

**GENERAL REMINDERS**

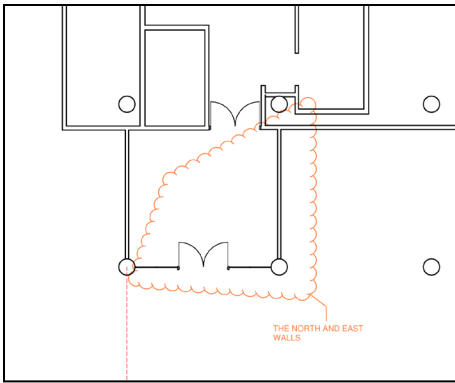
1. Professors will be responsible to self-jury their students and only submit the best two projects (2) per independently taught class/studio for judging in this competition
2. All final submittals are to be sent to: [design4next@gmail.com](mailto:design4next@gmail.com) All submittals are due by December 10th.
3. Submittals must be in PDF format and be **no greater than 24MB in file size** (no min/max on number of pages)
4. As a reminder, all student participants must be currently registered as juniors or seniors in their design program, 5TH year students enrolled into a 5-year Master's program, or in a Master's Program where there is no bachelor's degree offered or a master's program where the students have no bachelor's degree in design or other previous design experience.
5. Students must submit an entry as an individual, not as part of a team.
6. **All questions must be submitted by October 3rd**, and all questions must be submitted to: [design4next@steelcase.com](mailto:design4next@steelcase.com)
7. Each student participating **MUST individually register no later than October 3rd** to be considered eligible. Students can register by going to this link: [STUDENT REGISTRATION LINK](#)
8. **If a student hasn't registered themselves via the link above and they are submitted into the competition as one of the two entries per independently taught class/studio, their project will not be considered eligible; therefore, please ensure each student participating registers themselves before the deadline of October 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

**(NEW) Q+A QUESTIONS + ANSWERS – Questions submitted through October 3, 2025**

Q: In the Official Rules document, under Item #4, we wanted to confirm that when it states that no video formats will be permitted that it only applies to the presentation format style. If there is a QR code included in the presentation that may lead to a video as additional content, such as a video walkthrough, that it would be allowed?

**A: An embedded video is welcome via a QR code on the PDF slide; however, please recognize that clicking the link will be at the discretion of the judge reviewer whether they take this extra step. Most judges likely will; however, this is a consideration to think about. Therefore, if your students implement this strategy, please make sure what they are viewing via the QR code is supplemental/supporting content and at the same quality/rendering level as the submission. Some have done this very successfully in prior competitions where it reinforced their design concept and told a complete design story and some have not where it became a deterrent and confused the judges.**

Q: In the response, the initial question asks if the space is “part of the core space”, and the response doesn't address the space as such. In my understanding, the core space is out of scope and cannot be used. In the response, it talks about the doors and using the space for branding. Just confirming that it can only be used for branding? And not as an extension of the reception area including furniture? I hope this makes sense. Again, just trying to stay in compliance.



**A:** The vestibule should not be considered as part of the USF and is NIC. If the student wishes to apply branding elements to the vertical surfaces of this area, that is permitted; however, furnishings should not be placed in this area.

**Q:** The exact location of the skylight(s) within the design.

**A:** There are no skylights in this space. This on the fourth floor of a five story building.

**Q:** The intended window sill heights for the specified windows.

**A:** Please use Revit and/or AutoCAD files for the height of the window sill from the top of the slab floor and assume it is the same in all locations of the windows.

**Q:** Partners and Associate offices are supposed to be “differentiated aesthetically” with the Partner being more elevated. The program then requests at minimum three layout variations. Should students design three total, or should they design six since the partner and associate should be differentiated?

**A:** We want the students to design three different layout options for the 150 SF offices – this is inclusive of the partner and associate offices (therefore, only three needed – not six); however, the aesthetic differences between the two (partner vs associate) can be address through finishes and materiality.

**Q:** The Program lists three Practice Areas (real estate, labor, IP). Are these Practice Areas "fixed" in place, or does NEXT anticipate those teams and areas will change? How important is it to group these practice areas together? Or is it more important to have the program organized by space type?

**A:** It is most common practice for legal workplaces to group the practice areas together for colleague synergy, ease of collaboration, knowledge sharing, etc.; however, if your students wish to do this differently based on their design intent and they can articulate their decision making process for their choices they can choose to do whatever they feel it appropriate to support the program requirements for NEXT.

**Q:** We are assuming the building is sprinklered. Is that correct?

**A:** Yes, assume this is provided and this is nothing the students need to be concerned with for the competition requirements.

**Q:** Do students need to design and provide signage?

**A:** Students do not need to design signage for the building requirements (exit signs, etc.); however, if they wish to design any signage for their interior space that relates to their design intent/concept such as way finding, zoning, etc. they may choose to do so.

Q: Are we able to increase the square footage?

A: **No, the students must remain within the allocated SF as stated in the program.**

Q: Would it be possible to merge the Partner and Associate offices into a single space, while maintaining separation with a wall or partition?

A: **If the question is whether these offices can be zoned together in a single space (zone), this would be permitted as long as all of the other stated program requirements are met and proximities/adjacencies are accomplished. If this is about merging these into “shared offices” that is not the intended design application for NEXT.**

Q: How strictly will ADA compliance be reviewed?

A: **As with any space that is designed, you need to ensure your students are adhering to ADA compliance and guidelines as well as meeting all local codes and regulations. If the judges identify any violations through their judging process, it may be detrimental to the success of the submission in the competition when compared to other projects without issues.**

Q: Is there a checklist we should use, or just general adherence?

A: **We do not have a checklist.**

Q: Should the student-created NEXT logo be applied in space (signage/graphics) or only within the presentation?

A: **This is up to the student and how they envision the aesthetic of the space. If you review the example projects from last year’s semifinalists projects on the NEXT website that may provide inspiration. This would be the student’s decision based on their design intent.**

Q: Is there a maximum slide/page count for the PDF (besides 24MB)?

A: **No; however, students should consider the user experience of a judge/reviewer and balance how many slides are needed to visually “tell their story” as well as keeping the judges attention. The examples from last year’s semifinalists projects on the NEXT website may be helpful as a reference.**

Q: What drawing scale is expected for plans/sections (1/8”, 1/4”)?

A: **The students should scale for providing the best experience for the judges to review on their computer screens and recognize they may be viewing on a large monitor and/or on a laptop screen. The examples on our NEXT website may be helpful as a guide.**

Q: What size should the presentation slide be? 8 ½ x 11?

A: **This decision is up to the students; however, they consider the size they choose will be reviewed on a computer screen and it may be a laptop screen. The projects from last year on the NEXT website may be helpful as a reference.**

Q: For RCPs, do we need full lighting specs or conceptual intent only?

A: **This is up to the students and/or what you require of your students within your program. The examples from last year’s projects may be helpful as a guide/reference point in how they chose to do this.**

Q: Should the wildcard space be client-facing, employee-focused, or either?

A: **This is strictly up to the student based on their design intent for their space and they need to be able to visually story tell their concept and design decision.**

Q: For the Virtual Hearing Room, are specific systems expected?

A: **No.**

Q: Should hybrid tech be fully integrated into smaller spaces (focus, huddle, case rooms) too?

**A: As long as the students meet the stated program requirements for all spaces, this can be determined by the students.**

Q: Does importing images from google to create a REVIT material considered copyright?

