

12th Annual Steelcase Student Design Competition









#### Authenticity in the Workplace

Authenticity in the workplace fosters a sense of community among colleagues. As Chicago is often called the 'city of neighborhoods,' it is essential that the NEXT office reflects this defining characteristic. In creating this inclusive 'neighborhood' workplace culture, three key principles have guided this effort: **transparency, experience,** and **pathos** (the appeal to emotion and the use of sensory details).

### Ideologies in the Context of Design

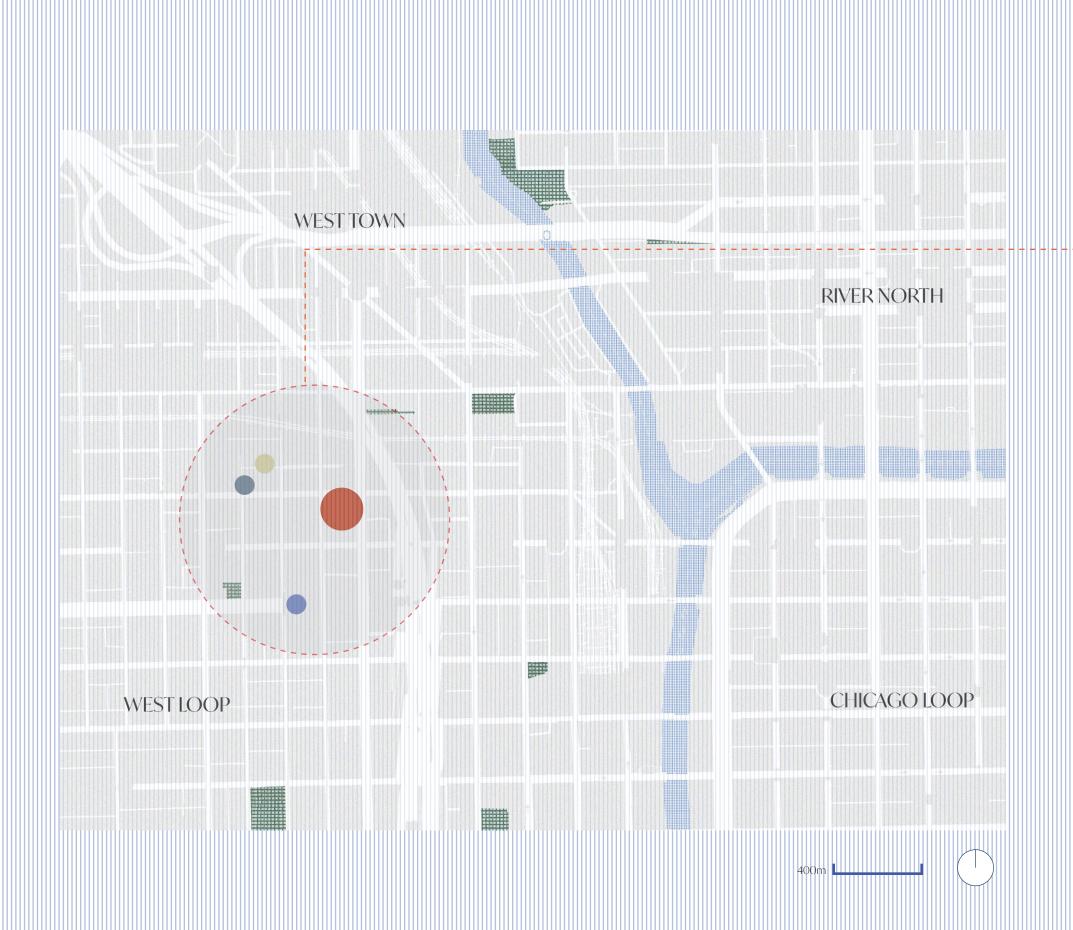
**Transparency** - involves open communication, honesty, and accountability at all levels of the organization. It emphasizes clear expectations and direct feedback to ensure a true to supportive environment. Building transparency and accountability fosters trust between all staff. It involves rethinking hierarchy in the workplace and is reflected in the office's culture and design. By thoughtfully balancing **public and private spaces and optimizing sightlines**, the office layout promotes openness and reinforces a transparent design language throughout the environment.

**Experience** - focuses on moments for individual work and collaboration within the office. This includes creating a dynamic work environment that supports both focus productivity and team collaboration through experience. Connections and spontaneous interactions are vital for fostering camaraderie and sparking creative thinking. **Providing employees with choice and flexibility** is key to creating a healthy and **human-centered work environment**. Features like open floor plans and adaptable workstations empower individuals to use spaces that align with their needs, enhancing both personal productivity and teamwork.

**Pathos** - highlights the importance of spaces that prioritize comfort, familiarity, and meaningful interactions. By fostering emotional engagement, the workplace becomes a welcoming and human-centered environment that enhances both morale and productivity. Selected designed moments, such as the **Music Lounge and Recording Studio** wildcard space, evoke emotional connections among staff, clients, and guests. By sharing stories, singing together, and dancing, these spaces enhance empathy, improve mood, and foster a sense of connectedness in the workplace – reinforcing the NEXT Ad Agency brand messaging of authenticity. Additionally, incorporating features reminiscent of home, such as the living room or kitchen-inspired spaces, helps to humanize the workplace. This approach transforms the office into a welcoming "second place," fostering deeper connections and engagement among users.



"Chicago is the intersection of food, design, commerce, arts & culture."





