieving sustainability goals.

2. CONSIDER HIGH-IMPACT EQUIPMENT UPGRADES

One of the appeals for tenants moving into a higher-end office space is they won't be dealing with flickering fluorescent tubes, inoperative elevators, or loud, rickety HVAC systems. Investing in high-impact equipment upgrades, such as workplace occupancy sensors and digital twins, can enhance tenant experiences, increase rent potential, and minimize unplanned outages and costly repairs.

Additionally, many advanced workplace technologies that were once viewed as "nice to haves," like indoor air quality (IAQ) sensors and utilization sensors, are now more affordable, making them more accessible for organizations to integrate into their offices. Even improvements in battery life performance and the ability for smart devices to easily connect to different workplace management solutions means more organizations can leverage data-driven insights about building performance and utilization in order to identify major cost-reduction opportunities.

3. DEMONSTRATE YOUR HIGH IAQ

Poor indoor air quality (IAQ) has been linked to low productivity, increased stress and diminished cognitive function in employees. That's a big reason Class A buildings tout state-of-the-art HVAC systems with advanced filtration systems and other features. Class B facility managers can follow suit by upgrading their ventilation systems and combining environmental and occupancy sensors with dashboards that provide real-time information about IAQ in specific areas of the office or floors within a building.

Sensors can also be used in conjunction with workplace management systems to track and control other factors that can impact employee comfort and wellbeing, like temperature, humidity and light. These solutions present the added value of being useful for increasing operational efficiency and reducing energy consumption.

4. DON'T SKIMP ON SECURITY

Class A buildings often feature top-of-the-line solutions to keep occupants safe and secure. Fortunately, many of these features can be replicated in older buildings through the use of devices such as access sensors, surveillance cameras, visitor management systems and access control systems. Integrating these solutions into a robust workplace management system allows for real-time monitoring and can help enable a quick response to potential threats. These smart building solutions can also detect hazards like smoke, fire, gas leaks or suspicious activity and automatically notify authorities.

Despite the uncertainties ahead for office real estate stakeholders, recent trends suggest that the worst-case scenarios may not materialize. For example, half of respondents to the FM:Systems survey reported that employees are spending more time in the office than they were a year ago, and 60% of business leaders want employees in the office full time. Recently, household names like UPS, Boeing and JPMorganChase joined a growing list of companies that have announced plans to require their employees to return to the office full time. With more employees returning to the office, the shortage of Class A space is expected to intensify, presenting a greater opportunity for Class B owners and operators to elevate their buildings above the rest of the pack. 🏢

by Kurt von Koch, CEO of **FM:Systems**, the all-in-one workplace management platform used by the world's largest organizations to access, manage, and measure every aspect of their real estate portfolio

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Certifying Smarter

These building rating systems focus on connectivity and smart tech. Could they be differentiators for your facility?

FLOORS
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Is your building smart or well-connected? These terms are often used to describe buildings with some level of high-speed connectivity or amenities that unlock with a tenant experience app, but they can be nebulous. Two certifications—WiredScore and SmartScore—can help you define exactly what these terms mean for your connected building by evaluating what you have to offer.

Here's how they're different—and how to use them to set your building apart in the marketplace.

WHAT ARE WIREScore AND SMARTScore?

Both WiredScore and SmartScore demonstrate a building's commitment to resilience and deploying technology that enables smart building outcomes, said David Stephenson, director of the



LEFT: The Ally Charlotte Center in Charlotte, North Carolina, was 80% pre-leased and sold within four months of completion. Crescent Communities itself relocated its headquarters to the building.

FAR LEFT: The Ally Charlotte Center is certified WiredScore Platinum—the highest level offered. This means the building is best in class across all features of connectivity. It was the first building in Charlotte to achieve this level of certification. In addition to its WiredScore certification, the Ally Charlotte Center has been awarded LEED Silver and WELL Core & Shell Gold.

BELOW: This public plaza at the Ally Charlotte Center gives people a place to gather outside the 26-story mixed-use office tower.

Photos © Mark Herboth, courtesy of Little Diversified Architectural Consulting



Smart Building Studio for Little Diversified Architectural Consulting. WiredScore focuses on building infrastructure, such as seamless connectivity and the resilience of systems coming into the building. SmartScore measures how technologies enable smart building operations, like seamless access control, Stephenson explained.

The certifications are administered by the organization WiredScore, founded in 2013. WiredScore certification is available for homes, offices and neighborhoods in development or already occupied. Connected buildings certified with WiredScore will deliver on four primary outcomes:

- **Mobile and internet:** Outstanding connectivity is in place to deliver the very best user experience to occupiers across the building.
- **Setup:** People can connect to the internet quickly and easily without any unnecessary complications. The setup process has been streamlined to ensure a hassle-free experience.
- **Future-ready:** The building can accommodate new and emerging technologies to meet the requirements of occupiers well into the future.
- **Resiliency:** The building is resilient against outages, accidental damages, cyberattacks, or climate change.

SmartScore certification, which launched in 2021, is intended to help landlords and developers create smart buildings that deliver exceptional user experiences, drive cost efficiency, meet high standards of sustainability and be fully future-ready, according to Andrew Freitas, director of business development, North America, for WiredScore. It's available for offices and neighborhoods. SmartScore-certified buildings deliver on these outcomes:

- **Inspirational experience:** A workplace that attracts and delights, with flexible and personalized services.
- **Sustainable:** With a reduced whole-life carbon footprint.
- **Operationally effective:** Using technology to operate the building more efficiently
- **Resilient:** From the initial design and for years to come.

HOW DO I CERTIFY A BUILDING WITH WIREScore OR SMARTScore?

Both certifications have Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels, though these levels mean different things for the two certifications, according to the WiredScore organization. They're both open to new and existing buildings. Certifying existing buildings enables owners and landlords to benchmark the technology across their portfolio and make data-led decisions about how to prioritize investment. When certifying new buildings, clients benefit from engaging WiredScore in early stage design as this makes it easier to apply WiredScore's design standards. A building can pursue both WiredScore and SmartScore together or choose one or the other.

WiredScore and SmartScore also have an audit or design review process. The team at the WiredScore organization will review evidence—anything from design documents for new developments to policies for existing buildings—and compare it to the requirements for each certification.

You'll receive a building report—essentially, an audit of your building's features with areas where you can improve. WiredScore's Client Success Team helps clients interpret the building report and identify cost-effective improvements that can help them hit their target score.


The Occupied certifications each have a two-year certification cycle to ensure buildings are keeping up with the speed at which both technology and the standards themselves evolve, Freitas explained. The Development certifications are valid until 18 months after practical completion to ensure developers gain maximum value by engaging WiredScore during early design. The certification renewal cycle allows users to discover things that have changed since the last audit; perhaps a tenant moved in or out and removed cabling, or a telecom company has swapped or moved equipment. "These may not be huge problems at the time, but can proliferate," Freitas explained. "That's why we want to have a re-audit and make sure the building is still up to the standard level."