**A: The student needs to identify if the image is copyrighted material and if so, they must cite as such if used and/or if the image is open sourced information.**

Q: In the rules it says power point formats are not accepted. Does this mean the presentation saved as a PowerPoint file or Microsoft PowerPoint should not be used at all?

**A: The format that must be submitted into the competition must be PDF format; however, they may choose whatever format they wish to create the submission.**

Q: What does “Make fixture recommendations” mean in the program? A list of fixtures being used within the project?

**A: Yes. See examples from last year’s semifinals for reference if helpful.**

Q: In the program it states that the legal assistants should be allocated 80 sq. ft. versus 64 sq. ft. allocated for each paralegal. Generally, paralegals are considered to be of higher status because of their education and professional skills. We were wondering if there is a reason that the legal assistants are to be allocated more square footage?

**A: The size isn’t a reflection of status - it’s more about functionality, workflow, and spatial logic. Students (designers) can communicate the status by prioritizing placement within the floorplan vs workstation size. Since paralegals have tended to work in a more collaborative manner with attorneys – they are less tied to their own individual desks and might be typically working in another attorney’s office, a case room, a collaborative space more often over their individual assigned workstation vs. the legal assistant who is much more tied to their individual workstation. The legal assistant might also have more equipment/things at their personal workstation - as they are working with and providing support to multiple attorneys. Paralegals would typically be working with more digital tools [virtual case rooms or web-based legal research platforms, for example] than the legal assistant – so less physical space works for them.**

Q: We have the following questions for the NEXT project. Could the Production and Resource Center be divided into two spaces as long as all the requirements are met?

**A: Yes, as long as the program requirements are met and both stay within the overall allocation of SF, this is permitted if it meets the student’s design intent.**

Q: What types of materials is NEXT looking for in the design?

**A: This is completely up to the student’s imagination and design intent as reflected in what they show as their inspiration for finishes and materiality.**

Q: Are there any material preferences or restrictions for this space?

**A: No, see answer above.**

Q: Are there additional floors above this level?

**A: Yes, this is the fourth floor of a five story building.**

Q: Where is the main entrance to the space?

**A: Please review the published Q+A, this has been addressed.**

Q: There are two stairwells shown. Which one serves as the primary access point to the office?

**A; Both are accessible within the allocated space in scope for NEXT. The student may choose either as primary if this meets their design intent and zoned space planning.**

Q: What is the room between the stairs and the bathroom in the center of the building?

A: This space is considered out of scope and should not be considered as part of the design. Assume this is part of the core building elements.

Q: The program seems unusually tight with the overall square footage of 15,700 - 30% circulation factor of 4,710= 10,990 s. f. The program requirements not including the wild space are 10,063 or if maximum is used 11,068 (over the minimum recommended circulation). Is there any more flexibility based on these numbers?

A: Our design team in preparation for this competition loaded the total SF and then added on top for the circulation 45% of the total number which is the way they have proposed doing in prior competitions. Our team then ran multiple blocking studies – first focusing on the necessary linear feet needed along the exterior glass and then filling in from there and they didn't run into complications. It is a design challenge for sure and may take a few iterations; however, the trade off this year is they do not have the challenge of designing an interconnecting monumental staircase.

Communal Space TOTALS		0	4,605 SF
SUBTOTAL		55	10,498 SF
Circulation	45%		4,724 SF
GRAND TOTAL		55	15,222 SF
			277 SF/FTE

Q: As our class has begun space planning with the provided square footage requirements given in the project program, some confusion has arisen revolving around NEXT's need to push boundaries and dismantle corporate hierarchies. If all partner offices must be placed on the exterior window wall and have an office space twice the size as the legal assistant (which must be placed within the interior of the space), I'm unsure how the program supports inclusivity and pushes the typical legal office into a workplace that values all employees as equals. By spatially allocating for rankings within the floorplan, the company is communicating from the beginning phase of the design that seniority is allowed to take place and doesn't allow the designer the opportunity to lead a progressive design." What are your suggestions?

A: This is a tough one and we empathize and appreciate the spirit of this question; however, in reality, the majority of law firms continue to be difficult clients to advise when it comes to hierarchy expressed in space. While the space typology given to each job function does communicate a hierarchy – it also relates to what might work best given the job function, behaviors of the individuals in a given role, etc. It would be very challenging to find sizable law firms in the U.S. that did not have some/most of the attorney offices on the exterior glass line – so we are trying to be true to the industry [on behalf of the students' portfolios] and provide them a realistic project brief to complement their learning experience...this is why we change the client profile/site location every year. Please challenge your students to identify other alternative and innovative ways to show/tell a story of inclusivity and valuing employees without providing everyone with an identical/equal primary workspace, which would not be aligned with the legal industry currently?

Q: It says students must use products (furniture, technology, and architectural solutions) available from the variety of all Steelcase Brands in our portfolio (including any Partner Brands), but does this mean the finish materials must also be the same colors that are provided by Steelcase? Additionally, what are the specific brand partners allowed?

**A: Any Steelcase brand, any Steelcase owned company, or any Steelcase partner brand (not Steelcase owned) is permitted. If you can find this company (or product) listed anywhere on the Steelcase website (in both the Products tab and the Ancillary Collection tab, it is allowed. All finishes options that are listed on the Steelcase Finish Library, Product Pages, or Company Websites (for partner brands) are permitted to be used. This is only for furniture...any other building materials and finishes are at the discretion of the student.**

Q: For wall colors and floor finishes, since these won't come from Steelcase, does this mean it will be factored into the 20% custom allowance?

**A: No, see above...it only applies to furniture.**

Q: In the NEXT Spaces portion of the presentation, where it breaks down the spaces to be developed (Slide 29), and it mentions the quantity of spaces and the allocated space. Does the allocated space mean total SQ FT for the whole space or for each amount? Such as, there are 20+2 Partner/ Associate Offices and the allocated space is 150 SQ FT, so would each of the offices be given 150 SQ FT?

**A: Correct. The SF shown is per each quantity being provided.**

Q: Can we cut openings in the ceiling so long as it doesn't cut all the way through to the floor above?

**A: Considering this is a poured concrete slab with structural elements within the slab, this wouldn't be permitted as the space is minimal (thickness of slab) from the top of the ceiling of NEXT (under side of slab) to the floor for the tenant above on floor five (top of slab).**

Q: Listed in the NEXT spaces it shows which spaces need to be against exterior glass and which need to be interior. When developing a floor plan are we able to put any of the interior spaces against the exterior even when marked as interior?

**A: If you have the appropriate amount of linear ft along the glass to accomplish this and all the program requirements have been met, this would be permitted; however, you may want to also consider some of the team spaces where glass would be nice to have available to more of the NEXT population. This would also potentially create an equity issue if there are differences within the same job functions.**

Q: Can we change the vestibule space? Knock down walls / change door location into the space?

**A: Please review the published Q+A, this has been addressed.**

Q: Does the building have shared amenities?

**A: Consider the answer is yes; however, the focus should be on the requirements of the spaces needed within the NEXT program/space.**

Q: It states 3 days in office as a part of the hybrid plan, and 4 days in office in another part of the brief. Please clarify.

