

June 2022

# BUILDING DIALOGUE

## COLORADO REAL ESTATE JOURNAL

Development Construction Architecture Engineering Interior Design



Vectra Bank

*New headquarters shines at Bellevue Station* \ PAGE 54





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S&P Global, Detroit, MI

## THE NEW WORKPLACE ECOSYSTEM

The new workplace is about bringing people together to collaborate in teams, connect and build community, while also supporting individual work. It must provide a variety of spaces that foster individual focus, where one can concentrate and reflect, and facilitate collaboration, where teams can build relationships and solve problems together.

If we envision the workplace as an ecosystem of spaces equipped for a variety of activities, we can reimagine work cafes, terraces, and other amenities as flexible spaces that can be leveraged to manifest a choice-filled and nuanced working environment.

Photography Top: Jason Keen;  
Middle/Bottom: David Lauer



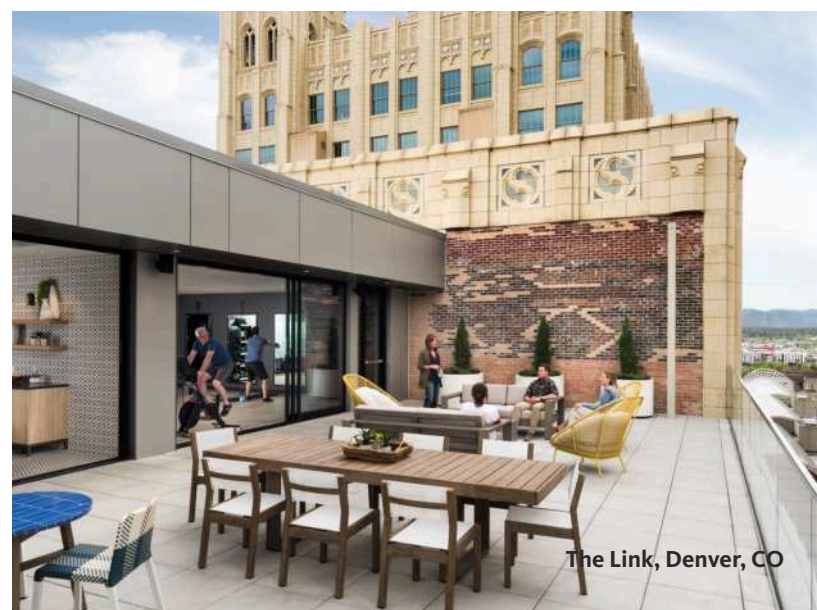
For additional insights such as what's next in workplace strategy and design, check out Gensler's on-going Workplace Survey findings.

# Gensler

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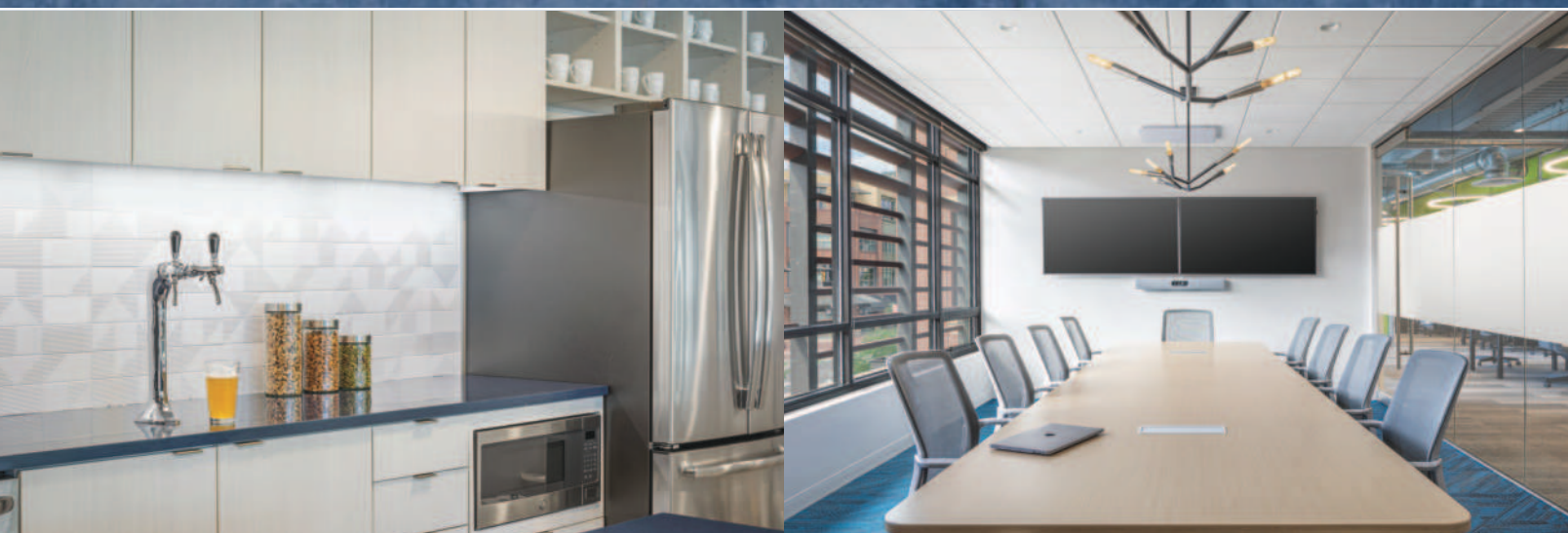


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**Traci Lounsbury, co-founder and CEO, elements**

*Traci is at the forefront of driving change in the way commercial environments are designed and built, helping organizations customize environments that positively impact people's lives.*

*Since founding elements in 2008, Traci has redefined and grown the firm's business model, combining interiors expertise with construction capability and the collaborative, cross-functional process of human-centered design. Traci helped launch and co-leads the Women on the Rise program through the Commons on Champa, and she is on the board of the Downtown Denver Partnership.*

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**Sean O'Keefe** explores the built environment stories one project at a time. He also provides integrated writing services to architects, engineers and contractors.

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**Jim Tolstrup, High Plains Environmental Center**

*High Plains Environmental Center is celebrating its 20th anniversary. The environmental nonprofit is focused on open space management, wetland restoration, native plant propagation, and environmental education and outreach. To celebrate this milestone, Jim published a book, "SUBURBITAT," providing detailed strategies for how city planners and developers can manage native landscapes within their communities to conserve water. The book aims to educate leaders across the industry about how its successful strategies can be replicated in any region across the nation.*

*jim@suburbitat.org*



**Martha Weidmann, CEO and co-founder, Nine dot Arts**

*Martha and Co-founder Molly Casey formed Nine dot Arts in 2009 with the vision of building a forward-thinking art consulting company that both curates incredible art experiences and advocates for art and artists.*

*letstalk@ninedotarts.com*

*Cover photo courtesy  
Rocky Mountain Photography*





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It's that time of year in Colorado – when during the day it's summer, that evening it's winter and a few hours later spring is in the air. It was a dizzying weather weekend in late May that brought much-needed moisture along with unwelcome damage. Thankfully, most of the trees are resilient enough to lose a branch or two.

Which brings to mind our economy as well as the commercial development and design market. It's been a bumpy couple of years, and still our market is humming along. Despite the uncertainty wrought by the pandemic and evolving demands in both office and multifamily design (not to mention all of the newly required industrial product to keep up with consumer demand), Colorado is proving to be resilient.

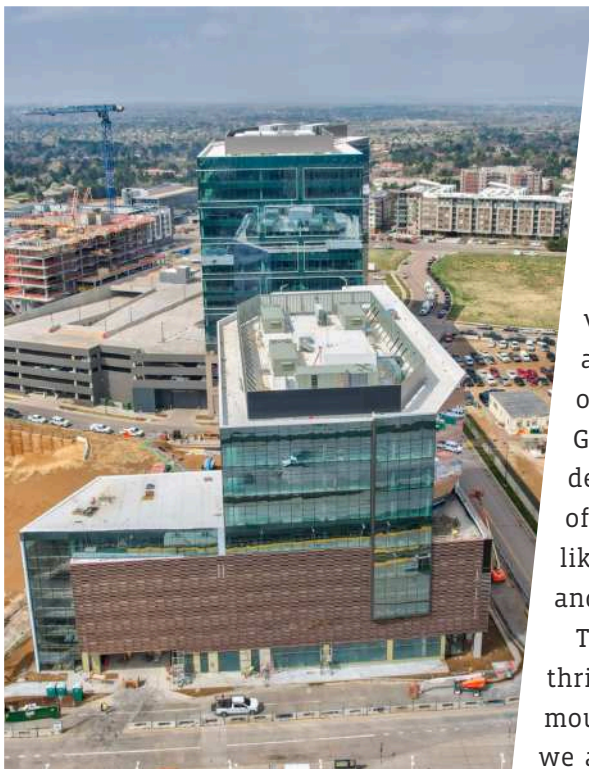
Take Vectra Bank Colorado's new headquarters in southeast Denver – it rises despite the pandemic thanks to the owner's willingness to prioritize moving forward during uncertain times.

Other homegrown projects continuing to make their way to completion include Silverthorne's vibrant new town center, National Jewish Health's state-of-the-art outpatient health center, RidgeGate's continued expansion and development along with a variety of thoughtfully reimaged projects like The Link in downtown Denver and the Boettcher Building in Aspen.

The promise of summer concerts thrills while more time spent in the mountains will be most welcome. As we all find our footing in these constantly changing times, I appreciate

the community we have built here and look forward to sharing more of your wonderful work in our September issue.

**Kris Oppermann Stern**  
Publisher & Editor  
kostern@crej.com



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*Indeed Tower, A Trammell Crow Development*

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## Developers Can Leverage Art to Preserve Culture and History



**Martha Weidmann**  
CEO and  
Co-founder,  
Nine dot Arts

Now more than ever, developers are recognizing the tremendous value art brings to today's corporate landscape. According to our most recent State of the Art report, 96% of professionals believe art improves the experience and quality of life for people who use a space, and 94% say their project would be less successful without art.

While these findings are encouraging, there is still much to be done when it comes to incorporating art in the initial planning of a new development. After all, only 32% of respondents in the State of the Art report admitted that they determine their art budget alongside the architecture, design and construction budgets.

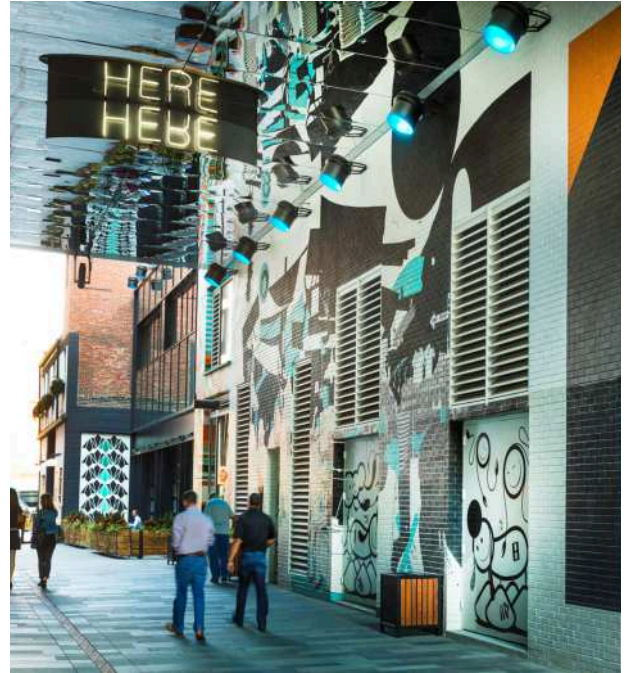
Proactive planning that emphasizes art in the early stages can make all the difference to the success of a real estate project. Art that is discussed and planned for in the brand and vision stages results in an intentional art collection that is integrated with design, architecture, and other critical elements. Plus, developers can maximize budget efficiencies, saving them time and money overall.

Aside from the financial and operational impact, strategic art programming can also help developers create a unique sense of place that prioritizes and preserves the local culture and history. As Colorado developer Chad McWhinney says, "Art and culture allow us to honor a brand, a place, a story."

But to achieve this, it's important that developers understand the necessity of art's involvement in the initial stages, which can lay the groundwork for both a revenue-boosting art experience and meaningful community engagement opportunities that make a social impact.

Just look at Arté Noir, an arts and cultural nonprofit with a newly secured permanent space at Seattle's Midtown Square apartment complex. The project aims to reestablish a vibrant creative community representative of the Black residents who have long called Seattle's Central District home. Many of these residents have been displaced over the years due to rapid commercial development, yet Arté Noir's space marks a new model in which corporate-community partnerships help to preserve the legacies of local Black businesses and cultural organizations. By prioritizing Black arts and culture in a historically redlined district, Arté Noir's permanent space lays the foundation for community resilience, restoration and vitality.

How can developers learn from a project like Arté Noir?



*Dairy Block Alley: Artists featured are Sandra Fettingis, Colin Parson, Michael Ortiz, Evan Hecox, The London Police and Chad Hasegawa.*

- Consider art and culture in the early stages of development. When it comes to incorporating art into your project, the sooner the better.
- Make it a collaborative effort. Over 90% of respondents said their projects are most effective when all stakeholders, decision makers and experts work together – and this includes the local community.
- Invite and embrace new voices. Art can build social and cultural capital, but only when diverse voices and experiences are included in decision-making and development processes.

Another best practice that businesses can prioritize is art with impact. This means embracing purpose-driven, high-impact pieces like murals or sculptures made by and for the local community. A focus on "big" art allows developers to utilize collaborative spaces like garages, exterior facades, lobbies, rooftop patios, and more in unique ways, meanwhile promoting the work of local artists by placing it in accessible and highly trafficked areas.

Further, a commitment to uplifting local artists reflects a commitment to the community as a whole – and that's just good business. Local artists tell the story of the area, producing work that is representative of a community's history, values and people. In fact, over 90% of people say purchasing artwork from local artists is a good way



to connect the brand vision to the local culture.

Denver's Dairy Block Alley is an excellent example of leveraging art with impact to capture the history and character of a space. The art collection pays homage to the site of the original Windsor Dairy, as well as the artisan "makers" who are integral to Denver's creative community. Through a variety of local works, the space creates a one-of-a-kind experience steeped in history.

What can developers learn from a project like the Dairy Block?

- Artwork doesn't have to be confined to a frame. The Dairy Block's activated pedestrian alley includes murals, sculptures, poetry and more spanning the walkway, walls, ceilings and even the lighting. Both interior and exterior works provide visitors with moments of discovery, surprise and delight, meanwhile connecting them to the history of the city.

- Celebrate and employ local artists. They produce rich stories and are fundamental to shaping the visual narrative of a space.

- Look beyond aesthetics. Art with impact is art that tells a story, sparks conversation and makes us feel connected to something larger than ourselves.

It's encouraging to see more developers leveraging art for their projects. But to reap the maximum benefits of



*The Maven Hotel at Dairy Block: Art by Andrew Ramino Tirado.*

an art collection, the art must be considered early in a project's development, so that it feels integrated with the project's design, architecture, operations and more. Doing so will culminate in a cohesive yet one-of-a-kind experience in which high-impact artworks – made by and for locals – help preserve, even prior to development, and celebrate all that makes a place special: its culture, history and people. \\\



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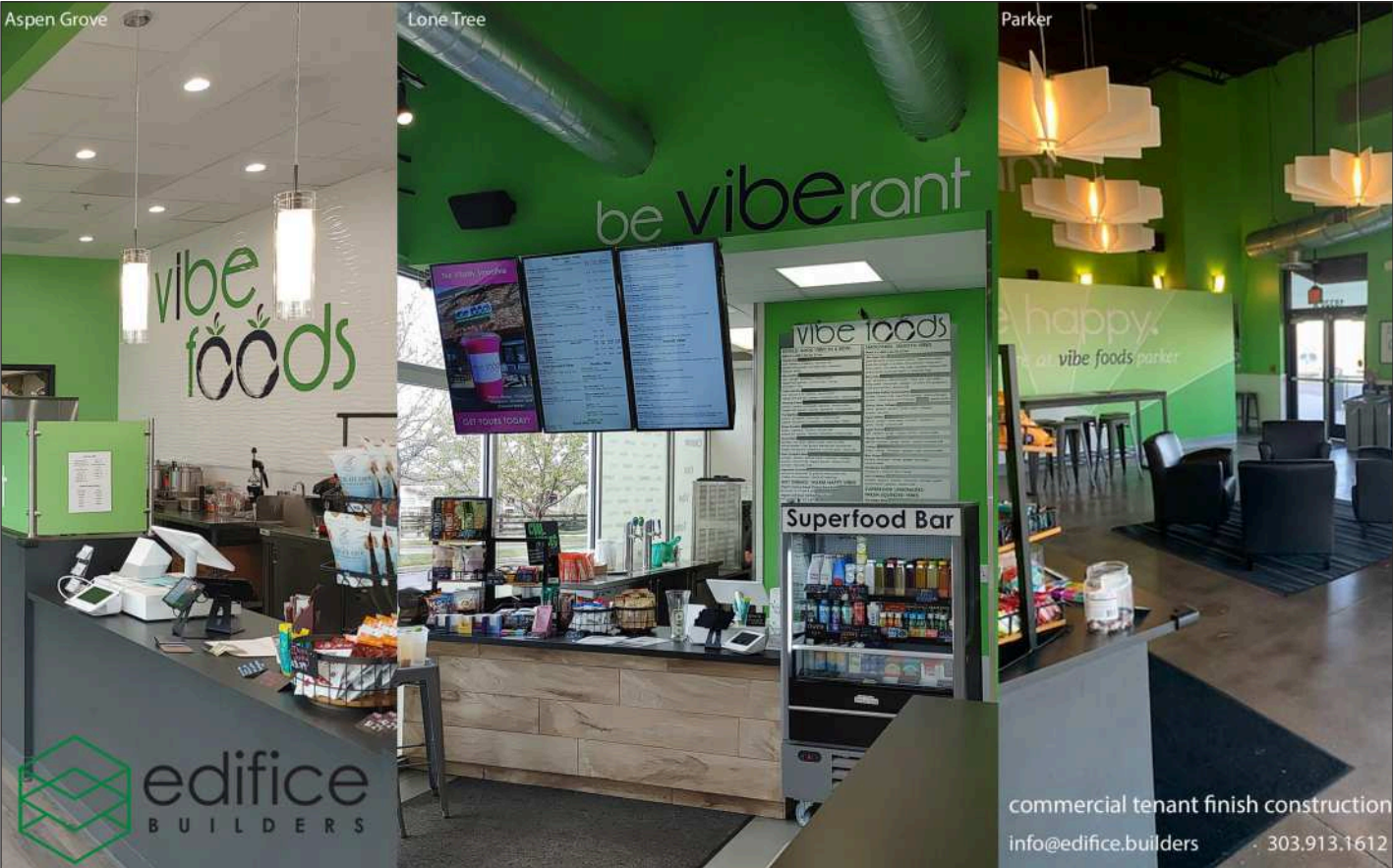


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## Back, Into, Work and Other 4-Letter Words in Today's Office



**Traci  
Lounsbury**  
Owner,  
elements

**W**hen did work become a four-letter word?

More importantly, why did it become a four-letter word?