#### Site

The NEXT office will be located at 811 W Fulton Market in the vibrant and trendy Fulton Market District of Chicago, Illinois. Once a warehouse district, this area has undergone significant revitalization since the early 21st century. (Fulton Market District, n.d.) This location is well suited to reflect the values of the company culture, as well as support NEXT's four primary clients: On Holding AG™ - a Swiss shoe company, Aesop™ - an Australian luxury cosmetic consumer-packaged company, Starbucks™-a fast-food chain, and lastly the Chicago Wine Company® - a beverage company. In addition to being a hub for business, the district is known for its dynamic nightlife, offering a variety of cafes, restaurants, cocktail bars, breweries, and boutiques that create an engaging environment for work and leisure.

#### History

Chicago has long been a cultural epicenter, emerging in the 1890s as a home for musically and artistically gifted individuals. Renowned as the birthplace of gospel music, urban blues, and modern jazz, the city's creative spirit permeates its neighborhoods. (Duis, et. al., 2024) Each of Chicago's diverse community areas contributes to a sense of collectivism, fostering a strong connection among its residents. This part of the city's identity brings a unique opportunity to be reflected in the workplace – reflecting the communal values that Chicago's neighborhoods display.



### Design Drivers + Furniture Analysis





#### Fixed to Fluid Adaptable spaces to accommodate different types of work through the use of modular systems.



Open + Enclosed Collaboration occurring in open-office spaces leading towards transparency, trust and accountability, while focus work and solace can be provided in



Braiding Digital + Physical Teams working both remotely and in-person: opportunities through use of cameras, acoustics, technology, space + lighting.



- 1. On the QT by Orangebox
- 2. Cobi by Steelcase
- 3. Nanimarquina Re-Rug by Nanimarquina
- 4. Ocular View by Steelcase
- 5. IC Lights F by Flos
- 6. Open Plan by Blu Dot



- 1. SideBySide Lounge by Blu Dot

- 5. Grid Corner Sofa by Established & Sons



private spaces.

- 1. Coalesse Ensemble Lounge System by Coalesse
- 2. In the Meadow by Moooi Carpets
- 3. Skald Lounge by Élu Dot
- 4. Emblem by Blu Dot





- 3. Pillar Side Table by Bolia
- 4. Thread by Steelcase
- 5. Flex Media Cart by Steelcase
- 6. Bix Lounge System by Coalesse
- 7. Right on Rug by Blu Dot



2. ACTIV-Pro 3-Stage Desk by AMQ

- 3. Peek Storage by Blu Dot
- 4. Captain Flint by Flos



### Transparency

The foundation of the company is built on equity and transparency. Each department and client is represented by a square placed on the same axis to indicate the essence of equality within the workplace and that each team member and client alike is valued. The final square pays homage to the city of Chicago and ensuring that the cultural aspect of the city transcends into the NEXT office.



#### Experience

The lines represent teamwork and supporting one another which emulate the team oriented experience that NEXT is committed to providing its employees and clients.

#### Pathos

The colors chosen are intended to evoke a sense of harmony and playfulness that is embedded within the company atmosphere. The soft nature of the colors provide a feeling of serenity that is so often desired in the workplace.



### Typeface

IvyMode



abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz ABCDEFGHIJK LMNOPQRSTU VWXYZ0123456 789!@\$%^&#?

