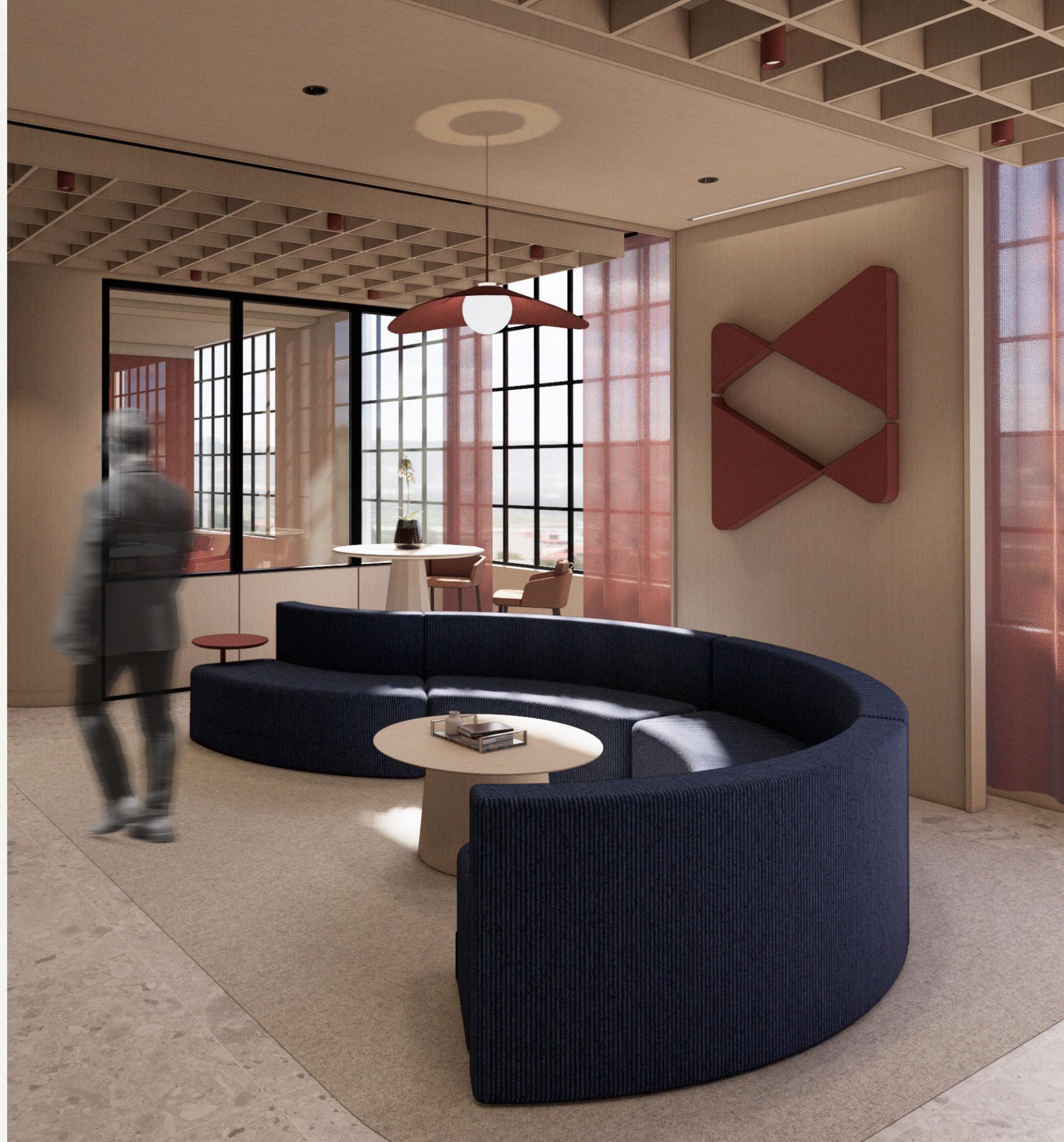




next
rooted in law | driven by legacy

2025 Steelcase NEXT
Student Design Competition



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balance in the workplace

next law firm embraces the future of legal practice by creating a balanced, human-centered workplace that is adaptable and aligned with the realities of hybrid work. Grounded in research on digital workflows and the importance of mental health, the new Los Angeles office reflects the firm's identity, "*Rooted in Law, Driven by Legacy,*" and prioritizes employee *well-being, work-life balance, collaboration,* and a *healthy workplace culture.*

Upon arrival, wayfinding is intentionally intuitive. Subtle tonal shifts, clear sightlines, and controlled acoustics guide employees and their clients with ease, reducing stress and helping staff transition back into high-focus legal tasks.

The spatial design integrates flexible furniture, ergonomic workstations, acoustic comfort, and a dedicated *Rejuvenation Room* (wildcard) to offer essential moments to reset and recover, supporting the cognitive demands and pressures inherent in legal work. Additionally, technology-enabled focus rooms, meeting spaces, and digital-ready huddle rooms ensure seamless transitions between in-person case work, remote collaboration, and virtual hearing sessions. Lastly, the design positions the workcafé and town hall at the *heart of the office* to strengthen mentorship, encourage intergenerational learning, and foster a supportive workplace culture.

Through a balanced mix of open and private environments, soft materiality, and residential comfort cues, the office becomes a welcoming, home-like destination employees want to return to. Moments of pause and reflection are intentionally embedded throughout the design, acknowledging the mental weight of legal practice. Together, these elements create a workplace that feels balanced and supportive; a place where people can think clearly, work proudly, and genuinely *feel at home.*





project location

757 S Alameda St
Suite 400 90021
Los Angeles CA

Approx. 15,200 ft²

*“A vibrant district that pushes the boundaries
between work, culture, and play”*

-ROWDTLA Office Brochure

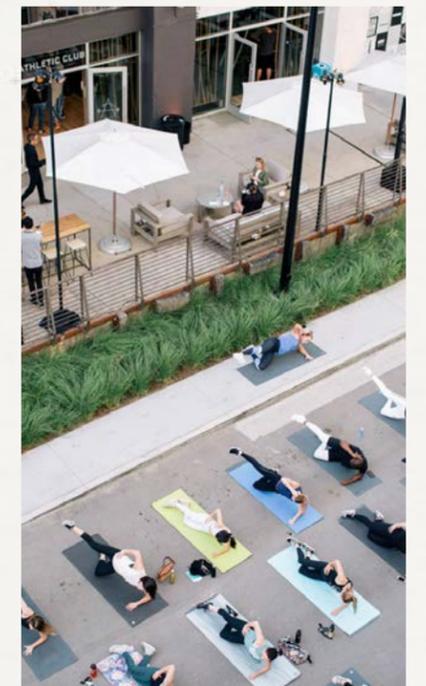
ROW DTLA

The site is located in ROW DTLA, a historical district within the boundary of downtown Los Angeles. The district features over 100 historical buildings that have been revitalized into an artistic, creative, and cultural hub.