How did we get to a place where the phrase “back to the office” is treated like an obscene phrase, muttered by those who see no value in returning to the workplace.

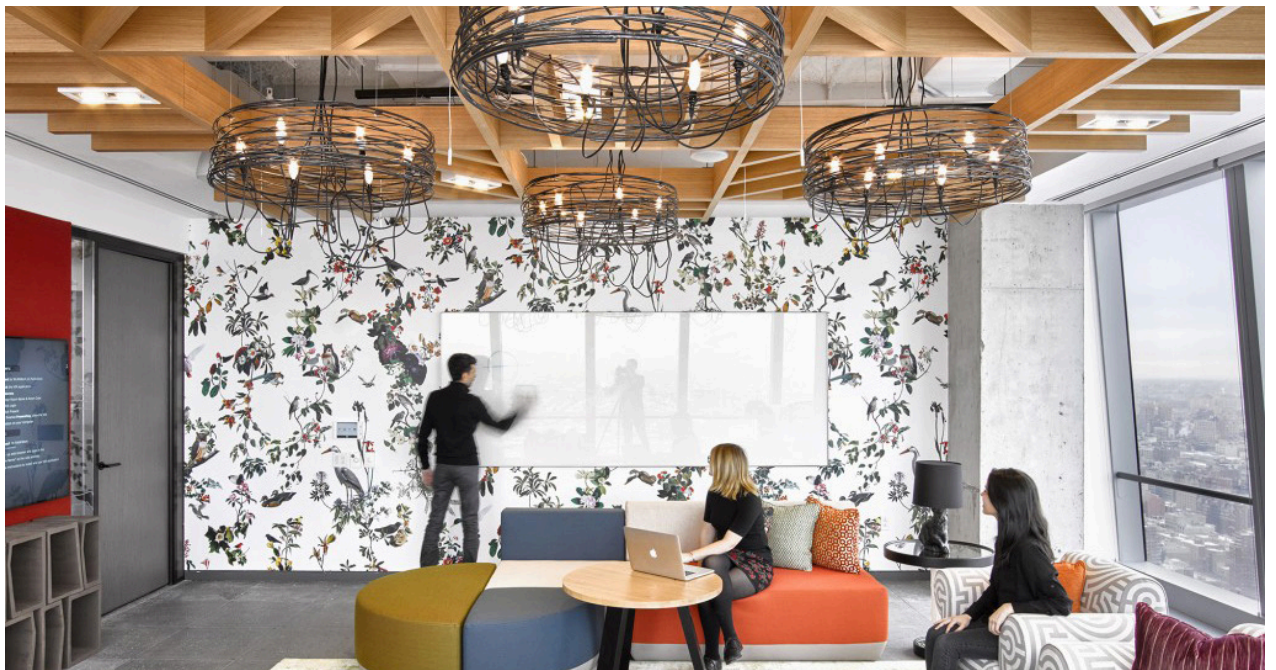
Perhaps “back to the office” got a bad rap when we realized how good we were at working remotely. The why is likely because employees have seen the perceived benefits of working from their homes. But it's our responsibility as leaders to rebuild the reputation of the workplace by creating a valuable and meaningful destination – to give employees an office they want to come back to.

Working from home is nothing new. Even before the pandemic employees asked to work remotely. Some employees were met with limited support, however, some organizations did have the capacity to work remotely, pre-pandemic. According to research by Gensler, flexible work strategies were very much in existence pre-pandemic. In fact, offices in the U.S.

*Boston Consulting Group, Detroit. Office designed by elements and Tryba Architects.*

were occupied around 80% of the time between 2016 and pre-pandemic 2020. Top-performing companies were hovering at an even lower rate (67%-74%) of occupancy during this time.

But now that we've all been working remotely for the past two or three years, we've collectively proven we can do it effectively. Leaders were forced to trust individual contributors and vice versa. And guess what – we were able to deliver. We trusted one an-



*Boston Consulting Group, New York City. Office designed by Gensler.*



other, we got creative and we got the work done.

Working remotely also gave every employee the power to better balance their personal lives during a time when they needed it the most. It created an environment where employees could control their surroundings. It empowered employees with choice. A choice about when and where to work. The choice to prioritize their personal lives, their humanity, over the 9-to-5 lifestyle.

Now, employees ask why they should go back to the office. It's a good question.

And it's a question you have to answer.

Ultimately, the workplace acts as a destination. One universal place that gives every employee something in common and levels the playing field. The workplace is a place specially designed to foster collaboration, ideation, and build culture.

Creating a separate space outside of the home where employees can focus on goals that exist outside of personal lives should be alluring. It should also give employees an opportunity to focus on relationships that aren't just their families.

Because of the talent reshuffling that has occurred as we emerge from the pandemic, many employees are onboarding, training and building new work relationships from scratch. Of course, all of this is possible on Zoom, but it takes more effort and much more intention. A well-designed workplace can make some of these otherwise labor-intensive and intentional encounters serendipitous and implicit. That's the power of place.

Additionally, the workplace acts as a metaphorical melting pot. It gives employees an opportunity to experience people, encounters, and tools they may not normally be exposed to. Spending all day, every day with your 5-year-old and your partner doesn't provide much opportunity to shake things up at best, and at worst fosters the unconscious bias to surround oneself with similar looking people.



*Signal House, Washington, D.C. Office designed by Gensler.*

The workplace should create spaces for people to step outside of their comfort zones to experiment, innovate and try new things. Don't bring people back into the office and expect people to continue sitting in front of their computers, on Zoom, with their headphones on or earbuds in. Create spaces and scenarios for people to engage with the space and one another. Here are some questions you can ask yourself or your workplace if you're thinking about transitioning back to the office:

- Does the physical space support the goal of driving engagement?
- Do you have flexibility in your furnishings and technology?
- Have you designed spaces where employees can do focused work?
- Do employees have access to the right people in the workplace as part of a high-performing team doing their best work?
- Do people want to come into the workplace because it delivers things that they cannot get at home?

At the end of a long day of work, how memorable is working from the dining room table? Are you sharing your great accomplishments and successes? Are you collectively learning from failures? Are you creating memorable work experiences with others? How often are you breaking bread, laughing over coffee, and looking one another in the eye as you move through your day?

As leaders in our field, it's our responsibility to create intentionally designed work environments and rebuild the reputation of the four-lettered word "work." Together we can create the workplace of the future; not just an office, but an ultimate destination – a place where we can shift our thinking from me to we. \\\



*Gensler, Miami Wynwood. Office designed by Gensler.*





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# The Importance of Installing Pollinator-Friendly Landscapes



**Jim Tolstrup**  
Executive  
Director, High  
Plains Environ-  
mental Center

Last year, Dr. Paul Opler, an entomologist with Colorado State University, studied bees at the High Plains Environmental Center and elsewhere in Northern Colorado. Opler counted over 100 species of bees at HPEC and calls our gardens an “ecological supersite” because of the density and diversity of the native plants that are so critical for pollinators. With an estimated 946 species of native bees, Colorado is home to nearly one quarter of the approximate 3,500 bee species found in the United States and Mexico.

Pollinators are animals (insects, birds, etc.) that carry pollen from plant to plant, fertilizing flowers and aiding in the reproduction of plants. Evolving together within the same ecosystem has led to specialized adaptations that benefit both pollinators and their plant hosts.

There are many ways in which plants have adapted to target specialized pollinators; a common strategy is developing specific flower forms to limit which insects can access their pollen. Insects that are successful in accessing the pollen and nectar of a particular species of flower are likely to go to other flowers of the same type. This helps to ensure fertilization and eliminates some of the waste of pollen being carried to different plant species.

Across the United States however, pollinators (and insects in general) are experiencing a dramatic decline. The European honeybee (*Apis mellifera*), a non-native but important pollinating insect in Colorado, is on the decline globally. This should be of extreme concern to us as we rely on these insects to pollinate crops. The honeybee has been moved around the world by human beings because it will readily pollinate a wide variety of plants. It’s es-



*Rocky Mountain beardtongue (Penstemon strictus) and Penstemon Nevada bumblebee (Bombus nevadensis)*

timated that in the United States alone, over 100 crops are directly dependent on pollination by honeybees. This represents roughly one-third of the American diet. The economic value of these crops is approximately \$15 billion.

There are multiple causes of the decline in bees, including pests, disease and habitat loss. But chief among these causes are pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids, a group of systemic insecticides that make an entire plant poisonous, sometimes persisting several months after application.

Native pollinators can also pollinate food crops, and a diversity of insects helps to increase capacity in the environment, distributing the function of



*Anise hyssop (Agastache foeniculum) and Southern Plains bumblebee (Bombus fraterculus)*



*Maximilian sunflower and Bombus griseocollis (brown-belted bumble bee)*





*Pollinators thrive in gardens filled with native plants in Chapungu Sculpture Park, at Centerra in Loveland.*

pollination to multiple species. Native pollinators are particularly dependent on the native plants that co-evolved with them, as much as the plants are dependent on the insects.

The concerns about pollinator conservation are so great that federal, state and often municipal governments have created measures to protect them. These measures include limiting use of pesticides, creating pollinator patches along highways and other public spaces, and encouraging the use of native plants in landscaping.

Baseline, a McWhinney master planned community in Broomfield, is being developed as a “pollinator zone.” The design and management of landscaping within the entire community is intended to be “pollinator friendly.” The Butterfly Pavilion is currently pursuing a \$50-million capital campaign with plans to relocate to Baseline’s Center Street to share its future 80,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art invertebrate zoo and research center with the community.

“The new, 8-acre site will include tropical, aquatic and desert biomes, and will provide a space for teaching invertebrate science to learners of all ages,” said Amy Yarger, horticulture director at Butterfly Pavilion.

What can you do to create pollinator friendly landscapes?

1. Bees are attracted to intense concentrations of flowers; the larger the area the better.
2. Bees require a succession of plants over the year, but some specialize in particular plant families, so it’s good to have a succession of bloom within those families, including Asteraceae, Rosaceae, Lamiaceae, Fabaceae, etc.
3. Don’t clean up dead stalks or remove old plant material until spring if possible. Pollinators may overwinter in plant stalks. Walking in the garden can also be destructive



*This solitary bee house at HPEC was created by Colorado State University interns.*

as insects may be just below the surface.

4. Encourage a bit of “weediness.” Make a distinction between noxious weeds and native plants that self-seed such as sunflowers and the Rocky Mountain bee plant. These plants can supply an abundance of flowers for insect forage.

5. Provide bee houses for solitary bees where possible and be sure to maintain them diligently to avoid spreading disease.

6. Provide areas of bare ground (bare soil with no mulch or gravel) for nesting bees.

6. Keep plantings in sunny areas; most bees forage mainly in sunshine. Honeybees and bumble bees are exceptions.

7. Avoid insecticides as much as possible. Know where your plants are grown and always avoid buying plants treated with systemic insecticides, particularly neonicotinoids.\





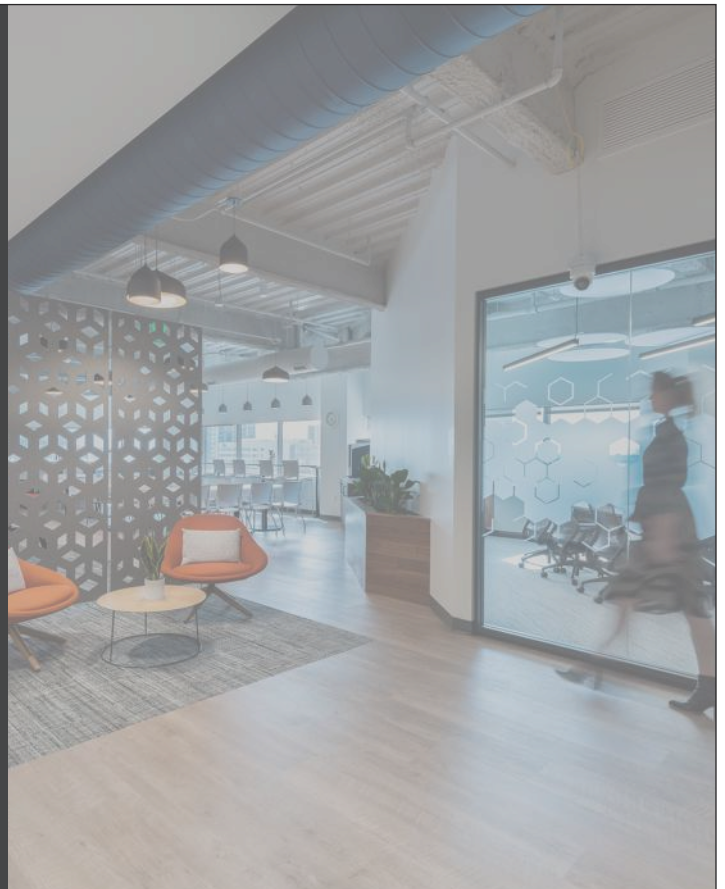
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Research suggests that when we feel depleted, connecting with nature gets us more energized than a cup of coffee.

*Journal of Environmental Psychology*



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# The Role of Biophilic Design in Creating Places of Solace



**Megan Testin**  
Principal,  
Norris Design

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic has been a major disruptor that has rippled throughout every corner of the world, impacting individuals and communities alike. In just the first few days we were collectively forced to reimagine our world and our daily routines, and in the weeks and months after we had to reimagine community and our connections with others. The term “social distancing” became as commonplace as bread or toilet paper (if you could find any).

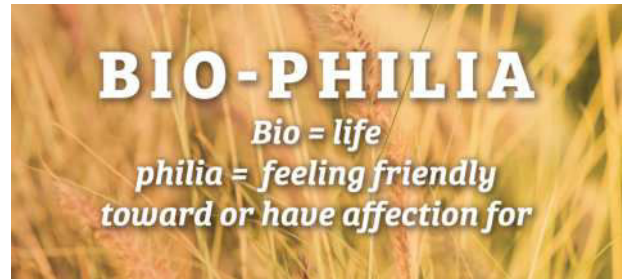
This abrupt, sweeping change for nearly everyone in the world led to sincere concerns for mental health and well-being. Beyond the stress, anxiety and loss that people cope with on a daily basis, the pandemic magnified the situational pressures of COVID-19. These stressors combined with the increase in political and social unrest brought many to the brink of mental and emotional distress.

## The Impact of Change

By January 2021, 41% of adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder, compared with only 11% in January 2019, prior to the onset of the pandemic. (Nirmita Panchal, Rabah Kamal, Cynthia Cox and Rachel Garfield, “The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use,” Kaiser Family Foundation, Feb. 10, 2021, <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/>) Human brains are sensitive to social and emotional stress. This is particularly true in life-threatening situations that force major change like social distancing, working from home and enforced mask wearing. The necessity to distance from others leaves us feeling isolated, uncertain, lonely and unable to connect with people or places.

Not only were basic human needs like food, shelter, security and safety threatened by the rampage of the pandemic, but our psychological needs also were threatened as we were unable to maintain intimate relationships or spend time with friends. This damage to the base of our human psyche sent many into a spiral of grief. The American Cancer Society describes grief as an emotional process that involves emotions, actions and expressions. This process is personal and contextual.

Mourning is the outward expression of grief and a requisite step in the emotional journey toward healing and returning to a meaningful life. For many, grief was and is now at the forefront of daily life – grief for lost loved ones, for a way



*Biophilic design in everyday outdoor environments can support mental health and well-being to help alleviate the need for an alternative solution.*

of life, for time lost and for an altered future that was forced upon us.

## A New Role for Biophilic Design

Healthy communities allow residents to share memories, tears, pain, stories and fellowship. This helps individuals grieving to remember that they are not alone in their journey. (“Grief and Mourning Basics,” Center for Loss & Life Transition, <https://www.centerforloss.com/grief/grief-mourning-basics/>) Without these grounding resources, we often resort to harmful coping mechanisms. As the weeks, months and years wane on throughout the pandemic, finding healthy ways to mourn and cope with stress as individuals and as a community seems to be more and more challenging. Systematic inequalities regarding access to resources that support mental health and well-being increase the need for a new solution.

We believe biophilic design in everyday outdoor environments can support mental health and well-being to help alleviate the need for an alternative solution.

Humans have long seen nature and outdoor spaces as a haven for connection and healing. Aristotle pondered humans’ love of life based on reciprocity and the meaning of “philia” or as the Greek considered it, a bond that people have in common. (Aristotelis Santas, “Aristotelian Ethics and Biophilia,”





*For many, grief was and is now at the forefront of daily life – grief for lost loved ones, for a way of life, for time lost and for an altered future that was forced upon us.*



*Experiencing biophilic design with others can help us process the collective trauma experienced throughout the pandemic.*

Ethics and the Environment, 19, 1, 2014), <https://essaydocs.org/aristotelian-ethics-and-biophilia.html>) Psychoanalyst Erich Fromm took this a step further by popularizing the term biophilia in the 1960s to describe our biological drive toward self-preservation as “an entire way of being ... that is expressed in the tendency of all living organisms to live.” (Erich Fromm, “The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil – Religious Perspectives,” Harper & Row, 1964)

In the late 1970s, evolutionary biologist Edward O. Wilson expanded the meaning of the term to describe the human bond with other species. Wilson hypothesized that biophilia is our “innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes” most commonly exhibited in nature. (Edward O. Wilson, *Biophilia*, Harvard University Press, Revised ed. edition, 1984) In the last few decades, hundreds of studies have proved that “being in nature, living near nature, or even viewing nature in paintings and videos can have positive impacts on our brains, bodies, feelings, thought processes, and social interactions.” (Kristophe Green and Dacher Keltner, “What Happens When We Reconnect With Nature,” *Greater Good Magazine*, March 1, 2017, [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what\\_happens\\_when\\_we\\_reconnect\\_with\\_nature](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what_happens_when_we_reconnect_with_nature))

A 2012 study completed by Catherine Ward Thompson found an inverse relationship between the percentage of green space in a community and perceived stress levels in humans – a result that even held up against adjustments for demographic and socio-economic variables. (Catharine Ward Thompson, et al., “More green space is linked to less stress in deprived communities: Evidence from salivary cortisol patterns,” *Elsevier Landscape and Urban Planning* 105 (2012): 221-229) By calming our central nervous systems, access to nature reduces stress. The innate biological connection humans have to nature creates a tangible environment that can support people on their journey through grief and from mourning to healing.

Outdoor environments that employ biophilic design

principles help us deal with stressors in a healthy way and can serve as mindful settings to support our mourning and the journey to find spiritual and emotional resilience. An outdoor space acts as a vessel, a comforting place to physically come to terms with grief.

### Healing through Intentional Design

Commonly recognized in the building industry, biophilic design increases connectivity to the natural environment through intentional design decisions as an extension of the theory of biophilia and the human connection to nature. When outdoor environments are designed with biophilic principles in mind, these alternative spaces can facilitate human connection and healing.

It is crucial for people to face the overwhelming feelings of grief and loss to be able to find strength and resilience as they return to meaningful life (Sameet M. Kumar, Ph.D., “Grieving Mindfully: A Compassionate and Spiritual Guide to Coping with Loss,” New Harbinger Publications Inc., 2005) Biophilic design strategies can support the community grieving process and provide an outlet for personal expressions of grief in a restorative environment.

