

September 2026

BUILDING DIALOGUE

COLORADO REAL ESTATE JOURNAL

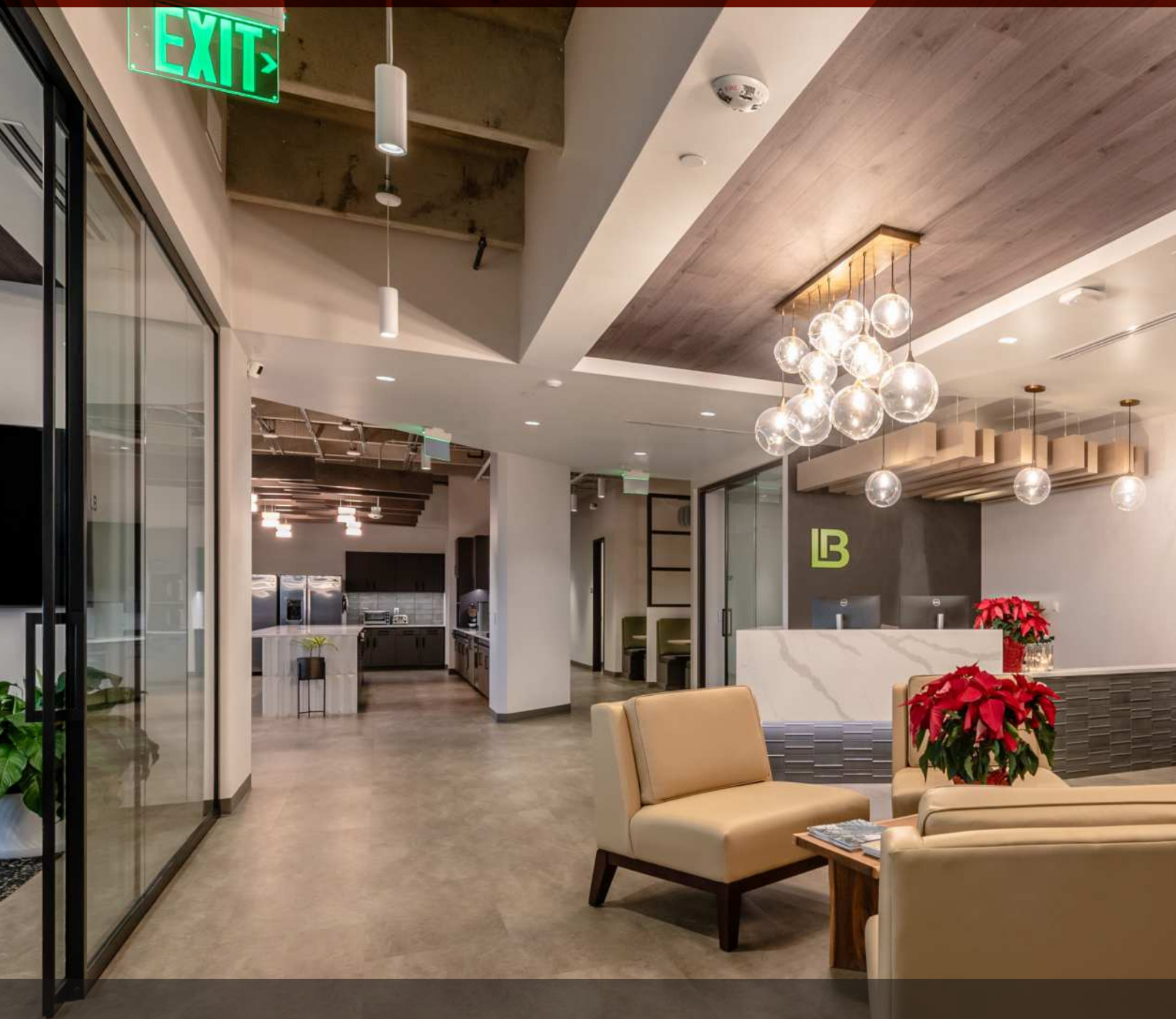
Development Construction Architecture Engineering Interior Design