ROW DTLA is a vibrant neighborhood, providing a lengthy history in produce and trade. The district continues to honor its history by hosting weekly markets open to the public, as well as preserving the buildings to showcase the architectural history. The district emphasizes community by providing space to gather, host events & workshops, ample dining and shopping opportunities, as well as fitness groups and classes.

legend

- project site
- DTLA boundary
- greenspaces
- water bodies
- neighboring districts
- major highways



client

next law firm

- New York based company opening a new workspace in LA
- Established over 70 years ago
- 16 offices globally
- The LA office will have 55 employees
- Mantra: **"Rooted in law, driven by legacy"**

demographics

Gen Z | 27%

- Junior associates
- Interns

Millennials | 34%

- Mid-level associates
- Rising partners

Gen X | 27%

- Partners
- Senior associates
- Leadership roles

Baby Boomers | 12%

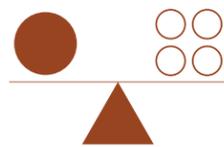
- Senior partners approaching retirement

design research

Expanding on the key design drivers and client needs + requirements, the following community-based design considerations inform the design proposal. These principles address current workplace needs while considering future growth, staff well-being, client experience, and technological changes. The design for next's new law office is guided by the following principles and Steelcase design drivers:

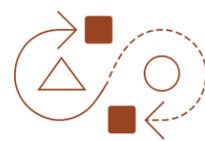
- *Variety of workspaces ranging from private offices to large meeting rooms*
- *Prioritize privacy through acoustics and flexible partitions*
- *Flexible workstations with power outlets for mobility*
- *Digital meeting rooms with video meeting abilities + interactive displays*
- *Inclusive design by creating space to fit all needs and following ADA guidelines*
- *Natural lighting for well-being in addition to artificial lighting options for varying work styles*
- *Safe storage for personal belongings and document storage*

design drivers



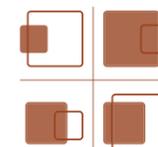
me + we

Supportive environment for individual or group work settings for both in person or hybrid work. Case rooms, small and medium conference rooms, and huddle rooms provide spatial and technological support for small group settings.



fixed to fluid

Flexibility to support fixed, hybrid, and travelling workers through adaptable workspaces, movable desks, and a range of seating for individual focus or collaborative group work.



open + enclosed

Variety of spaces to accommodate open collaborative work areas in the workcafe, or enclosed private meetings in the conference rooms, for both the firm staff and visiting clients

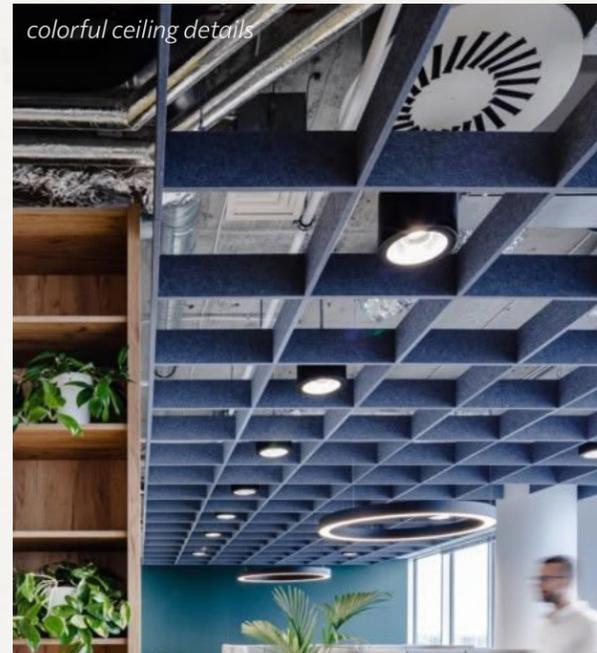


braiding digital + physical

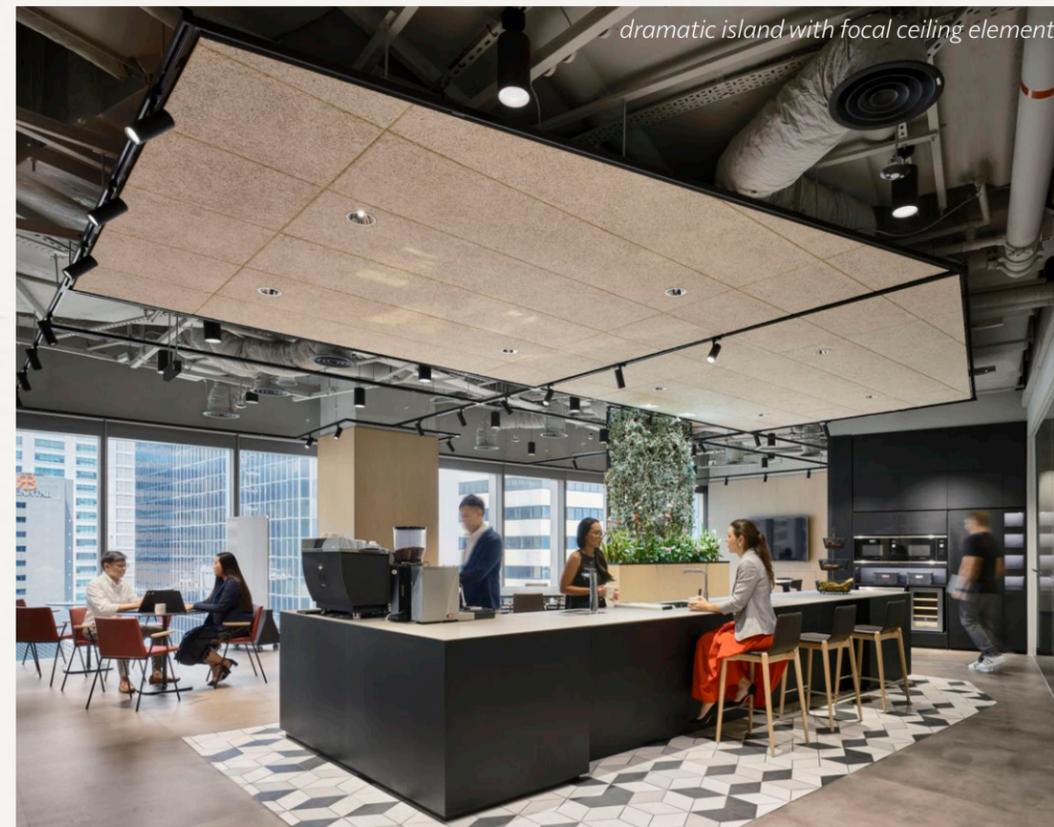
Innovative technological solutions through support for virtual meetings, digital document storage, and AI enabled software with a goal of working towards a digital hybrid office