3 TIPS FOR CERTIFYING WITH WIREScore AND SMARTScore

Interested in pursuing one or both certifications? Consider these three takeaways first.

1. Understand the process. It's easy to assume that certification will be hard and involve a lot of homework, but that's often not the case, Freitas explained. "With WiredScore, you don't have to have a great understanding today of your telecom infrastructure. We'll audit it and then we'll explain it to you against the standard," Freitas said. "Or, you think you have technology in the building, but you don't really know how you're using it or whether you have enough. We'll help you audit that and understand exactly what kind of technology you have, where it stacks up and things you can do to leverage it for better outcomes."

2. Start collecting documentation early. "From an owner's standpoint, documentation is a big driver of being able to get certified," Stephenson said. "There is a lot of documentation that needs to be captured during the certification process. You're really going to need to think about where your documents are—construction documents, as-builts, service agreements and more." For WiredScore, for example, you'll want to have documents showing how services enter your building, service agreements you have with different telecom providers and even the dimensions of your telecom rooms to ensure there's room for tenants to put in their own technology if needed. Audits can help with this, but if you have some of the documentation already, you can get a head start on your certification journey.

3. Follow through after you're certified. "WiredScore does provide marketing materials," Stephenson noted. "Work with your brokers in the local market to make sure they understand that your building is now a WiredScore building and communicate what the WiredScore and SmartScore benefits are." 

by Janelle Penny, Editor-in-Chief



A Bold Statement

Method Architecture's new Houston office makes a powerful design statement with a multi-wall mural, a vibrant color palette and more.

Serving as a place of creativity and inspiration for the studio's designers and clients, Method Architecture did not hold back with a bold, vibrant and out-of-the-box design for its Houston office.

With a 49-foot, 2-inch linear multi-wall mural, large acoustical baffles, archways, bright colors and more, the 8,612-square-foot office portrays a welcoming, upbeat vibe.

"By pushing the limits of our own office design through blending color, pattern and texture, we created a vibrant, innovative space where clients can dream. This allows us to encourage our clients to be open to approaching design differently, using our office as a library of inspiration," explained Ashley Bettcher, a research and design specialist with Method.





A multi-wall mural, hanging acoustic baffles and colorful, three-dimensional walls greet employees, clients and visitors at Method Architecture's new offices in Houston.

Images courtesy of Ana Larranaga, Method Architecture

Break room booths are colored in blue walls, accented with drum-shaped light pendants, where employees can eat, relax and socialize.

Upon entering the offices of the minority-owned firm, one's senses are awakened with vibrant hues of blue, green, yellow, orange and pink. And employees and visitors come face to face with a larger-than-life mural painted by local Houston artist David Maldonado depicting the skyline, city and state flower, Space City and the neighboring Buffalo Bayou. Hidden elements include the firm's quality mascot and a rubber duck, further creating a sense of customization and individuality within the space.

"Blending form with function, 40 star-shaped acoustical baffles were left exposed throughout to serve as a unique, geometric art moment complimenting the office's bright pink ceilings while reducing echo and noise throughout the space," said Bettcher.

Curved archways with recessed lighting create dramatic openings. The curved design is mirrored in the break-room booths, which feature calming, blue-colored walls and drum-shaped light pendants where employees can eat, relax and socialize.

The Method team designed the floors with two styles of custom carpet with a free-flowing pattern that fades from deep gray to white. For the stylish seating, the architects repurposed chairs from their existing office for the open office areas.

In addition to the main mural in the entry, a secondary mural, also designed and installed by Maldonado, features drip paint in mirroring colorways located at the back of the office.

Overall, the colorful, animated environment helps communicate the idea that creativity has no limits and great design doesn't necessarily need to cost more.

"The lively environment and vivaciously unique design are among the top impressions we receive from clients and visitors alike," reported Bettcher. "Ultimately, it is the

cohesion from space to space that stands out most to visitors, as maximalism can often be misjudged as chaos."

Contrasting the dynamic interiors is an all-white conference room where designers can present plans and materials for projects in a distraction-free environment.

The conference room is flanked by three medium-sized meeting rooms and two smaller huddle spaces, also designed with neutral colors and organic materials. Tunable white lights can be adjusted in each of the client spaces and a window cut-out of the Method Architecture logo adorns one of the walls, providing transparency into the design process.

The reception area also features its own soundproof huddle room for guests and clients to have private conversations.

PROJECT PROCESS

Before arriving at the desired environment, interior design and blend of different spaces, Method's designers began the design process with an intention to create a highly functional and flexible space to support different working styles where employees would be excited to come to work every day.

At the same time, the project kicked off right at the beginning of the pandemic. Amidst the volatility of the office market and the rapidly growing popularity of work from home trends, the designers were very challenged to imagine what the firm's office culture and work style would look like post-pandemic.

That said, to best address team efficiency, collaboration and support from management and operational teams, the open office space underwent many iterations.

For example, the team thought to place the breakroom space in the back of the office. But in order to create





The conference room contrasts the rest of the office with its neutral design, enabling designers to present clients with different design ideas.

more circulation through the area, a more central location was ultimately selected.


"The idea was to make the space a more active hub for informal meetings and gathering rather than simply a destination for meals and coffee," explained Bettcher. "Moving the breakroom to the center of the office also broke up the length of the open office space, making it more accessible and creating intentionality for engagement."

Overall, the design succeeded in creating informal, collaborative spaces between each work pod while also breaking up the space. This also supports flexibility for future growth and the ability to create space for more work pods and hoteling stations, if needed.

For this LEED v4 Silver, WELL v2 Certified project, sustainable features include ample windows for daylighting, demountable partitions reused from the previous office space, reused office furniture, low-VOC emissions, recycled content carpet tile and interior materials sourced from sustainability-focused vendors that prioritize carbon-neutral practices.



Custom carpet transitions from deep gray to white sit alongside colorful ergonomic chairs reused from Method's former office.

WELL features include a water bottle filling station, recycling bins, height-adjustable desks, ergonomic task chairs and dimmable office lighting. 

Barbara Horwitz-Bennett has been covering the AEC industry for the past 25 years. She writes for a number of industry magazines and works with AEC firms and product manufacturers on content writing projects.



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A WATTS Brand

Ultra-Sustainable Student Housing

Georgetown University contracted RAMSA and ACC to design 55 H St. NW, earning LEED Platinum.



Georgetown University's Capitol Campus residential building at 55 H St. NW earned a LEED Platinum certification from the U.S. Green Building Council and is the first building at Georgetown to achieve the highest LEED certification.

The university, located in Washington, D.C., pitched the project with the priority to construct a state-of-the-art, sustainable residential building. Robert A.M. Stern Architects (RAMSA) was the building architect and worked collectively through a private-public partnership with the developer American Campus Communities (ACC), interior architect and designer Elkus Manfredi Architects and landscape architect Rhodeside & Harwell to develop the building.