**A: Our apologies on the discrepancy on page 7 and 27 and thank you for bringing this to our attention. Consider (four days) that is mentioned on page 27 to be the guidance for NEXT.**

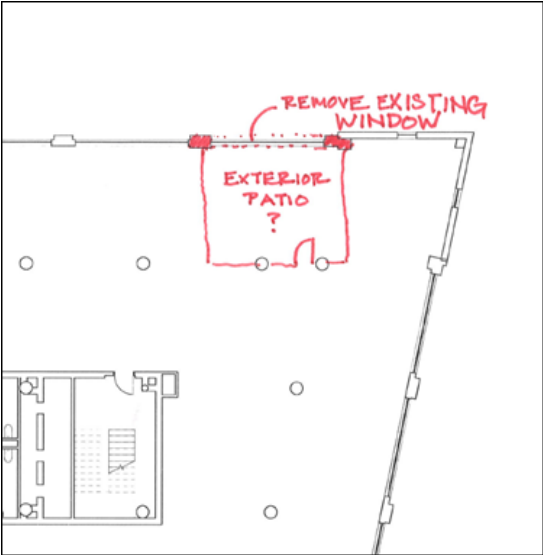
Q: Can private offices be shared through the hybrid schedule? Can workstations be shared through the hybrid work schedule?

**A: The intention for this year's NEXT competition is to not have shared offices or workstations due to the nature of the work being done and work processes being implemented as well as being in four days per week. However, there are many shared spaces by team, department, or all that are within the required space types.**

Q: For the 22 partner/associate offices, the brief says "All of these offices should be placed along the exterior glass." Does that mean right up against the windows, or can there be a circulation path/hallway between the offices and the exterior windows?

A: Please see the published Q+A as this has been addressed.

Q: If space planning and program allow, can we remove an existing window while leaving the remaining exterior structure, to provide a contained exterior patio (see attached)?



A: To maintain our focus of providing a competition that provides a realistic experience, this isn't permitted. As a tenant of the building as well as only taking a portion of one floor of a five-story building and not being the anchor tenant, this wouldn't be realistic and we must remain consistent with how this has been addressed in all prior competitions.

Q: For Partner / Associate Offices, I am reading under the function of the space "Differentiate between Partner and Associate offices aesthetically with the Partner offices being the more elevated of the two. All of these offices should be placed along the exterior glass." The last sentence is referencing "all offices", does that include the Associates' offices or is it just specifically referencing the Partner offices that need to be placed along the exterior glass?

A: Per the program document, all of the offices, Partner and Associate, should be along the perimeter glass.

Managing Partner Office	Partner / Associate Offices
1	20 + 2 additional visitor offices
225 SF	150 SF
<p>This office supports an executive level office for the Managing Partner, offering a refined, spacious environment for deep focus, hybrid meetings, and hosting clients or team members. It balances prestige with functionality, enabling seamless transitions between individual and collaborative tasks.</p> <p>This office should be the most premium from a finish, materiality, and aesthetic perspective.</p> <p>This office should be placed along the exterior glass.</p>	<p>This space is designed to support both focused individual work and small-scale collaboration within the office (2 others max), including virtual meetings. It offers a quiet, enclosed environment that reflects the user's professional identity while enabling seamless transitions between work modes. These offices should be a more elevated from a finish and materiality perspective.</p> <p>Differentiate between the Partner and Associate offices aesthetically with the Partner offices being the more elevated of the two. All of these offices should be placed along the exterior glass.</p> <p>Provide at minimum (3) THREE different office layouts. NEXT wants to promote individualization for each person and give them the ability to choose the best solution for the way they like to work.</p>
Direct/indirect lighting, supplemented by individual task lighting. Make fixture recommendations.	Direct/indirect lighting, supplemented by individual task lighting. Make fixture recommendations.



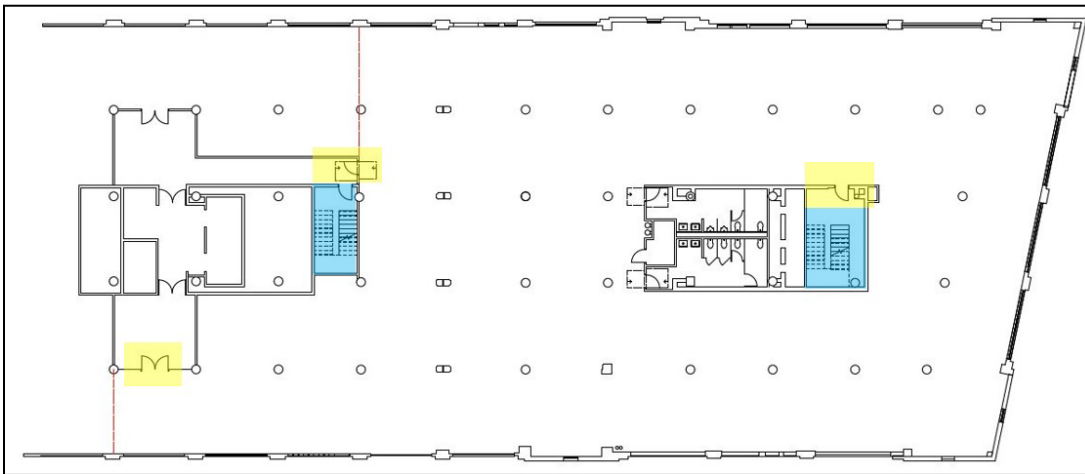
Q: In doing a bit of research on the base building we have noticed that some of the large "warehouse" style windows in the building appear to have had (at least at one time) operable center portions. For the purposes of this project (and based on the Revit file) should we assume that all windows are fixed?

**A: The assumption should be made that all of the windows for NEXT are fixed.**

Q: In going through the program, we have noticed that there are very few adjacencies listed. Are there any important departmental adjacencies and/or interactions between departments that would be critical for the client to function? Or are the students free to generate adjacencies as they feel appropriate?

**A: The students are free to create any and all adjacencies as they feel appropriate to reinforce their design concept and planning decisions and/or based on any precedent research they may have done that is cited. Considering the key challenge this year will be space planning with all of the private offices and requirements for perimeter glass versus key challenges with prior competitions, we wanted to leave the adjacencies open ended to lend for more flexibility/creativity.**

Q: Are all three of the doors (highlighted in yellow) considered a means of egress for exiting? Do the enclosed stairs (highlighted in blue) lead to an exit discharge on the main level?



**A: Yes, the yellow shaded areas are egress. Yes, the blue shaded lead to the main level.**

Q: Is this building equipped with a fully automated sprinkler system? (Answer will affect dead end corridor length, distance between exits, etc.)

**A: Yes, the assumption should be this space is equipped with a fully automated sprinkler system.**

Q: The Wildcard Space is meant to address a unique element missing from NEXT that brings the concept to life. Beyond addressing general objectives, is there a primary demographic (e.g., Gen Z interns, remote Partners) or a specific cultural gap (e.g., lack of cross-generational socializing, insufficient collaboration) that the firm feels is crucial for this space to resolve?

**A: This is completely up to the student to express their creativity and bring their vision to life. This space isn't something that NEXT has requested – this is something the student would design and position to NEXT based on their design concept in helping NEXT achieve their goals while also fully implementing their design vision with a space that wasn't predetermined.**



Q: What are some specific outcomes NEXT wants to achieve through this work place design to encourage the transition toward a regenerative and restorative work experience? Like reduced burnout rates, increase in workplace attendance, or other examples to help the 66% of employees that are not thriving at work.