### Primary Color Logo



### Branding in Situ



















TEAM ORIENTED















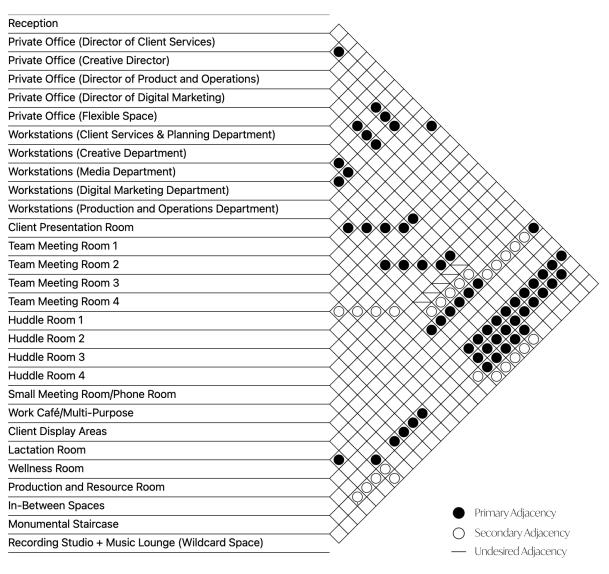




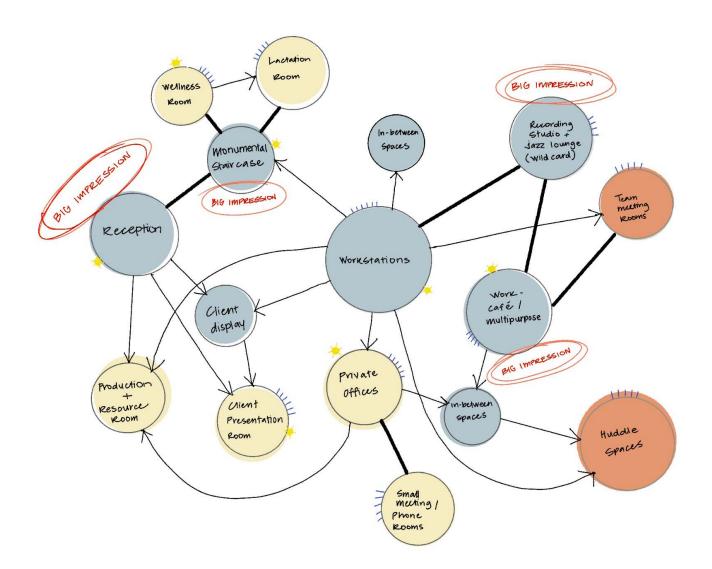




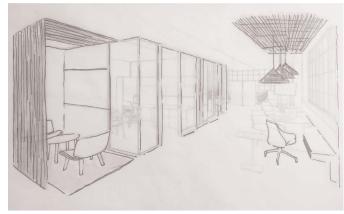
### Adjacency Matrix



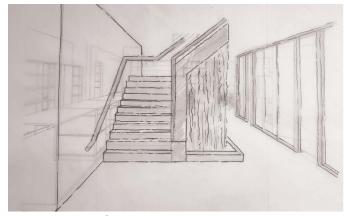
### Bubble Adjaceny Diagram



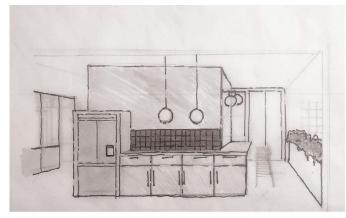
### Preliminary Sketches



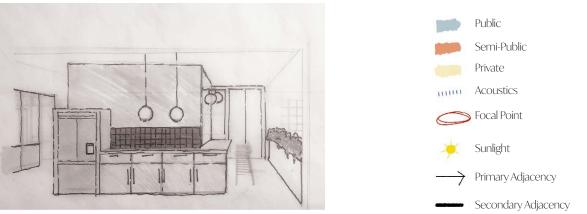
Collaboration Spaces



Monumental Staircase



Work Cafe: Kitchenette



### Level 6 Floor Plan



The floor plans were designed to ensure accessibility and optimal circulation for both employees and clients, prioritizing navigational clarity. To align with the concept of neighborhoods, the layout fosters connectivity across the office. This was achieved by implementing an open concept design, where collaboration and in-between spaces could be accessed from either side of the office, ultimately creating a communal hub around the central atrium monolithic stairs.

- A Client Celebration Gallery
- B Reception
- C Storage
- D Lactation Room
- E Wellness Room
- F Resource + Production Room
- G Monumental Stairs
- H Client Presentation + Meeting Room
- I In-between Space
- J Creative Department Workstations
- K Huddle Space
- L Guest Workstations
- M Work Pod
- N Private Office (Creative Director)
- O Private Office (Digital Media Director)
- P Media Department Workstations
- Q Digital Marketing Department Workstations
- R Phone Rooms
- S Lounge
- T Staff Lockers



### Level 7 Floor Plan

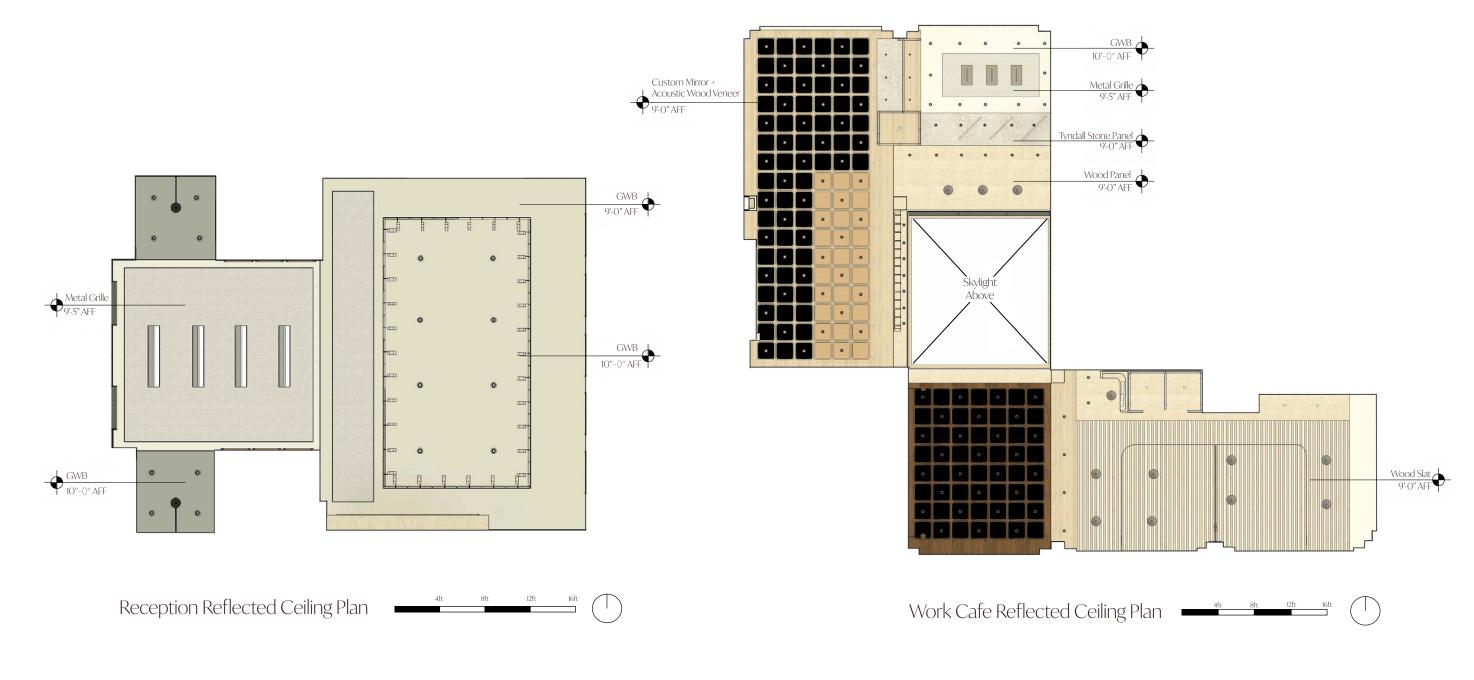


- A Client Celebration Gallery
- B Work Cafe: Nomadic Zone
- C Storage
- D Wildcard: Music Lounge + Recording Studio
- E Work Cafe: Social Zone
- F Phone Rooms
- G Work Cafe: Fluid Work/Meeting Zones
- H Resource + Production Room
- I In-between Space
- J Private Office (Flex Space)
- K Private Office (Client Services + Planning Director)
- L Private Office (Production + Operations Director)
- M Client Services + Planning Department Workstations
- N Production + Operations Department Workstations
- O Meeting Room
- P Monumental Stairs
- Q Work Cafe: Resource Zone
- R Work Cafe: Meeting Zone
- S Work Cafe: Specialty Zone
- T Staff Lockers