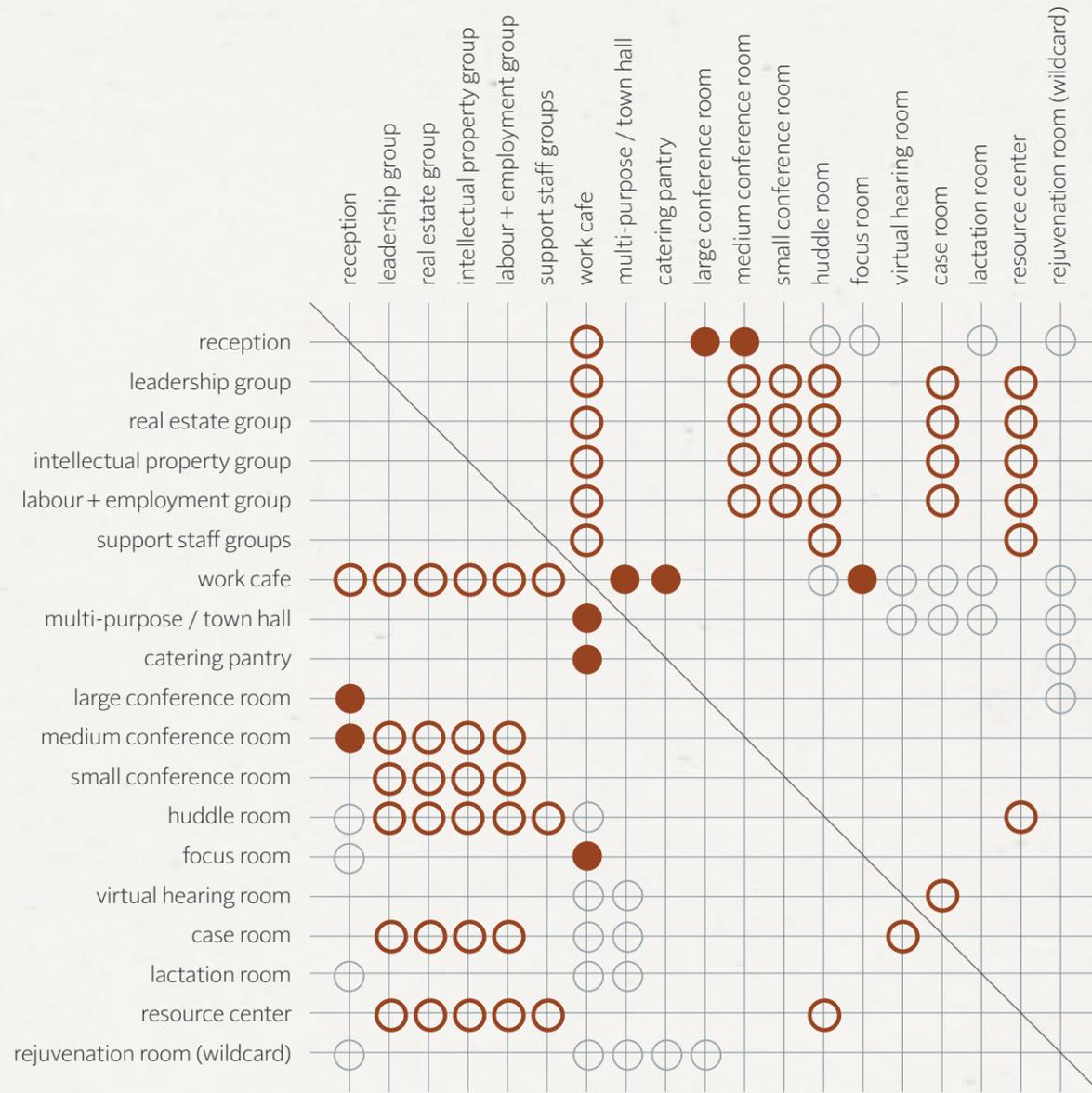
wellbeing



collaboration



balance

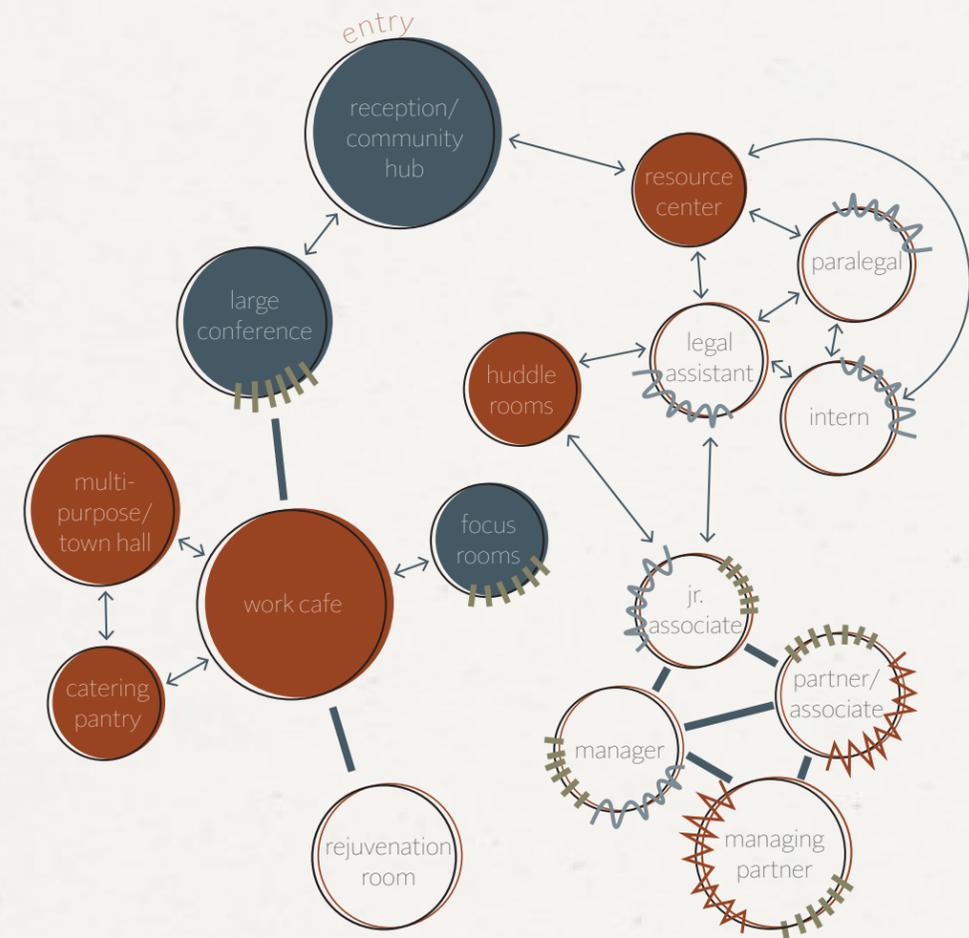


adjacency matrix

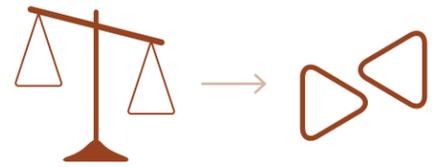
legend

- primary adjacency
- secondary adjacency
- undesired adjacency
- client focused space
- public space
- private work space
- acoustic needs
- along the perimeter
- within the interior
- primary adjacency
- secondary adjacency

Adjacencies for the plan were determined by analyzing individualized tasks along with team tasks. Each team is placed together to facilitate meetings and provide assistance to one another. The various conference rooms and case rooms are found at each corner of the plan to provide a balance between private and group work. These meetings spaces act as pillars for collaboration and provide visual interest throughout the space. The workcafe and town hall form the heart of the plan: central to the space providing easy access for all users.



bubble diagram



The primary logo consists of the intersection of 2 triangles, representative of the recognizable scale of justice, which signifies collaboration: "coming together" in the workplace. The central pocket represents the "whole" of the firm; a gathering of the quadrants merging together and working together as a team.

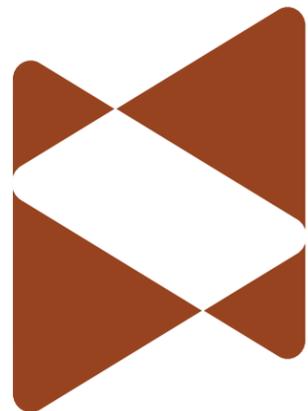


The secondary logo for **next** consists of lettering in the typeface *Belgiano Serif*. The serif font is representative of the firm's sophistication, while the curved edges express softness and organic continuity, representing collaboration and a focus on well-being.



The primary colour for **next** is a warm terracotta. Red is often associated with power, strength, and intensity. The orange undertone softens the intensity and fosters a welcoming ambience. Additionally, California is known for terracotta tiles and ceramics, thereby representing a connection to **next's** expansion to LA.