"We wanted to express the emphasis on sustainability through the building's design and architecture," said Will Gridley, associate partner at RAMSA. "We designed very deep windows with big

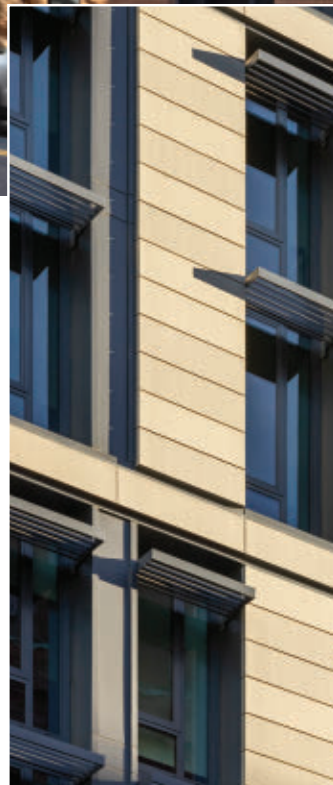
expanses of glass that are shaded as much as possible. The building's character is grounded in sustainability."

MATERIAL SELECTION

55 H St. NW is an apartment-style residential building for undergraduate and graduate students situated a few blocks from the U.S. Capitol and near Georgetown Law and the School of Continuing Studies. In addition to providing student housing, the building has numerous sustainable features within the construction and usable spaces.

High-performance windows that adjust tints based on the sunlight intensity and indoor temperatures reduce the building's energy consumption. The deep setback windows and the sunshades reduce the energy load and regulate the building's interior temperature.

"On the top floor there is dynamic glass at the penthouse, which changes tint based on the solar



LEFT: A street view of the 55 H St. NW residential building on Georgetown University's Downtown Campus in Georgetown, Washington, D.C.

RIGHT: Solar panels are installed on the green roof and the front-facing side of 55 H St. NW, with a rainwater capture system to water the south green roof plants. These are visible sustainable elements on the LEED Platinum building.

Images courtesy of Peter Aaron/OTTO



intensity," Gridley said. "Seeing it change during the day makes you aware of the building adapting to its environment."

The 12-story, 223,000-gross-square-foot building sits on a three-quarter-acre lot. It is constructed from roughly 7,000 cubic yards of ECOPact low-carbon concrete with a high fly ash content to reduce the carbon footprint. According to the Georgetown University website, flat

A close-up of 55 H St. NW's exterior facade showcases the details of the terracotta panels that building architect Robert A.M. Stern Architects took care to put together. Designed by a German designer, the terracotta panels create a thick facade while covering the dryer vents.



plate concrete leads to a "40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared to traditional concrete."

The facade is terracotta panels, supplied by a company in Germany, explained RAMSA partner Kevin Smith.

"It's not the first time they've been used in Washington, but we took a great deal of care to put them together in a beautiful way," Smith said. "Everything came through miraculously without any problems during COVID."

The thick terracotta panels cast beautiful shadows onto the building's structure, which allowed the design team to create an aesthetically pleasing building that hid the dryer vents, Smith added. Most terracotta buildings have no depth, but it was the illusion of depth RAMSA wanted to be the showstopping element.

"It is the little things that make a big deal to the perceived quality of buildings," Smith said. "We found a way to hide all the dryer vents inside metal returns, and they disappear because they're all black. You look at most market-rate apartment buildings and there are those little bumps all over."

RAMSA is known for its classical-inspired buildings, but for 55 H St. NW, RAMSA created a contemporary design that nods to its neighbors. The building is situated between two other facilities. One has a historical context from 1992, and the other 2006-constructed building has a historic look, too.

"The depth of the terracotta panels shades against the sun and hides the dryer vents, but they also nod to the deep recesses of the adjacent buildings," said Smith. "55 H St. carries the cornice line prescribed by the height act to reference the building to the west of us."

The materiality of the buildings is tied together with the ground floor featuring metal panels and bits of tan brick. The back of 55 H St. NW is brick. Large glass windows on the ground floor bring in natural light to the lobby and communal spaces that line the street. Passersby can look through the building to the courtyard—a deliberate design decision Gridley said.

"I'm proud of the facade because the D.C. zoning envelope can force you to design within a box much of the time," Gridley said. "To achieve

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One of the lobby's main features is a green wall adorned with living plants designed by Elkus Manfredi Architects.

the level of aesthetic interest and richness that we did with the combination of the terracotta, metal, glazing and depth took a lot of effort."

Georgetown University challenged RAMSA and ACC to maximize the solar footprint on the building. The top two floors have vertical photovoltaic panels integrated into the structure on the south facade, and the green roof has a large solar panel array. A rainwater capture system is used for irrigation of the south-facing green roof plants. The solar panels generate roughly 5% of the energy that the building consumes.

"We filled the roof with as much solar as we could while also having things grow on it," Gridley said. "We found a way to have both a green roof and solar panels. Plants grow under the solar panels."

Additional sustainable elements are the cisterns to capture rainwater for irrigation and the bicycling infrastructure.

55 H St. NW promotes sustainable transportation for tenants, faculty and staff who commute by bicycle. The building hosts significant on-site bicycle storage as well as access to showers and locker rooms for faculty and staff who ride their bicycles to work.

"If you're thoughtful and do your homework, you can do a lot with modern technology and products," said Gridley.

COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE

55 H St. NW's entrance is set off from the sidewalk at a 90-degree angle and upon entering the lobby, students see a green wall adorned with living plants and a large outdoor courtyard, which is viewable from the street. Elkus Manfredi Architects designed the green wall.

55 H Street wraps around two exterior courtyards, which use a stormwater retention area that retains excess rainfall and percolates into the ground to enhance a natural rock feature.

The residential building has 476 beds within studio, two-bedroom, three-bedroom and four-bedroom apartments. The penthouse fea-



This electric water vapor fireplace serves as the hearth of the parlor space. It offers a safe, energy-efficient and eye-catching feature without introducing a fossil fuel fireplace into the building.

tures modern living spaces, common areas like a contemplation space for students to study and engage with peers and a fitness center.

Smith said RAMSA and Elkus Manfredi Architects wanted a fireplace in the parlor, which required creativity as they could not use gas.

"We ended up with this interesting electric fireplace that uses water vapor and lights," he said. "It's fascinating the same way that a fire is and students often hang around it in the cold weather. You need to get quite close before you realize they're not actual flames."

This safe, energy-efficient and eye-catching electric water vapor fireplace is a central hearth for the parlor space. Cool to the touch, the water vapor is adjustable in height and color and does not affect humidity or condensation in the area.

Gas boilers are traditionally a cost-effective source of hot water in apartments. However, RAMSA wanted a greener option. Through a system of air-to-air heat pumps, each apartment has cooling and heating options that provide maximum efficiency.

The design and development teams also wanted to positively influence student behavior, so screens in the lobby display environmental statistics on water usage and energy-saving features floor by floor and unit by unit. They hope residents learn they don't

have to sacrifice comfort to live sustainably.