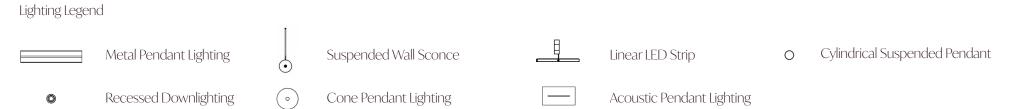


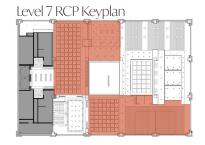


# Reflected Ceiling Plans









# **Design Driver Application**



Braiding Digital + Physical Workspaces are equipped with advanced technology to support a variety of meeting formats, both in-person and virtual. This setup also enables employees working from home to stay in-touch and connected with their teams seamlessly.



#### Open + Enclosed

Staff can customize their workspace to suit their needs. For a private work setting, curtains can be drawn to create a secluded environment. Alternatively, leaving the curtains open promotes interaction and seamlessly integrates the space with the rest of the workplace.



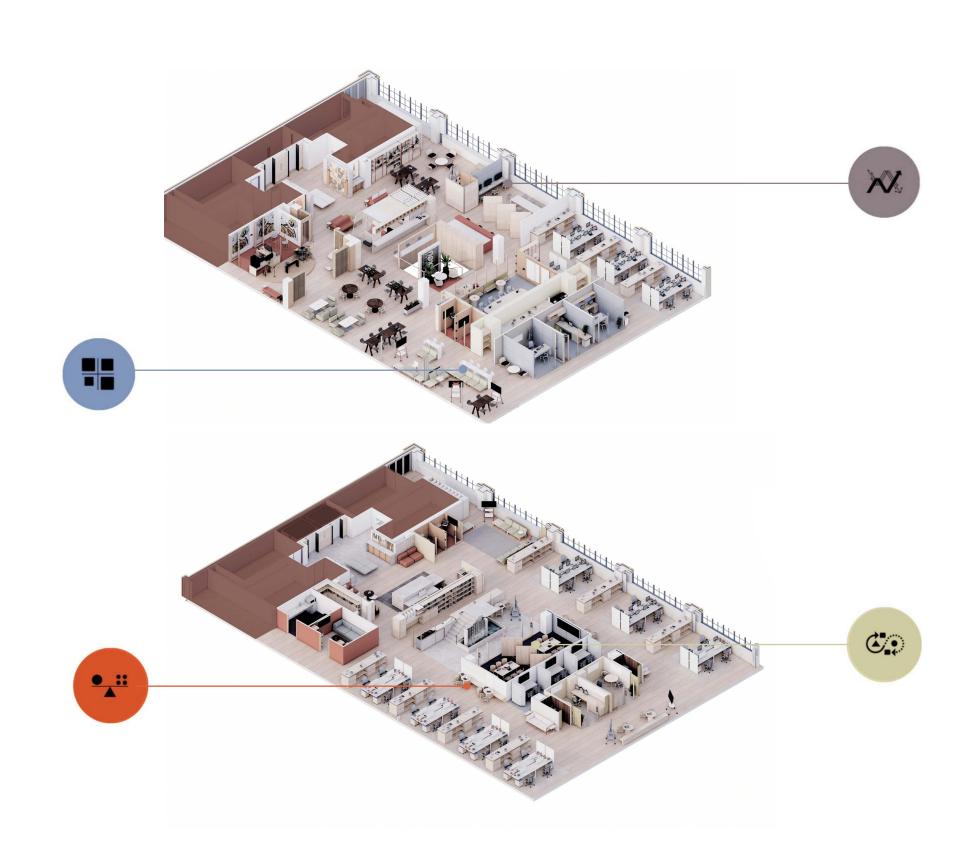
#### Fixed to Fluid

The NEXT office features versatile spaces designed to support various activities, including collaborative work, private focus, and casual meetings. Moveable panels, curtains, and modular furniture allow users to easily reconfigure areas, fostering an adaptable and dynamic work environment.



#### Me + We

These spaces promote variety within the workplace, allowing employees to seamlessly transition between individual and collaborative work zones.



# **B**uilding Sections



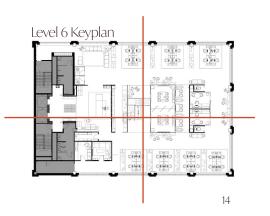
North-South



East-West

The vertical circulation demonstrates thoughtful consideration of acoustics by placing workstations and private offices in close vertical proximity, while situating social zones, such as the work cafe, above the reception area.

A waterfall feature, positioned in the atrium beneath a skylight, emphasizes the monumental staircase and creates a dynamic interplay of light and water. The sound of slow-running water allows for moments of pause and calm among staff, clients and guests. This design element encourages curiosity among workers and clients, inviting them to explore spaces beyond the immediate entry.





# Reception + Client Celebration Gallery



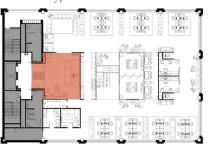
#### Run on clouds.