The Parson

Vertically integrated in the Golden Triangle \ PAGE 52

TOP NOTCH TENANT IMPROVEMENT



EJCM

COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT | EJCM.COM

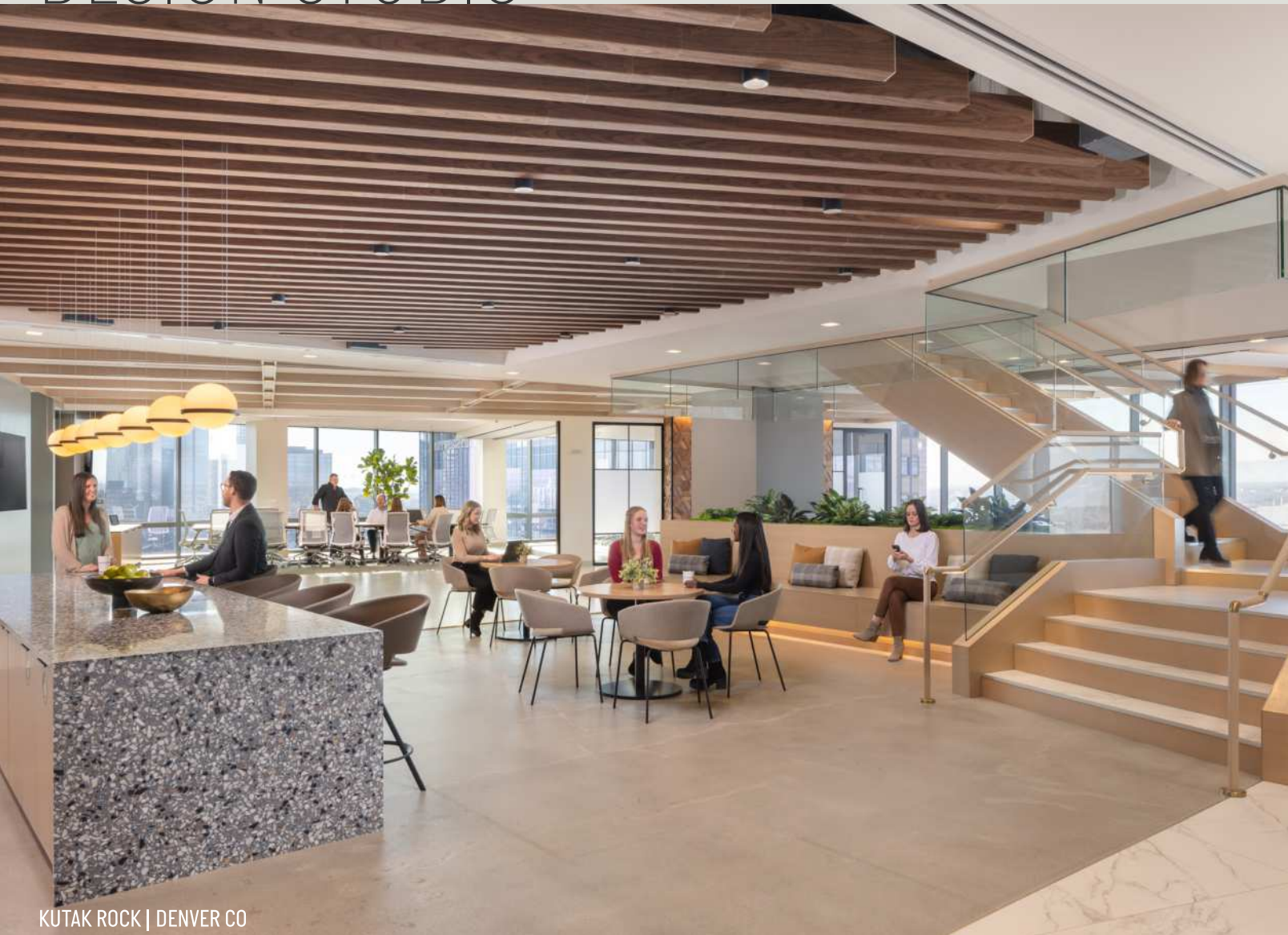
Office | Medical | Specialty

303-573-5678

Pete Gillespie, President
Bill Brauer, General Manager
info@ejcm.com

Clic.

DESIGN STUDIO



KUTAK ROCK | DENVER CO

Clic Design Studio is a full-service commercial interior architecture and design studio elevating spaces in Colorado and enhancing the human experience with strategic, customized design.



52

Vertically Integrated: There's Nowhere to Grow but up in the Golden Triangle



58

More than a Library: Connecting with Nature



62

Back to (Boulder) Basics: DTJ Knows People Learn Better Together



64

The Marlow: Inspired by Historic Colfax Avenue



68

Sgi-USA Denver Buddhist Center Blossoms Downtown



70

Beyond the Bottle: The Future of Wine Retail is Built Around Community

Cunningham

Creative by nature, disciplined by design.

Discover what's possible, Colorado.

CONTACT: Kitty Yuen, AIA, NCIDQ | 303.885.8307 | kyuen@cunningham.com | 1675 Larimer Street, Suite 375, Denver, Colorado 80202



Valleywise Health Medical Center, Roosevelt Acute Care Replacement Hospital

COLUMNS /

- 14 Building Envelope
- 16 By Design
- 20 From the Ground Up



ELEMENTS /



- 24 Artificial Intelligence: AI as a Catalyst for Smarter, Collaborative Design
- 26 Adaptive Reuse: Denver's Downtown Has a Second Chance
- 28 Social ROI: Intentional Community Building to Increase Asset Value
- 32 LEED Gold: LEED Gold & the Future of High-Performance Buildings
- 34 Post-Occupancy: A Year Later: What Happens After the Ribbon-Cutting?
- 38 Community Engagement: Community Planning Begins with Engagement
- 42 Construction Trends: Certainty Eclipses Speed as Top Driver of Construction Strategy
- 44 Construction Labor: Construction Industry is Combatting Labor Shortages
- 46 Mid-Century Modern(ization): School Districts are Facing Aging Facilities
- 48 Housing: Plans, Policy, and the People Behind Them

DESIGNER APPROVED

- 74 The Value of Place: Why every square foot should strengthen the organization
- 76 Workplace Considerations: Designing for Neurodiversity is a Growing Priority



CRUSOE, DENVER, CO



CONFIDENTIAL MEDIA CLIENT, GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO

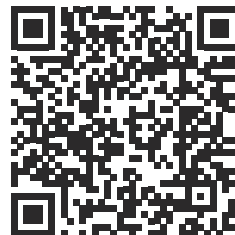


MOLSON COORS, CHICAGO, IL

ENTERING A NEW ERA OF WORKPLACE

The workplace is entering a new era, defined by flexibility, purpose, and the experiences people value most. As organizations across Denver navigate shifting expectations, the spaces they create must work harder to support culture, performance, and connection. Gensler's 2026 insights for workplace share what's in, what's out, and how design can drive meaningful impact across the region's office market. Read the complete perspective on the blog.

1225 17th St #150 Denver, CO 80202
303.595.8585 | Gensler.com



Ryan Kane, Licensed Architect and Principal, Tandem Architecture Group



Ryan is an architect with over 12 years of experience in commercial, industrial and telecommunications design. Grounded by a strong technical background in comprehensive building systems and multidisciplinary CD sets, his current practice emphasizes hands-on client collaboration. Ryan is passionate about leveraging advanced visualization

technology to demystify the design process, allowing clients to fully understand their projects prior to construction and ensuring a seamless, predictable project delivery.
rkane@tandemarch.com

Rob Kiester, Licensed Architect and Principal, Tandem Architecture Group



Rob is an architect with over 14 years of experience practicing nationally across the United States. His work focuses on manufacturing, industrial distribution, cold storage, office and general commercial projects, including some of the largest e-commerce and cold storage facilities in the country. As a father of five, Rob brings a practical,

collaborative perspective to design, with a passion for visualization technologies including photorealistic real-time walkthroughs and 3D printing. His practice emphasizes real-time design feedback that helps clients better understand their projects, reduce miscommunication, shorten design timelines, and make confident decisions before construction begins.
rkiester@tandemarch.com

Jesse Ledin, Design Principal, Intentional Architecture



Jesse is an architect with over 20 years of combined experience in construction and architecture, working on residential, multifamily and commercial projects for municipalities, developers, and private owners. He began his career on construction sites, an experience that continues to inform his hands-on, collaborative approach.

His work emphasizes clear and elegant design strategies with distinctive architectural elements, and early decision-making that support constructability, durability, and long-term value.
jesse@designbyintention.co

Leanne Vielehr, Norris Design, Principal



Leanne has nearly 20 years of experience in landscape architecture and planning, leading projects ranging from residential landscapes to large-scale master planned communities. She specializes in planning, entitlements, and landscape architecture for residential, commercial, recreational, and hospitality developments,

guiding multidisciplinary teams through the approval process across Colorado's Front Range.
lvielehr@norris-design.com

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



DESIGNING WORKPLACES

where people + performance thrive



Design to elevate people's potential

architecture : engineering : design | 303.595.4500 eua.com

Adaptability /əˌdaptəˈbɪlədē/

The ability to change behavior, plans, or thinking when new things happen

That concept has been on my mind in recent weeks, albeit a bit more globally. As I write this, I am sitting in a hotel room in the lovely Bend, Oregon. It's beautiful in Bend.