**A: Students may make any assumptions here based on their design concept and they should articulate their decision making on what they are intending to solve for and how their design intent and application of their space design helps to solve for the assumed and stated outcome.**

Q: The Los Angeles office is meant to represent the cultural and operational anchor even with employees only being encouraged to be in the office for a minimum of 3 days a week. What are some of the essential non-work related rituals, social programs or informal mentoring goals the office design must facilitate to ensure it represents firm culture and identity within the flexibility of workplace attendance?

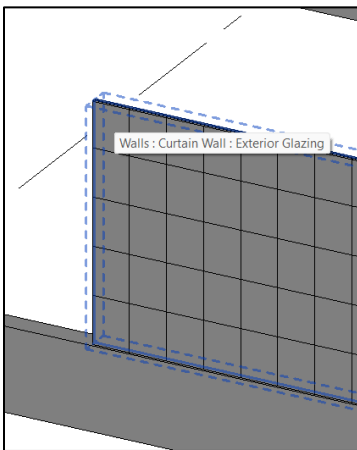
**A: We have addressed an identified discrepancy in our program for the days in the office through the Q+A that has yet to be published. The days in the office is suggested to be four, not three. Regarding rituals, programs, goals, etc., the students may make assumptions here and weave this into their concept development and storytelling through what is being submitted for their project which should articulate what they are intending to solve for and their strategy for doing so.**

Q: When trying to render, the exterior curtain walls are not see-through. Therefore, natural light is not being seen in these renderings and its just a gray box. A lot of us, me included, have tried many things such as changing the panel and the type of windows but none seem to either work or allow changes. What can be done about these windows?

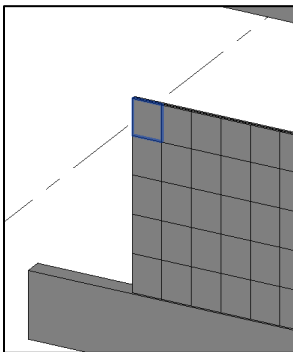
**A: The file was purged to ensure it remained lightweight; therefore, the glazing system material was reset to the default. It is important to change the material to one that is glass or see-through.**

**Here are the steps to do so:**

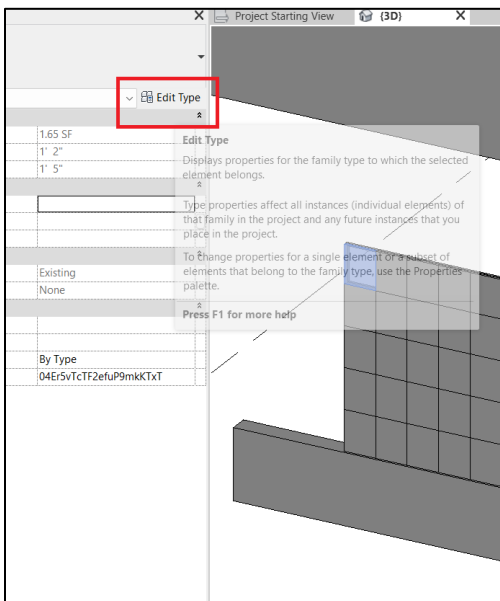
- 1. Place the cursor on the glazing system.**



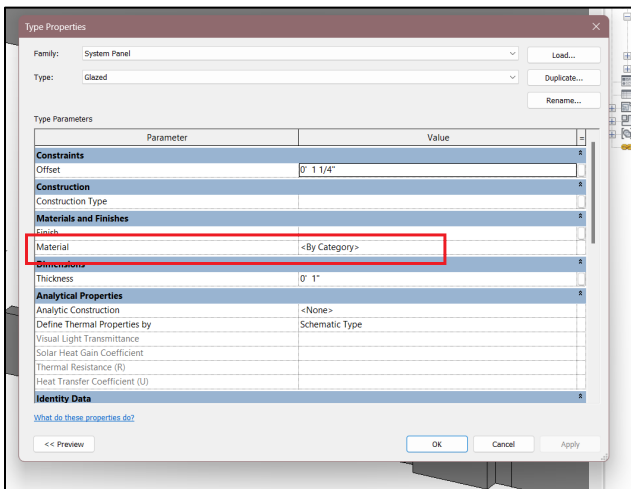
- 2. Press tab until a panel is selected, and click-it to select it.**



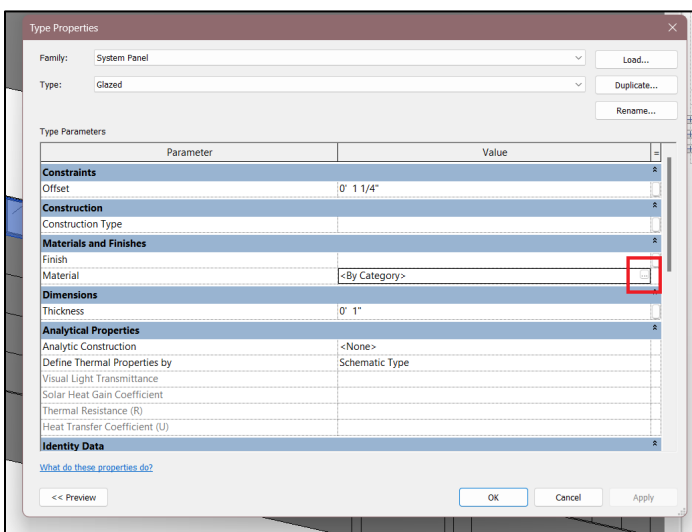
### 3. On the properties panel, select "Edit Type"



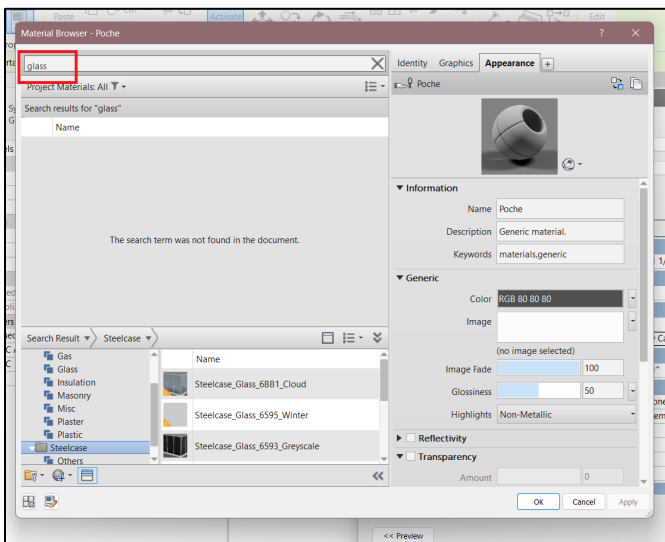
### 4. Go to Materials and finishes --> materials