On Holding AG™ is a Swiss shoe company founded by former professional athlete, Olivier Bernhard. The vision behind the shoe company is committed to engineering highly comfortable, yet fashionable shoes that are lightweight and provide a sensation of walking on clouds. Their mission can be identified as: "At On, we don't believe it's the human body that determines whether you cross the finish line, reach the peak or dare to dream the big idea - it's the human spirit. Our innovations and actions are shaped by our mission: to ignite the human spirit through movement."



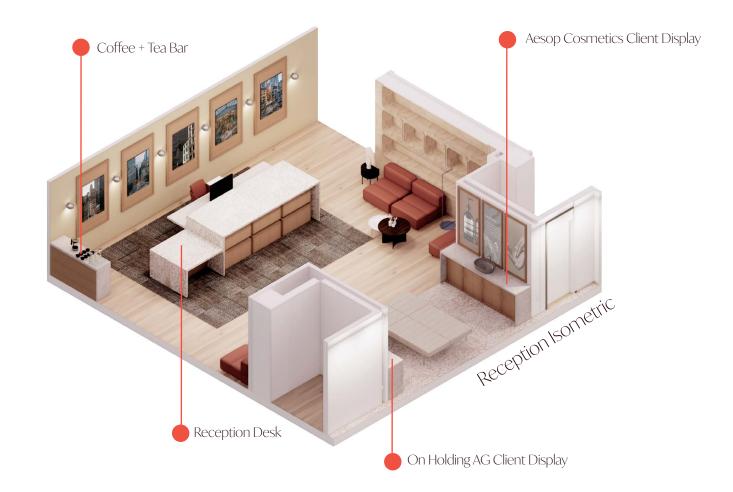
**Aesop\*** is an Australian luxury cosmetic brand that sells skincare, haircare, fragrances, and home-ware products. Since its establishment in 1987, Aesop has always been committed to its brand by providing high-quality, naturally derived ingredients, and aesthetic packaging. The brand now has nearly 400 stores across the Americas, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Asia - making it a widely known and respected company.

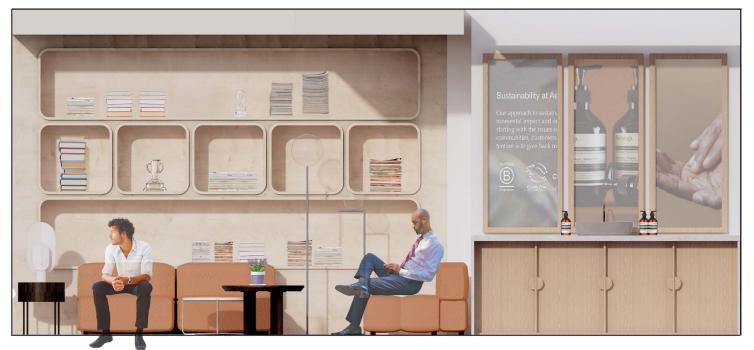
#### Level 6 Keyplan



As visitors approach the reception area from the elevator lobby, they encounter two distinct client displays. The Level 6 displays celebrate partnerships with key clients, starting with **Aesop™** Cosmetics (consumer-packaged products company). This display features a functional sink where visitors and employees can test the products upon entry, creating an engaging and tactile brand experience.

The second display highlights **On Holding AG™** (shoe company), promoting a sense of community among employees through an office running club. This initiative encourages staff to engage with the brand by adopting the mindset of their consumers, enjoying runs through nearby streets and parks as a way to manage stress during busy workdays. Complementing this, the display showcases a variety of On Holding shoes, allowing employees to try on different styles and experience their ergonomic design and innovative technology. This direct interaction not only deepens employees' appreciation of the product but also strengthens their connection to the brand's culture of movement and well-being.





Aesop Client Display Elevation







Level 6 Keyplan



# Client Presentation Room + Meeting Space

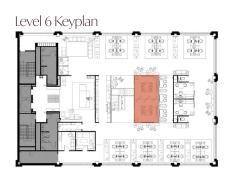






Meeting Room Transition

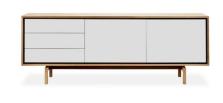
Client Presentation Room



The client presentation room is a multipurpose, modular set up where when not in use for presentations, the modular panels can be adjusted to accommodate two separate team meeting spaces to maximize the function of the room.









Floow Sideboard Steelcase Flex Wall Package

### **Resource** + **Production Room**





Resource + Production Room Elevation

The resource + production room is centrally located and designed in a galley layout, ensuring easy access for employees working in any part of the office. It features a large-scale printer, a recycling station, two freestanding copiers/printers, and ample counter space to support various project needs. This space allows employees to conveniently pick up supplies, retrieve packages, access organized mail trays for incoming and outgoing correspondence, and efficiently complete tasks.