"The whole building system does well and provides the comfort students want," said Smith. "That they also know what they are consuming sends a very good message."

Requirements by Washington, D.C. and Georgetown University challenged RAMSA's team to maximize the use of sustainable materials that sparked the building's sustainability story, now passed onto residents. 🌱

by Lauren Brant, Editor

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Top Tenant Amenities for 2024

What space types are office tenants expecting these days? Here's how to determine what makes the most sense for your building.

Tenant amenities are more important than ever in the effort to bring employees back to office spaces. Driven by requests from tenants, owners are looking for opportunities to strategically upgrade office buildings in ways that will drive foot traffic.

"Different tenants are asking for different amenities, but the common thread is that they want their employees surprised by how robust the amenity package is," explained Grant Bollman, senior associate at Lee & Associates of Illinois, a commercial real estate services provider. "Current tenant demand is for more bells and whistles so they can tell their employees, 'Come into the office. Before, we had a gym and a shared conference room, but now we have X, Y and Z.'"

Tenants who elect to come back into the office need to have a good reason for doing so, added Sarah Brooks, senior associate with GTM Architects and the primary designer on Washington, DC's 1750 H Street, a recently renovated 10-story office building that now has several new amenity spaces. Since the emergence of COVID-19, people

have realized they can work nearly anywhere, so they consider other factors when they choose to commute to your building.

"The number one thing we think about is, how do we make this more of a seamless transition of working in the office as opposed to working at home?" Brooks said. "People have things at their fingertips when they work from home. We want to provide that when you go into an office building—where you have that same flexibility and multiple levels of privacy."

The amenity conversation in 2024 harkens back to the urban planning theory of 15-minute cities, said Ann Hoffman, director of workplace strategy for FCA. This architecture firm recently designed its own Philadelphia headquarters, including several amenities. "You're 15 minutes from everything that's important to you—the bank, the post office, the school, the church, groceries, art museums, parks," explained Hoffman. "As much of that as you can pull into the microcosm of the building itself, you're creating your own little city. It's convenience close by."

These five amenity ideas have proved popular in recent years. Could one of them be a fit for your building?



A recent project at 1750 H Street in Washington, DC, concentrated on providing flexible work areas and amenities, said Sarah Brooks, primary designer on the project and a senior associate for GTM Architects. This free-function lounge area borders a large conference room.

Images courtesy of Quentin Penn-Hollar Photography



The terrace at 1750 H Street was enlarged to create more outdoor space.



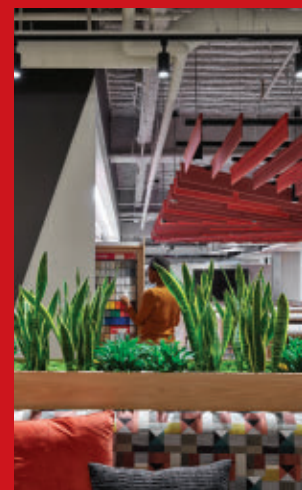
This conference room at 1750 H Street is flanked by the free-function lounge area on one side and outdoor views on the other.



FCA, a full-service architectural and design firm, recently designed its own Philadelphia headquarters. Workstations are highly customizable, with each featuring five to six factors that people can control for themselves. Giving people autonomy isn't necessarily an amenity on its own, but it resonates with people who have spent the last few years working from home, where they can be highly autonomous.

Images courtesy of Jeffrey Totaro

FCA's Philadelphia space features several amenities that showcase what people need from the office in 2024.



Greenery improves any workspace as long as it's well-maintained.

PICKLEBALL COURTS

Pickleball—a fast-paced, but easy-to-learn sport—is taking off across America. Played on a court the same size as a doubles badminton court, it resembles tennis or table tennis, but with different rules. Tenants may not specifically seek out pickleball courts, but they're a definite nice-to-have that can help differentiate buildings in the marketplace, Bollman said.

"Pickleball is really hot now," added Tiffany Hughes, senior project interior designer for FCA. The building housing FCA's offices has a multipurpose outdoor space that sometimes hosts pickleball matches. "There was, frankly, an underutilized outdoor courtyard directly off of what used to be the conference center. Now that it's accessed by the gym, directly off the fitness center, you can go outside and do yoga, have outdoor classes or do pickleball lessons."

GYMS AND HEALTH SERVICES

A space for people to work out is a major attraction. It saves people the time they'd otherwise spend going to an off-site gym on their way to or from the office. Looking to improve an existing gym? Consider expanding with sports areas, Bollman suggested.

"The upper echelon of a gym would be what someone might call a health club," Bollman said. "Maybe there's squash included or a half basketball court. Maybe the towel service is factored into the cost of being in the building, or they have a turf area for training. Those are some of the things where tenants are saying, 'I want an area for my employees to work out, but you're not just checking a box. You're going above and beyond to make it really special.'"

Wellness amenities don't stop at workout spaces, Hughes added. Doctor's offices and small urgent care clinics are an up-and-coming addition to office buildings.

"It's about convenience," Hughes said. "Everyone's time is valuable."

COMMON CONFERENCE AND COWORKING SPACE

Office tenants are downsizing their footprints, and one of the first spaces to be cut is often large conference rooms. However, that can leave tenants in the lurch if they need to gather many employees together in a communal space. Building owners can meet that need with flexible conference space that can be checked out as needed.



A variety of seating areas, such as this one at EisnerAmper's FCA-designed Manhattan office, are a popular amenity for people who want to work in different ways throughout the day. Consider offering spaces like this for tenants to book.

Images courtesy of Frank Oudeman



Glass partitions allow views and light while offering more privacy to the people inside the enclosed space. This space is at Eisner-Amper's office in Manhattan.

NEW FACILITIES SHOW LAUNCH

The facilities expo team is excited to announce that the Facilities Expo is coming to Reno, Nevada on August 21-22, 2024! It was decided to expand the facilities expo to Reno, NV due to the increasing demand in the growing market and the positive feedback received from existing exhibitors. The decision was made to tap into the potential of the Reno area and provide a platform for businesses to showcase their products and services in this thriving region.

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The Facilities Expo provides valuable FREE learning and networking opportunities in a unique format serving the Northern Nevada and Tahoe region. The Reno Facilities Expo attracts a diverse audience of **facilities managers, maintenance managers, and energy managers from a wide variety of industries including education, entertainment, financial services, government, healthcare, hospitality, logistics, manufacturing, technology, utilities, and others.**

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Many clients are looking for conference rooms on the larger side, but with dividers that allow users to create smaller breakout rooms, Brooks said.

Different types of communal workspaces are also a popular amenity, Hughes added: "People are used to not being tethered to a desk. They're working in their living rooms on lounge sofas, or they're in their kitchens working on higher top tables and bar stools."

Letting people choose where in the building to work also gives them a sense of autonomy. Adding more user control features, like dimmable task lighting or adjustable table heights, add to that feeling, Hoffman said. FCA uses workstations by Haworth and Teknion to give people adjustable spaces to work; they have access to power for device charging.