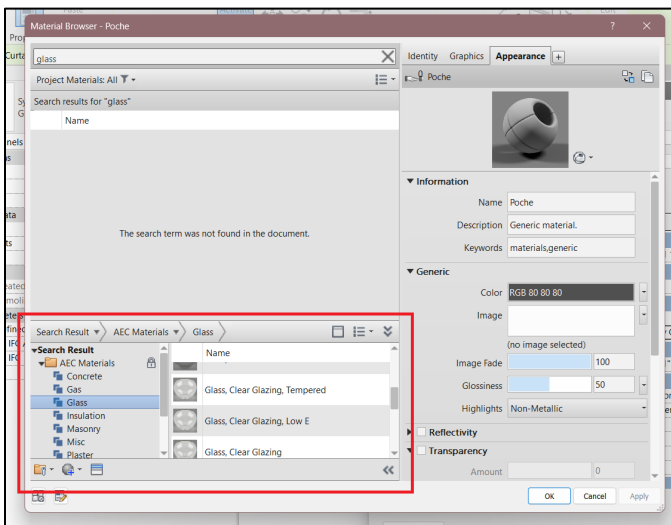
### 5. Click on the three-dots button



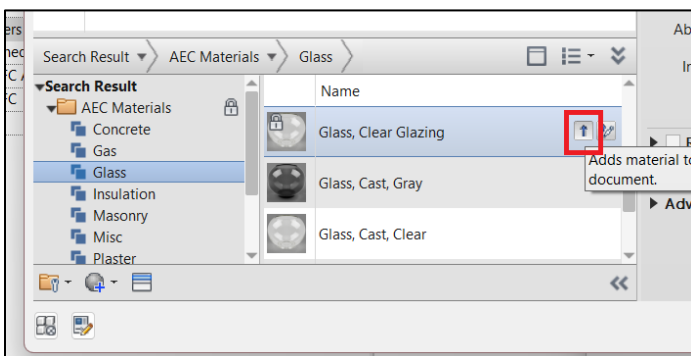
## 6. Type Glass on the search tab



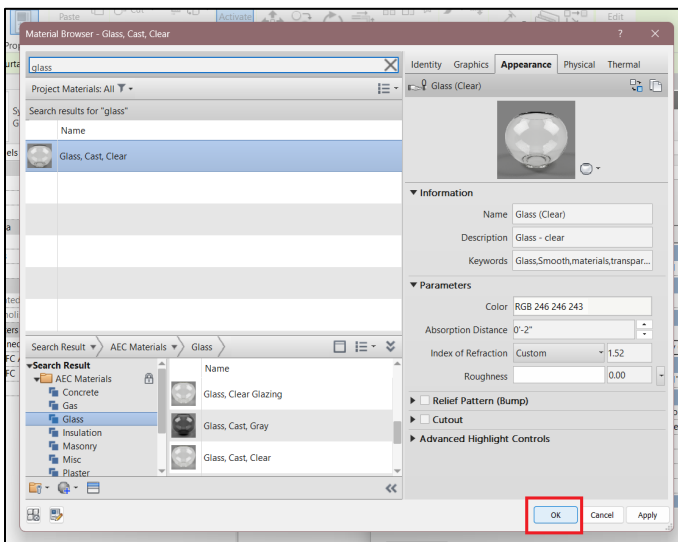
## 7. Select a glass material



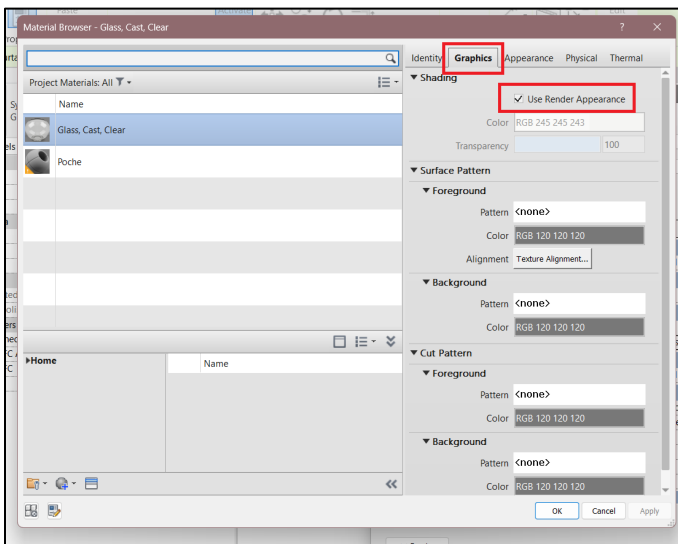
## 8. Click the arrow to load the material to the file



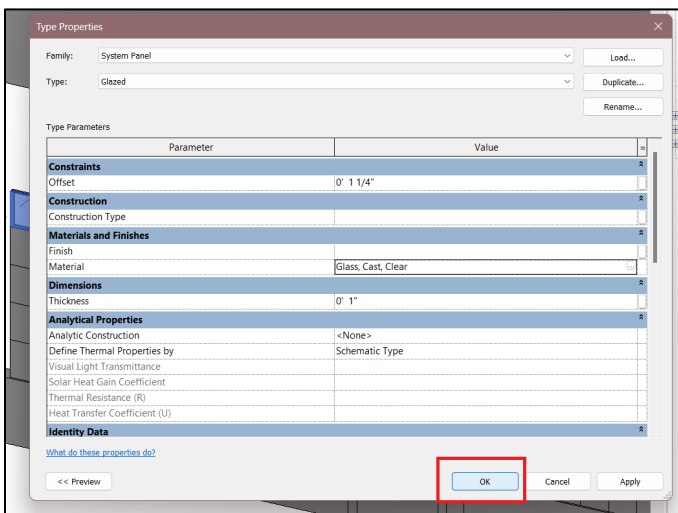
## 9. Click Ok to accept the changes



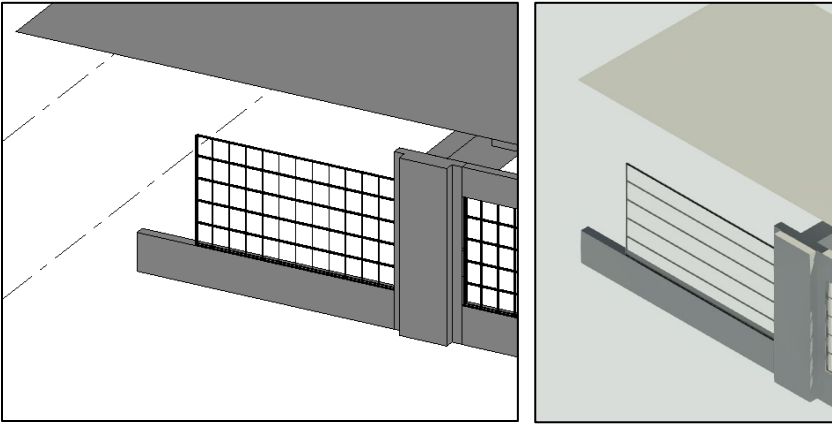
## 10. Go to Graphics tab and select "Use Render Appearance".



## 11. Click accept (once-again)



## 12. File is ready to render the glazing system

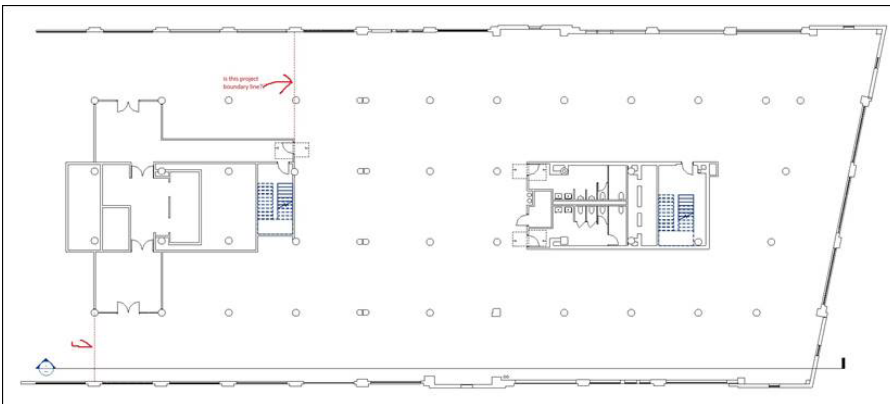


### (PRIOR) Q+A QUESTIONS + ANSWERS – Questions submitted through September 26, 2025

Q: Which door is considered to be the primary entrance to this level?