# **Monumental Staircase**

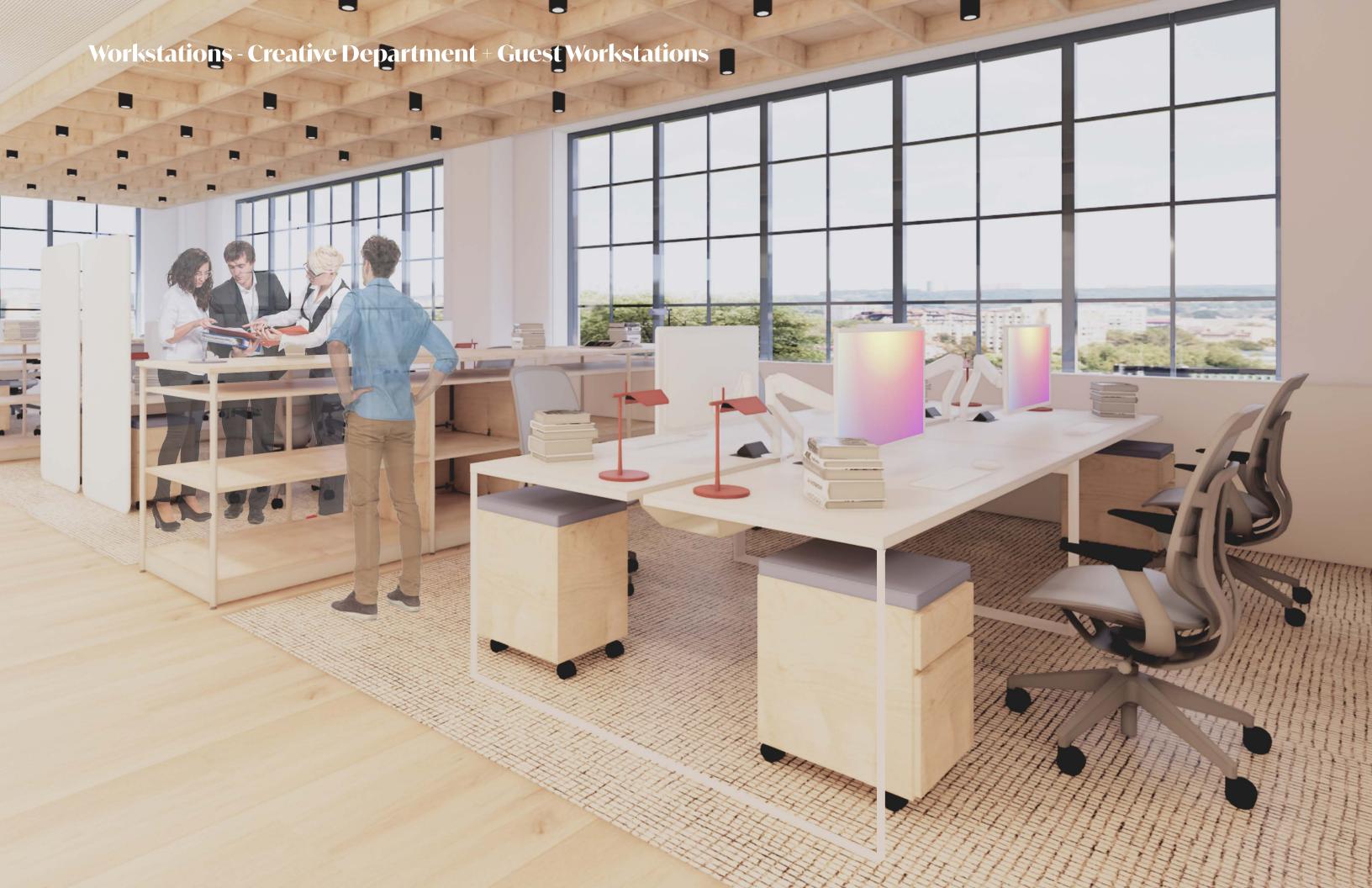






The monumental stairs are placed in the center of the office to act as an easy transition space between those working on level 6 and level 7 and to encourage overlap between workers. The water feature is intended to bring a sense of tranquility to the office, while metaphorically drawing on the idea of transparency in the office as mentioned in the concept statement.





# Workstations - Digital Marketing + Media Departments

The primary workstations are set up by department for maximum productivity. In order to maintain cross-collaboration between other departments, workstations are placed adjacent divided by a shared worktable to encourage overlap and collaboration.



West Elm Work Greenpoint Bench + Tables



Amia Chai



Steelcase Flex Active Frames





Workstations Perspective



Workstations Elevation





Huddle Space Elevation Elevation

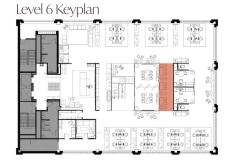
The huddle space is a semi-private arrangement where small teams of two can spontaneously meet to discuss ongoing projects. It provides moveable panels to additionally accommodate larger huddles while also ensuring privacy is maintained with acoustic and visual barriers.



Steelcase Flex Acoustic Boundary



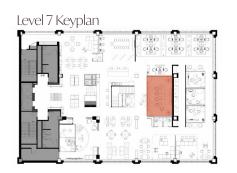
Steelcase Slim Leg Height-Adjustable Desk







Interior Meeting Room Perspective





Exterior Meeting Room Perspective

# Private Offices + Work Pods





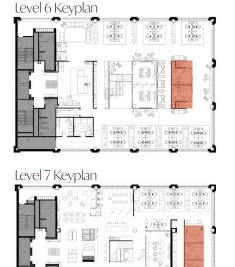




Level 6: Private Offices + Work Pod Elevation

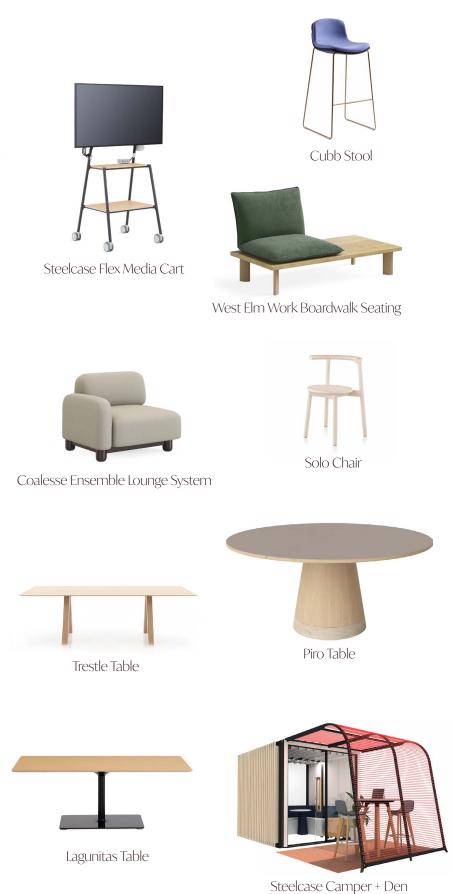
On level 6 adjacent to the private offices, provided are two private work zones that offer a quiet space for employees in need of a change of scenery, or simply requiring an alternative environment to focus.