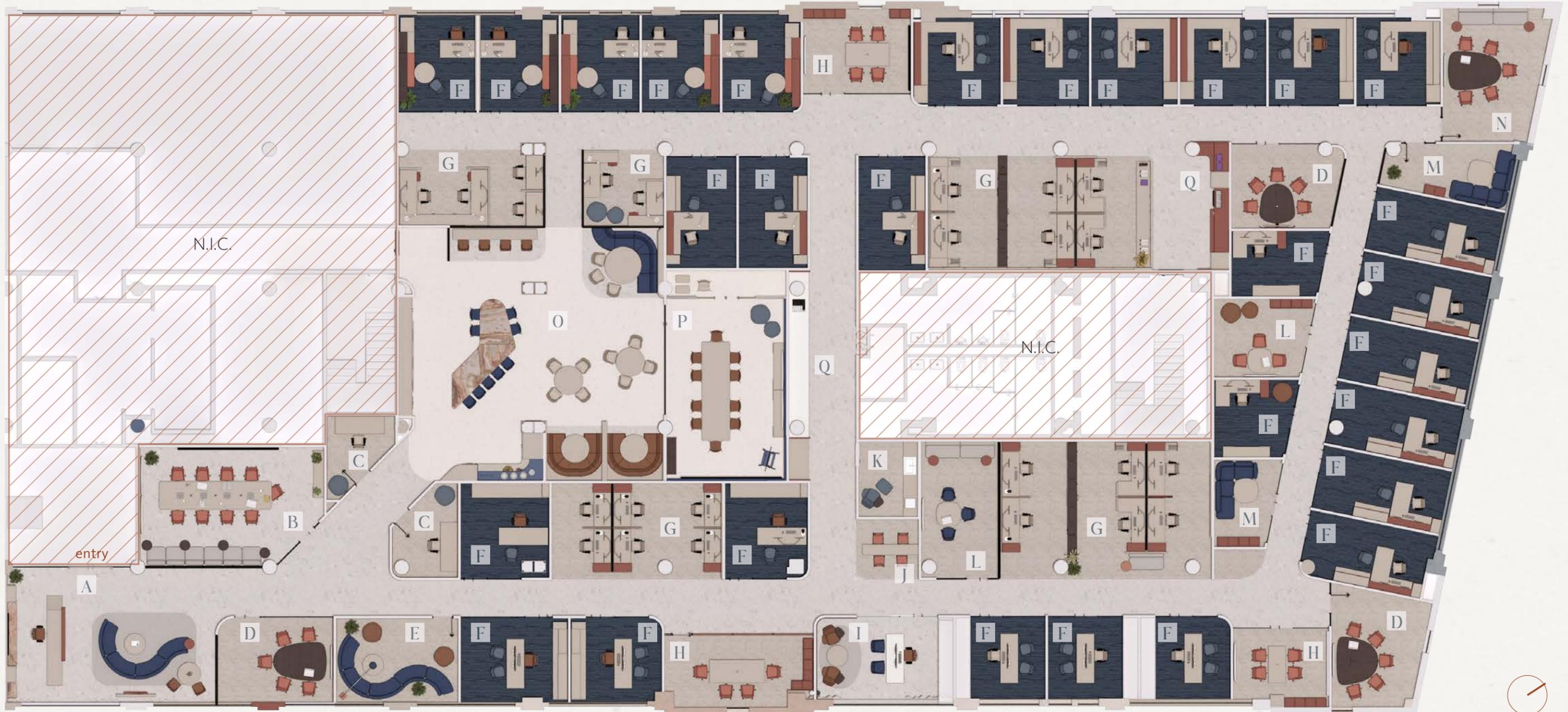
primary logo



secondary logo



floorplan



legend

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A community hub reception + welcome lobby | G workstation | M huddle room |
| B large conference room | H case room | N virtual hearing room |
| C focus room | I managing partner office | O workcafé |
| D medium conference room | J in-between / touchdown work spaces | P town hall / multi-purpose room |
| E restoration space (wildcard) | K lactation room | Q resource + production center |
| F private office | L small conference room | |

0' 5' 10' 15' 20'

The spatial planning takes inspiration from the research surrounding hybrid workspaces. Teams are placed together to ensure ease of communication and collaboration, while the larger collaborative workspaces