OUTDOOR AREAS

Work and relaxation spaces on an outdoor terrace are a differentiator for buildings that have that option, Brooks said. Views of the outdoors can also enliven the indoors.

1750 H Street has a large conference room with a telescoping glass wall that opens up to a free-function lounge area; people in the lounge area also have an operable glass window that opens at a countertop to give the space an indoor-outdoor feel. "We also enlarged the terrace on that project to create more outdoor space," Brooks added.

Another GTM Architects project at 2677 Prosperity Avenue in Fairfax, Virginia, features a 50-seat conference room adjoining an area with an operable glass storefront that opens to an outdoor patio.

SNACKS AND FOOD OPTIONS

Office workers have spent the last few years enjoying free reign over whatever snacks and drinks are available in their homes. Building owners can dominate the gourmet game by offering full-service snack bars, restaurants and a wide variety of beverages beyond what's feasible for a work-from-home setup.

FCA's redesigned Philadelphia headquarters has a smart beverage machine that provides cold and hot drinks, including seltzers. "The attempt was to provide all of those services that are built in—things you maybe wouldn't have free access to in your home," Hughes said. "We also wanted to reduce the plastics we have coming into the office—that was a big sticking point with our staff. We try to practice what we preach, and we feel strongly about sustainability."

WHAT AMENITIES ARE BEST FOR YOUR BUILDING?

The best amenity is the one that sets you apart from other similar buildings in your area, but there are other factors dictating the direction your building should go. Consider these six factors that can



This gaming area at 2677 Prosperity Avenue in Fairfax, Virginia, features a shuffleboard table, built-in seating and some privacy rooms for phone calls. It replaced a private conference room that was rarely utilized. 2677 Prosperity Avenue recently underwent an amenity-focused renovation by GTM Architects.

Images courtesy of Greg Powers Photography

2677 Prosperity Avenue has a large conference room with a bifold operable partition that's suspended from the ceiling. It can split the room into two for smaller meetings. The space opens up to an outdoor patio.



Gyms and other fitness-centered spaces, like this one at 2677 Prosperity Avenue, are highly popular with today's tenants and employees.



At 45610 Woodland Road in Sterling, Virginia, GTM Architects created a 20-person conference room that opens up into this lounge area. The lounge features multiple types of seating to create a multifunctional space and features a fresh market in the far corner where people can grab a bite to eat.

Images courtesy of Quentin Penn-Hollar Photography

help you separate the must-haves from the nice-to-haves.

1. Cost. Not surprisingly, cost has the biggest impact on amenity space, Bollman said.

2. Rentable space. Every square foot you use for an amenity that the whole building can utilize is a square foot you can't rent to a tenant. "Are you taking space that's already set aside for amenities in your building to convert or change what the amenity is, or are you taking space that would otherwise be rentable and turning that into an amenity area?" Bollman asked.

3. Demographics. "If you've got a law firm, they have a certain type of client. Is it a corporate client or a personal injury client?" Hoffman said. "There's an audience that comes in and out of the building. What are they going to be attracted to? Who are your tenants and what speaks to them?"

4. Location. "Location is huge," Hoffman said. "We had a client whom we did a whole building for, and they put in a huge gym. The client owns the showers, the lockers and the gym. That's a huge commitment, but it's based on location—what's near and what's not. If

there's something not near, that's the amenity you want."

5. Rent. "Make sure your amenity package lines up with the price point you're asking per square foot based on who your competitors are," Bollman recommended. "If you're a well-amenitized building, great—you can charge top-of-market rents, but the amenities need to be better than everybody else you're competing with. If you're not going to offer amenities, get that rate as low as you possibly can so there's a clear delineation of what the tenant is going after."

6. Staffing. Who is running your amenity? "Does it fall on the already put in place building management?" Hughes asked. "Do they have the capacity and the know-how to clean and run those types of spaces? If not, perhaps look to outsource to somebody who can run them properly, who can make sure they're really up to snuff and able to track the metrics of what's being used."

ARE YOUR CURRENT AMENITIES UNDERUTILIZED?

Is it time to remodel your current amenity spaces into something else? If no one is using the spaces you have now, the answer is almost certainly yes, said Brooks.

"They really need to be monitored," Hughes added. "Somebody has to be watching the space because you really want to grow with the times. If people are working differently, the space needs to be modified."

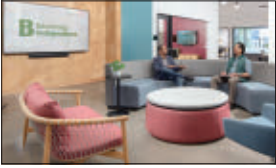
Key card swipes are an easy way to track utilization, Bollman explained. Other strategies include monitoring the amount of supplies you have in spaces with consumables, such as a café or bar, or looking at how often spaces are booked if you have an online booking system. Not seeing enough swipes? Survey your tenants' employees to find out what they want and what's missing. "Concentrate on the amenities that tenants are now looking for," Brooks said.

The right amenities placed in the right building will help attract tenants to your facility and employees to come back to your tenants' offices. The convenience factor "allows people to take a break from what they're doing and interact with their coworkers in a different way," Bollman said.

"The office is not just for work," he added. "It's for life as well." 🍷

by Janelle Penny, Editor-in-Chief

More Than Accessibility



A new nonprofit headquarters provides centralization and adaptability in a space designed for independence.

PROJECT PROFILE:

Project: Becoming Independent headquarters

Architect: HGA

Photography: Chad Davies Imaging Group



Imagine a vibrant space that serves individuals with physical and intellectual needs. It has an open hall that transforms from art classes into a fundraiser gala. There's a commercial kitchen and garden that provide socialization and training. The building is based on the mission to "break barriers and build opportunities."

This is the reimagined headquarters for the nonprofit Becoming Independent, created by architecture firm HGA. Located in Santa Rosa, California, the renovated space offers an inclusive design that allows the organization to continue empowering people.

FROM DISJOINTED TO UNIFIED

Like many nonprofits, Becoming Independent (BI) had made do with spaces that weren't custom built for its unique mission or population. They were faced with three disconnected locations, including a main building that started life as a manufacturing facility and had a patchwork of interior modifications. The layout was inflexible for the breadth of programming and events the organization offers. Staff were also siloed despite the significant need to collaborate and share knowledge.

Would you know this bright, airy space was originally a manufacturing facility? HGA was able to retain the building shell but completely reimagined the interior of Becoming Independent. After a significant renovation, the nonprofit now has a flex space with 10,000 square feet, three retractable partitions and rollup garage doors.



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FAST, INTUITIVE SETUP



Becoming Independent's new headquarters consolidates staff into one location. The admin area has energetic, modern office amenities.

"In many ways, consolidating locations for BI was a way to formalize their operations. They had grown and evolved to the point where they needed an actual headquarters," explained Heather Kampa, HGA project lead. "We started by addressing space issues that were incongruent with nonprofit programming."

To give BI a hub similar to an education campus, HGA's first step was to reconfigure the main building. The existing shell was mostly reused and given a facelift to create a more welcoming facade. The entire HVAC system was overhauled along with upgrades to ventilation, especially since the old mechanicals was still programmed for a warehouse baseline. Partitions were removed to make way for a cohesive layout and zoned heating and cooling.