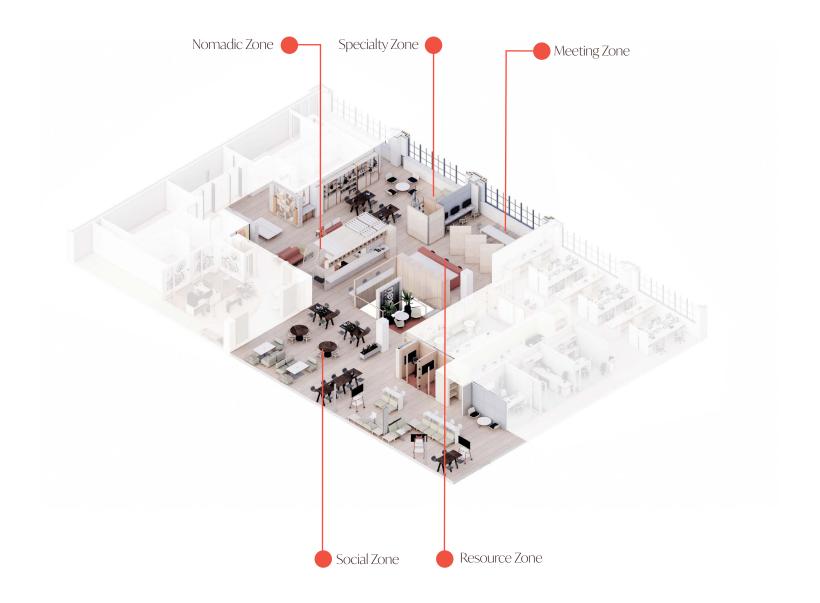




# Work Cafe: Isometric Zoning

The work cafe spans the majority of level 7. It is important that in keeping with the concept of community and neighborhood, the culture of the office feels like a shared space. This encourages social interaction among employees, while also providing numerous seating arrangements to accommodate everyone's diverse needs. Implementing the cafe space throughout the office additionally provides a relaxed environment where people can dwell at work.





# Work Cafe: Lobby Area

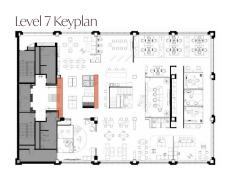
The client display on level 7 is celebrating the partnership between NEXT, **Starbucks**™, and **The Chicago Wine Company**®. Both displays carry interactive elements such as LED screens depicting different branding advertisements that NEXT has completed for the companies, as well as glass cylinders filled with coffee and hot chocolate for the Starbucks display, and wine for The Chicago Wine Company display. As employees and clients come and go, they can taste-test the products in the galleries.



**Starbucks**™ is the 2nd-largest fast food chain in the United States. Since 1971 when it first began on the streets of Seattle, Starbucks has been committed to excellent customer service and high quality food and beverages. As their mission statement declares: "With every cup, with every conversation, with every community - we nurture the limitless possibilities of human connection."



**The Chicago Wine Company**® is formed of several individuals who all share a deep passion for fine wine and providing customers with outstanding service. All wine is created using only the finest produce from top vineyards ensuring highest quality wine every time. Over the past 40+years, The Chicago Wine Company has established itself as one of the most trusted fine wine merchants in the US.





Starbucks + Chicago Wine Company Client Celebration Elevation

The baris an important feature within the office. It is intended to act as an accompaniment to the recording studio and music lounge to create a certain workplace community culture that draws from Chicago city culture. Including this feature challenges the concept of the conservative coffee break, allowing coworkers and clients to socialize in a casual, lively setting. Music and wine creates the intended atmosphere of "coworkers beyond the office" emphasizing the importance of community, minimizing barriers, and being one's authentic self.