are intertwined throughout the plan creating pockets of groupwork among individual, fostering a balance between private and public, and to create easy access to these spaces as needed.

The cafe and multi-purpose room form the central heart of the plan. The intention for this is to create a communal and central workspace for everyone to feel welcome. The work cafe is accessible for all users and becomes part of the staff members' daily journey while navigating the entire floor.



legend

 collaboration spaces

support staff groups

 IT & cybersecurity

 operations

 HR

 finance + accounting

legal professional groups

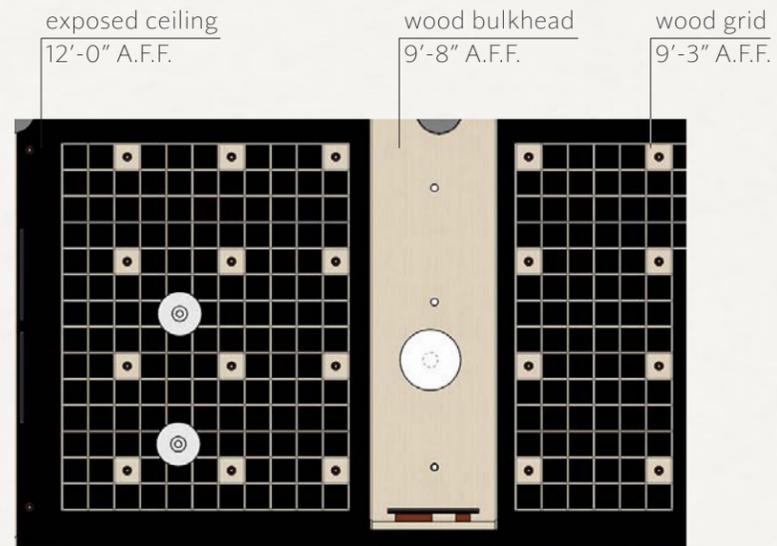
 leadership

 litigation practice: intellectual property

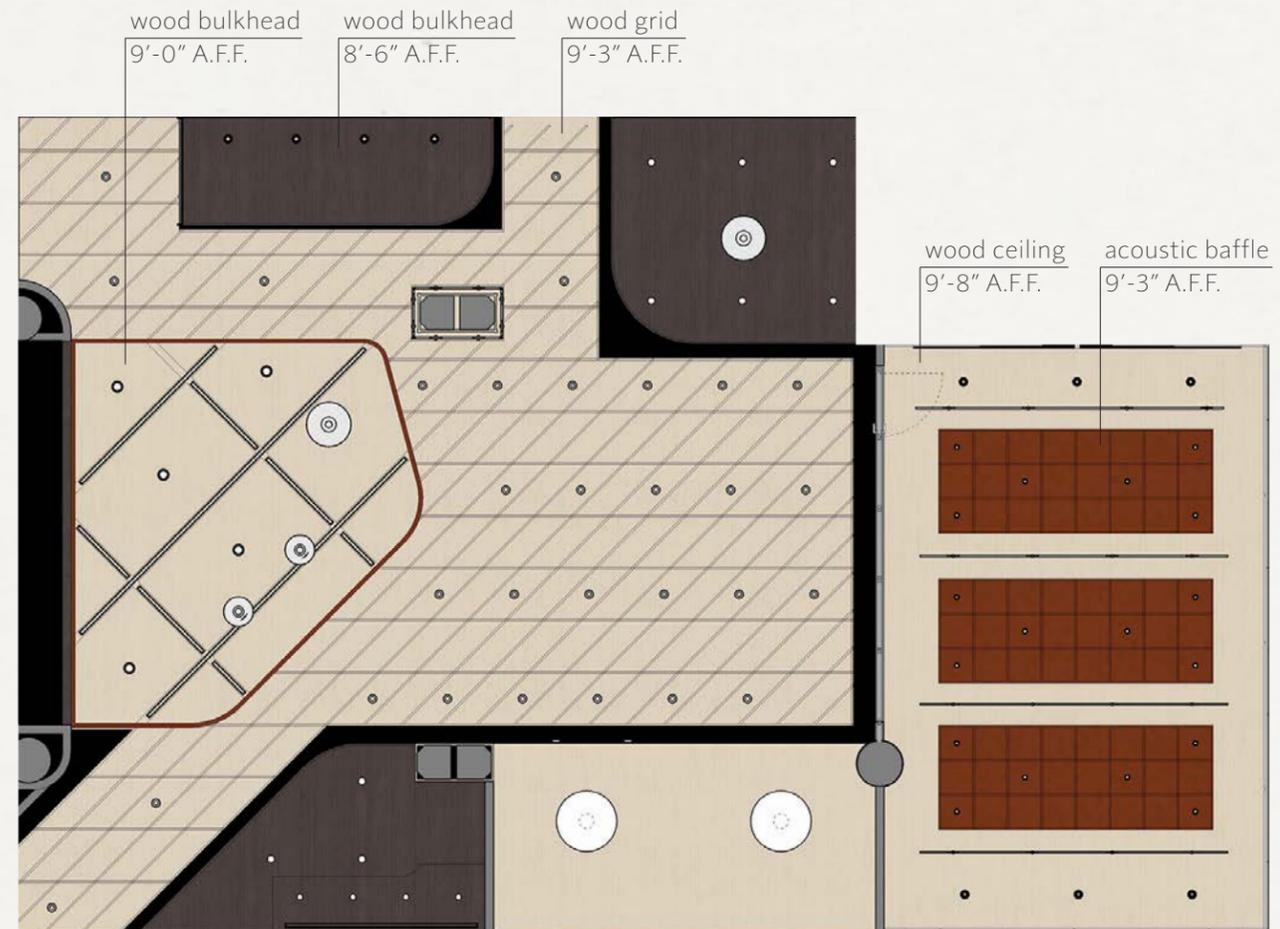
 litigation practice: labour + employment