The people are as friendly as any I'd find at home, in Denver. But the reality is that here, even more so than it seems it's been in Denver, the heat, the dry conditions and the nearly constant thick haze of wildfire smoke has requires folks to adapt, to change their sports training regimens (better get in that bike ride, run or swim in early, before the heat and smoke build in); alter their outdoor entertainment plans (maybe take the picnic indoors, or skip the show at the amphitheater); even reroute backpacking and hiking trips (if the fires and smoke were over there yesterday, looks like they are over here today).

All of those adjustments could apply to commercial real estate as well. Projects that once made sense, at a certain time, in a certain place, may no longer work. Buildings that originally served one purpose may be better utilized by changing tenant mixes or uses.

Adaptive reuse is not new, but it feels like its time has come.

In this issue, we shine a spotlight on several adaptive reuse notions and projects: Converting underperforming properties into residential stock has gained some steam, but there are any number of issues to consider before such an undertaking; downtown Denver's office vacancies are inviting a refresh that aims to bring more full-time residents to the central business district;

Inviting early community engagement and partnering with forward-thinking architects may well inform development in ways that better stand the test of time. That's the hope – I look forward to watching and learning as these concepts and projects come to fruition.

In the meantime, the issue is filled with inspiring new projects, including The Parson in Denver's Golden Triangle, Anythink Library (a whole new spin that is sure to bring a new generation back to the stacks) in Thornton, and The Marlow on historic Colfax.

As always, it's a pleasure to share your ideas and your creative work with our readers. Keep the good work coming.

Kris Oppermann Stern
Publisher & Editor
kostern@crej.com



BD\

VOLUME 13 / ISSUE 3

ADVERTISING:

Lori Golightly
lgolightly@crej.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Jolene Wollett
jwollett@crej.com

ART DIRECTOR:

Heather Lewis
hlewis@crej.com

1536 Cole Blvd. Building 4
Suite 300
Lakewood, CO 80401
(303) 623-1148
www.crej.com
www.crej.com/buildingdialogue/

Page/

370 17th Street, 56th Floor
Denver, Colorado 80202
303 595 0491
www.pagethink.com



UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital Anschutz Medical Center Tower 3 Expansion and Renovation

Fresh perspective on arrival.

Westin at Denver International Airport | Denver, CO



JNS

ARCHITECTURE + INTERIOR DESIGN

PRAGMATIC BEAUTY

SWINERTON 

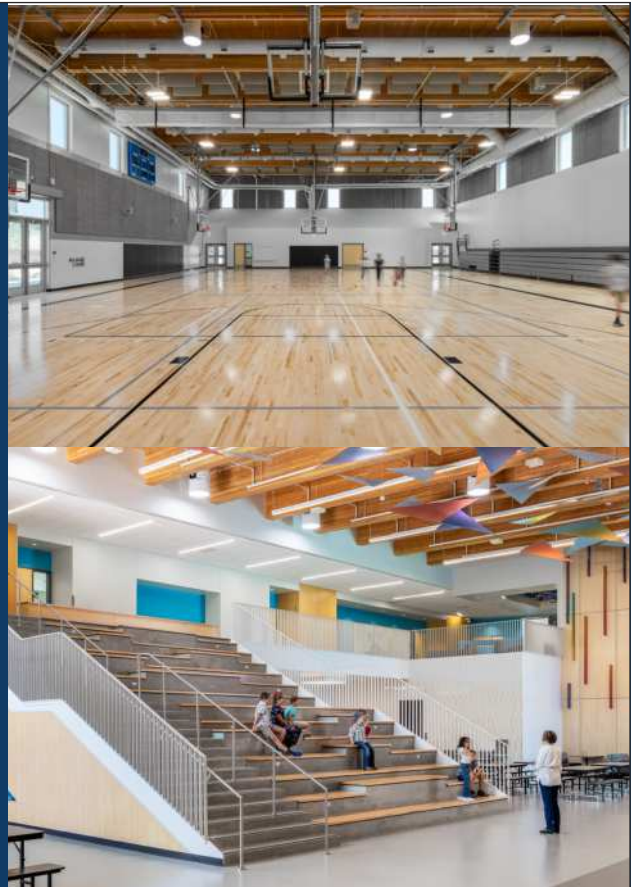
PROVIDING SUCCESSFUL FOUNDATIONS AT EVERY LEVEL OF LEARNING.

Our tailored approach to renovating and building new campuses puts students and teachers at the center.

With us, peace of mind is built in.

DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESPONSIVE
ARTS & STEAM ACADEMY (RASA) 

www.swinerton.com





Gables Union Market
Washington, DC
Gables Residential

Understanding: The Future of Design Begins Before Design

Conversations about the future of architecture almost always focus on technology. Artificial intelligence, computational design, and automation promise to transform how we practice. Those advances are significant, and they deserve our attention. Yet after more than two decades in architecture and construction, I find myself asking a different question: Why do some project teams – comprising equally talented owners, consultants, contractors and architects – produce buildings that feel remarkably coherent while others become increasingly complicated despite everyone’s best efforts?

For years, I assumed the answer was complexity itself. Modern buildings ask us to balance performance, constructability, resilience, cost, regulations, occupant health, operations and long-term adaptability. It seemed natural that as projects became more sophisticated, they would also become more difficult to coordinate.

Over time, I began to notice a different pattern. The most successful projects were not necessarily led by the most technically gifted teams or supported by the most sophisticated tools. They were the projects where owners, architects, engineers, consultants and contractors developed a shared understanding of what success looked like before hundreds of individual decisions had to be made.

The defining characteristic of successful projects is not simply the technical ability of the people involved. It is the degree to which the team shares a common understanding of what the project is trying to accomplish.

That realization crystallized during a conversation with a contractor who questioned a mechanical detail. Viewed in isolation, his suggestion made perfect sense. Instead of debating the detail, we discussed why it existed in the first place: how it supported the building’s performance goals and the broader design intent. After a brief conversation, he looked back at the drawings and said, “*Now I understand.*”

The detail hadn’t changed.

His expertise hadn’t changed.

His understanding had.

With that understanding, he no longer needed every situation prescribed. He could apply his experience in ways that reinforced the larger goals of the project. I’ve seen similar moments with owners refining priorities



Jesse Ledin
Design Principal,
Intentional
Architecture

during early design, consultants coordinating complex systems, and trades resolving unforeseen field conditions. Once people understand what the project is trying to achieve, their independent decisions begin supporting one another rather than competing with one another.

That experience changed how I think about the architect’s role.

We often describe architects as designers, coordinators, or problem solvers. Those responsibilities are certainly part of the profession. I believe one of our most valuable contributions is creating the shared understanding that allows an entire project team to exercise good judgment.

Every complex project eventually reaches a point where technical expertise is no longer the limiting factor. Everyone at the table brings knowledge and experience. The challenge becomes whether that expertise is exercised in service of the same objectives. Good judgment depends on context, and context is created through understanding.