**A: The primary entrance is the one plan-south of the elevator lobby. This provides good elevator lobby exposure.**

Q: Are the red dashed lines marking the project boundary? Are students not permitted to place spaces beyond these lines?



**A: The red dashed lines on the plan are the project boundary lines for the space NEXT has rented. Students must provide demising walls in these locations and the space to the left of these boundaries are considered out of scope (NIC). Therefore, the main entrance into the NEXT space is plan south of the elevator lobby.**

Q: We are curious about this portion of the design brief located on the first page of the Programming Information section. It states: “At NEXT Law Firm headquarters, located in New York, the office serves as the central hub for legal operations, collaboration, and client engagement. While the firm embraces a hybrid workplace model, attorneys and staff are encouraged to work from the office at least four days per week. This approach supports the firm’s belief that in-person collaboration strengthens mentorship, fosters trust, enhances knowledge sharing, and drives innovation—all essential to delivering exceptional legal service. Leaders from the firm’s New York headquarters and attorneys (Associates) from regional offices in Seattle, Denver, and Houston frequently visit the main office for multi-day working sessions. These visits are designed to deepen cross-office collaboration, align on firmwide initiatives, and engage with clients in the region. It is essential that visiting attorneys feel fully integrated and supported, with seamless access to the same technology, resources, and amenities they rely on in their home offices.”

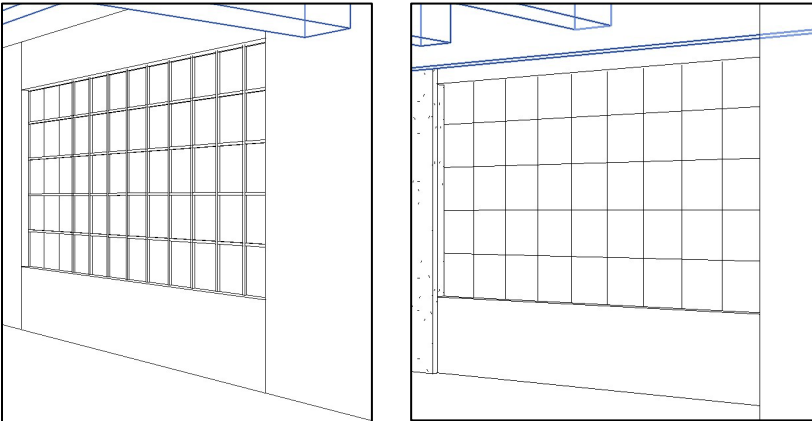
This information does not mention the LA branch, but reads as key data for the design. In the summary above, is the main office which attorneys from New York HQ and regional offices (Seattle, Denver, and Houston) intended to refer to the new LA office? Earlier, under the Design Drivers portion of the brief, it states “The office serves as the cultural and operational anchor—a central hub for collaboration, mentorship, and connection to firm identity. Legal professionals are encouraged to be in the office at least 3 days per week to foster deeper engagement, while maintaining flexibility for remote work as needed.” Is the reference to the New York office and its requirement for working in office four days a week meant to reference the culture in the home office (New York), which will be different in the LA branch, where in-office work is expected for three days a week?

**A: Think of the other established offices (the three mentioned outside of the HQ location) as precedent for how the LA office will operate once up and running and 4 days is the norm across all office locations company wide.**

Q: I have registered our program / university for the competition but have a couple clarification questions before I launch with the students. It looks like each student in the class is required to register, correct? But, at the end of the competition the university is only allowed to submit one project per session, for a maximum of two submissions. Is that correct?

**A: We are glad to have you and your students participate in this year’s competition. Yes, each student participating in class needs to register via the link we have provided to register themselves. Then, at the end of the semester, you can submit (two students) per independently taught studio...if you have two studios with different students, you submit two each for a total of four submissions. If they are taught together, simultaneously, as one studio, you only submit two.**

Q: Are the windows supposed to be same on all sides of the building? Some of the windows have mullions with thickness and others just have lines:

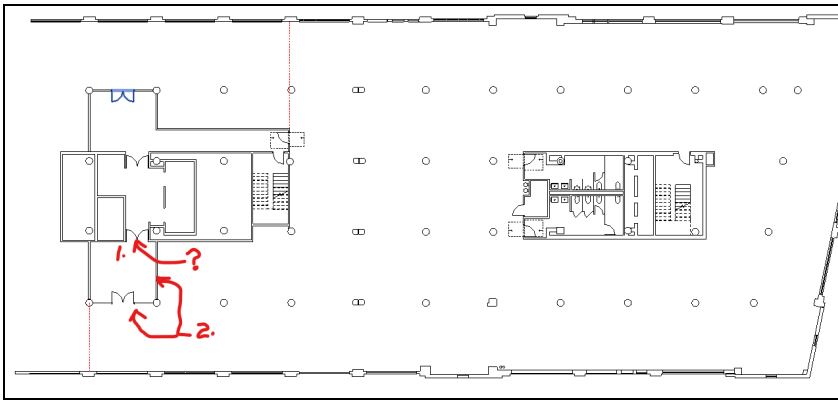


**A: Assume all windows have mullions and use the thickness in the windows with them shown for all windows.**

Q: Can students have the Steelcase architectural walls meet a window mullion or do all walls have to meet a wall?

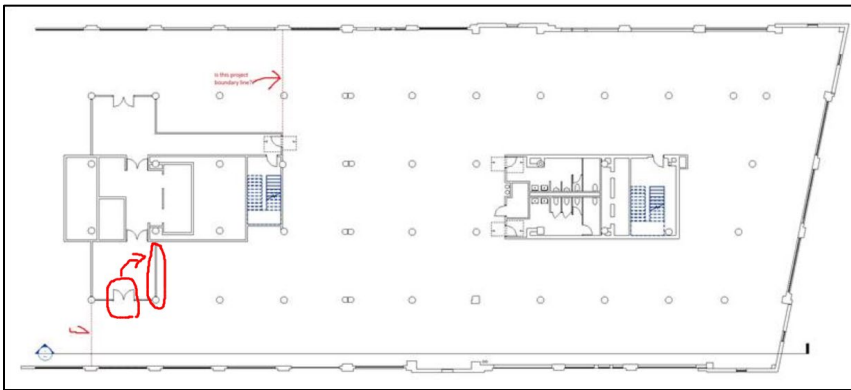
**A: The preferred location is a wall or column; however, our walls come with “mini ends” with every product line to come off walls or mullions as standard. The reason being, very few walls are square and plumb, so the mini end expands and compresses to account for variations in the wall. It kind of acts like a shim, if you will, because our walls are always square, so it marries the two.**

Q: Is the sub-lobby to the south of the elevator also considered part of the core space, or are students free to eliminate walls and doors south of those leading directly to the elevator lobby (door and walls #2)? I can hold this question until the official Q&A if it is not deemed appropriate at this time.