The end result is 22,000 square feet that now facilitates the majority of BI's services. It not only spans the needs of program participants and staff but also includes offerings for public rentals and donor events. There are three key areas:

1) GREAT ROOM

Dubbed the Backdrop, the primary programming area has a spacious 10,000 square feet. It can be divided into three rooms separated by retractable walls. Furniture with casters simplifies rearranging the layout. The space is illuminated by banks of windows and glass roll-up doors. When not occupied by BI activities, this room is rentable as a source of income.

2) VOCATIONAL TRAINING

BI has pillars in education, employment, health and wellness, socialization, self-advocacy and the arts. To support its nearly 1,000 learners in their quest for growth and development, additional spaces include a commercial kitchen adjacent to the Backdrop, two classrooms that can double as conference rooms and a fitness center with adaptive equipment for a wide range of users.

"Participants of BI's programs still go out into the community, not just in Santa Rosa but in the North Bay Area. The renovated interior helps BI prepare individuals to access external opportunities," Kampa noted.



3) OUTDOORS


Since the building is in an industrial setting, the original grounds were not developed as a meaningful part of the site. HGA adopted an indoor-outdoor approach to take advantage of California's temperate weather, explained Kampa. The team eliminated a parking lot road in favor of landscaping, a patio and garden, which all provide a tranquil view from the inside.

BEYOND ADA

One of the lasting benefits of BI's renovation is improved accessibility. Most buildings meet the bare minimum for ADA guidelines, much less include more comprehensive approaches like universal design.

"Accessibility is more than accommodating wheelchair users," Kampa stressed. "Since ADA is primarily focused on impaired movement, it doesn't fully account for people who have other navigation challenges like low vision, cognition disabilities or sensory concerns. Our job was to go beyond code requirements to create a space that everyone can successfully navigate."

HGA intentionally designed the new layout to be simple and intuitive. For example, narrow corridors in the old space were a significant barrier to individuals as well as their assistants. This is because restricted sightlines don't allow people to see beyond, making it difficult to assess their next steps. Features like cane detection, truncated domes, acoustics and signage were also integrated.

"As architects, we tend to associate the term 'adaptive' with reuse projects. That is the literal case for BI through this renovation," said Kampa. "But we also gave the organization adaptability for their needs now and in the future. BI's new headquarters is a dynamic place that will allow their programs to expand and change." 

A former BUILDINGS editor, Jennie Morton is a writer specializing in commercial architecture, IoT and proptech.



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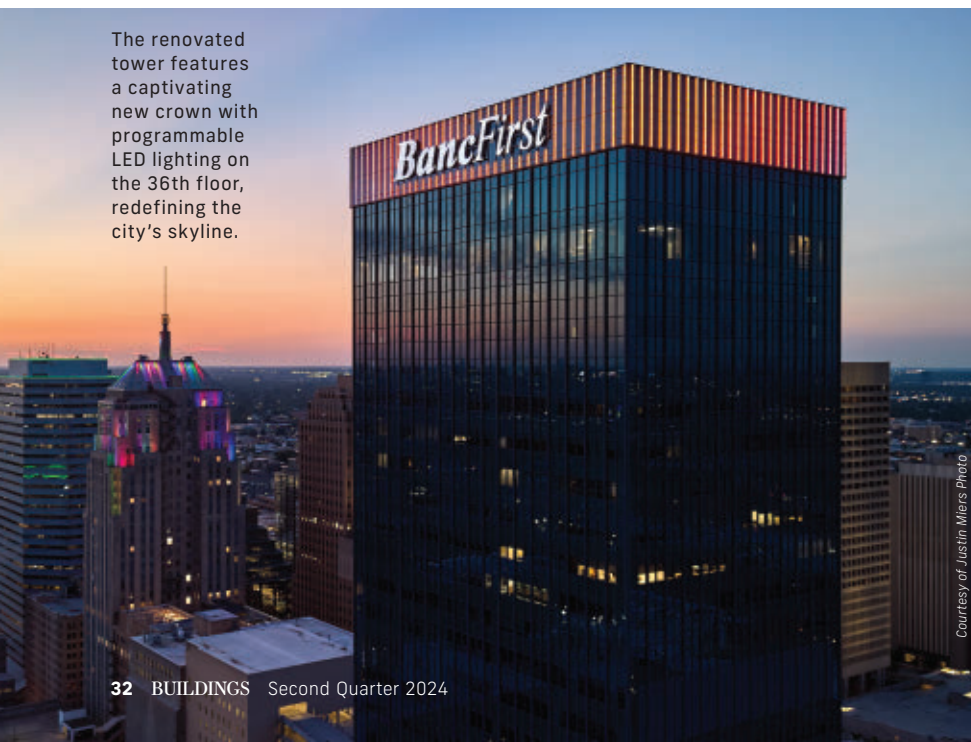


Courtesy of xxx

Courtesy of Justin Miers Photo

Bockus Payne's renovation of BancFirst's new headquarters in Oklahoma City's second-largest building ushers in a downtown resurgence.

The renovated tower features a captivating new crown with programmable LED lighting on the 36th floor, redefining the city's skyline.



Courtesy of Justin Miers Photo

In its quest to centralize multiple locations into a unified banking headquarters, BancFirst turned its attention towards a prominent landmark in downtown Oklahoma City: the former Liberty Tower, a towering 36-story skyscraper erected in 1971. Despite its stature as the city's second-tallest building, the 50-year-old structure had fallen into disrepair and faced receivership. By undertaking the revitalization of this local icon, BancFirst not only demonstrated its dedication to the community but also played a pivotal role in fueling the ongoing revitalization of downtown Oklahoma City.

The financial institution engaged Bockus Payne to carve out a path forward for the building and spearhead the renovation process. "We, for 30-plus years, have done work with BancFirst—we do all of their local branch banks, which are [located] throughout the state of Oklahoma," explained Collin Fleck, AIA, partner and director of design at Bockus Payne. "So, when they were looking to relocate and consolidate all of their locations into one centralized headquarters, they called us."

then



In place of the old curtain wall system with its closely-spaced, heavy vertical mullions, the design team implemented a suspended, point-supported structural glazing system with low-e, low-iron clear glass that was more efficient, lightweight and modern. Prior to renovation, the lobby was dark, outdated and empty, with an occupancy rate of less than 50%. **INSET:** The former Liberty Tower building featured multiple exterior columns, half of which were removed, and heavy concrete cornice detailing, which was eliminated to achieve a streamlined aesthetic.

Courtesy of Bockus Payne

Leveraging its extensive collaboration history with BancFirst, Bockus Payne brought its design expertise to the forefront of the project, laying out the necessary upgrades to rejuvenate the space while balancing the client's need for security. The resulting project stands as a testament to the transformative impact of thoughtful renovation on an aging structure, culminating in the creation of an inviting community focal point.