This is why the earliest stages of a project matter so profoundly. Before design begins, owners need clarity about what success truly means – not simply the number of rooms or the desired aesthetic, but the priorities that will guide hundreds of future decisions.

As that understanding develops, alignment follows. Architects, engineers, contractors and owners begin evaluating decisions through the same lens. Individual expertise starts reinforcing the work of others instead of pulling the project in competing directions.

Ironically, this becomes even more important as artificial intelligence continues to evolve. AI will help us generate options, optimize systems, and automate repetitive tasks with extraordinary speed. Those capabilities should make our profession better. But optimization assumes that the team already knows what it is trying to optimize. Technology can evaluate alternatives. It cannot establish purpose. That remains a fundamentally human responsibility.

Perhaps that is where the future of architecture truly lies. As our technical tools become more powerful, the architect’s greatest value may become less about producing information and more about cultivating the understanding and insight that lead to better decisions.

When a project team shares a clear understanding of its purpose, hundreds of independent decisions begin reinforcing one another. The result is not a simpler building, but a more coherent one.\



HERE ... BIG WORK IS TAKEN PERSONALLY

MULTIFAMILY



HOSPITALITY



CLUBHOUSE



LUXURY TRAVEL RESIDENTIAL

1050 Bannock St. Denver, CO 80128

studio10interiordesign.com

Earthwork Costs: Want Your Building Flat or Sloped?

Asked about a flat or sloped roof, the majority of people out there would probably reply “... uh flat please?” But buried in that question are some potential cost savings for certain types of buildings.

This is because the cost of earthwork can quickly become the variable that dictates whether a project pencils out. Site balancing, importing fill, or hauling away spoils can inflate a budget to the point of killing a deal before a single footing is poured.

To mitigate these prohibitive site costs, development and design teams are increasingly turning to an often overlooked, structural strategy: the sloped slab.

■ **The 1/2% solution.** In a standard tilt-up warehouse, a sloped slab is exactly what it sounds like. The entire concrete floor is poured at a gentle grade, typically around 1/2% (or a slope of about 1/16-inch per foot).

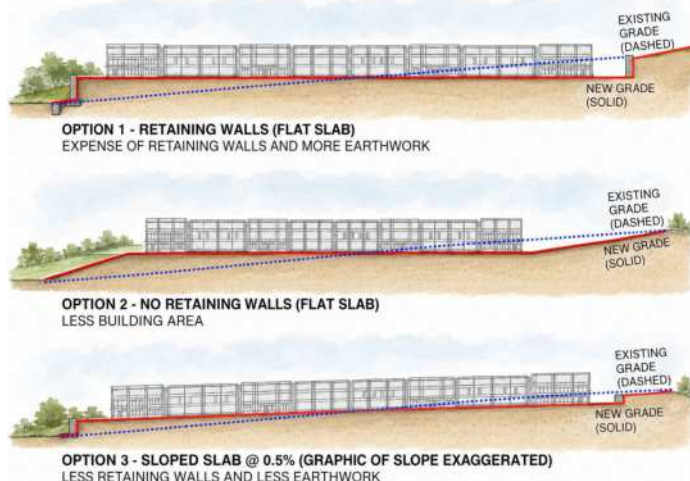
While a 1/2% slope is largely imperceptible to the na-



Rob Kiester
Licensed Architect
and Principal, Tandem
Architecture Group



Ryan Kane
Licensed Architect
and Principal, Tandem
Architecture Group



ked eye and unnoticeable to standard foot traffic, the impact across a longer building is profound. Over the length of a 1,000-foot building, a 1/2% slope accommodates a 5-foot elevation change. By allowing the building to follow the natural topography of the site rather than forcing the site to conform to a totally flat building pad, developers can eliminate thousands of cubic yards of cut



WE bring thoughtful leadership to the building experience.



Scan For More
weoneil.com



and fill, saving significant time and capital.

This solution also saves on trenching for utilities, as a sloped slab will reduce the depth for gravity-drained systems as long as they drain in the same direction as the sloped slab.

■ **The trade-offs: Clear heights and robotics.** While the cost savings on earthwork are undeniable, a sloped slab is not a universal solution for every tenant. The primary disadvantage of a pitched floor lies in how it interacts with specific equipment.

- **Clear heights (36 feet and above):** When a building features clear heights of 36 feet or more, the natural sway of a high-reach forklift mast is amplified by the floor's slope. At maximum extension, even a 1/2% grade can cause a forklift to lean slightly, making it more difficult to load and unload top-tier racking safely.

- **Robotics and automation:** Automated storage and retrieval systems and autonomous mobile robots require incredibly stringent floor flatness and floor levelness tolerances. These highly sensitive systems rely on level ground for navigation and precision, making a sloped slab a nonstarter.

- **Manufacturing:** Some equipment for precision manufacturing processes has stringent FF/FL requirements. These may not be suitable for installation on a sloped slab.

■ **The sweet spot for standard operations.** Despite the limitations for specialized users, a sloped slab remains a nonissue for the majority of industrial applications. Standard distribution, general manufacturing (most equipment), and traditional warehouse operations function normally on a 1/2% grade. For these users, standard forklifts, conveyor systems, and ground-level assembly lines operate the same as they would on a traditional flat slab.

■ **Navigating the office build-out.** One unique challenge of a sloped slab arises during the tenant improvement phase: framing the interior office space.

Because the floor is pitched, building standard partition walls requires extra care. Experienced general contractors who have worked with sloped slabs have developed methods for framing these spaces to ensure the walls and drop ceilings remain perfectly plumb and level.

However, for teams that are less experienced with this geometry, there is a straightforward workaround. During the design phase, the specific bay designated for the future office block (usually on the short ends of the building) can be designed and poured as a traditional flat pad, transitioning into the sloped warehouse floor. This localized flattening makes framing the office complete-