As designers of outdoor space, we believe it is our responsibility to consider how our designs help make the world a better place. This is particularly important as we approach what seems like the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel. So many of our communities have received vaccinations and boosters, and we’re finally beginning to visualize what the return to a new normal will look like. Even with this hope in mind, grief and mourning will continue for many.

We believe a connection to nature throughout this personal, emotional journey is paramount to healing, solace and moving beyond grief.\

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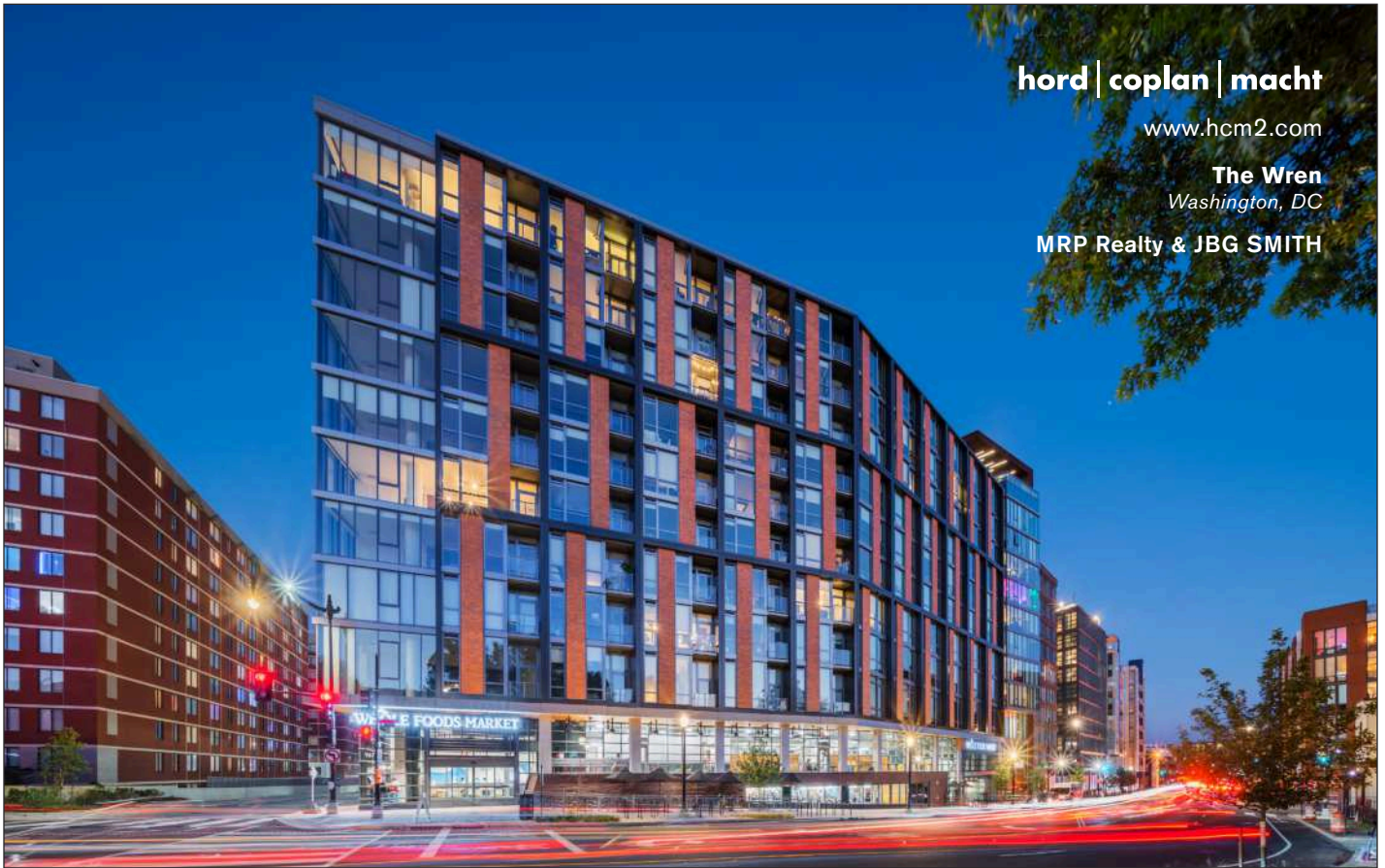
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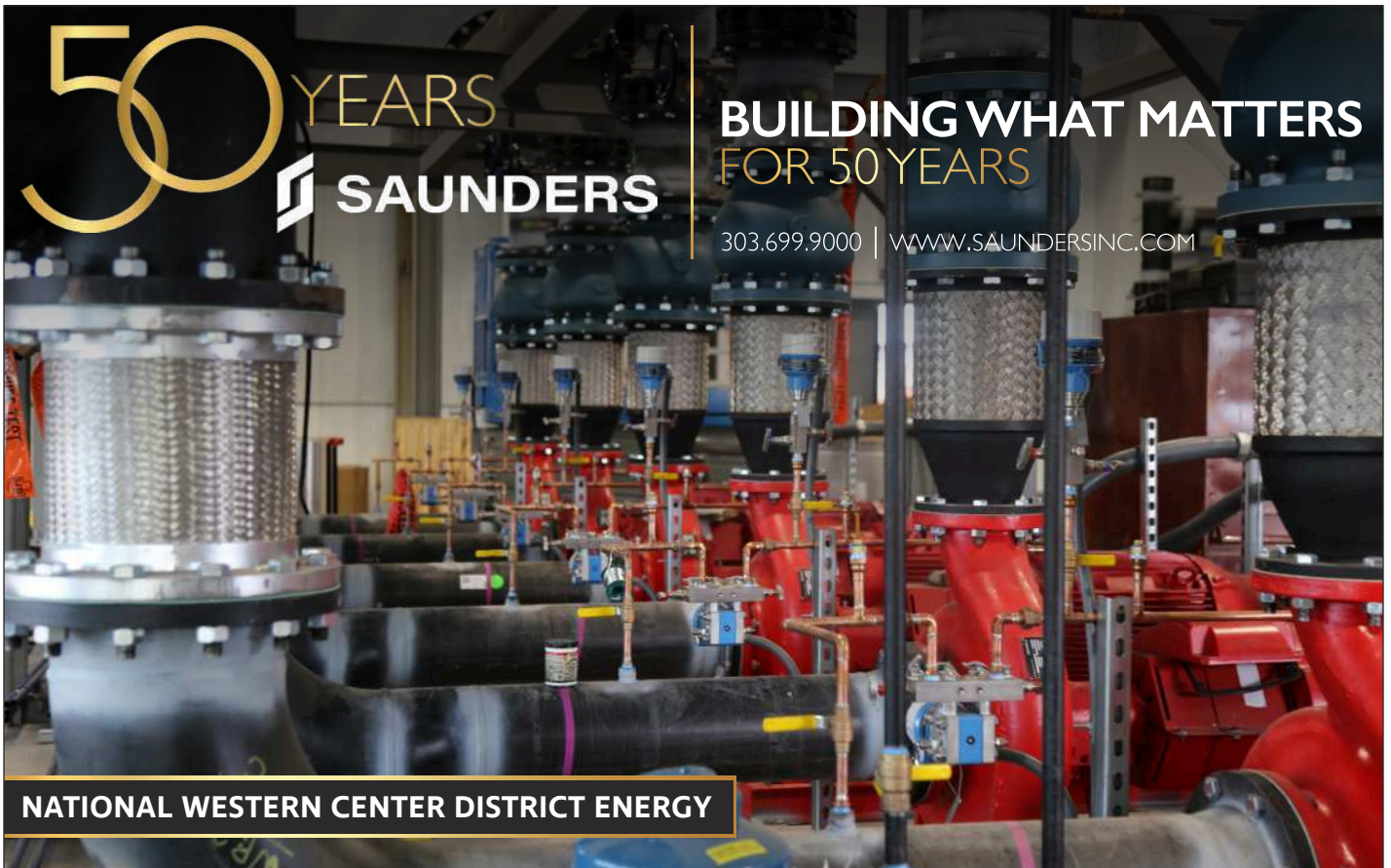
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# How Placemaking Attracts Visitors, Keeps Them Coming Back



**Beth Rosa**  
Principal,  
ArtHouse  
Design



**Marty Gregg**  
Founder &  
Principal,  
ArtHouse  
Design

Even before the pandemic, Colorado was experiencing a major shift in its population, from growing numbers of residents to changing demographics. To accommodate, we're seeing an increased need to use our land more efficiently and effectively with infill development, outdoor recreation areas, hybrid workspaces and more. At the same time, finding ways to maintain the character of the cities we live in has become increasingly challenging. One approach to blending historical context with modern infrastructure is to invest in placemaking.

■ **What is placemaking?** Placemaking brings together disciplines in architecture, development and design to activate spaces that enhance the pedestrian experience and build healthier, happier and stronger communities, especially in urban settings. The interconnected approach is like a warm, welcoming handshake that then pulls you in – so gently you don't even realize you're being led as you move through an environment.

From music playlists and lighting to places to sit and landscaping, various elements work together

nesses, increasing property values and building the local economy.

■ **Effective placemaking examples.** From sidewalks and streets to parks and waterfronts to shopping and entertainment districts, placemaking exists at the heart of a community, where there's a story to be told. It can be entertaining and fun or serious and reverential. But it should always be authentic.

These are some of our favorites from the ArtHouse portfolio:

• **14th Street Redevelopment:** What started out as a banner design project blossomed into a comprehensive wayfinding and placemaking program for the entire district. We were tasked with creating directional signage that would call out venues along Denver's 14th Street and help slow traffic. As a result, 14th Street evolved from the quick racetrack to get out of downtown to the Ambassador Street. Visitors may notice that photography of elements and details of iconic architecture in the district have been incorporated into the design of the pylons.

Thoughtful placemaking engages all of your senses – sight, touch, sound, smell, taste – to create a vision, feeling, vibe, scent, and flavor that you'll remember.

to get you to interact with the built environment – and others in it. It's like a social experiment in form and function, with people at its center.

Rather than making a space follow a set of placemaking principles, a meaningful design depends on the space and the people who use it. Take time to listen, observe and consider the opinions of the people who have used or will be using the space to stay true to the culture, character and essence of a community. Reflecting on the past can be just as insightful as looking to the future.

■ **Why is placemaking important?** Placemaking turns a public space into an experience with bits and pieces and layers, so each time you visit, you unravel a little more to see, do and remember. In this way it's a valuable element of a good brand that builds awareness, interest, desire and action. It's also a worthwhile investment that opens people's eyes to what's possible, attracting other busi-



The 14th Street Market kiosk helps visitors navigate the venue.



• **Whole Foods Market:** We were asked to create bold, upbeat, regional placemaking designs in seven of Whole Foods' existing and new stores across Colorado. Our team used large dimensional type, lighting, painted graphics and color to guide visitors throughout the indoor retail space. The placemaking in each store tells a unique story of the local neighborhood by incorporating elements of its history and the people who live(d) in the area.

• **Golisano Children's Hospital Rochester, N.Y.:** A bubble motif featuring regional identifiers, supergraphics and bright colors guides visitors through each level of the hospital, first welcoming them with an atrium, then inviting them in to experience the rest of space. Other delightful distractions include a walk-off mat, large backlit graphics, donor recognition, glass graphics/frit pattern, signage and wayfinding on an occupiable wall that kids can climb into.

• **Mushrif Botanical Gardens, Abu Dhabi UAE:** Repurposing the design of an existing park for women and children in the UAE, our team created large floral and colorful elements that welcome visitors to the newly reimagined space. Rich and layered with kinetic lighting, local materials and multilingual graphics, signage and wayfinding, the park features a hand-drawn fish cast in bronze and interactive, interpretive signage that has helped it become a widely popular destination for Instagrammable moments.

■ **Build trust – and your brand.** Creative placemaking ex-



*Mushrif Botanical Gardens is a repurposed park that includes kinetic lighting and local materials.*

ercises like sketches, mood boards, charettes and models can help establish your goals, define the project's vision, gain valuable context and discover sources of inspiration. As a project comes to life, a good designer should make you feel like part of the creative placemaking process. Invite an experiential graphic designer to join your team today.\\

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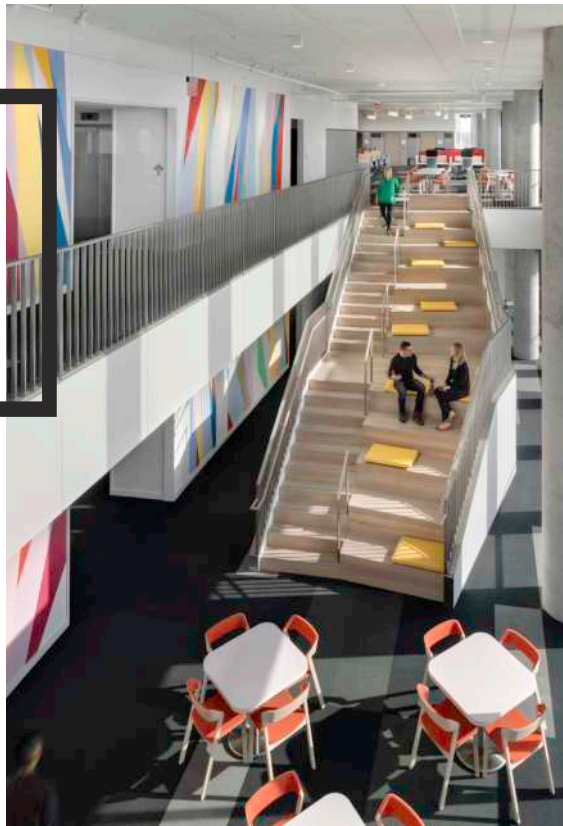
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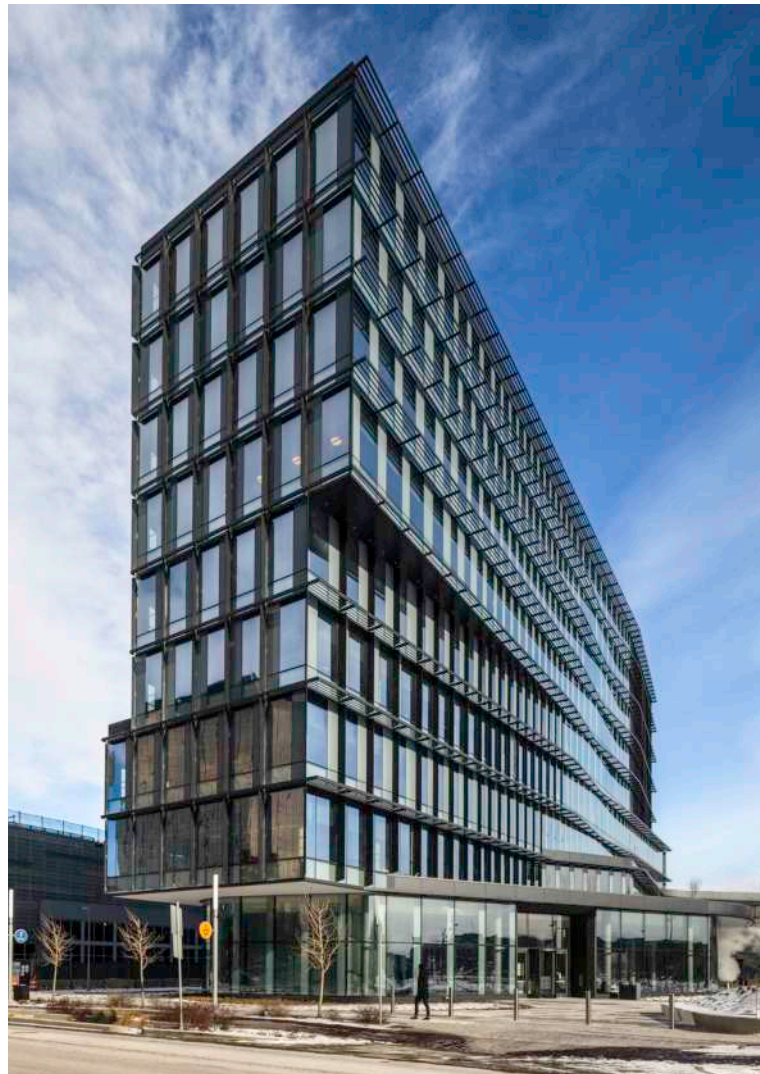
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# Engaging the Community in the Construction of Your Project



**John McCorkle**  
Construction  
Executive,  
GE Johnson  
Construction  
Co.

If you are planning a new facility, renovation or addition/expansion, consider the benefits of involving the community during construction. From hard-hat tours to milestone events, the benefits of community engagement before the doors open include community goodwill, donor cultivation, educational opportunities and relationship building. It can create excitement for construction crews and subcontractors by instilling a bigger sense of pride in the asset they are building.

- **Events that involve the community create engagement and build excitement.** From ground-breakings to topping-outs to ribbon-cuttings, construction projects often have built-in milestones that communicate progress. These milestones are a great opportunity to make stakeholders and community members feel involved and informed. Make the most of events by providing attendees the chance to scoop a shovel of dirt, sign structural beams, or even contribute to a time capsule that can be enclosed in the facility. If your project will feature artwork or specialized architectural components, plan a reveal event to create excitement for the community. You also can leverage other community events to amplify your reach. For example, if a local parade or festival is held near your site, find ways to educate the public

about your project and the impact it will have on the community when it is complete.

- **Hard-hat tours.** Hard-hat tours allow guests to see construction in action and provide a connection to projects. Our U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum project team hosted over 200 construction tours with community members in Colorado Springs. Inviting athletes to participate in these tours gave a higher sense of authenticity by providing the perspective of a subject-matter expert. Your tour guides should serve as SMEs and understand your specific goal for hosting hard-hat tours.

Be discerning about who tours. For a highly anticipated building that uses public dollars, there can be a high number of requests that cannot be accommodated or have limited return on your team's time investment.

Communication is key for a successful tour. Inform attendees on where to park, what to wear and how to access the site. Tour guides should serve as the point of contact and know how many people are touring, who they are, and when. Pre-plan how to accommodate people with physical disabilities and set expectations for accessibility. Communicate with the construction team weekly and daily on the expected tours and consider creating standing tour days/times when there will be less impact on construction.

To ensure safety for visitors, create a personal



Community members sign the beam at the topping out ceremony for the new Switchbacks FC Downtown Stadium.



The Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center project team leads MiLL students on a hard-hat tour.



protective equipment station that includes boots and other PPE like high-visibility vests, hard hats, protective eyewear and gloves. Perform a safety orientation, and have visitors sign waivers and provide contact information. This serves in case of an emergency but also as a follow-up after the tour and after the project is complete. Don't forget to obtain fire department approval, including approved access and egress plans.

- **Donor cultivation and presales.** Depending on the nature of your project, you may be looking to cultivate future customers or donors. Early engagement with your facility can provide a sense of belonging long before the doors open. For instance, at the Switchbacks FC Downtown Stadium in Colorado Springs, owners were looking to capture ticket and membership presales during stadium construction. In addition to hard-hat tours, a virtual fly-through of the finished stadium highlighting key features was shared to generate excitement. Consider creating collateral or an ask for tour attendees to take when they leave.