 litigation practice: real estate

reflected ceiling plan



reception | reflected ceiling plan



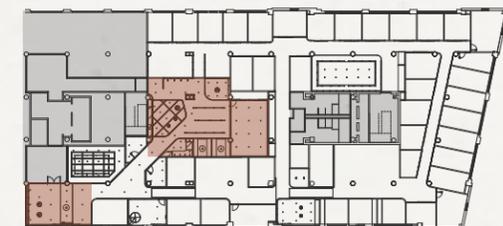
workcafé + town hall | reflected ceiling plan

legend

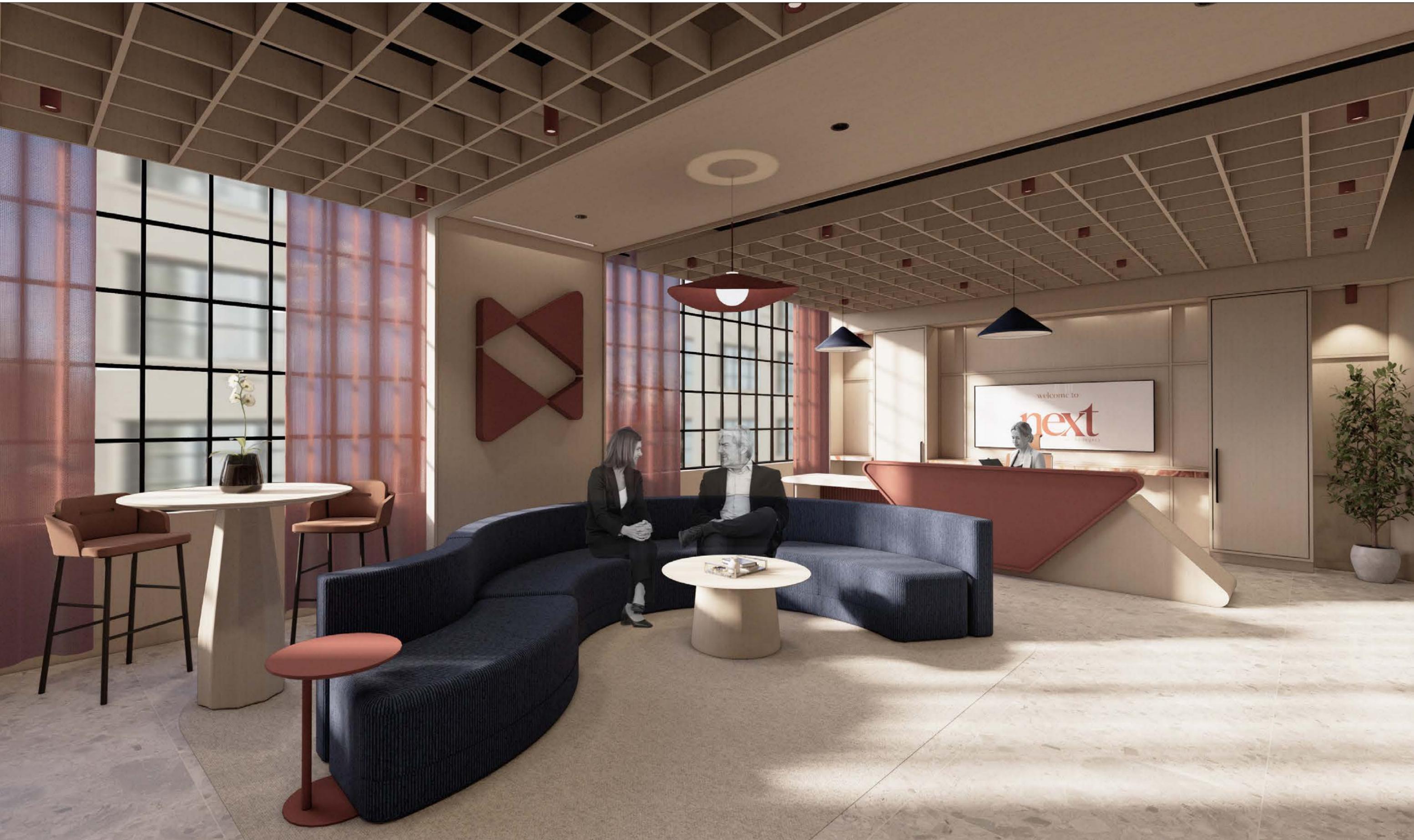
- 3" recessed downlight
- Lumenwerx suspended track
- ⊙ Haworth Bola pendant
- ⊙ Vibia suspended pendant
- ⊙ Vibia suspended pendant
- ⊙ Vibia suspended pendant