By Design continued, Page 73



**NORRIS
DESIGN**
PEOPLE + PLACEMAKING

cascadia

see how memorable places begin at norris-design.com



HASELDEN IS COLORADO'S

PREMIER BUILDER

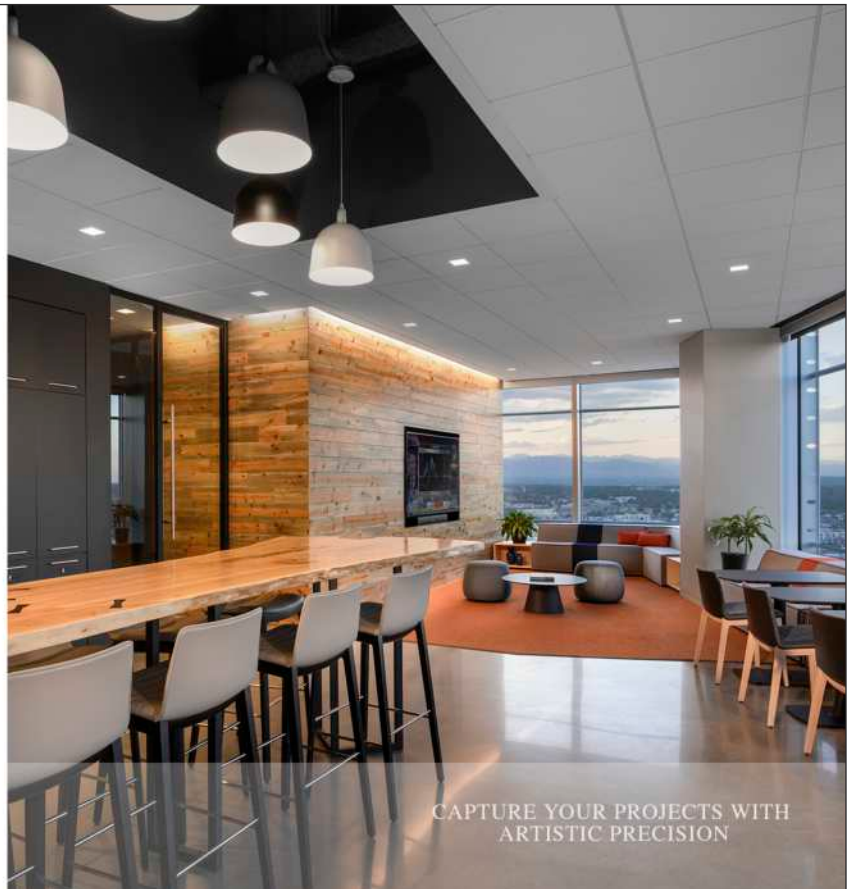


BRAD NICOL PHOTOGRAPHY

CORPORATE | EDUCATIONAL | MULTI FAMILY | HOSPITALITY



BRADNICOLPHOTOGRAPHY.COM
303.304.6233
DENVER, COLORADO



CAPTURE YOUR PROJECTS WITH
ARTISTIC PRECISION



Wall Art inspired by Saving the Wild

Saving the Wild is a groundbreaking charity collaborating with award-winning artists and photographers in our united goal of art as a force for good. Whether looking to elevate office buildings, hotels, retail or residential design, Wall Art will turn heads and inspire minds.

Chosen from our collection or custom designed, make a statement with materials of the highest quality that include linen, silk, silver, and velour.



SAVINGTHEWILD.COM/WALLART

Challenges & Pitfalls of Commercial-to-Resi Conversions

Infill redevelopment is becoming increasingly more common as older, underperforming or vacant commercial properties get re-envisioned for a higher and better use. With the continued demand for housing, many of these properties are being converted to residential, but many municipalities still require a mixed-use component. These projects provide community benefit, but a variety of challenges must be overcome to get to the finish line.



Leanne Vielehr
Principal, Norris
Design

■ **Entitlements.** In recent years, the land use model has shifted away from the single-use format and toward mixed-use, bringing both opportunities and challenges. Many municipalities have updated their comprehensive plan land-use designations to encourage or even require mixed-use, but often the zoning in place for older commercial properties doesn't allow for the residential component. In addition to rezoning these properties, often waivers, adjustments or variances to code are needed to allow for deviations in standards like density, building height, setbacks, parking and parks/open space requirements. Identifying these deviations early can minimize impactful site plan redesign later. These approvals often require public hearings, adding an additional layer of risk to the approval process. The overall community benefit must justify the request for code deviations.

■ **Existing infrastructure.** As commercial assets age, so does the surrounding infrastructure. At time of construction, utilities and roadways were all designed with projected uses and capacity at that time. As uses change, so do the demands for the infrastructure. Increased traffic is probably the number one concern we hear from surrounding neighbors with any project, but with infill

redevelopment, access points and capacity are often limited and can have a big impact on future expansion. Similarly, utilities such as water and sewer can be undersized for the increased demand associated with higher-density residential uses. Necessary utility improvements can extend off-site, and the full extent of improvements are often unknown until design progresses.

■ **Mixed-use.** The loss of potential commercial tax revenue can be a hard sell in the pursuit of residential redevelopment; therefore, many municipalities require the preservation or incorporation of commercial square footage into redevelopment projects in former commercial spaces. Everyone likes the idea of ground-floor retail occupied by a charming coffee shop or a hip brewery, but the reality is that the leaseability of these commercial spaces is very low due to several contributing factors. Municipalities often require more commercial square footage than the market can support. In addition, the cost to build out a “warm gray shell” space is too expensive for most “mom-and-pop” business owners,



Caroline Ralston Creek is a mix of high-density residential and commercial uses.



Caroline Ralston Creek is in Arvada.



The design team navigated many challenges along the way.



Developers of Caroline Ralston Creek pursued entitlement approvals to build 328 apartments on a former Kmart and Good Times site.

despite build-out subsidies and incentives. Lastly, the final decision on who can lease the commercial space is in the hands of the leading institutions that are funding the construction of the project. Here's a shorter version: Commercial leasing requirements are often so stringent that many independent business owners cannot qualify. As a result, storefronts remain vacant, leaving neighborhoods, developers and municipalities with unrealized visions for vibrant, active communities.

Case study: Caroline Ralston Creek

Despite the headwinds facing infill redevelopment, with the right team and partners, there are many examples of successful outcomes. One such example is the

Caroline Ralston Creek in Arvada. In fall 2020, the Morgan Group began the multi-step process of pursuing entitlement approvals to build 328 apartments and 10,200 square feet of retail space on an 8.75-acre former Kmart and Good Times site. In March 2021, Arvada City Council approved the conditional use application, and in June 2022, staff approved the site plan. The mix of high-density residential and commercial was dictated by the Mixed-Use Urban zone district and the Ralston Fields Urban Renewal Plan. The design team navigated many challenges along the way, including designing a site that maintained on-site operational patterns from adjacent

From the Ground Up continued, Page 73

Jordy Construction

**New Builds.
Remodels.
Construction Done Right.**

303.744.6106 | jordyconstruction.com



archshop.com
enriching lives through design

aw



Celebrating 25 Years!

Local roots.
National caliber.

Built in Colorado. Proven craftsmanship,
accountability, and long-term relationships.

bootsconstruction.com

Compliance. Guidelines. Incentives. Solar Isn't New, Just More Complicated.

But Douglass Colony Group knows exactly what we're doing.

Solar is where projects stall — from utility coordination and municipal requirements to shifting incentives and supply chain constraints. We help commercial teams navigate solar requirements the right way. We understand how solar fits into the entire building envelope and how to deliver it without rework, delays, or lost credits.

Solar done right moves a project forward.

This isn't residential solar scaled up. It's commercial building expertise, applied intelligently.