Because the USOPM held a capital campaign throughout construction, hard-hat tours were helpful for donors and potential donors to understand what their gift was supporting. A Diamond Donor campaign was created where donors bought an individual diamond-shaped panel that makes up the building's exterior. Panels can



Switchbacks FC reveals "The Epicenter" sculpture in downtown Colorado Springs.

be located on a virtual model throughout and beyond construction, providing donors an instant sense of ownership and pride in the facility. \\

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# Fulfilling the Promise of Modern Mental Health Facilities



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Planner, Page



**Val Williams, AIA, ACHA**  
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Healthcare  
Planner, Page

The pandemic has brought the reality of mental health challenges into everyone's homes. Recent years have seen renewed public interest and education in mental health, and across the country, a record number of projects are being undertaken to improve care facilities. For a system serving some of the most vulnerable among us, the stakes are extremely high. Mental health treatment can be lifesaving, and the physical environment can support a better quality of life for practitioners and patients alike. However, there is a long and complex history of both success and failure in the alignment of design and patient care that any new project must acknowledge and address. Increasing demand has encouraged substantial investment in facilities for mental health care. In 2021 alone, Colorado received a \$94 million federal funding boost for behavioral health services. And as part of a five-year strategic plan, Larimer County identified gaps in service and is investing in new regional facilities. A 20-year dedicated funding stream



*In addition to creating welcoming private spaces, current trends in mental health design also call for the creation of communal public spaces as well as a direct connection to the outdoors.*

voted on by the county's residents will expand and enrich local behavioral health services by providing assessments and treatment, as well as facilitating connections between community-based services and county providers in a centralized location.

The Larimer County Behavioral Health Facility provides this "one-stop shop" for the community's behavioral health needs. The facility is sited equidistant from all major municipalities to ensure equal and convenient access. It includes a secure drop-off for first responders to bring a person in crisis to a safe place. In lieu of relying on the hospital emergency department or worse, corrections facilities, which are not well equipped to respond to mental health crisis situations, the new facility will house the Behavioral Triage Hub. The Triage Hub and its care units – including medical detox, social detox, crisis stabilization and inpatient residential treatment – provide a comforting environment with minimal locking and restraints to signal to patients that they are in a place of care, not a place of confinement. The building orients to Horsetooth Mountain, providing views and access to nature. Residential units include a combination of single- and double-patient rooms to provide appropriate accommodations for a wide range of diagnoses, gender identities and mobility issues. The facility also houses multiple county resources, so that well-coordinated discharge planning and follow-up care can start as soon as a patient is admitted.

This facility, like so many others recently built or soon to be completed, is designed to support the future of mental health care in a continuum that is

## Space Drivers: Behavioral Health Components



## Space Drivers: Organizational Components





striving to respect the whole person and bring individualized care to patients where they are. Across the country, the inventory of outdated buildings ill-suited to support modern treatment is being upgraded or replaced. In 2020 alone, 40% of the specialty hospitals under construction were psychiatric and behavioral health, according to the American Society of Healthcare Engineering. However, despite increased focus and capital investment, many challenges remain. Community-based care facilities and outpatient clinical programs designed to detect and treat early signs of mental illness are in notoriously short supply. The misalignment of clinical crisis care and law enforcement adds strain on critical resources. With each new project, architects, engineers and contractors must strive to understand the opportunities and risks involved in the daily use of these facilities and move away from obvious confinement and surveillance toward supportive research-driven design solutions. Durable, ligature-resistant products and materials are just one aspect of a complex approach to mitigating risk and ensuring that the environment best supports mental health.

About one-third of people in Colorado, more than 1.8 million individuals, experience a mental health condition each year. This number has increased significantly since the beginning of the pandemic, and the full extent of the pandemic's impact on mental health remains to

be seen. Yet, out of the tragedy of COVID-19, opportunities exist. A strengthened focus on continuity of care; increased use of virtual health tools, including medication reminder check-ins; reduction in stigma; greater public awareness; frictionless collaboration among specialties; and improved family involvement are all steps toward normalizing mental health treatment and making care more accessible.

There will be no single perfect solution to solve the fractured mental health care system. The extraordinary increase of construction projects for mental health facilities is a promising step toward better supporting practitioners and individuals receiving services. However, it is a widely held belief that, to avoid the failings of the past, the evolving mental health care environment must be composed of a comprehensive constellation of services at every level of society to best support prevention, intervention and treatment. This means an unprecedented level of multidisciplinary focus, public awareness and advocacy, education and law enforcement training, as well as consistent funding and accountability from those responsible to provide these public health services. Lives and livelihoods are at stake.\

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A graphic celebrating Pinkard Construction's 60th anniversary. It features a large, stylized number '60' in pink and blue, with the word 'Years' in white and 'STRONG' in white. To the right, the company name 'PINKARD CONSTRUCTION' is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the '60 Years STRONG' text, a message reads: '60 Years **BUILDING BETTER** Pinkard wants to **thank all our clients and collaborators** for the opportunity to help **build Denver and the Colorado Front Range** for so many years. **We look forward to many more.**' At the bottom left, the website 'PinkardBuilds.com' is listed. In the bottom right corner, a small blue box contains the text 'PARTNER PLAN BUILD BETTER' in white. The background is a dark blue/purple gradient with a faint image of construction workers wearing hard hats.

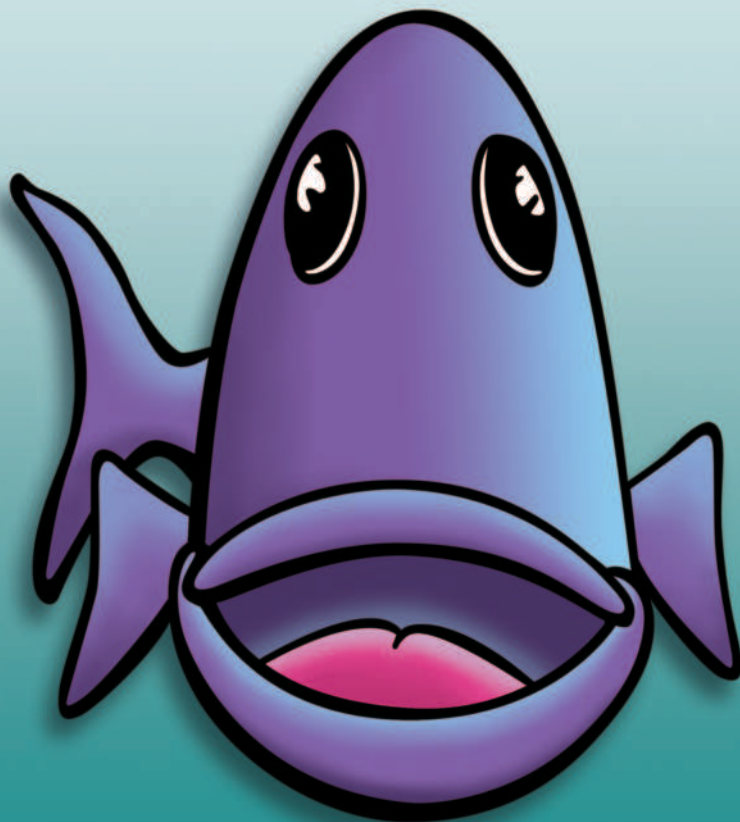


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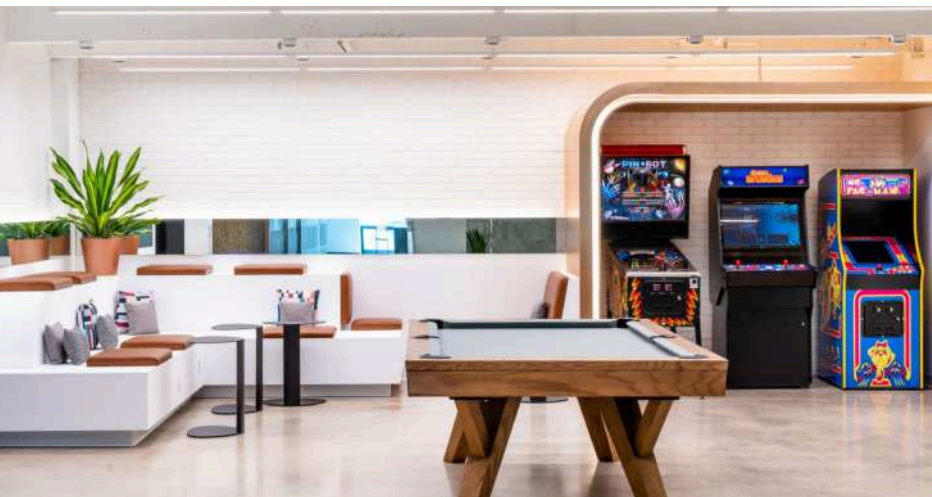
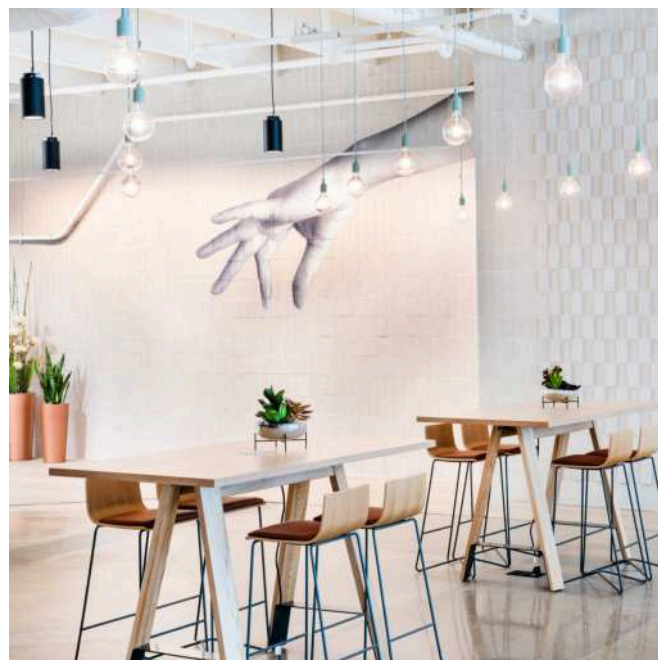
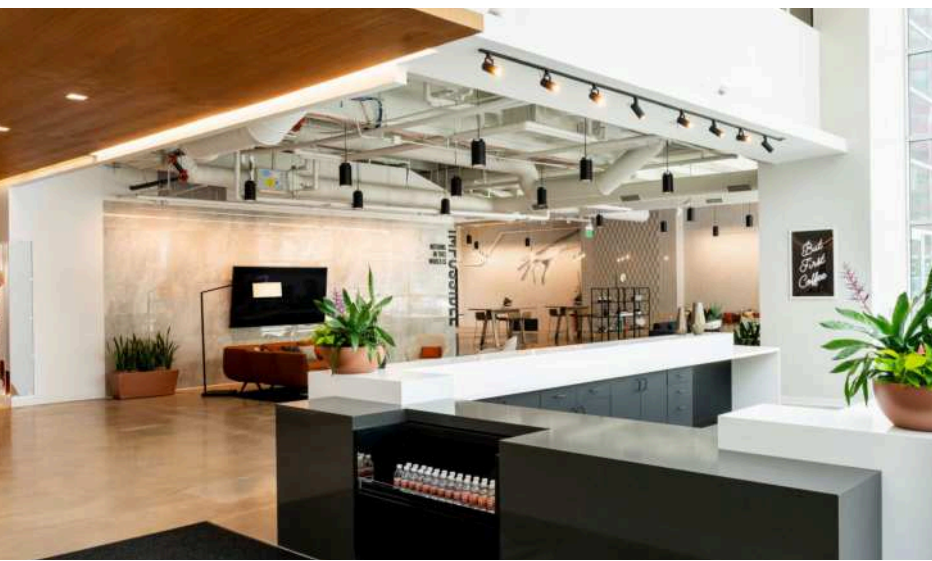
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# Innovative Design, Amenities Reshape Multifamily Product



**David Morris**  
Design Principal,  
The Beck Group

Like other high-growth states, there has been booming demand in Colorado's multifamily residential market, prompting developers and investors to expand the supply of residential units needed to accommodate the population influx into the state and other desirable cities in the Sunbelt region. In metro Denver, Colorado's most active multifamily market and one of the top apartment markets in the country, construction of multifamily units is moving at a torrid pace.

According to a report released by Fannie Mae, an additional 1,100 multifamily units were added to the construction pipeline in metro Denver during the third quarter of 2021, bringing a total of 19,600 units. Like the country's other multifamily hotspots, a shortage of available units continues to drive rents higher.

The growth in the market also has created a noticeable shift in multifamily design offerings, innovation in multifunctional living spaces and upscale hospitality-type building amenities in Denver and other Front Range communities. While unique design features and amenities were evolving prior to this latest growth in the market and prior to the pandemic, these design features and new living trends have accelerated at a pace not experienced ever before in multifamily.

In Colorado and other Front Range communities, the pandemic has boosted demand for larger and more flexible spaces to accommodate those working outside the office. More importantly, it required a reassessment of over-programmed, inflexible space.

Here are some examples of how unit design – as well as both unit and building amenities – is changing the function and feel of Colorado's multifamily properties.

- **More open and expansive kitchens.** An earlier multifamily trend focused on designing smaller and more efficient galley-style kitchens, compact footprints with a more utilitarian focus. In the pandemic-era, multifamily units are being designed with more spacious and free flowing kitchen



*At Bellevue Station, the North Tower will feature residential units on the top floors and hospitality spaces on the lower floors.*

ens, with higher-quality finishes and higher-quality appliance packages. Kitchens also are being built more central within the units, prominently focused as the hub of family and entertainment activity.

- **Bigger and multifunctioning bedrooms.** Studios, one-bedroom and multiple-bedroom units are expanding in size, from as much as 75 square feet to 100 sf, making the average unit between 900 and 1,000 sf. This has allowed increased flexibility in how bedroom space is used.

- **Utilizing outdoor space.** Newer multifamily buildings feature larger and deeper balconies, providing more space for entertainment and other purposes. It also has led to designing an outside space as an extension of the interior space such as partially enclosed terraces and sunrooms.

- **Greater storage capacity.** Closets and other interior storage spaces are offering more capacity and a higher level of detail. One trend is building



closets without doors and clothing rods. Instead, cabinets are being placed in closets to maximize space and usability.

• **A multitude of amenities.** Amenities can be found in high-end multifamily units like temperature-controlled storage areas for online food and package deliveries, theater-quality entertainment, in-unit exercise equipment, coworking spaces, rooftop patios and a host of other unique amenities.

In addition to these amenities, there has been a greater emphasis placed on designing buildings with all-electric HVAC systems; vegan and recycled furnishings; and other eco-friendly features, driven by increasing demand for a carbon-free environment.

Projects in the Mile High City and surrounding areas serve as striking examples of the new wave in designing multifamily living spaces.

One of those is a Beck multifamily project in Denver's Tech Center. One of two planned high-rise buildings at Bellevue Station will be built with the North Tower having residential units on the top floors and hospitality spaces on the lower floors. The project's South Tower will provide a mix of hospitality and office space.

Bellevue Station residents will have more space dedicated to living and for work-related activities. Those

working from home will have access to the tower's business center outfitted with conference tables, video conference software and other state-of-the-art technology – a dramatic departure from the old business center concept of a few chairs and desks, a couple of aging computers and a copy machine.

The buildings also are being designed to allow residents to edit their homes and easily convert their living rooms into work areas. For instance, wall-mounted TVs can be used as laptop monitors, and curtains and sliding partitions are designed to close or edit for work activities from the balance of the living space.

Before the pandemic arrived, the design called for balconies on 60% to 70% of the tower's residential units. Due to the pandemic and the desire for natural ventilation, it was later decided that all the units would include balconies and or outdoor terrace space.

Colorado's multifamily properties are indeed changing with the times, driven by the pandemic's lingering impact as well as fresh trends in how we live, work and play. Combining the latest residential designs with hospitality-type amenities represents the start of a new and vibrant phase in the ever-evolving multifamily market.

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# Project Manager Can Drive Process: Inception to Completion



**Guia Lasquete,**  
**LEED Green**  
**Associate**  
Principal, Rider  
Levett Bucknall

Contracting a project manager early in the planning phase focuses the project scope of work to capture the greatest cost savings and efficiencies. This timing allows the PM to effectively guide key decisions on milestones made during budget planning, design and procurement.

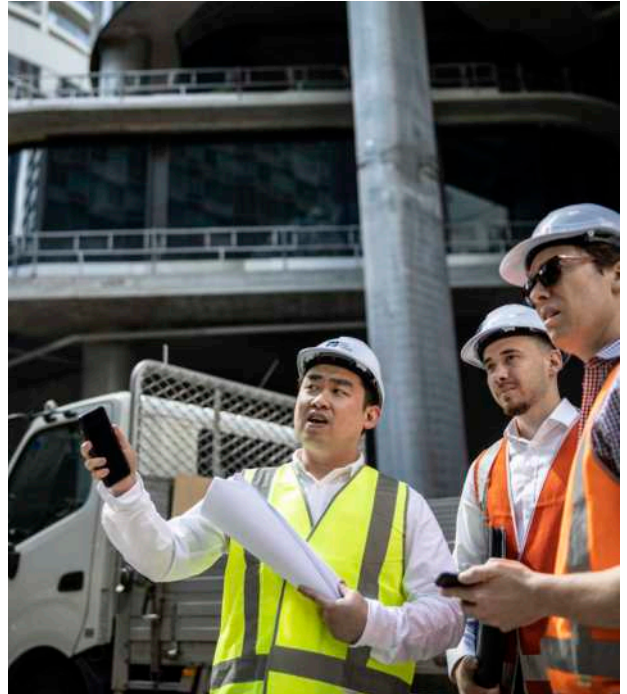
The following are examples of how a PM can drive the process from the initial phases of planning:

- **Budget development.** PMs can expand budget development to include soft costs, not just construction/hard costs, providing an all-encompassing financial picture. For example, for a Colorado health care project, the PM developed the budget during the planning phase to provide early cost certainty to the board to request funding for a new building. PMs can also guide the design at key milestones with feasibility studies on site selection and incremental budget checks at each phase of the project to avoid costly value engineering discussions later in the project.

- **Design.** PMs are at an ideal vantage point as oversight so that the original programming goals are captured in the design documents. Acting as a second set of eyes on the documents during constructability reviews, they call out early risks the proposed design poses to the budget, as well as advise on finding solutions in order to keep the project moving forward. The Colorado health care PM used this method to provide the optimum amount of physical square footage throughout all campuses; this allowed the owner to avoid vacant, unused space sitting idle and overcrowding at other facilities.

- **Procurement.** A regionally based PM's familiarity with design firms' capabilities/portfolios, as well as those of contractors and consultants, can streamline the selection process for the owner, as PMs can effectively screen qualified candidates. Referencing the same health care project above, the Colorado-based PM, in teaming with the owner team, assisted with design firm interviews and recommend experienced contractors for bid consideration. Additionally, due to the early budget development exercise above, the PM was involved in negotiating the guaranteed maximum price for the project. A PM's knowledge of multiple forms of contract agreements and contract negotiating skills can work to an owner's advantage.