**A: Door #1 cannot be eliminated. Door and walls #2 may not be eliminated; however, if your students would like to take advantage of this space for branding (which can be removed if they leave as a tenant), that is permitted. The location of door #2 can be moved if the student researches local codes and requirements and verifies if moving the door meets the local codes.**

**Q: Some of the students asked if they can change the location of the entrance from the southside glass wall to the east side wall.**



**A: The location of the can be moved if the student researches local codes and requirements and verifies if moving the door meets the local codes for egress.**

**Q: Is there a wall construction type you want to see for the demising wall between the NEXT law firm and the building occupant on the other side of the building? I suggested that we would want a 2-hour firewall between tenants, but other than that I did not have a specific construction to use. If there is something you are looking for in that situation, we will build the wall type per your specification.**

**A: We do not have a construction type we are looking for. Our recommendation would be to follow the local codes for compliance and construct accordingly...other than the wall meeting local codes, the students are free to construct however they wish.**

**Q: The program lists out 5 managers on page 27 within the office support staff, but then on page 30 there are only 4 listed as needing offices - is there one of the managers on page 27 that doesn't need an office? Or should we create 5 manager offices rather than 4?**

**A: Yes, there are five with manager in their title for the office staff; however, if you review the chart on page 28 you will see what type of space each receives. The one that doesn't receive an office is the Facilities Manager, they receive a 64 SF workstation. The other four receive a 150 SF office as indicated. Therefore, the numbers show on page 30 are correct.**



Q: Would it be possible if we designed the cafe space with tech access that this would double as the multi-purpose/townhall area? This is what Meijer headquarters has accomplished.

I wanted to decipher if they required these spaces to also be separate or if they could function together at only the 500 SF, but I would make this more around 800 SF to accommodate other visiting partners.

**A: Yes, this is permitted if the space created meets the stated and intended requirements for both spaces.**

Q: Regarding item 14 in the official rules (see below), does the term “custom” refer only to those items which the student would design (i.e., reception desks, ceiling elements, unique screening elements, etc.), or can items be selected from a manufacturer other than Steelcase they do not fall into a category of items offered by Steelcase? Can you clarify if other light fixtures, or non-furniture elements from other sources may be included? From the statement below, we understand that all furniture and architectural solutions MUST be selected from Steelcase brands but are unclear about other elements. For instance, if a ceiling system such as a linear plank metal system or perforated metal tile system is desired, and it comes from another manufacturer, is that acceptable? Likewise, if there are larger signature / monumental light fixtures desired, may specialty lighting sources be utilized?

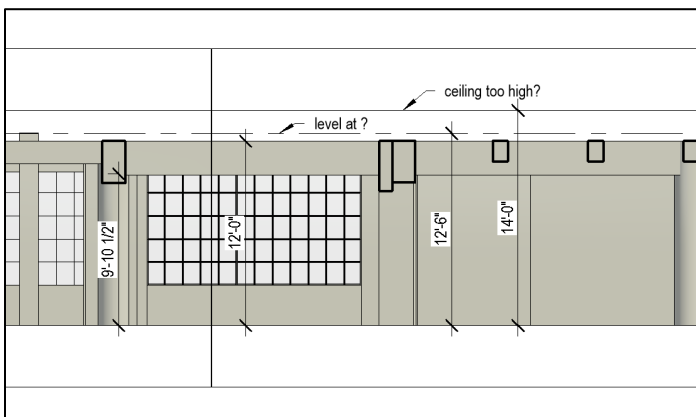
*14. Students must use products (furniture, technology, and architectural solutions) available from the variety of all Steelcase Brands in our portfolio (including any Partner Brands) for the project. Students are allowed to have up to 20% of the project be “custom” as applicable for feature areas. However, custom applications should remain economically feasible as most clients do not budget for a completely customized project.*

**A: This requirement only applies to furniture elements which would include any built-in furniture elements like a custom designed reception desk which is expected. We do not want to see custom/built-in furniture solutions to exceed 20% of the overall solutions for the space. Students are free to use any ceiling system, lighting elements they wish to use; however, all solutions/choices should be indexed however the student chooses to do so.**

Q: Are the “double” columns in the plan concrete as well?

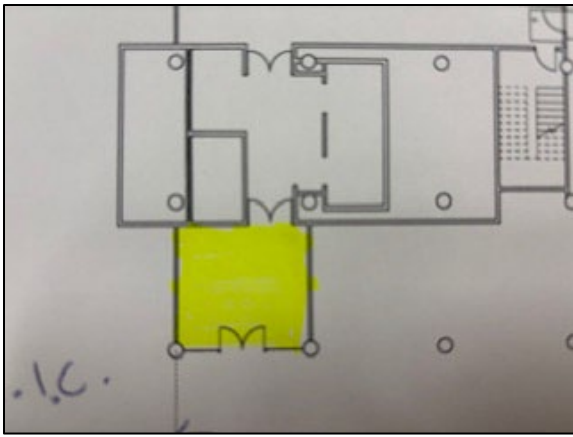
**A: Yes, all columns should be considered concrete.**

Q: What is the dimension between level 4 and 5 on the Revit model- it is not showing level markers and we want to confirm? The ceiling element in the model is at 14'-0", but we assume it needs to move down. Looks like we have 12' clear to underside of deck/ceiling (but the level marked is showing higher) and 9'-10-1/2" clear from bottom of existing beams to floor?



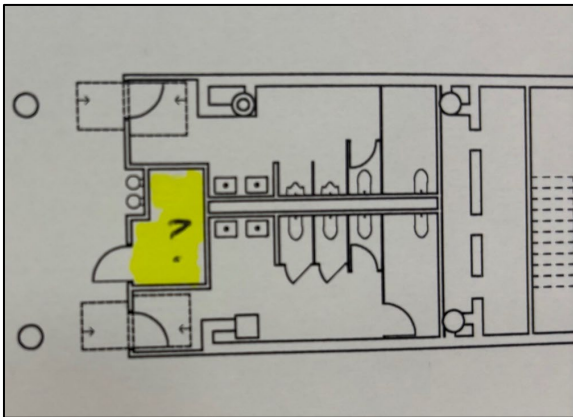
**A: The actual slab to slab dimension is 12'- 0" and this is what should be used for the competition.**

Q: Can we design the vestibule into the suite and use this square footage for furnishings or is this NIC? (see yellow in image below)



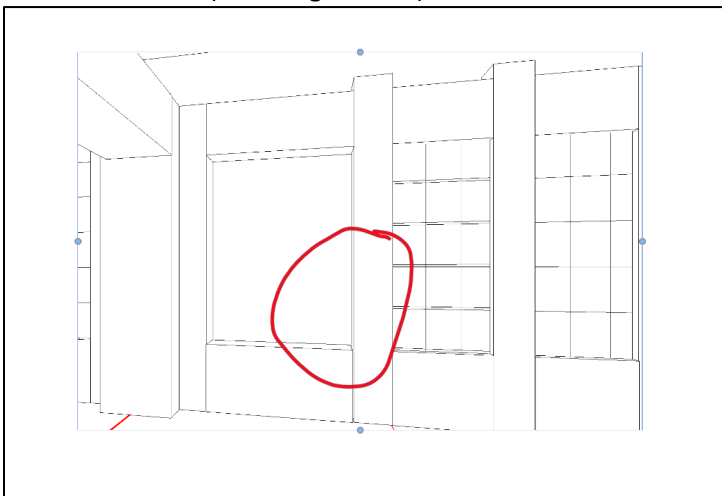
A: The vestibule should not be considered as part of the USF and is NIC. As mentioned on other Q+A shared in prior emails, the door location may be moved; however, not removed. If the student wishes to apply branding elements to the vertical surfaces of this area, that is permitted; however, furnishings should not be placed in this area.