Weighing all of the potential design options, the team guided BancFirst through the decision to embark on a full-scale renovation encompassing the exterior plaza, ground floor and subterranean levels, as well as a redesign and revitalization of the tower facade. Taking charge of architecture, interior design and landscape architecture, Bockus Payne ensured comprehensive oversight throughout the entirety of the project.

LANDMARK RENOVATION IN 'THE BIG FRIENDLY'

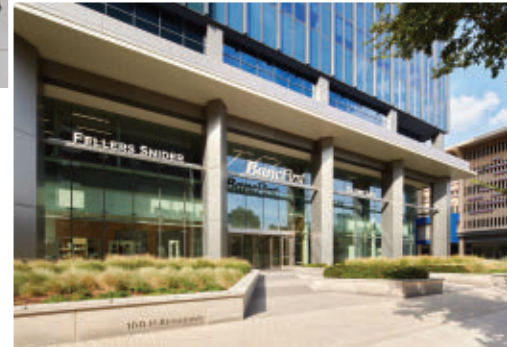
Standing stories above its neighbors, the renovated BancFirst Tower features a captivating new crown with programmable LED lighting on the 36th floor, redefining the city's skyline. BancFirst logos grace the

now



At the lobby level, in place of the old curtain wall system with its closely-spaced, heavy vertical mullions, the design team implemented a suspended, point supported structural glazing system with low-e, low-iron clear glass. This was instrumental in making the tower feel modern and lightweight.

Courtesy Justin Miers Photo



north and south sides of the tower, reinforcing the brand's prominence in the area. These iconic 14-foot elements symbolize BancFirst's enduring dedication to community progress and prosperity, enhancing the tower's status as a landmark in downtown Oklahoma City.

"If you're from around here, everybody knew Liberty Tower, which is what the building originally was," Fleck recalled. "So, the building was significant to the locals here, because when it opened in 1970, it was the tallest building in Oklahoma City for a long time."

The renovation process also involved a peeling-back of superfluous design details and enhancing transparency, through strategies such as removing the superficial columns that were unnecessary for structural support and led to a cave-like feeling in the interior foyer. "The building—it was really dark, kind of a monolith," said Matthew Siebert, AIA, partner and managing principal at Bockus Payne. "And when you went inside, it was worse: the dark, bronze mullions, the glass was not great looking, not a lot of light—the lobby had never been engaged. It was very empty and vacuous. Nothing was happening in it."

then & now



Public access from the plaza level into the underground concourse is provided via a stairwell within the northern glass lantern that features an art gallery featuring local artists.

Courtesy of Justin Miers Photo

In fact, Fleck noted that tenants were actively leaving the building at the onset of the project with less than 50% occupancy, "and there was a concern from a property management standpoint that the building was clearing out."

The design team removed every other column and streamlined the aesthetic by removing the heavy concrete cornice detailing. These changes allowed the lobby to feel open and engaged with the street level and the urban fabric, letting daylight indoors and enabling pedestrians outdoors to see inside.

"The design concept really became about contrast, trying to find ways where things were dark to make them bright; where things were uncomfortable, make them comfortable; where things were empty, make it attractive for people to come in—this transition and transformation from old fortress to open, inviting, transparency, visibility, people and places," Fleck said.

Bockus Payne also replaced the bronze colored, single-pane, annealed glass that covered the entire tower with a stand-out, energy-efficient, insulated blue glazing that nods to the bank's brand color. At the lobby level, in place of the old curtain wall system with its closely-spaced, heavy vertical mullions, the design team implemented a suspended, point-supported structural glazing system with low-e, low-iron clear glass that was more efficient, lightweight and modern.

In addition to bringing natural light to the interiors, the design team recognized the importance of activating these spaces so that they engage tenants and pedestrians. The refreshed lobby design includes a BancFirst branch bank, a deli with ample seating, a coffee shop, along with an art gallery celebrating local artists.

The interior design details draw inspiration from all things Oklahoma. Warm wood finishes such as white oak on the walls and modern marble accents create a clean-lined, timeless and inviting interior. Angled wood patterning behind the central lobby desk visually represents stalks of wheat waving in the wind. Interior plantings further the biophilic effect, which extends seamlessly to the exterior plantings.

SECURING AND LIGHTING THE WAY OUTDOORS

The team transformed the outdoor plaza, formerly a sparse concrete vista, into an inviting space with ample seating and green space for use by employees and pedestrians. Bockus Payne analyzed pedestrian paths to conceptualize an engaging layout while balancing security.

"There's a balance between all this openness," said Siebert said. "And when you look at the new plaza design, we really studied circulation paths of people as they come and go during the day to the different locations around it, and also trying to avoid a car or something else being driven into the building, so we tried to do that without it being in your face."

Stone seating and planters set at an angle that narrow the path to a pedestrian scale help balance a sense of openness with the security needs of a bank building.

The existing plaza had large concrete tree wells that extended down to the underground concourse level, where they appeared as dark,

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Bockus Payne studied circulation paths to conceptualize an engaging layout while balancing security.

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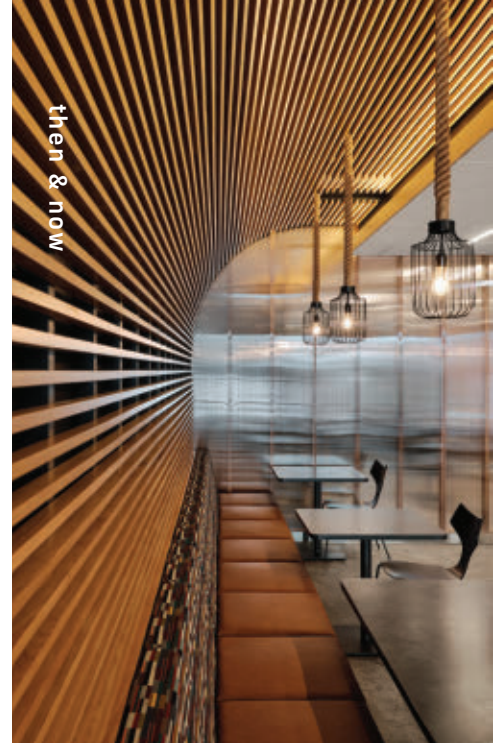


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Warm wood finishes such as white oak on the walls and modern marble accents create a clean-lined, timeless and inviting interior.

Courtesy of Justin Miers Photo

windowed spaces with neglected trees. Bockus Payne transformed three of the tree wells along the west elevation into artistic, point supported, structural glass "lanterns." These lanterns transform the underground by bringing natural daylight into the space during the day and glow at night by employing color-changing LED light fixtures cast onto fritted glass.

Public access from the plaza level into the underground concourse is provided via a stairwell within the northern glass lantern. The underground concourse remodel includes a relocation of another BancFirst branch bank, a USPS mail center, relocation of The Executive Barber shop and a renovation of the Hot Tamale Grill restaurant.