Urban Peak | Denver, CO

REACH OUT TO BUILD WITH US:

303-288-2635 | [DouglassColony.com](https://www.DouglassColony.com)



FRAMECAD / ROOFING / WATERPROOFING / METALS / SOLAR

AI: A Catalyst for Smarter, Collaborative Design

Artificial intelligence is changing the way architects and designers work, not by replacing human creativity, but by accelerating how we explore ideas, collaborate with clients, and connect design decisions to human experience. While the pace of advancement has been rapid, its impact on architecture and design feels more evolutionary than disruptive. It is reshaping our process while reinforcing what has always been central to good design: human insight, judgment and experience.

■ **Designing in real time.** AI is enabling a more collaborative and iterative design process. Traditionally, architects would receive a brief, develop concepts over several weeks, and return to the client with a refined idea. Today, the journey is far more dynamic. AI allows design teams and clients to explore possibilities, visualize options, and refine solutions together from the earliest stages of the project, which can compress weeks of back-and-forth into a highly productive working session.

This shift is especially relevant in markets like Denver, where building owners and tenants are rethinking how office space earns its place in a hybrid work environment. As organizations rethink the role of the office as a more flexible, experience-driven environment connected to the broader community, AI-enabled design can help teams evaluate workplace strategies faster and align de-



Michelle Liebling
Co-Managing
Director, Gensler
Denver

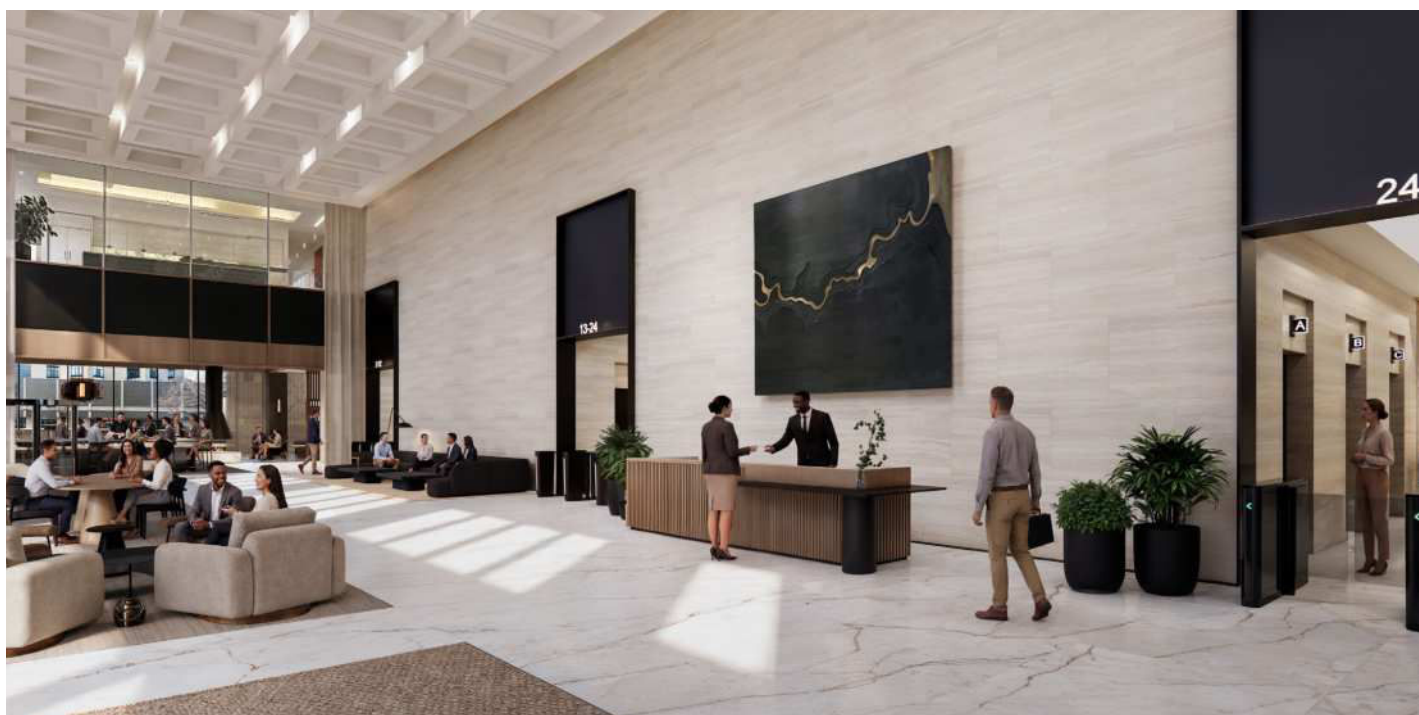
sign decisions with tenant expectations and market realities.

Greater efficiency also fosters more meaningful collaboration. At Gensler, we see AI as a tool that enhances the design process by creating greater transparency and enabling clients to engage as active participants in shaping outcomes. By rapidly generating and evaluating multiple design scenarios, design teams can tailor solutions more closely to an organization's culture, brand and long-term vision.

AI also serves as a storytelling tool, redefining how ideas are communicated. Design teams can illustrate what a space will look like, as well as how it will function, feel, and support the people who use it. This is particularly valuable in projects where experience and identity, rather than efficiency alone, are key drivers of value.

■ **Technology guided by design judgment.** In the age of intelligence, the most impactful design solutions emerge when technology enhances, rather than replaces, human creativity. AI can accelerate ideation and expand the range of possibilities, but meaningful design still depends on human judgment. As designers, we are responsible for understanding context, translating client aspirations into meaningful experiences, and creating spaces that are purposeful, inclusive, and responsive to the people and communities they serve.

We have seen these benefits firsthand at 1225 17th St., where Gensler's Denver office is located. As part of the effort to reposition the lobby and building amenities,



As part of the effort to reposition the lobby and building amenities, our team used AI to better visualize the space at 1225 17th St.



In the repositioning of 1225 17th St., our team used AI to help communicate its potential experience to the client, current tenants and future tenants.

our team used AI to better visualize the space and communicate its potential experience to the client, current tenants and future tenants. The process helped show not only what spaces could look like, but how they would feel bringing materials, atmosphere, and moments of arrival to life in a way that made the design vision more tangible and compelling.