During the procurement phase, the PM also can create a short list of project-specific suitable procurement options to further maximize cost



*Project managers act as a representative of the owner and drive entire process, from project inception to completion.*

savings. Assets can be optimized by conducting comparative construction budgets for various program configurations. When developing the requests for quotes and requests for proposals, the PM can offer insight into whether a project might benefit from a two-stage procurement approach.

- **Construction.** If construction is the point of contact for a PM, then he is relegated to playing only an oversight role. The potential benefits to the team remain unrealized and become nothing more than a missed opportunity. However, the PM continues to play a key role in continuous interaction with owners, designers and contractors to serve as the point person in communications. Essentially, she ensures consistent, accurate information is delivered through the entire execution.

- **Summary.** Project hard costs are approximately 70% of the budget, and by the time a project reaches construction, this severely limits the project decision-making/course corrections with such a large percentage of the budget committed. On the other hand, engaging a PM as the first executed contract, he can actively manage 70% of the risk. PMs act as a representative of the owner and drive entire process, from project inception to completion. \\

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# Modern Meets Historic: Design for Future, Nod to the Past



**Nicole Nathan**  
Partner, JNS  
Architecture +  
Design

Infill and redevelopment projects continue to take shape throughout Denver's city center, and the convergence of old and new is ever-present, begging the question of how we design the built environment for the future while paying homage to our city's storied past and creating a strong sense of place. Our firm recently completed two downtown Denver projects that answer just that.

Situated at unique intersections where modern meets historic, both The Fitzgerald and the Hyatt Centric Downtown

Denver transformed underutilized surface parking lots into developments that meld seamlessly among their neighbors of all ages – from lofty, contemporary office towers to stately federal courthouses.

Each project was designed carefully to consider the context of its surroundings, joining new finishes with timeless design elements. From façades to fixtures, a closer look at what once was informs the character of each building and its own unique place in the urban landscape.

- **The Fitzgerald.** The Fitzgerald, a 282-unit apartment building located at the intersection of the central business district's sky-scraping office towers and Lower Downtown's low-lying historic warehouses, was designed as a gateway between the two distinct neighborhoods. To achieve the proper sense of transition architecturally, the façade was divided into five individual masses that reflect the rhythm of historic downtown lot sizes.

Each mass is composed of masonry with fenestrations that reflect the character and window proportions of LoDo. Balconies are recessed and appear as masonry openings along these lower facades, transitioning to a more playful rhythm in the upper stories. At the eighth level, the massing steps back substantially, paying respect to the adjacent warehouse district and creating the



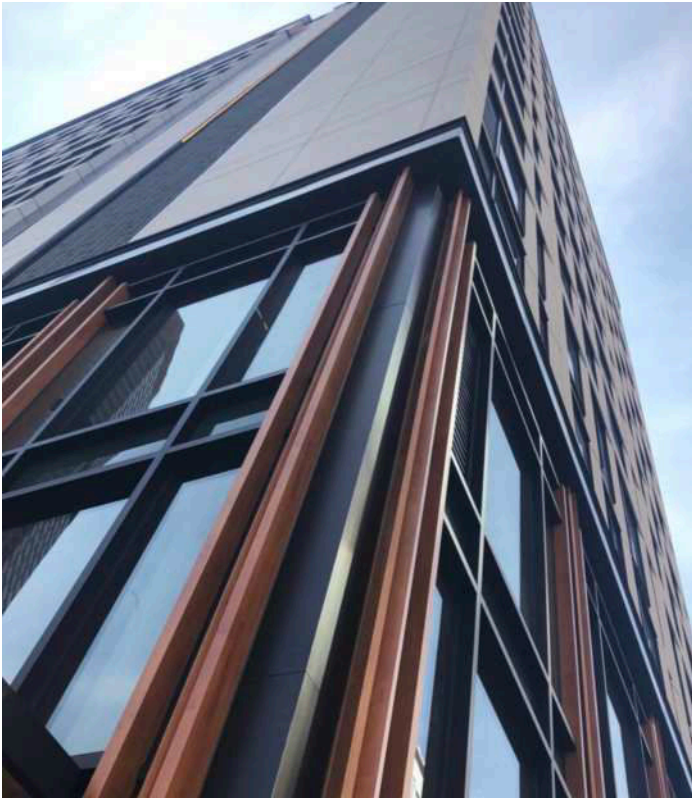
*Designed as a gateway between the two distinct neighborhoods, The Fitzgerald's façade is divided into five individual masses that reflect the rhythm of historic downtown lot sizes.*

opportunity for an extensive outdoor deck (a reflection of the modern desire for ample outdoor space). Penthouse units occupy the upper levels, with an additional amenity deck on the top floor that provides expansive views of downtown and the Front Range.

At The Fitzgerald, the design of interior and exterior features alike is inspired by the rich history of the block, viewed through a present-day lens. While the homes are thoroughly modern, throughout the lobby and common areas, the design features elements such as mosaic tile, built-in millwork, metallic accents, geometric patterns and deep, moody paint colors that nod to the lavish parlor houses, gentlemen's clubs and 1920s dance halls that once populated the street. The resulting experience provides residents with a subtle sense of the evolution of their neighborhood over time.

- **The Hyatt Centric.** As the last urban infill spot on a downtown Denver block of registered historic buildings, finding the right "fit" for the Hyatt Centric was central to the planning process. The JNS team undertook extensive research of Denver's historic civic and entertainment districts, as well as a detailed study of the individual buildings immediately adjacent to the site. As with The Fitzgerald, the result was a design with two distinct façades that draw heavily from the





*The Hyatt Centric's façade features deconstructed columns, a nod to its historic neighbors.*

massing, rhythm and architectural expressions that have dominated the neighborhood's skyline over the past century.

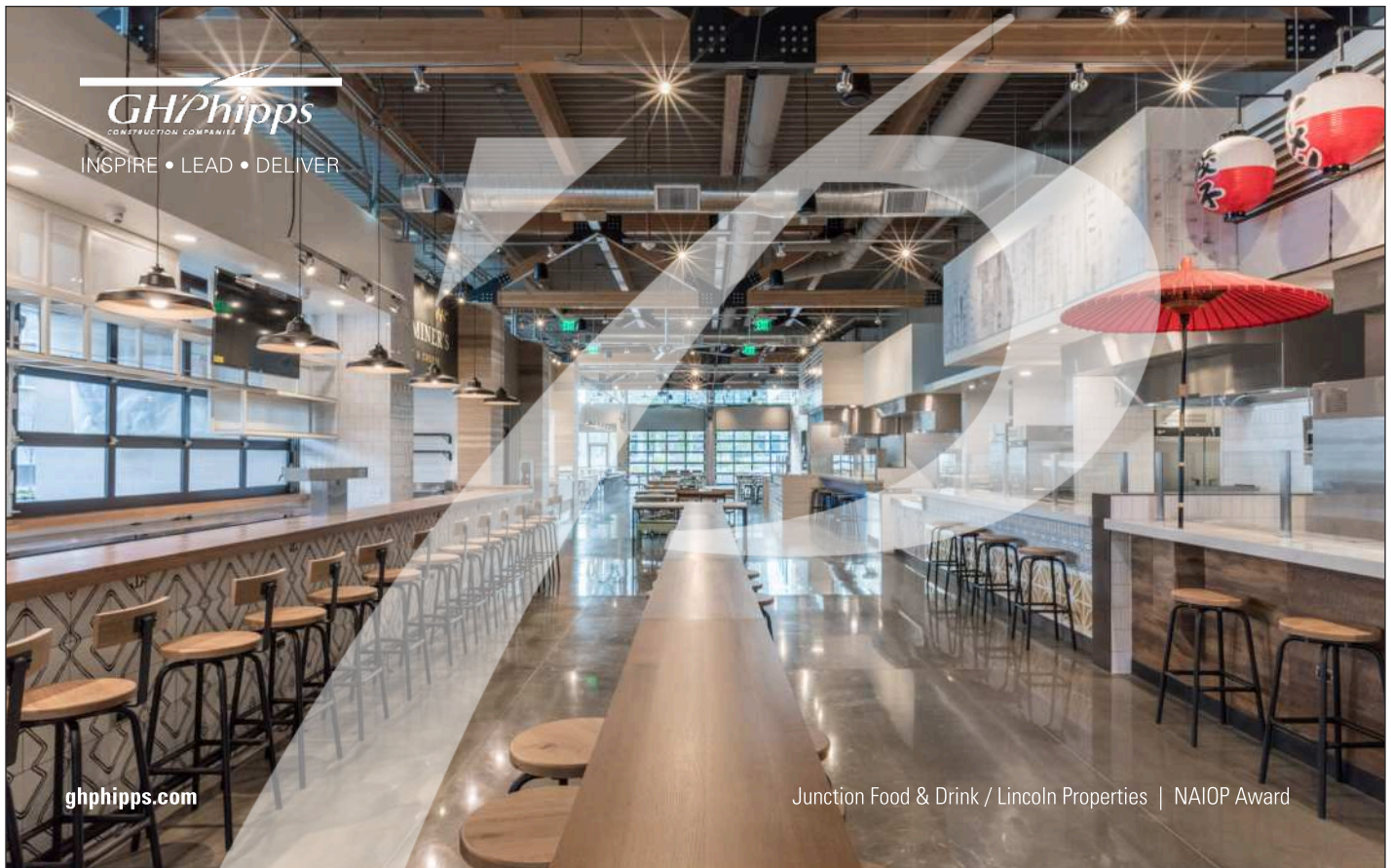
While drawing from the influences and context of the past, the design of the façade is modern in its expression and materials. The crisp detailing and stylish material selections create a tailored design that fits seamlessly along Denver's historic Champa Street.

Windows and screens were carefully designed to complement the building's context. Many of the hotel's noteworthy elements – from the angling metal panels to deconstructed columns of the curtain wall, to the patterns in the porte-cochère's concrete – explore the unique possibilities of the building materials.

Just as the adjacent, historic buildings are witness to their respective times, the Hyatt Centric was designed to bear witness to its own era of modern craftsmanship. And, just as guests can gaze out at the distinctive columns of nearby federal judicial buildings from the Hyatt Centric's street level restaurant, Apple Blossom, they can also observe a modern, evolving city skyline from the property's rooftop patio.

As discussions surrounding the future of urban centers persist, one thing is certain: Thoughtful design can help bring history along for the ride into the future. \\

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# How Does Hybrid Office Policy Impact the Workplace Today? What might it look like in 12 to 15 months?



**Susan Kohuth**  
Senior Interior  
Designer, EUA

Whether a business has embraced flexible hybrid office policies, assigned a certain number of in-office days, or welcomed everyone back to in-office work full time, the way their current and future employees want to work – and the way they achieve that work – has changed. All businesses are facing two challenges right now as the world enters the next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The first challenge is how to adapt and enhance their existing space and resources to meet this shift in the workforce. The second but larger challenge is understanding and correctly assessing whether growth in the business and number of its employees still requires growth of an overall footprint.

Clients who are mid-lease are actively enhancing their spaces in response to a hybrid work environment. To address the challenges that arise during the evolution of the current space, taking a fresh look at space utilization is a priority; this is followed by technology upgrades to create spaces that are intuitive, easy to use and focused on productivity. In evaluating usage of space, there is a shift from owned space to shared space. With minimal construction, spaces that were previously private offices



*Healthy office environments are increasingly becoming a requirement vs. a differentiator for companies, with high value being placed on elements such as daylight, air quality, walkability, and access to nature through views and outdoor spaces. (LBA Realty Denver)*

es are now being repurposed to small collaboration or focus rooms. By shifting some or all spaces to unassigned spaces, open offices are trading seats for collaboration or work lounges, providing a whole new menu of spaces for employees to best utilize their time in the office and throughout the day. The biggest mindset shift for employers is learning to be less focused on the square feet per person and instead focused on leveraging the existing space to have variety, which is then complemented by intuitive tools.

Looking further down the road, business stakeholders need to assess how shifts in employee needs and expectations will continue to impact the overall space requirement. Along with work flexibility, employees are looking for healthy office environments. This can include a variety of elements, such as daylight, air quality, walkability, transit options, outdoor space, etc. Building owners of both existing and new construction are investing in their amenities to support these growing needs. No longer is the elevator lobby just a transition zone – owners are taking



*Dorsey & Whitney LLP's recent renovations of its current space included reconfiguring workstations with all new furniture and 10 hoteling offices to encourage and accommodate employees' hybrid work schedules.*



back rentable space to enhance building amenities. This creates activated spaces for tenants and their teams. It can also reduce the need to build out certain functions within the tenant space. Large conference rooms, training rooms and even coffee bars are now provided as an amenity with the latest technology, reservations systems, etc. Outdoor spaces are not just a few benches, but rather work lounges providing employees the variety and choice they desire throughout the day. We are currently working through space plans with a client that has intentionally selected a site where the amenities allow the client to reduce its current footprint and lean on the building for support space. With this flexible office mentality, it is able to incorporate a vision for growth while reducing its footprint.

As businesses face the very real challenges of retaining and attracting employees in a post-pandemic world, the workplace environment will continue to be a critical component. It will take an open mindset to solve those challenges while enhancing the culture of the workplace and cultivating growth in the business. This is more than achievable with dynamic and inspired collaboration among owners, business tenants and their employees,



*Seeking to minimize cost and downsize square footage to accommodate a hybrid workstyle, Dorsey & Whitney LLP hired EUA to renovate its existing Denver office space.*

and an expert design team. Forward-thinking solutions grow from curiosity, innovation and exploration, and those solutions will allow businesses to adapt and flex as growth occurs and needs evolve.\

[susank@eua.com](mailto:susank@eua.com)

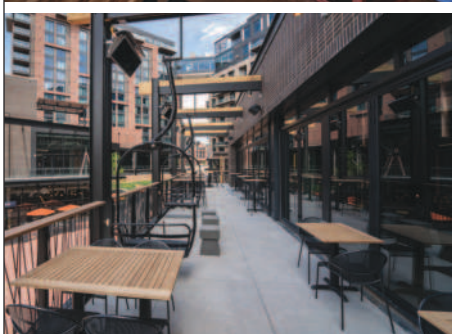


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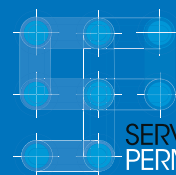
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**Steph Joerger,**  
**NCIDG**  
Interior  
Designer, SAR+

## SAR+: Warming Up and Softening Lines to Bring Comfort to Design



### Unika Vaev Ecooustic Timber Blades

As color palettes continue to lean on the warm side, designers often turn to wood detailing to add warmth to a space. Unika Vaev offers a wood solution that also boasts acoustic and environmental benefits. The Ecooustic Timber Blades come in eight wood tones and four profiles, providing a warm, textural acoustic solution for walls and ceilings. These wood panels have an STC rating of 0.85 with an ecore backing and also contribute to LEED and WELL points due to its low VOCs and VOC reduction in a space.

<https://unikavaev.com/products/timber-blade-panels/>

### Design Trend: Disco balls and cut mirror

Disco balls are back more than ever, as evidenced by the celebrated 50th anniversary of Abba's disco fame, Taylor Swift's "Mirrorball" and new local dance clubs, such as Disco Pig in Denver. Kelly Wearstler brought disco into interior design through her collaboration with Rotganzen, a Dutch art collective with a focus on American pop art. Wearstler already has started implementing these shimmering art features throughout her projects across the globe and a limited offering is up for sale. Artists of all trades have begun building and interpreting their own disco balls through various translations, including painted works of art and cut mirror tile. Gallery – Sari Not Sorry Art by Sari Shryack

<https://www.kellywearstler.com/kw-rotganzen>

<https://www.sari.studio/disco-balls>





## Brizo Odin

Brizo's Odin collection allows for a mix of metals within a single fixture, opening up a world of possibilities for a play on metals and materials. It also offers a wood handle for further customization and variation. Additionally, it has come out with a Lumicoat finish for several fixtures that wipe clean to eliminate the use of harsh chemicals for hard water stains. Brizo has a lot of exciting new products and innovations in the works that we are looking forward to specifying!

<https://www.brizo.com/search?searchTerm=odin>

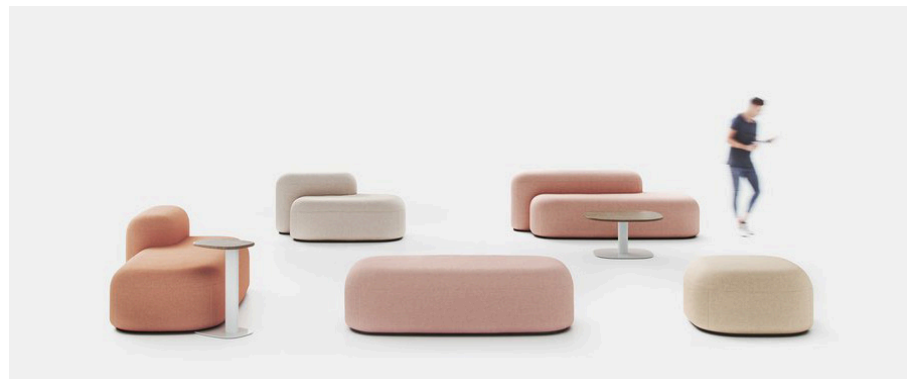


## Design Trend: Soft-Line Furniture

In contrast to hard, raw-edge stone making its presence known in the interior, we are seeing furniture take a softer approach. A new focus on comfort, flexibility and familiarity has become evident after being quarantined at home for the past two years. We gravitate toward shapes that are welcoming and soft as opposed to stiff, hard-lined furniture. Collaboration spaces are resembling our living rooms as we shift back into the office and seek out familiar, comfortable locations to post up and work. The flexibility of these rounded shapes offers a variety of positions to work and collaborate comfortably.

<https://atelierdetroupe.com/product/jia-chair/>

<https://www.derlot.com/collections/p/mochi>



## Design Trend: Bringing Geology In

As designers, we often talk about "bringing the outdoors in" and biophilia as design concepts. These concepts are regularly exemplified by green walls, live edge wood and more daylight, but raw-edge stone has been humbly awaiting its spotlight in interiors. Stone is naturally grounding and helps provide stability and balance to design, so it's no surprise that this topography would make its way indoors through wall applications, furniture and stand-alone art features.