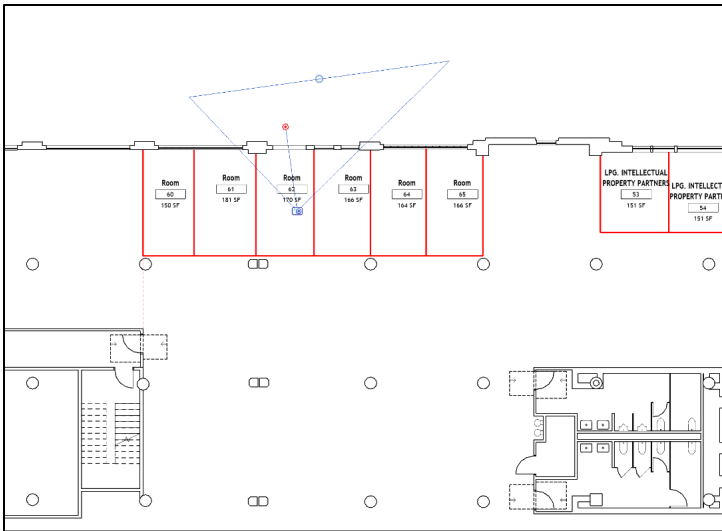
Q: What is the function of this room and can we use it or assume it's a janitor's closet, etc. and part of the NIC core?



A: Consider this to be part of the NIC (core building elements) and should not be considered as part of the design for the competition.

Q: One of the walls appears to have a cut out for a window in Revit, but no curtain wall. Can we assume that we will add a window there? (see image below)





**A:** This must be an error in the Revit model. Consider this to match all other walls/windows.

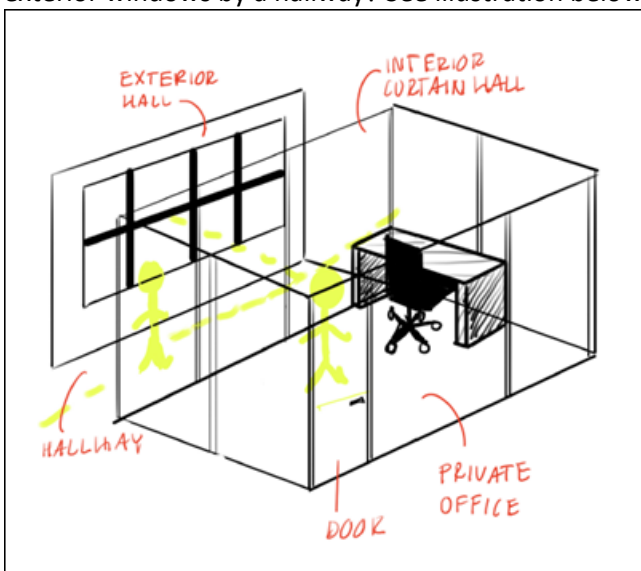
**Q:** If we design the 2 extra private offices to be used as huddle or focus rooms when not in use, do we still need to have 2 huddle and 2 focus rooms?

**A:** Students need to fulfill the program requirements and quantities as stated. Consider that the program requirements were developed to accommodate all conditions that need to be address in the workspace and therefore, the need to be able to accommodate both multiple huddle and focused activities at the same time. Once all the requirements have been met, if a student wishes to add anything that may do so.

**Q:** Huddle rooms are described as a “relaxed, semi-private setting” but under construction they are described as “Enclosed with acoustic treatments, glass or solid partitions, and camera-conscious finishes to ensure privacy.” Can you clarify the level of privacy these rooms need?

**A:** The level of privacy was meant for acoustical privacy – hence the enclosed room with wall – however, the need for visual privacy isn’t an issue to glass wall with full transparency would be appropriate for these settings.

**Q:** Many spaces in the program are required to be adjacent to a window. Must these rooms be directly flush with the exterior wall, or can they instead be positioned along the perimeter with a glass wall facing outward, separated from the exterior windows by a hallway? See illustration below:



**A: Providing such a corridor would be very unusual for a law firm to implement in their workplace. Though this is very typical for other market sectors, this is not something that has been adopted in the legal workplace as they most likely wouldn't provide this valuable real estate along the glass for a full-length corridor. If this was to be implemented in a few areas based on unique space planning constraints, it would be acceptable if the student can defend their design intent and design decision for doing so.**

**Q: I noticed that the questions for this week arrived this morning in my inbox. In the past, we did not receive those until Monday, so we had the full day on Friday and the weekend to submit questions. I am wondering about the cutoff next week as this will make a significant difference next week especially if I receive questions from students during the day on Friday. Do we have all day through October 3<sup>rd</sup> to get questions sent in, or is the cut off really October 2? I want to be clear so we can follow directions.**

**A: Your students will have the complete day next Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> to submit questions and we will provide the responses and publish the final Q+A the following Monday.**

**Q: It says reflected ceiling plan required for Community Hub – Reception & Welcome and Work Café, Multi-purpose / Town Hall, does that mean they are not REQUIRED for every other space?**

**A: Correct, those are the only (required) RCPs for submission for the competition; however, some programs require their students to do RCPs for the entire space – which is also acceptable. You can review the projects from last year on the NEXT website for reference if helpful.**

**Q: Do the square footage allocations for each space have to be exact?**

**A: For the individual workspaces (ie: offices and/or work stations), yes, exact size. For the other spaces, please note, we provide a range...students should remain within this range as closely as possible. Some of the spaces provide a (+/-) which allows for variances for these spaces to accommodate for flexibility.**

**Q: Do new construction walls and/or partitions need to extend to the ceiling deck like the existing Interior core walls?**

**A: They do not; however, if they do not extend to the ceiling deck the students will need to demonstrate how they are putting a ceiling and/or cap on these spaces to help maintain acoustical privacy for these spaces.**

**Q: Do we need multiple views of a space rendering or just one?**

**A: For each space that has a required rendering, only one view is required and we suggest choosing the view that best tells the story of that space; however, if the student wishes to provide more views of that space that is permitted.**

**Q: What does "full bleed rendering" mean?**

**A: Full bleed means full page (ie: maximizing the page with the full rendering)**

**Q: What is the required height of the plenum space?**

**A: We do not have a required height for this, student may make assumptions here.**

**Q: Can we use any type of STEELCASE furniture within the space? (Collections/materials, etc.)**

**A: Any Steelcase brand, any Steelcase owned company, or any Steelcase partner brand (not Steelcase owned) is permitted. If you can find this company (or product) listed anywhere on the Steelcase website, it is allowed.**

**Q: Are there any limitations considering technology that can be put into the spaces?**

**A: No technology limitations; however, the only considerations would be local codes/requirements for power, etc.**

**Q: Do we have to explain the design behind the logo?**

**A: This is to be determined by the student. If it is self explanatory, maybe no explanation is needed. If they want to show the logo development/iteration; that helps tell a story. However, I would caution spending more time on the actual space design and requirements versus time on the logo.**

Q: For the reflected ceiling plans, are we only putting lighting in the specific areas noted in the official rules document - community hub, work cafe, and reception area? More so, do we add the lights on the plan that already exist?

A: You are welcome to use the existing lighting plan and show that in the RCP; however, the existing may be disregarded and a new lighting plan developed if this better meets the students' design intent.