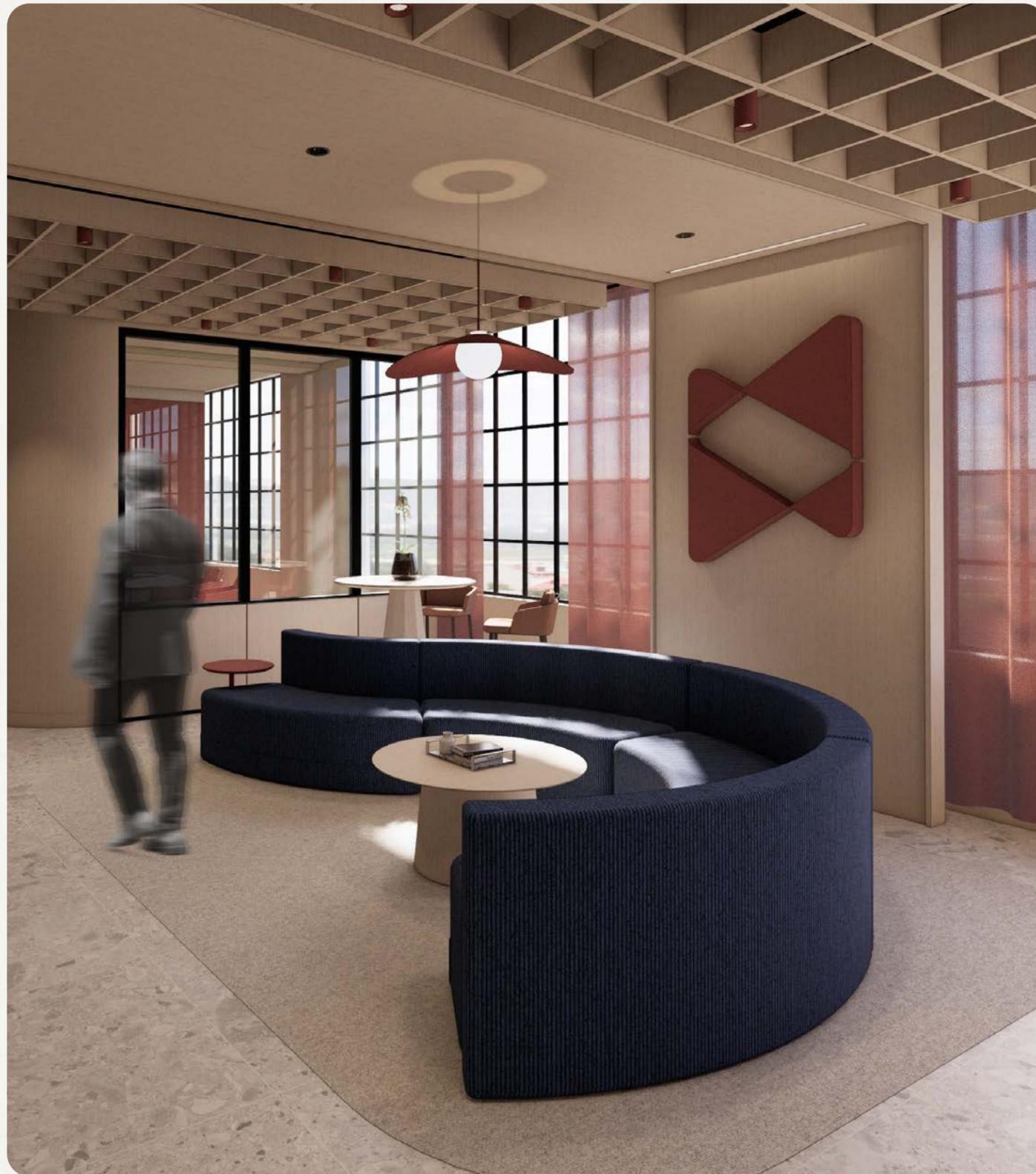
key plan



reception



reception



The reception and community hub *invites guests* into the space by providing a *warm and welcoming* entry. **Next's** branding is proudly displayed, both through emblems as well as *material and design choices*, to remind guests of what it stands for: *balance in the workplace*. Comfortable seating is provided for guests while they wait, with open views to the conference rooms showcasing **next's** branding and identity.



reception elevation

nts

furniture selection



Viccarbe Season Lounge System



Bolia Pillar Side Table

key plan



large conference room



large conference room



Steelcase wall-mounted markerboard anchors the conference room, transforming the wall into a high-performance collaboration zone

Dual displays in meeting rooms support hybrid collaboration by allowing users to present information on one screen while maintaining clear visual connection to remote colleagues on the other

furniture selection



Coalesse Marien152
Conference Chair



Coalesse Ensemble
Lounge System



Coalesse Host Table



Flex Markerboards

The large conference room is *equipped with technology* to allow for in-person and hybrid meetings. The central table seats up to 9 people, with 6 additional lounge chairs along the side for additional seating as needed. The space is intended for *conferences with both staff and guests*, with space for *storage and catering* when hosting guests.

key plan







coffee station elevation

nts



cafe seating elevation

nts

furniture selection



Coalesse Marien152 Counter Stool



Bolia Piro Table



Campfire Lounge System



Campfire Slim Table

The workcafé provides a range of seating and work stations for **next** employees to find what suits their needs. The kitchen is equipped with *coffee and organic snack stations*, in addition to ample storage and counter space for larger gatherings and events. The work cafe is adjacent to the multi-purpose room to allow for larger workplace events and meetings, creating a *sense of community*. The work cafe is central to the entire floorplan, creating a *central hub for employees to gather, connect, and collaborate*.

key plan



meeting zone

Large work space adjacent to workcafé for conferences, staff events, training sessions, and gatherings

nomadic zone

Power-enabled semi-private seating for casual working

specialty zone

Central space for eating and gathering with colleagues

social zone

Large seating space for casual gathering and socializing

resource zone

One of two spaces for storage of various office needs ranging from copy & print to stationary and recycling

By prioritizing *collaboration and team building*, the workcafé ensures *accessibility* for all users by following ADA guidelines throughout. Accessible seating and height appropriate appliances ensure a welcoming and *inclusive space for all*.