<https://www.simonjohns.com/missisquoi-04>

<https://tigmitrading.com/products/otti-coffee-table>







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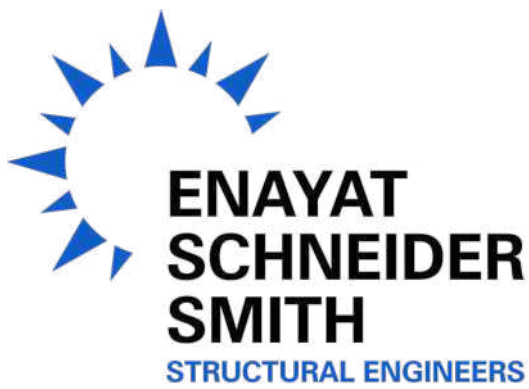
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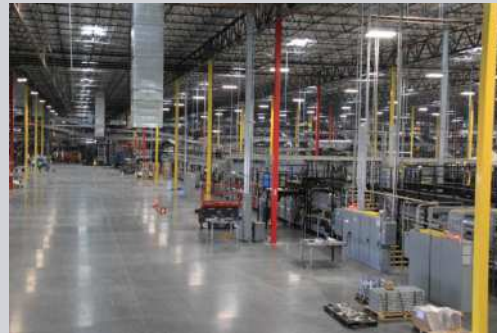
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# Once in a Lifetime

An elegant blend of presence and perspective, Vectra Bank Colorado's new headquarters building shines



*The building contributes aesthetically through a refined exterior of shimmering glazing stretched across a curtain wall system.*





**B**lake Mourer takes pride in being a problem-solver. As the owner and founding principal of Denver-based Open Studio Architecture, Mourer frequently finds himself at the intersection of challenging conditions that require critical reflection to compel solutions that solve for all. Mourer and then-partner Brad VanArsdale founded Open Studio Architecture in 2011 after working together for nearly 14 years at Gensler. Since inception, Open Studio has built a broad portfolio of commercial office buildings and corporate headquarters campuses while maintaining a small shop, hands-on approach to design. For Mourer, the experience of creating exceptional architecture is a matter of cultivating a culture of collaboration based on authentic vulnerability.

“Open Studio strives to maintain an intimate, design-focused workshop environment with the capacity to take on exceptionally large commissions,” says Mourer from his Ballpark District office on Park Avenue West. “What is most important in achieving that goal is a professional but casual internal structure that allows people to be authentically themselves, to be vulnerable to what they don’t know, and to learn from one another to the benefit of improving our projects.”

Open Studio’s portfolio is proof that the authenticity is paying off. Named the 2019 AIA Colorado – Young Firm of the Year, in the 12 years since opening, Open Studio has delivered a handsome array of buildings like the HomeAdvisor corporate headquarters in River North, ANB Plaza in Cherry Creek North, and Partners Group Denver HQ, which was named NAIOP Office Development of the Year in 2020. One of the firm’s newest projects, coming to fruition at Bellevue Station, is Vectra Bank Colorado, which looks to be every bit as impressive as its predecessors.

“Vectra Bank Colorado stems from the bank’s need to consolidate several sets of scattered office properties,” says Mourer. “They had been operating out of spaces that weren’t ideal. In developing their new headquarters on an urban greenfield site, Vectra Bank had a wonderful opportunity to define exactly what they want and who they are in their new headquarters.”

Like any good project, the Vectra Bank Colorado headquarters was not without its challenges. On the design side, the challenge began with the site’s odd, truncated configuration, a shape that was less than square but not quite a triangle either. Despite what may seem like a suburban locale, Bellevue Station is fully within the city and county of Denver and therefore subject to Denver’s development expectations.

“This is urban zoning. You have to build right to the setback line,





*The building design was informed by the site's odd, truncated configuration, a shape that was less than square but not quite a triangle either.*



*Vectra Bank's headquarters stands directly adjacent to 6900 Layton St. and a block away from One Bellevue Station.*

so the building's geometry is prefixed in the zoning," says Mourer of where the equation starts to get interesting. "We have to account for the parking within the building's profile. Making the ramping work efficiently inside a narrow, less-than-rectangular shape involved some very intense calculations to configure something unique to this building."

Mourer happens to be a long-standing member of the Bellevue Station Front Range Land Development Design Review Board, where his responsibilities involve evaluating

development proposals against the district's established design criteria. In-as-much, he has a keen appreciation for the district's emerging character from an applied perspective.

"Bellevue Station is planned as a walkable, urban district master planned around the street-level, pedestrian experience," says Mourer of Vectra Bank Colorado's new neighborhood. "Within the design criteria and design review board, we have tried to promote consistently high quality and a vibrant mix of retail, dining, office, and multifamily assets close to the light-rail station. Vectra's new front door is only about 50 feet from the light-rail station and two blocks from I-25, so the workforce has immediate connectivity to metro Denver in every direction."

In addition to the building's odd-shaped lot, Vectra Bank Colorado, which was developed by Confluent Development LLC, stands out from the crowd in stature. At just nine stories tall, the bank headquarters stands directly adjacent to 6900 Layton St. and a block away from One Bellevue Station, both at 15 stories apiece. The building contributes aesthetically through a refined exterior of shimmering glazing stretched across a curtain wall system. Four levels of parking, accommodating 398 stalls, are carefully concealed between the building's first and fifth floors. These are topped by four levels of corporate office space fixated on taking advantage of the site's key view planes to the mountains and downtown Denver. The building is optimized for energy performance and operates 16% more efficiently than required by building codes, featuring low-emissivity, high-efficiency





*Bellevue Station is planned as a walkable, urban district master planned around the street-level, pedestrian experience.*

windows; LED lighting; occupancy sensors; and daylighting controls – all while using 40% less water than a standard office building of the same size.

The Weitz Co. was the construction contractor given the challenge of building Vectra Bank Colorado. Founded in 1855, Weitz is one of the oldest general contractors in the U.S., with an earned reputation for excellence over more than 165 years of building. Brendon Loveday, the project manager Weitz put in charge of managing the Vectra Bank headquarters to fruition, is a builder who enjoys seeing his work come to life day by day.

“The variety of work is my favorite part of the job,” says Loveday from his office on the Vectra Bank job site. Loveday appreciates the hands-on nature of construction and loves being engaged with both office and field teams delivering high-profile, architecturally forward office properties. “This building combines a cast-in-place, slab-on-grade structure from the ground floor to level five with a steel-framed structure rising to nine stories above. This blend of structures allowed the steel to be designed around the building cores, which we used to our advantage, ultimately topping out all the concrete at the same time.”

Aside from the hybrid structural form, Loveday points to the interesting textural skin concealing the open-air parking podium on the building’s north face.

“This is a high-end way of masking the necessary but visually obtrusive parking component behind a beautiful, architectural aluminum façade,” says Loveday. “The exterior bat-

ten is hung on an aluminum substructure and works with changing daylight and the lights within the garage to create some interesting movement that catches your eye from I-25 or the light rail.”

Weitz, Vectra and Open Studio were starting the pre-construction process in March of 2020 when the effects of COVID-19 took hold of the global economy, shutting down all but essential services in Colorado. A strong culture of collaboration and a willingness to roll up their sleeves and think through the challenges were the biggest factors in what is a proud accomplishment for all.

“The biggest challenge on this project was the COVID-19 pandemic, which was certainly a first for everyone,” Loveday said. “We broke ground in December 2020, only one month later than initially planned. Today, we are nearing on-time completion, and that alone makes this project a resounding success.”

Like Loveday, Mourer is proud of the accomplishment and very appreciative of the owner’s willingness to prioritize moving forward with the project when things were so uncertain.

“Bruce Alexander, the CEO of Vectra Bank Colorado, was wholeheartedly committed to pushing this building forward, which was huge for us, because of course we needed the work,” says Mourer. “Bruce kept the entire team motivated and showed himself to be a visionary leader. This project didn’t miss a beat during the pandemic, and as such this has become a once-in-a-lifetime project.” \\





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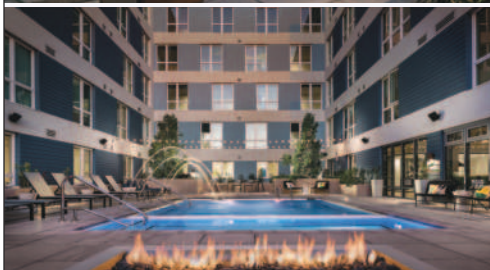
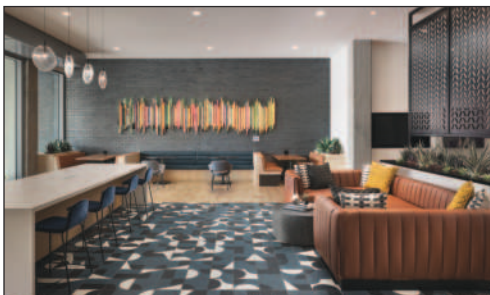
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*The Boettcher Building was thoughtfully restored and renovated by the Rowland+Broughton team.*

# Preservation: Looking to the Future While Honoring the Past

It started with the Aspen Idea. A thought that an individual's mind, body and spirit are tied to the environment in which they are immersed. Through dialogue, debate, exploration, an open mind and heart, and a little sense of adventure, one may cultivate a better self and a better society. Place these activities in the right environment and go about them with intention and real change can begin.

In 1949, Chicago-based industrialists Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke followed these lofty principles and founded what is today known as the Aspen Institute. Recruiting famed Bauhaus architect Herbert Bayer, they initiated the design of a campus in Aspen to host this new organization and cultivate an environment where the free exchange of ideas could flourish, the body could be restored, and the spirit could engage unhindered. Over the course of the next quarter century, Bayer and his collaborators designed and built one of the finest examples of Bauhaus planning and architecture in North America, culminating with the completion of the Boettcher Seminar Building in 1975, Bayer's final building in Aspen.

Originally located in a meadow of native sage, the Boettcher Building was designed to encourage the egalitarian sharing of ideas. Organized to allow seminar participants equal status within the space, three octagonal



**Craig Lawrence, AIA**  
Associate,  
Rowland+  
Broughton  
Architecture/  
Urban Design/  
Interior Design

seminar rooms were arranged to create an open exterior octagonal courtyard, with a broad lobby and various support rooms arranged in an adjacent bar of space. Access to and from any of the seminar rooms was through this central courtyard, thus encouraging not only a physical exchange in the center of the building but also establishing it as the heart of the building, a place where ideas could be shared under the sun in the fresh mountain air during down time between seminar sessions. Additionally, two octagonal "pods" were constructed as offices accessible over a low bridge to further support the activities of the building.

Recently, the Aspen Institute engaged our firm to breathe new life into this important community resource. Conscious of Bayer's original intent, the design team decided to enclose the exterior courtyard under a central skylight, physically centered at the intersection of the surrounding seminar rooms. This new gathering space allows for year-round use, and it directly complements a new incubator space, the Creative Lab, located in the entry and support bar. Intended to facilitate the free flow of dialogue and the exploration of solutions to today's most pressing issues, this flexible space is equipped with state-of-the-art streaming and videoconferencing technology, expanding the reach of these powerful ideas beyond the physical walls.

As stewards of this important historic resource and in consideration of the environmental imperative, the design team sought to drastically increase the performance of the Boettcher Building through hidden, yet impactful interventions. Building thermal performance was increased





*The exterior courtyard was enclosed under a central skylight allowing for year-round use.*



*The octagonal seminar rooms encourage the sharing of ideas.*



*A new incubator space in the Boettcher Building, the Creative Lab*

over 300% above the existing conditions, while old, inefficient HVAC rooftop units were replaced with a high-efficiency heat pump system. The building was air sealed and indoor air quality improved through high-performance air filtration. Interior finishes are low-VOC and utilize recycled content, while all the LED lighting is controlled by a smart lighting control system utilizing daylight and occupancy sensors and zoning. Perhaps most importantly, the vast majority of the building envelope and structural components were left in place and rehabilitated, drastically reducing the embodied energy impact these components carry.

As the final building designed by Herbert Bayer in Aspen, it was important to the community to preserve not only the spirit of the design of the Boettcher Seminar Building but also the physical structure itself for generations to come. To this end, the design team and the Aspen Institute sought and received designation to the Aspen Modern Historic In-

ventory, effectively protecting the structure as the historic and community resource it is.

Forty-five years and countless sessions later, the Boettcher Seminar Building still embodies the Aspen Idea in its mission and use. It is further re-energized by the recently completed renovation, along with the companion new-construction neighbor, The Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies, for which we had the privilege of acting as architect of record.

Together, these buildings form a new bridge to the greater Aspen community, reinvigorating an underutilized corner of the Aspen Institute's campus. In recognition of the incredible influence Herbert Bayer had on global thought, design and post-war Aspen, the Boettcher Seminar Building is a revitalized and energized structure at the intersection of mind, body and spirit – at the intersection of the Aspen Idea.\



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*Passing along the brick and glass façade, visitors are drawn to the entrance plaza, which links the new facility and old to provide easy access and wayfinding. The approach brings visitors under a colored glass canopy where colored shadows create a point of arrival and lead visitors to the grand lobby.*

# Nation's Leading Respiratory Hospital Adds State-of-the-Art Center for Outpatient Health

PHOTOS: Frank Ooms

**N**ational Jewish Health has been a pillar in the Denver community since 1899. Today, it is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the globe to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care.

As it has grown into a leading respiratory hospital, demand for its services has outpaced capacity. Between 2008 and 2018, patient visits to the hospital's main campus grew more than 57% to 90,996 annual visits.

In response, Michael Salem, MD, president and CEO of National Jewish Health, began the process of executing a vision for an expanded hospital campus that would better support National Jewish's continued growth in patient care and education, as well as the world-class research for which the hospital is known.

At the project's onset, National Jewish Health empha-



**Taber Sweet**  
Director of  
Real Estate  
Development,  
Mortenson

sized to the building team at Mortenson and the design team at Davis Partnership its goal of creating the optimum environment to deliver world-class care, and maximizing the time that practitioners could spend with patients, listening to them, evaluating their situations, and offering the latest clinical research trials.

The team wanted the design to reflect the prominent position National Jewish Health holds not only in the Denver community, but internationally as a leader in health care research. The design of the new Center for Outpatient Health had to feel substantial and support the significant work taking place within. The team wanted people from all over to feel welcome, considered and cared for in every way.

## Realizing a Long-Held Vision

Realizing the ambitious vision for this project required a years-long process that both a comprehensive capital campaign as well as a unique financing structure identified by our development arm.

While Mortenson's construction arm was engaged by National Jewish Health as the builder on the expansion back in 2017, Mortenson Development Inc. was brought





*The design features comfortable waiting areas outside the clinic and exam spaces, along with dedicated areas to serving children and adults.*



*The new five-story Center includes 110 clinical exam and treatment rooms for both children and adults, as well as a 17-bed infusion suite to care for patients with cancer and immune-related conditions.*

in a year later. The MDI team has been engaged in a number of significant health care development projects in the region in recent years, and we were in the process of investigating a specific tax-exempt bond structure for nonprofit healthcare providers when we got the invitation to collaborate with our construction team.

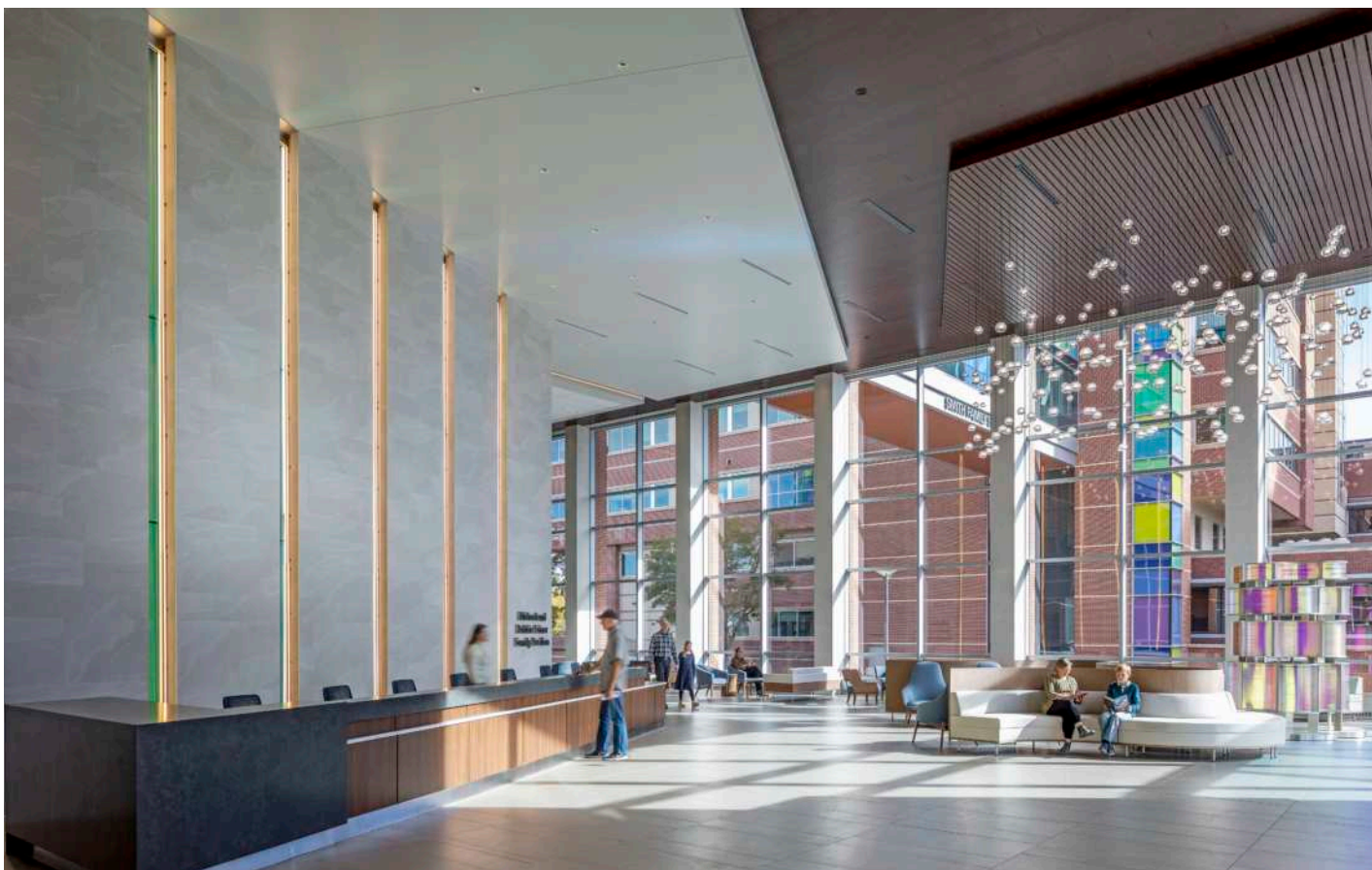
Working with the team at National Jewish Health, MDI identified this particular bond structure as a cost-effective, efficient and transparent solution that was well-suited to the hospital's needs.

This mechanism, along with generous donor support

organized by National Jewish Health, helped keep the project moving forward.