"The amenities for the building are not just for the people who work there," Fleck said. "It's for all people downtown to be able to come over and enjoy—and they do." He added that the building has become a community asset to draw people in to have lunch or attend food truck events, for example.

Bockus Payne helped BancFirst turn a former fortress on its head, creating a transparent, inviting, engaging space for BancFirst employees, building tenants and the people of downtown Oklahoma City. Previously at very low occupancy, the transformed tower now enjoys more than 90% occupancy and is a striking symbol of renovation and community reinvestment. 

by Robert Nieminen, Chief Content Director

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Seating



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Poor posture is associated with chronic pain, fatigue, injury, depression, poor vision, dysfunctional breathing and even shortened life expectancy. Anthros is designed to improve posture, reduce pain and increase performance with a highly comfortable sitting experience. The science-backed ergonomic chair features an adjustable upper back support that's tapered to pull back the user's shoulders as they sit, while the two-part back system is able to support most body types. The low back pelvis support works with the upper back to promote an upright posture. The chair also features cushioned, adjustable 4D arm supports and a contoured foam cushion with pressure-relieving cutouts in the rear well. The base moves smoothly and turns as a unit to reduce the incidence of bruised ankles and scuffed shoes.

ANTHROS CHAIR by ANTHROS.

www.anthros.com



RECYCLABLE MULTIPURPOSE SEATING

Coleuri, a multipurpose seating series by Via Seating, was developed by the designers of Dorigo Design. Available in five dipped-look colors and 100% recyclable, this collection capitalizes on simplicity while maintaining an Italian high-design aesthetic. The side/guest chair sits atop a four-leg base and can include an optional upholstered seat cushion. Its weight capacity is 300 pounds. All Via Seating products, including Coleuri, are BIFMA LEVEL certified.

COLEURI by VIA SEATING.

www.viaseating.com



GENEROUS COMFORT FOR WAITING SPACES

Mayland is the latest guest and lounge seating collection by Encore. It uses human-centric design elements and layered components to create a compelling visual from the simplest of forms. The third collaboration between Encore and integrative design firm Gower + Woolf, Mayland's standout feature is an exposed tubular metal or wood frame that encircles the back to provide an appealing aesthetic from any angle. A thin-profile, tapered upholstered shell provides support and serves as an underlying structure for generously proportioned plush cushions. Ideal for waiting areas, meeting spaces, hospitality applications and more.

MAYLAND by ENCORE.

www.encoreseating.com



SUSTAINABLE AND INTUITIVE DESIGN

The HÅG Tion is a task and meeting room chair created with intuitive design and built for sustainability. It's outfitted with features that make it adaptable to constantly evolving work environments, including a HÅG inBalance movement mechanism that echoes the way the body moves throughout the workday. The HÅG Tion is made with 75% recycled and renewable materials, leaving a low carbon footprint. Designed for disassembly and made using as few components as possible, the HÅG Tion is BIFMA LEVEL 2 and GREENGUARD Gold certified. Choose from a selection of colors and textiles that complement the contemporary design, including monochromatic color options.

HÅG TION by 9TO5 SEATING.

www.9to5seating.com



MODULAR BENCHES FOR ANY SPACE

Flipside is a comfortable and stylish place to do all things. Available with or without a backrest, the signature style is defined by wood details, a durable metal frame and seat cushions with suspension webbing for lasting comfort. Choose from two-, three- and four-unit combinations for standalone or modular configurations, as well as standard or premium finishes for the metal frame. Integrated and connecting tables are also offered in white oak veneer, laminate, Corian or Fenix. Optional accessories include power technology for convenient connectivity. Tamper-resistant floor mount hardware is available.

FLIPSIDE by ARCADIA.

www.arcadiacontract.com

Furnishings



SPACE-SAVING DESIGN

Kupp Flip-Top Tables are the perfect companion for the Kupp horizontal nesting chair, originally introduced in 2020. The table's space-saving design ensures efficient storage and complements the legs of the Kupp chair. An intuitive surface-long handle enables users to easily flip the tabletop. The tables also feature a two-sided work surface finish for a consistently polished aesthetic, even in the vertical position. A modesty panel is available in Smooth Felt, Source Laminate or Flintwood. Optional accessories include a power/data cut-out and a bag hook. The table is available in various dimensions, including depths of 24 and 30 inches and widths ranging from 42 to 72 inches.

KUPP FLIP-TOP TABLES by TEKNION.
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SEMITON by ARPER.
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INVIGORATING OUTDOOR TABLES

Southpoint is an outdoor table series that's designed to encourage connection, conversation and collaboration. It invigorates any space to let users relish the moment. Offered in a wide range of sizes from petite squares to large communal tables, the collection is ideal for outdoor meeting spaces, family-style dining, cafes and more. The cornerstone of the collection is a 10-foot-long banquet table that invites people to gather for food, laughter and fun. Tables feature soft, round edges and are available with powder-coated aluminum tops or a selection of engineered stones. Hand-assembled in Miami.

SOUTHPOINT by PAVILION.
www.pavilion-furniture.com



CLASSIC TABLE WITH MODERN MATERIALS

The Firma collection draws inspiration from the Parsons table archetype of the 1960s, but transcends its historical origin by incorporating innovative materials into an expanded line. Firma, which is designed for customization, introduces an expanded finish library that includes wood veneer, laminate, glass, engineered quartz and solid surface. The standard offering also includes a robust array of sizes, discreet power options, knocked-down assembly and a fully integrated lighting system by Juniper—the Shared Task Lamp and Ground Control Power System, which are available on all Firma communal tables. Ideal for lobbies, libraries or “third space” public areas. Choose from Occasional (Side and Coffee tables), Multipurpose (Console) and Communal (Conference, Counter Height, Bar Height and ADA Height) tables.

FIRMA by HBF.
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FOLIAGE by INNOVATIONS.

www.innovationsusa.com



VERSATILE AND COLORFUL

The Micra tile collection is highly versatile, with an aesthetic based on an intense palette of colored cements inlaid with tiny fragments of different intensities. The tiles that make up the collection are simultaneously cheerful with their excesses of color and graphics and discreet with neutral tones. The 11mm-thick tiles are frost-resistant and can be used on floors or walls. Available in a selection of sizes.

MICRA TILE by VIVES.

www.vivesceramica.com



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The Beljn porcelain tile collection evokes the grandiose history of Belgium and is inspired by Belgian limestone. Its European sensibility features white veining, coal lines and even visible fossils. The old-school styling is modernized with contemporary color and sizing; sizes range from the traditional 12 by 24 inches to an expansive 24 by 48 inches. Square and brick mosaics are available to complement any space. Choose from five hues, ranging from light to dark, and two finishes: unpolished (which features a proprietary glazing technique) and a bush-hammered style exterior finish for grand scale in outdoor spaces. The tile features the nearly maintenance-free qualities and strength that are synonymous with porcelain and is ideal for large-scale installations, such as feature walls and expansive floors. It's also suitable for use in wet applications.

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