AI also enabled a more intentional approach to storytelling within the space. By simulating how different design strategies would be perceived and experienced,

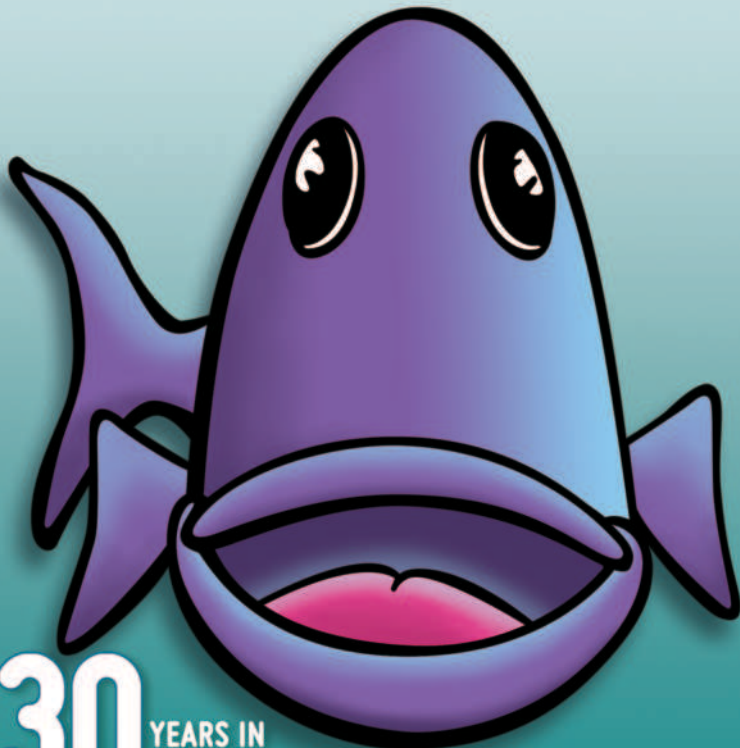
the team could make informed decisions about how the environment supports the tenant experience and day-to-day use. The result is a space that both performs well and resonates with occupants and visitors.

As adoption increases, it is important to approach AI with intention. The technology is powerful, but it still requires critical oversight. As designers, we must ensure that AI is used to expand perspective, not limit it, and that human judgment remains central to decision-making.

■ **Designing for what comes next.** Looking ahead, AI will continue to play a larger role in shaping the design process, from early ideation through project delivery. In a challenged office market like downtown Denver, where owners are working to attract tenants and differentiate their assets, AI can help teams move faster while making more informed decisions about experience, functionality and long-term value.

At its core, the opportunity is clear. AI gives designers new ways to think, test, and communicate, but its greatest impact comes when it is guided by human expertise, critical thinking and a deep understanding of place. Used with discernment, it can help teams create spaces that are more informed, engaging, and meaningfully connected to the people and communities they serve.\.

Michelle_Liebling@gensler.com



Become a Bigger Fish



SUTER MEDIA RELATIONS
*Media Relations and Publicity
 for Your Company*

30 YEARS IN BUSINESS

(P) 720.771.9093 (E) sutercomm@aol.com
 (W) www.sutermidiarelations.com

Denver's Downtown Has a 2nd Chance: Here's What it Takes to Get There

Downtown Denver's office vacancy rate sits at [38.6%](#) as of the second quarter, nearly three times pre-pandemic levels. That number has become a familiar refrain in commercial real estate circles, and understandably so. But vacancy statistics alone don't tell you what to do next. What matters is the question behind them: When a building has outlived its original purpose, what does it actually take to give it a new one?



Sejal Sonani, AIA
Managing Partner,
HLW

That question sits at the center of High Fidelity, the adaptive reuse of 621 and 633 17th St., led by The Luzzatto Co. as owner and developer, HLW as architect and Beck as general contractor. Spanning a full city block and nearly 970,000 square feet of former commercial office space, the project is being converted into a mixed-use multifamily community with approximately 750 rental homes, ground-floor retail, and a range of amenity and community spaces. It is among the largest office-to-residential conversions west of New York, and it offers some hard-won lessons for anyone navigating similar projects in the Colorado commercial real estate market today.

■ **The economics have to work first.** Office-to-residential conversion is not a new idea. Cities across the country have been studying it, piloting it, and streamlining permitting and zoning processes to encourage it. What has been harder to crack is the financial equation. Conversions are inherently more complex than ground-up construction. The variables are unpredictable, and the margin for error is thin.

What is different about Denver, and about High Fidelity specifically, is the role of the Downtown Denver Development Authority. The DDA's financial support, totaling \$63 million, has been the mechanism that made the economics viable so far. The project team still has a long road ahead to make this vision a reality. Other cities have updated their adaptive reuse ordinances and expedited approvals, but without direct funding, many projects stall before they start. The High Fidelity team is exploring other potential funding mechanisms, including historic preservation tax credits, CASR and Xcel energy incentives.

■ **Buildings that have already changed once.** The building at 621 17th St. has a long history. Originally con-



The project is being converted into a mixed-use multifamily community with approximately 750 apartments.

structed as a National Bank building, its soaring atrium served as a banking hall before transitioning to office use over decades. As for 633 17th St., which came later, it is a more conventional office tower connected to its neighbor by a link structure that itself became underutilized over time. Together, the two buildings reflect structures that have already been modified, adapted and built upon more than once.

That history matters in two ways. First, it informed the approach to historic preservation. The project is registering both buildings as historic landmarks, a process that is relatively new territory for structures of this type and would unlock tax credits if achieved. Pursuing that designation has required balancing historic character with



Spanning a full city block and nearly 970,000 square feet of former commercial office space, the project is being converted into a mixed-use multifamily community, ground-floor retail, and a range of amenity and community spaces.



High Fidelity is the adaptive reuse of 621 and 633 17th St., led by The Luzzatto Co.



It is among the largest office-to-residential conversions west of New York.

modern energy code requirements, including a planned conversion from the old steam loop system to a fully electric building, and determining where the existing facade can be retained and where performance demands something different.

Second, the layered history of these buildings is a useful frame for understanding what conversion at this scale actually involves. Part of the design work has been identifying what is worth restoring and what can be updated to meet the needs of a new program.

■ **Programming a full city block.** The most unusual design opportunity on High Fidelity has not been structural or mechanical, though both have been substantial. It has been circulation and access: how different user groups move through a building designed for a single purpose.

The original buildings were planned around a simple logic. Commuters park, take the elevator to their floor and go to work. What is now being built is a 24/7 mixed-use, multigenerational environment in which residential tenants, retail visitors, and community members all share the same block, but not necessarily the same spaces.

For example, the fitness center and pool deck amenities are planned for residents only. But the coworking lounge exists at two scales: one as a resident amenity and one open to outside membership. The daycare and children's programming are intended to serve both residents and the surrounding neighborhood. A speakeasy in the original bank vault will be open to all. Threading those distinctions through a building never designed for them has required close coordination between the design team, ownership, and building management throughout the process.

The ground-floor program reflects a broader philosophy. Downtown Denver has been missing certain basic amenities that make a neighborhood livable around the clock. High Fidelity is planned to include a bodega, a bakery, a bar, a daycare, a children's museum, an art gallery, and a bookstore. Luzzatto has cultivated a similar model

elsewhere, built around locally operated businesses that create the texture of a place rather than a transactional retail strip, and is applying that approach deliberately to 17th Street.