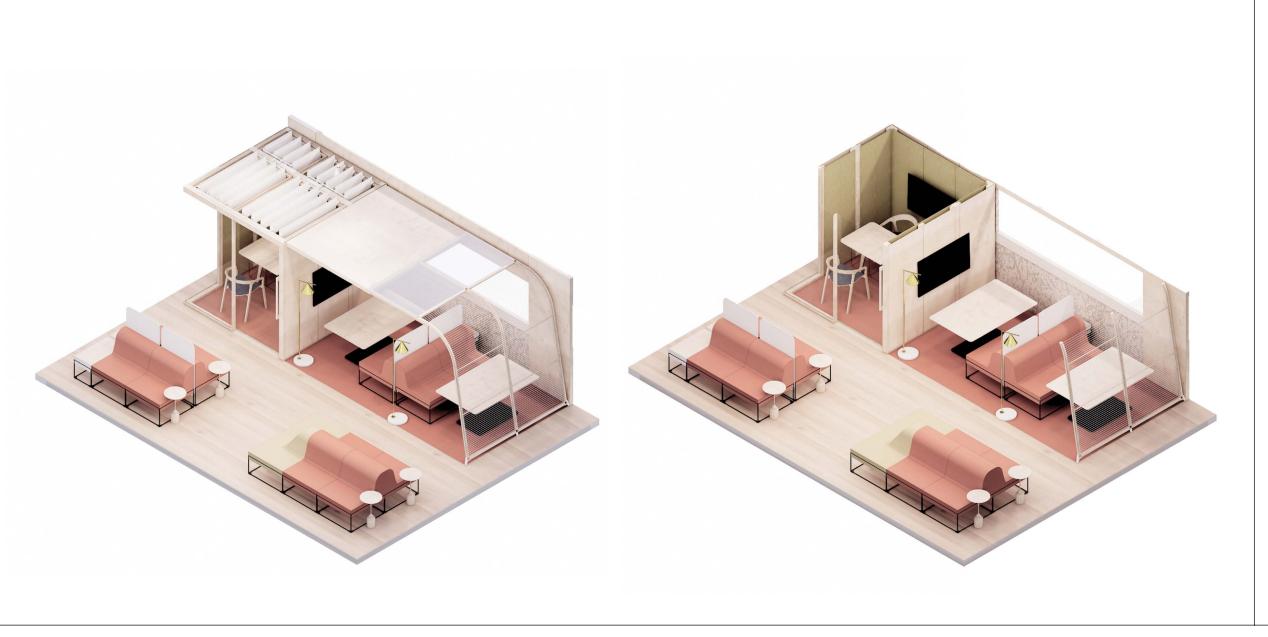


Work Cafe: Bar Elevation

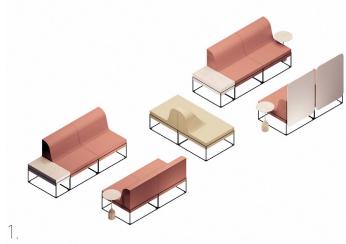


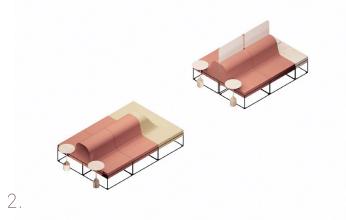
Work Cafe: Nomadic + Huddle Zone

# Work Cafe: Nomadic + Huddle Zone Isometrics



### Modular Furniture Arrangement Examples







The nomadic + huddle zone located within the work cafe provides a flexible space where casual meetings, individual work, or dining can occur. The modular "Camper", offers a partially enclosed space providing privacy yet still seamlessly flowing into the rest of the cafe.



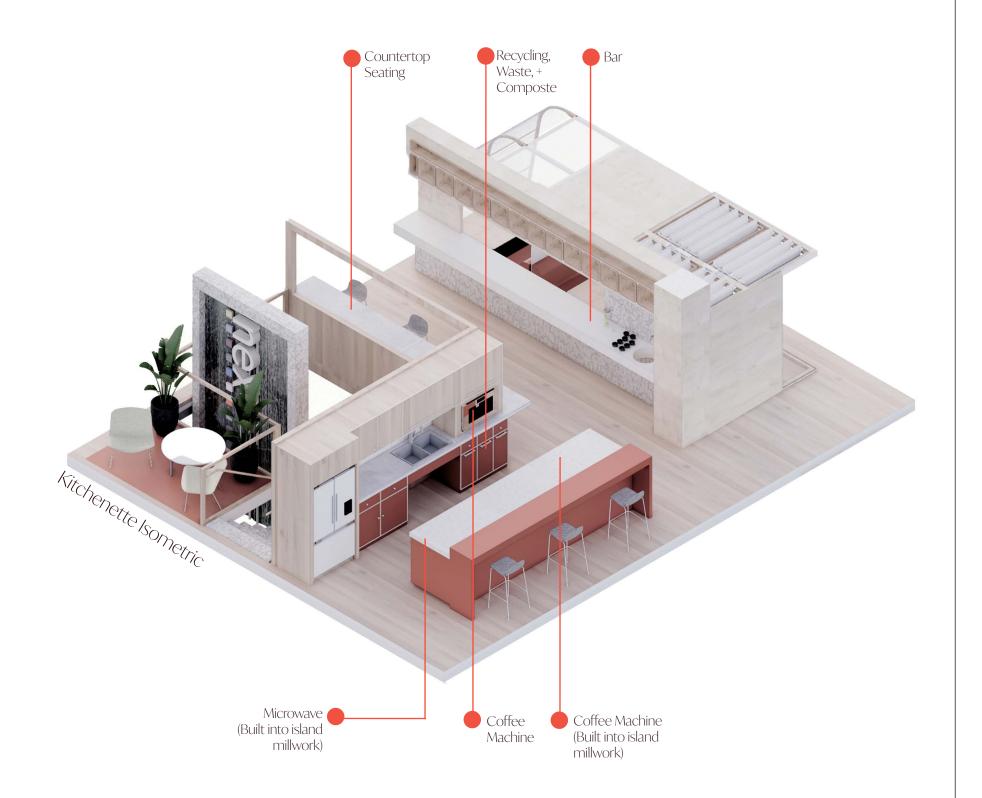
Burin Table







### Work Cafe: Kitchenette





Kitchenette Elevation



Kitchenette Island Elevation

The work cafe kitchenette is a more structured space where people can take a coffee break and converse with coworkers. It is equipped with accessible features such as the open-below sink, and a coffee machine and microwave located on the other side of the kitchen island millwork. Additionally, a bar counter serves the staff with non-alcoholic drinks during the work day, and during happy hour on Fridays houses alcoholic beverages to be enjoyed while listening to the live bands and performers in the music lounge (wildcard space).



### Work Cafe: Social Zone



Work Cafe: Social Zone Perspective



### Ceiling Detail

The custom wood ceiling featuring a reflective material seeks to promote a more authentic workplace. Through the view of one's reflection, a moment of introspection is encouraged reminding employees and clients alike to value our most authentic selves in the workplace.



# Music Lounge + Recording Studio



The chosen wildcard space for the NEXT office is a music lounge. This space is equipped with a sound recording studio to accommodate in-house advertising, as well as an adjacent stage to host music bands and performers. This space can also be used as a townhall for the office when needing to have important company announcments or gatherings. Since Chicago is the birthplace of jazz music, it was important to incorporate this unique, identifiable culture in the office creating an authentic experience, and provide a space that brings the NEXT community together.



Recording Studio Elevation



Amia Chair









Thank You!