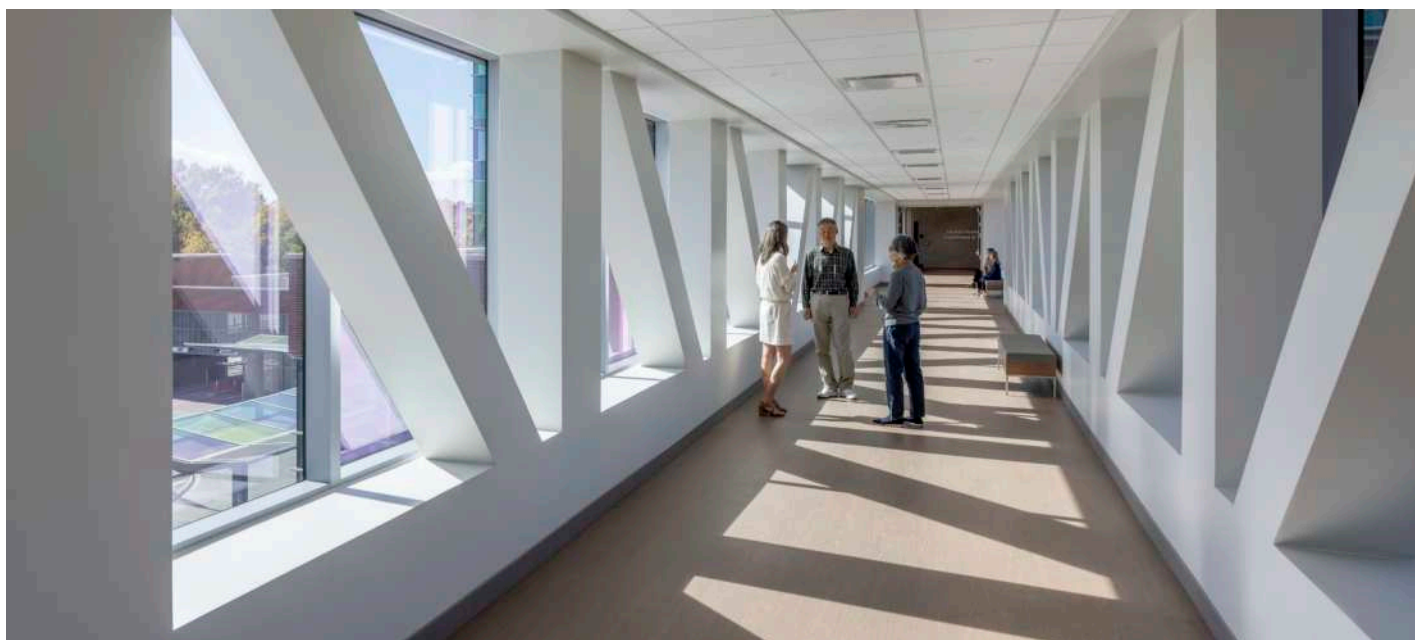
With one major hurdle behind them, National Jewish broke ground on the expansion in January 2020, a mere three months before the COVID-19 shutdown.

"We broke ground for this building just before the pandemic," Dr. Salem said at the announcement of the project's completion. "At that time, we didn't know there would be a pandemic, but this additional space, dedicated to treating patients with a wide variety of respiratory, cardiac and im-



*Entering the building, visitors are greeted with a warm, bright and naturally lit space.*





*The pedestrian bridge offers a light-filled experience passing from one building on campus to the next.*

mune-related illnesses in children and adults, is even more important now as we continue to address long-term challenges of COVID-19.”

Despite the many challenges of building during a pandemic, Mortenson completed the project on time and on budget.

### Designing for Healing & Impact

Located near the intersection of East Colfax and Colorado Boulevard in Denver, the new five-story center includes 110 clinical exam and treatment rooms for both children and adults, as well as a 17-bed infusion suite to care for patients with cancer and immune-related conditions. The building also includes space for the primary care practices of National Jewish Health’s clinical partners at SCL Health. An attached 251-stall parking structure is located partially under the medical building. Previously a surface parking lot, the site provides necessary proximity to existing core services and infrastructure to allow National Jewish to serve a growing population.

With the goal of creating a more welcoming experience for patients and visitors, the main entrance to the campus was moved to 14th Avenue from Colfax Avenue. Through the new “front door,” visitors will now find a warm, light-filled lobby, along with a modern café space and pharmacy.

In addition to meeting the functional goals of the project, the new center features an iconic design by Davis Partnership belonging to both campus and community. The center’s exterior was designed to harmonize with the existing National Jewish Health buildings and with the surrounding neighborhood through a design that is both pragmatic and poetic. An elevated pedestrian bridge seamlessly connects the new building to the existing campus, with a similarly styled façade complemented by striking mul-



*The hospitality-influenced design offers amenities and experiences intended to actively promote health and wellness.*

ticolored confetti glass windows that create an instantly memorable design.

Since opening, the state-of-the-art \$71.7 million Center for Outpatient Health has become an immediate and vital asset, expanding National Jewish Health’s capacity to serve increasing numbers of children and adults, while also providing more space for research, education and clinical services on the campus.\





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*The preserved and updated Mint Building continues to front the Blue River Parkway on an updated outdoor plaza, an extension of the public sidewalk.*

## Catalyst for Community: Creating a Vibrant Town Center

**A**s it grew from camp town to thriving community, Silverthorne still lacked the heart of a Town Center. In 2017 the town created policy and guidelines to establish a unique town center that would attract development to implement this new vision for the community: 4th Street Crossing and 4th Street North encompass a multiblock mixed-use development that took a strong development and master planning team plus private-public cooperation to bring it to life.

To begin the process, the town of Silverthorne initiated blight studies, an urban renewal area and plan, and significant community engagement, then made its developer selection after an request for proposal process. This proactive approach led to site programming, public finance negotiations, development agreements, replating of land, site plan approval, and bond structuring and sale. The private finance side was comprised of a



**Lee Payne, AIA,  
NCARB, LEED  
AP**

Principal  
and Owner  
| Director of  
Architecture,  
DTJ Design

residential component, hotel and market hall, each individually financed with unique debt and equity sources.

Buildings are oriented toward street frontages to complement existing adjacent context and to create a coordinated and visually attractive street scene. A safe, continuous pedestrian network was established that minimizes conflict with vehicular traffic, while providing a convenient option for pedestrian circulation within and between public spaces.

Important to the town was to promote land uses that established this area as a compact, pedestrian oriented, economic hub and encourage development that presented an image of high permanence, quality and value. Key to the vision was to create pedestrian activity and provide a critical mass of diversified land uses that were harmonious with a walkable downtown experience.

Also imperative to create an image of high-quality development was to set minimum quality standards for site design and building architecture and develop an attractive street façade with storefronts scaled and oriented to a town center context. The town desired a variety of architectural elements that avoided featureless



design and uninterrupted repetition of building materials. Building height, mass, form, length and proportions were designed to provide a variety of visual interest while maintaining a human scale that is appropriate to its surroundings. Exterior building colors are aesthetically pleasing with rich colors rather than intense, bright colors, and building materials schemes tie building elements together and enhance the architectural form of the buildings.

The impact of parking was thoughtfully considered for the master plan. Buildings located adjacent to the street were allowed minimal setback between the sidewalk and the storefront to create a typical downtown street. This also maximizes areas for parking behind street-adjacent architecture. Surface parking is screened by buildings or landscaping from public view, and higher-intensity parking zones are in structures designed in harmony with the rest of the architecture. Shared parking is encouraged between sites and on-street parking where feasible.

The master plan allows for pedestrian activity from streets, alleyways, surface parking and the Blue River side of the buildings by encouraging multiple pedestrian gateways and experiences. The design includes a pedestrian system with sidewalks and streetscaping along the streets west of state Highway 9 and wider multiuse paths along the Blue River.

Through a variety of uses and scales, the collection of buildings makes a dynamic synergy of spaces. A market hall includes event spaces with food and beverage venues plus the preserved Old Dillon Inn. Signature hotels and mixed-use buildings reinforce a pedestrian scale and



*Buildings are oriented toward street frontages to complement existing adjacent context and to create a coordinated and visually attractive streetscene.*

individuality while the townhomes reflect the smaller massing found in mountain communities. Public plazas serve as event spaces while being a focal point for the development, anchored by community uses and active outdoor elements. Two structured parking buildings take on a variety of uses, such as retail, climbing walls and transit hubs. The preserved and updated Mint Building continues to front the Blue River Parkway on an updated outdoor plaza, an extension of the public sidewalk. On the north end, an attainable housing development cradles a west-facing private outdoor area for residents.

The 4th Street Crossing and 4th Street North project is a great success story in partnering to implement a vision. Its mixed-use master plan has a strong streetscape presence and is designed to reflect the new character of Silverthorne, with the proportions and feel from traditional main streets in Colorado. \\



*On the north end, an attainable housing development cradles a west facing private outdoor area for residents.*





# The Link: A Sustainability Case for Adaptive Reuse and Repositioning



During the era of urban renewal spanning roughly the late 1950s to the 1970s, a significant portion of downtown Denver's historic fabric was cleared away. New buildings were erected to "revitalize" the city with grand – but often sanitized and impersonal – architecture. There is then some irony in reimagining one of those buildings that symbolizes urban renewal.



**Alex Garrison**  
Design Director,  
Gensler

Originally built in the early 1960s as a telecom office tower serving the rapidly growing economy of the American Mountain West, the Link sits in the heart of downtown Denver. In recent years, however, the tower sat underutilized. Despite its prime location within the city, the Link's heavy concrete panel facades and lack of an "active" ground floor presented a major barrier for any prospective tenants. The Link simply did not have the engaging experiential qualities expected by 21st century office tenants.

Through the tactical use of design, we brought the Link from its mid-20th century urban renewal roots into the present day. By focusing on the tenant experience, we transformed the Link into a creative, modern, mixed-use office building featuring increased access to daylight, an active ground floor, elevated health and wellness amenities like a new indoor-outdoor rooftop lounge and gym, and modernized building systems throughout. And by adapting an existing building, the Link achieved those

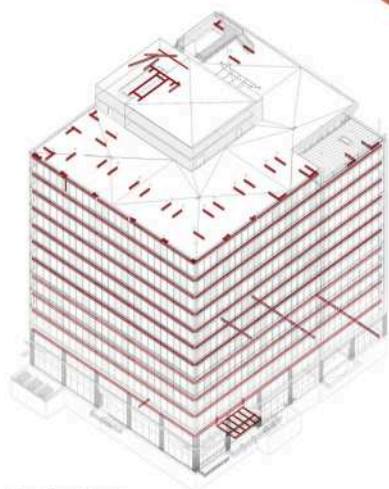
goals at a fraction of the embodied carbon cost – around 68% less CO<sub>2</sub> – than an equivalent new build.

The concept is simple: The most sustainable building is the one you do not have to build.

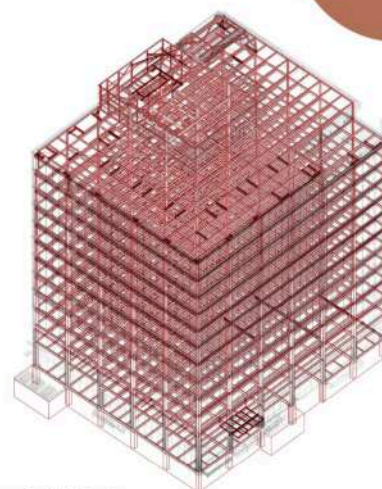
Renovations of existing buildings have an inherent advantage over ground-up construction in that they do not require an entirely new structure. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, concrete, steel and aluminum together account for 23% of total global emissions. Since most commercial construction is still built using concrete and steel, the reuse of existing structures can have a significant impact on carbon reduction right



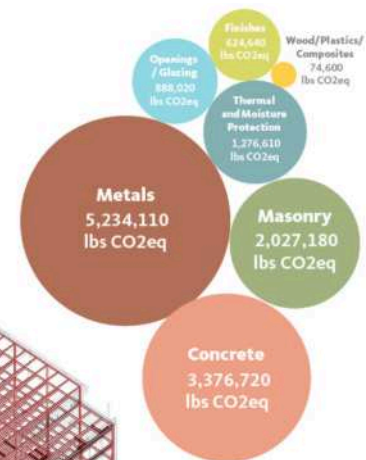
68% less CO<sub>2</sub> than  
an equivalent  
new build



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19 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>eq / sf (core and shell)



**New Build Study**  
13.5 million lbs CO<sub>2</sub>eq  
60 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>eq / sf (core and shell)







*Hospitality-inspired blended space*



*Activated pedestrian arcade*

out of the gate.

The Link, built primarily from concrete and steel, proves this concept. With an existing structure already in place, we leveraged the building's bones to craft a new design that caters to current expectations for a healthier, happier, more daylit workplace. Gensler's Climate & Sustainability team conducted an embodied carbon study using Tally, a Life Cycle Assessment plug-in application tool that calculates the environmental impact of building components throughout the design process.

We left in place core walls, elevators, plumbing, heating systems and other components of the original construction that could be salvaged through minimal upgrades. Our new design considered existing infrastructure throughout the building to avoid overly destructive renovation work while simultaneously adding completely new features and amenity areas, such as:

- Increased access to daylight through a new high-performance curtain wall that also defines a new architectural character.
- An activated ground floor that blends retail and office functions into a hospitality-inspired lobby.
- Elevated health and wellness amenities with a new rooftop patio, gym and lounge connected by operable sliding glass doors.
- Modernized building systems.

Despite the complete transformation of the Link, the ability to leverage its existing structure had a significant impact on the project's carbon footprint. With the newly reimagined façade, ground floor, and amenity areas, the Link now competes with the latest commercial office buildings while accounting for only one-third of the embodied carbon compared to building new.

The future of our cities is already here.

With adaptive reuse and repositioning, there is a better way forward that honors the past with an aspirational eye toward the future – where cities continually improve their urban fabric through thoughtful and strategic evolution. Infill projects, renovations and adaptive reuse offer a far more sustainable future that can simultaneously respect the past while improving upon our shared legacy. By capitalizing on the already-built good structural bones all around us, we are afforded excellent opportunities to transform seemingly left-behind buildings into projects that embrace contemporary wellness and a more inclusive paradigm.

Design is a powerful tool and catalyst for enacting this transformation in all our cities. As practitioners of design, we are trained to see possibility. Every built structure has possibility and should be considered thoughtfully as a candidate for transformation.\





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# Legacy Builder

40 years in the making, Alliance Construction Solutions is ready for whatever is next

**L**eaving a lasting legacy is something few truly ever do. It happens in sports, music and entertainment where reach is broad; in medicine, science and justice where impact is deep; and occasionally in business where milestones are marked in time, tenacity and the differences made in the lives of others. At Alliance Construction Solutions, a dedicated group of homegrown leaders have their hands on the helm, guiding their workforce through the high tides and stormy weather of commer-

cial construction in 21st century Colorado. As the ship they sail reaches 40 years at sea, Alliance Construction Solutions President and CEO Brian Weinmaster and Chief Operating Officer Jeremy Nothdurft are honored to be building beautiful buildings but most proud of building lasting relationships.

"Alliance Construction Solutions is a special place to be," says Weinmaster, who has been with Alliance for 28 years. Starting as a laborer working in the equipment yard, Weinmaster has worked his way up, holding pretty





**WORDS:** Sean O'Keefe

much every position in the company at one point or another along the way. "One of the defining features of Alliance is that the firm ownership team is extremely hands-on with our clients, the architects, engineers, developers, subcontractors and even the vendors we work with."

Forty years in business is a long story. This one began in 1982 when Baldwin Construction Inc. was founded in Fort Collins by Ed Baldwin with an emphasis on educational projects operating under the traditional bid-build model. In 1994, new ownership changed the name



LEFT:

*Hyatt Place Peña Station*

ABOVE:

*Hyatt Peña Station Lobby*

to Alliance Construction Solutions to be more reflective of what the team does as a measure of who the team is. Alliance also changed its contracting objectives, gravitating toward negotiated contracts with an intention of self-performing significant portions of the work as a path to profit. Weinmaster was among a group of employee investors that bought out the previous owners in 2009 and relocated Alliance's headquarters to Denver in pursuit of Colorado's richest commercial market.

"Today, our delivery process is driven more by relationships than cost, schedule or market segment," says Nothdurft. Like Weinmaster, Nothdurft has been with Alliance for more than 20 years, all of which have had their ups and downs. "When I joined Alliance in 2000, there were 160 craftsmen self-performing the work. Then Sept. 11 happened and suddenly the self-perform market became less profitable and much harder to manage. Times change, market conditions change, but relationships that are built to last can weather any storm. Who we are working for and with is more important than what we are building."

While the Alliance portfolio still features plenty of K-12 projects, now they are joined by noteworthy buildings across a wide range of markets including higher education, medical, hospitality, civic and multifamily housing. Among it all, Weinmaster and Nothdurft point to the experience of delivering affordable housing as perhaps the sweetest, for selfish reasons.

"Affordable housing is a product type we really love building," says Weinmaster. At the recently completed Sheridan Station Apartments, a multifamily, income-re-





TOP:

*Hilton Garden Inn exterior*

BOTTOM:

*Hilton Garden Inn breakfast*

stricted apartment property in Denver, Alliance worked through the rigors of COVID-19 with Mile High Development and the architects at Johnson Nathan Strohe to deliver this much-needed affordable housing on schedule in spite of the pandemic. “It’s more than sticks and bricks, we always put our heart and soul into affordable housing projects because they help transform the lives of people who need just a little bit of help.”

As the operations officer, Nothdurft points out that affordable housing projects receiving federal funding often apply for low-income housing tax credits before breaking ground. It’s a process that can stretch Alliance’s engagement on the project out to three or four years from precon-

struction to ribbon-cutting.

“It takes a lot of collaboration and forward-thinking to price work that won’t be built for two years and then hit the ground running once the funding is available,” says Nothdurft. “Fortunately, as builders Alliance Construction Solutions is exceptionally strong at multi-unit construction. From housing and hospitality to health care, we can build anything with a bed.”

Instead of concentrating on a market type, a building technology or a process, Weinmaster and Nothdurft understand the best investment they can make is in their people.

“It doesn’t matter if you are in construction or conducting an orchestra, you are only as good as the people playing the music,” says Weinmaster. “We make a significant investment in training, mentoring, and internal career development. We believe that you always need to be training your replacement and your replacement needs to be better than you are.”

Nothdurft agrees. He returns to the mid-’90s name change, right about the time Weinmaster started working in the equipment yard, as a key indicator of the firm’s trajectory, way back then.

“Our name sums it up,” says Nothdurft. “Alliances are what we want to create. Construction is what we do, and Solutions are what we provide.”

The solutions part of the equation is





where things get interesting. For the Hilton Garden Inn at 20th and Chestnut streets, Alliance delivered a new 12-story, 233-key hotel that incorporates the adaptive reuse of a brick firehouse, built in 1881, as a boutique restaurant. Alliance also completed the largest continuous concrete pour in metro Denver history. At a rate of some 465 cubic yards per hour, more than 10,000 tons of concrete was delivered, pumped, placed and finished in a single 10-hour day, creating a uniform mat slab foundation for the new construction.

“Within the context of this company's lifetime, construction technologies have changed significantly, especially over the last 20 years as the labor market has shrunk,” continues Nothdurft. “Green technologies, prefabrication, lean construction, 3D modeling and integrated scheduling are all ex-

amples of fundamental industry shifts we have been keeping pace with.”

“Technology has helped us do more with less,” agrees Weinmaster. “However, the successful construction manager of the future is going to have to be nimble. The pace of change is going to continue to accelerate, and Alliance is optimized to adapt quickly. Our teams are empowered to make quick decisions for the better of our projects, whenever there is a need.”