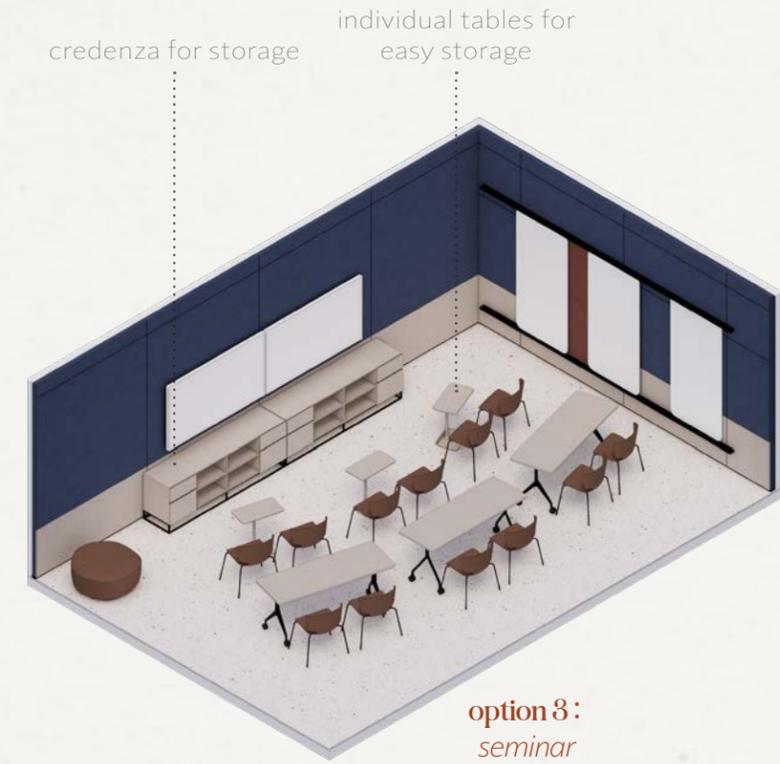
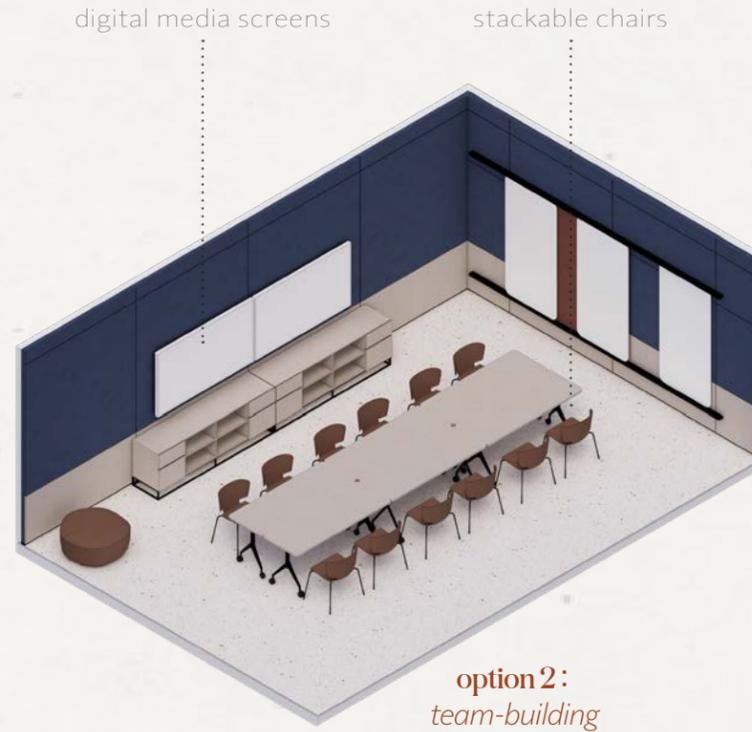
To allow for larger gatherings, the multi-purpose room opens to the workcafé with a foldable wall. This allows for additional space for seating and tables for staff events.



key plan







The multi-purpose room is equipped with *stackable chairs* and *tables on casters* to allow for *flexibility* and a wide range of seating options. The space is intended to host large staff events, conferences, meetings, and learning events. The furniture selection allows for *adaptability to suit the event needs*, and the space is *enabled with technology* for virtual attendees and digital displays.

furniture selection



Groupwork Training Table



Flex Media Cart



Coalesse Wrapp Chair



Coalesse Lagunitas Table

key plan







With a warm palette, natural materials, and organic forms, the *rejuvenation space* provides users with a space of *respite*: to *relax and escape* from the stress and demanding tasks of their office work. Ambient lighting and window coverings allow for custom lighting controls to suit individual user preferences, in addition to ample seating providing varying views.

The space is *rooted in well-being*: the goal is to provide users with a mental and physical break from daily stressors. The plants act as a *connection to the outdoor courtyards* by bringing these exterior and natural elements within and allowing users to connect with nature.

The space is ultimately intended to evoke feelings of *calmness and rejuvenation*, allowing for mental breaks before returning to work.

furniture selection



Viccarbe Season Lounge System



Bolia Pillar Side Table

key plan





option 1:
collaborate



option 2:
comfort



option 3:
focus

A range of office configurations are offered to provide *adaptability* to suit individual user needs. Each office is equipped with *height adjustable desks*, ample storage space, as well as additional seating for 1-2 other guests. The offices are finished with glazed walls and sliding doors for simplicity, and the material finishes create a *warm and comforting atmosphere* for high-focus needs.

furniture selection



West Elm Kent Guest Chair



Slim Leg Height-Adjustable Desk

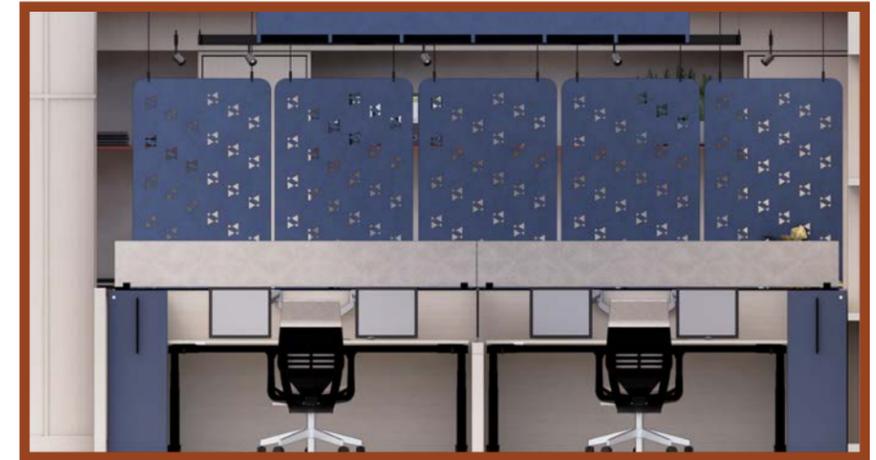


Gesture Chair



Currency Enhanced Storage





workstation elevation

nts

The open workstations throughout the space provide a range of seating options for individual needs. Ample storage is provided at each workstation, as well as height-adjustable desks and chairs. Modular storage is provided to allow for adaptability as needs evolve overtime. Acoustic paneling aids in sound absorption to allow for better focus in the open areas.

furniture selection



Gesture Chair



Ology Height-Adjustable Desk



Flex Active Frame



Lateral Universal Storage

key plan





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