Nothdurft shares that Alliance strives to build that same sense of empowered partnership into subcontractor relationships as well. “Just as we foster partnerships with clients and employees, we try to do the same with our subcontractors. Rather than price shopping on every project, we keep a collection of trusted subs busy. We get their highly skilled, but limited resources committed to our work whenever we need them.”

Weinmaster turns the conversation back to the hands that do the work and how indispensable they are to the prospect and process of success.

“We have a lot of potential future leaders within the organization right now,” he continues. “Rather than chasing a revenue target, Alliance has decided to be an organic growth company. When people are ready for bigger challenges and greater responsibility, we promote from within. Honestly, we are just a bunch of blue-collar people who enjoy what we do and enjoy who we do it with. We have a lot of fun, and we see a lot of smiles when we walk into work every day.” \\



TOP:

*Sheridan Station exterior*

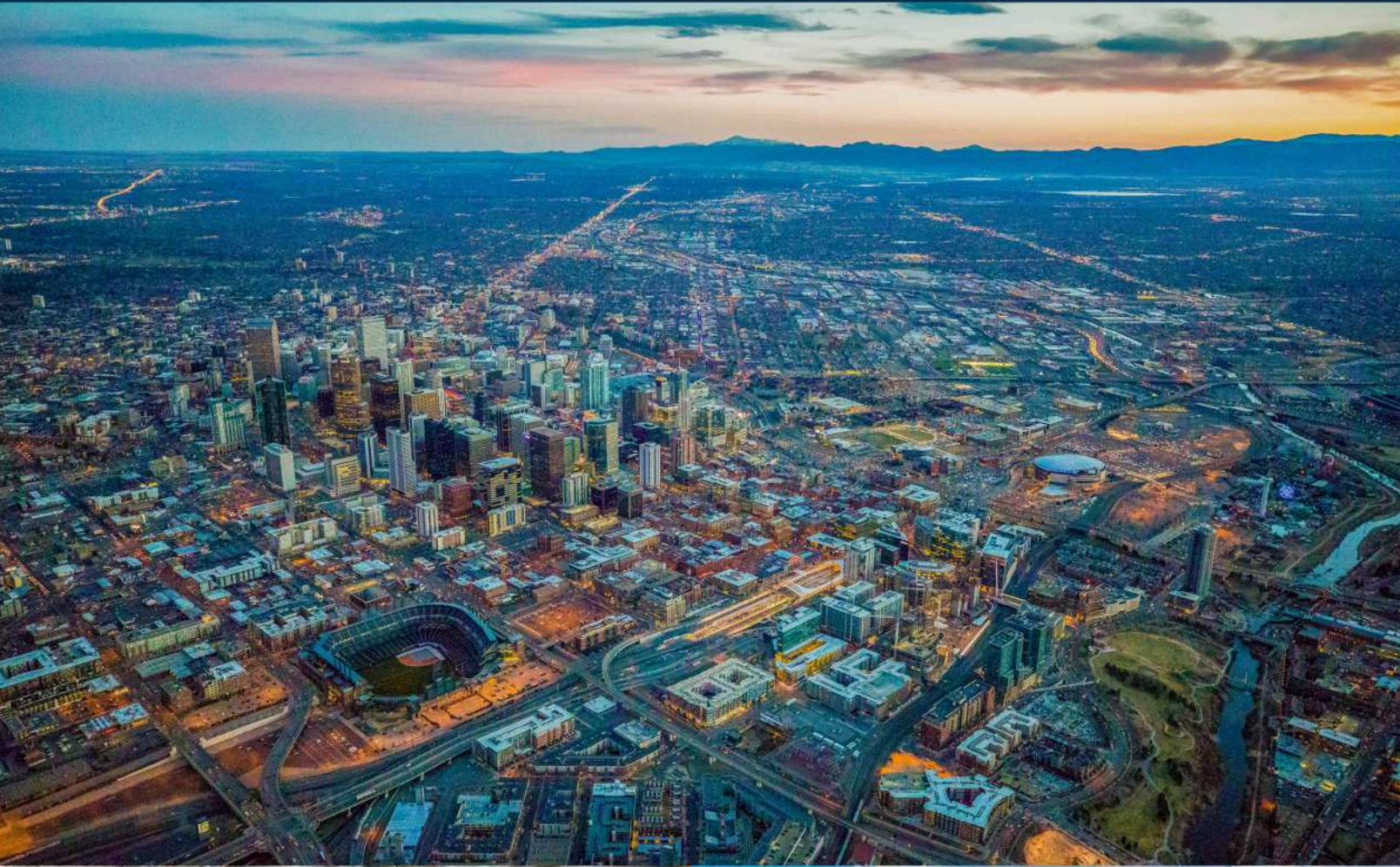
BOTTOM:

*Sheridan Station interior*



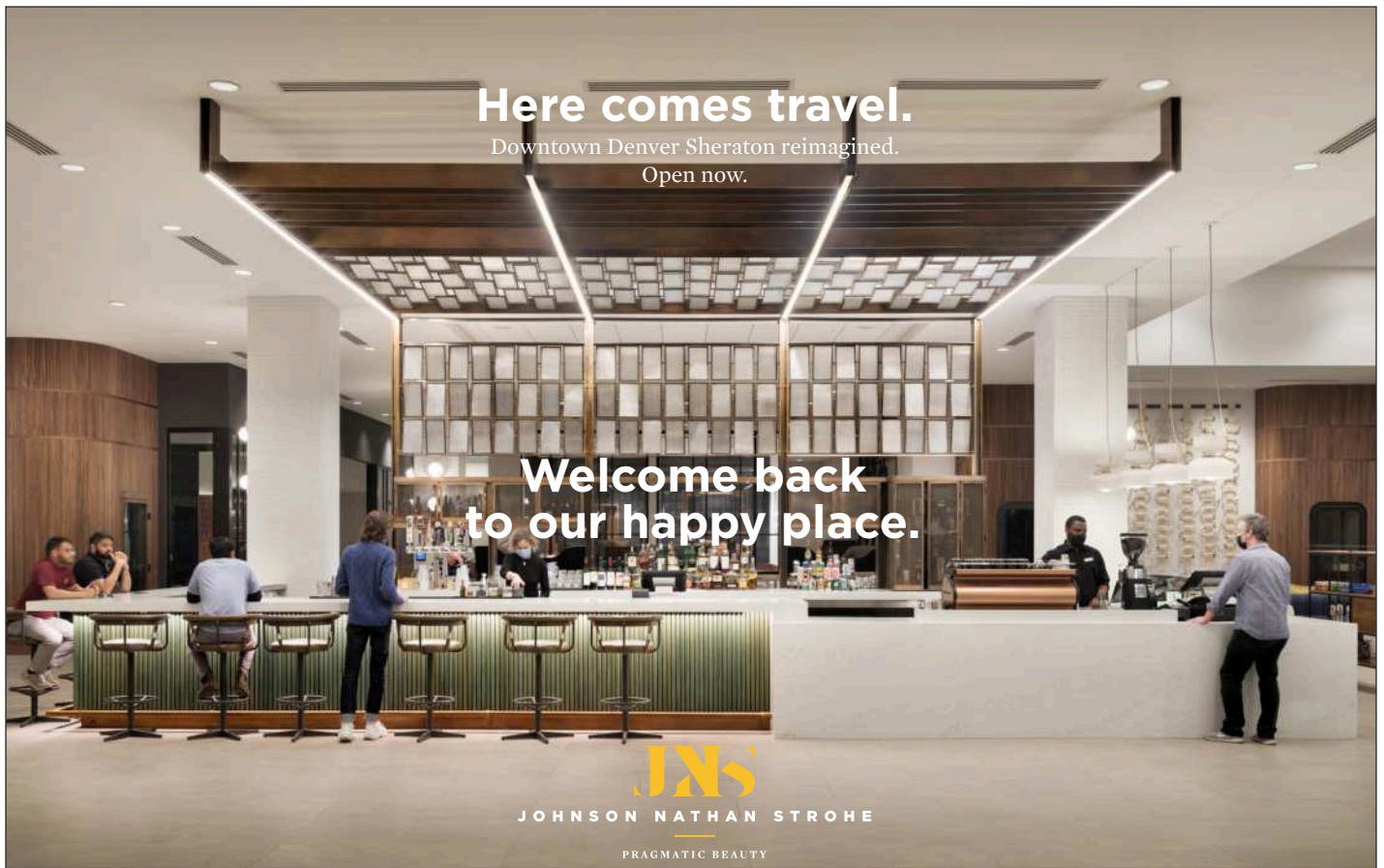


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# RidgeGate Rises in the East





The RidgeGate community in Lone Tree is flourishing on both the east and west sides – with new infrastructure, public transportation, extensive parks and open space, retail space, commercial and residential offerings taking shape to further expand its complete community where people can live, work and play. RidgeGate was designed with the goal of helping companies and people thrive, and each year delivers more fully on the promise of creating a community with lifestyle amenities, connection to work and nature, and diverse residential offerings.



**Darryl Jones**  
Senior Vice  
President,  
Coventry  
Development  
Corp.

The residential opportunities at RidgeGate are evolving – last year Shea Homes closed on the land for its Lyric at RidgeGate community, named for its poetic approach to Colorado living. Phase 1 comprises 185 acres and 430 homes, and will become a highly anticipated new neighborhood on the east side. As the master homebuilder, Shea Homes will work alongside several other select homebuilders to build approximately 1,900 homes just east of the RTD RidgeGate Station – with its Phase 1 model homes scheduled to be completed by the end of this year. Shea also signed an agreement with Quantum Fiber, a Lumen Technologies brand, to construct a state-of-the-art all fiber broadband network. With the Quantum Fiber network in Lyric residents will experience the benefits of high-performance, reliable connectivity, including enhanced Wi-Fi, as a standard home amenity to work from home, take online classes, or connect with friends and loved ones – all with unlimited data.

Several residential rental projects are slated for completion this year, including:

- Novus Sky Ridge Station Apartments, a new 240-unit apartment complex situated on the last parcel of land at the Sky Ridge Station transit-oriented development

site. The seven-story apartment complex, which includes two levels of parking, is adjacent to several large employers in the area including the Sky Ridge Medical Center, Charles Schwab and Kiewit's regional headquarters. Construction is scheduled to be complete in the fall.

- Some 67 affordable apartment homes are being built by Koelbel and Co. at RidgeGate Station. Project amenities include a fitness center, community room, and on-site leasing with units ranging from 30% to 80% area median income.

- Additionally, the Regency Residential Apartments at RidgeGate Station broke ground on its first phase of 540 market-rate apartments and are scheduled for completion in 2023. As one of the first RidgeGate development projects on the east side of Interstate 25, this project will create a mixed-use, transit-oriented community that provides well-designed interior living spaces and high-quality outdoor spaces.

- The final segment of the East-West Regional Trail, which connects Highlands Ranch, Castle Pines, Lone Tree and Parker was completed in 2021. The city of Lone Tree along with South Suburban Parks and Recreation District completed the master planning of the 80-acre Lone Tree Regional Park.

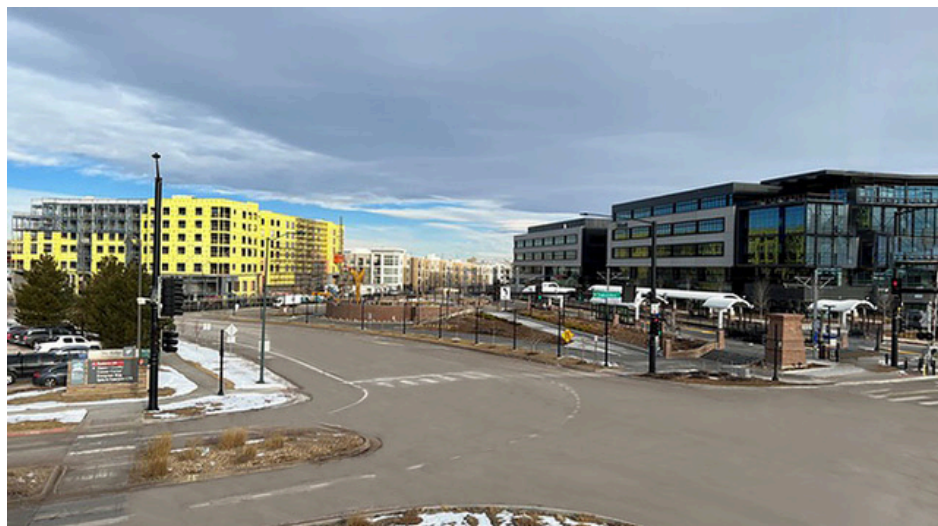
As for commercial development, numerous large-scale corporate campus projects recently reached completion on the west side of RidgeGate. Charles Schwab's mixed-use retail, conference center and parking building is now complete and Kiewit's new regional campus opening last year and its second building – a 150,000-square-foot building – is scheduled to be completed later this year.

Future projects are also taking shape and anticipated this year on the east side of the community. RidgeGate continued the construction of millions in public infrastructure and streetscape that laid the necessary groundwork for all future developments. Current projects include:

- A 200-unit luxury seniors community called the Retreat at Lone Tree, being developed by Experience Senior Living Development, a Nex-Core-owned company. It plans to break ground in the fourth quarter.

- A highly anticipated new anchor grocery store tenant (likely to be announced shortly) that will serve the future and current residents in the area on the east side.

- Living Spaces, a modern furniture store, will make its Colorado debut on the final retail site on the West Side at RidgeGate Commons (near Cabela's and Sierra Restaurant).



*Novus Sky Ridge Station Apartments is a new 240-unit complex.*



# KTI Delivers The Exchange: Coffee + Conversation

In the overwhelming buyers' market, we were tasked with finding progressive ideas to meet and manage a new era of consumer expectations by creating an amazing experience, not only for first-time visitors, but for residents alike.

This award-winning, one-of-a-kind Coffee House + Information Center at The Canyons – a new community in Castle Pines – was developed by Shea Homes, in partnership with Kimberly Timmons Interiors and Woodley Architectural Group.

It's an inviting space for both residents and the public, centered around coffee, conversation and community connection: a central gathering spot where you can enjoy a handcrafted latte in the morning or a light snack and iced tea in the afternoon. (You must try the Sea Salted Avocado + Lemon Olive Oil Toast!) Visitors can settle into a comfy armchair by the fireplace or enjoy the fresh air and fire pit with friends on the outdoor patio. It's

where visitors get information and first impressions about the community; and where they start and end their days.

The building embraces its natural surroundings and embodies a unique take on modern farmhouse architecture with warm gray wood siding, crisp white limestone and standing seam metal roof. The interior architecture features large volumes with high scissor truss ceilings that continue out onto the outdoor covered patio. The retractable doors provide an indoor-outdoor connection, letting the breeze flow through the space. The exterior siding is a composite material over a rain screen for low maintenance and sustainability.

The design approach utilized modern, simple clean lines and a fresh color palette, one that showcases all the characteristics of the community's brand – a spa-like feel, simple, elegant. Comfortable, yet with a buzz of positive energy.\



*Modern farmhouse architecture comes alive at the Exchange with warm gray wood siding, crisp white limestone and a standing seam metal roof.*



*The community room is the perfect place for clubs, meetings and smaller get-togethers.*





*Beautiful Colorado weather can be enjoyed at an outdoor table or around the cozy fire pit.*



*Learn more about the community and builders, and pick up a model home map, at the information center.*



*The dining area features natural light, floor-to-ceiling windows, porcelain wood-look tile floors, and an exposed ceiling for a warm, inviting atmosphere.*



*Kids can play in an area designed just for them.*



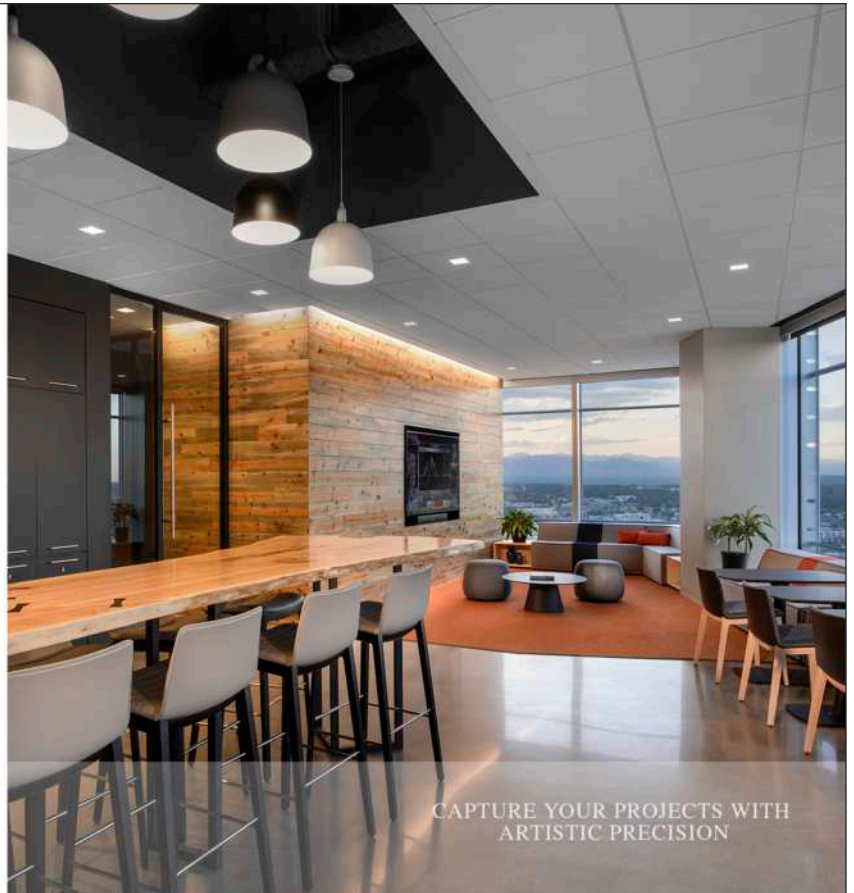
*Enjoy a handcrafted latte in the morning or a light snack and iced tea in the afternoon.*



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# River North is Rising

Cranes are dotting River North's skyline and projects under construction range from office to multifamily. Some of the office projects underway include The Current River North (238,000 square feet), T3 RiNo (230,000 sf) and Paradigm River North (200,000 sf). Multifamily projects include Novel RiNo, Vert Lofts and Drive Train among many others.\

**PHOTO:** Rocky Mountain Photography









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Building Dialogue is a quarterly digital magazine whose readers includes developers/owners, contractors, architects, engineers, interior designers, landscape architects and end users/tenant rep brokers. The magazine caters specifically to the AEC industry, including features on projects and people, as well as highlighting trends in design, construction, development and more.

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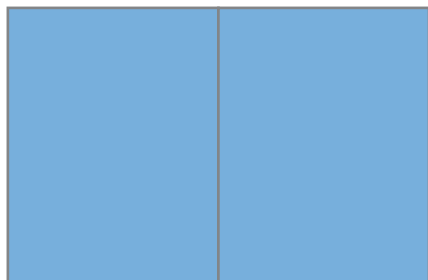
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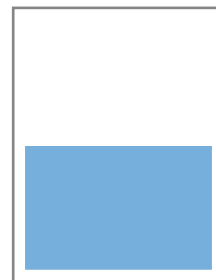
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