■ **What the market can take from this.** High Fidelity is a landmark undertaking for downtown Denver, in part because nothing quite like it has been attempted here at this scale. A few things stand out as broadly applicable to Colorado's commercial real estate market.

At a project of this scale, the cost implications of even minor decisions compound fast, which is why bringing the contractor in during preconstruction, rather than after design is set, was critical to keeping the project on track.

The amenity program is doing the real work. In a market where residents have options, the experience of a place determines whether it fills and sustains. The community spaces, the art, the ground-floor activation at High Fidelity were not added at the end of the design process – they are the project. Having a client with clear vision at the onset makes this possible.

Downtown Denver is at a real inflection point. The vacancy numbers are high, the DDA funding is moving projects, and the conditions for conversion are present in a way they have not been before. What High Fidelity is working through is what it actually looks like to execute on that opportunity – and if successful, it has the potential to serve as a model, not just for downtown Denver's recovery, but for how cities across the country approach obsolete office stock.

For architects and developers, it also raises a longer-term question worth sitting with: How do we design buildings today with enough flexibility that the next generation doesn't face the same barriers we're working through now? The structures going up today will inevitably outlive their intended use. The ones that don't account for that will be someone else's problem to solve.\

ssonani@hlw.com

Intentional Community Building Can Dramatically Increase Long-Term Asset Value

When evaluating the long-term asset value of a master-planned community, the real estate industry has historically leaned on physical and structural metrics. Experts analyze phase absorption, segment pricing and the capital expenditure of physical amenities. In an increasingly competitive landscape, developers continue to invest heavily in amenities that enhance quality of life and differentiate communities. Trails, pollinator-friendly fields, dance halls, coffee bars, wellness spaces and art-centric third places often serve as a resident's first impression of a place.

But amenities alone do not guarantee community. Social ROI amplifies the value of investment in built environments. The full potential is realized when amenities become settings for participation and shared experiences. The question is no longer simply what assets are built, but how those assets are activated.

To drive true, long-term asset value, developers and community managers must shift from simply managing physical properties to intentionally influencing how a community forms and becomes self-sustaining over time. This requires investing in social infrastructure. When executed strategically, this “social ROI” de-risks



Todd Hornback
Co-founder and Chief
Executive Officer,
Cohere

master plans across three distinct operational phases.

■ **Designing performance and participation before operation.** The financial and operational success of a neighborhood is determined long before the first foundation is poured. True capital efficiency occurs when a developer aligns the community's vision, governance structures and financial assumptions during the initial planning phase.

By shaping assessment strategies and amenity activation before resident habits form, developers guide how people will engage with a place from day one. The objective is simple: Reduce operational and governance friction before it shows up on the balance sheet.

When the physical plan and the social plan are integrated from inception, the community operates exactly as it was intended and deepens with resident participation, rather than requiring costly operational retrofits later. For example, at the Baseline neighborhood in Broomfield, sustainability and identity, such as its designation as a pollinator district, were baked directly into the early planning. Residents arrived expecting interaction and an outdoor-forward lifestyle, resulting in well-utilized social spaces and governance that remains cohesive from the outset.

Baseline demonstrates how thoughtful planning translates into operational performance. By incorporating resident expectations with the community's long-term operating model, the development achieved stronger amenity utilization, reduced governance friction and a smoother transition from development to long-term operations.

■ **Activating at the point of first impression to drive absorption.** To maximize asset value, a community's lifestyle must be evident at that start, turning the sales process into a lived experience.

When prospects tour a neighborhood and gather at community happenings rather than empty spaces, early social perspectives are defined and connection accelerates. Our work at Cohere has shown that connection drives absorption and brand loyalty.

We see this dynamic play



Baseline residents arrived expecting interaction and an outdoor-forward lifestyle, resulting in well-utilized social spaces and governance that remains cohesive from the outset.



At the Baseline neighborhood in Broomfield, sustainability and identity, such as its designation as a pollinator district, were baked directly into the early planning.



When prospects tour a neighborhood and gather at community happenings rather than empty spaces, early social perspectives are defined and connection accelerates.

out in full force at Barefoot, a master-planned metro district community in Firestone. By immediately activating the lifestyle around its lakes, trails and “The Cove” social hub through early programming, farmstands, and concerts, new residents quickly formed tight bonds. They transitioned from buyers to brand ambassadors, creating an organic word-of-mouth referral engine that plays a role in actively reducing the developer’s customer acquisition costs in subsequent phases.

Early participation patterns and resident feedback

from Barefoot indicate that conscious activation is helping residents build connections more quickly and take ownership of the community identity. This aligns with our broader community impact reporting, which consistently shows that communities with higher levels of participation and social connection generate stronger advocacy and referral behavior. As residents become ambassadors for the places they live, communities benefit from increased word of mouth, reinforcing the connection between purposeful programming and long-term asset performance.

■ **Building social infrastructure to shift operational loads.** We believe the ultimate measure of Social ROI is sustainability. The strongest communities evolve beyond staff-led programming by cultivating resident-led clubs, committees and initiatives. When residents are empowered to shape community life, shared norms take hold, participation grows and connection becomes self-sustaining.

At the Kinston community within the Centerra master plan in Loveland, the focus is on creating neighborhood leaders, not just event attendees. By implementing a resident leadership program, early homeowners are invited to help shape and co-create the community fabric. When early adopters become the primary connectors between neighbors, feedback loops improve, community norms are reinforced peer-to-peer rather than top-down, and the neighborhood becomes structurally more resilient and operationally efficient over the long term.

■ **The underwriting formula for the future.** As institutional investors and master developers underwrite future residential projects, the evaluation formula

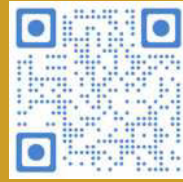
must evolve. A development’s balance sheet is deeply linked to human behavior.

Neighborhoods that are left without supported opportunities for social connection may default to isolation and underutilized assets. Conversely, developments that deploy an intentional social scaffolding strategically build a distinct competitive advantage: a community that appreciates the life cycle of the project.\

thornback@coherelife.com

contact us at sehinc.com or 800.325.2055

where **innovation**
meets **impact.**



explore what's possible.

engineers | architects | planners | scientists
better places. clean water. infrastructure renewal. mobility.



BRINKMAN
CONSTRUCTION

DRIVEN TO BUILD
BRINKMANCONSTRUCTION.COM

VIEW OUR WORK:



PROJECT PICTURED: MARSHALL POINTE, 260-UNIT MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT IN ARVADA



AndersonMasonDale

LEED Gold & the Future of High-Performance Buildings

The definition of a high-performance building is changing.

For years, sustainability frameworks largely focused on design intent: what a building was designed to do. Today, owners, investors, occupants, and regulators are increasingly asking a different question: How does the building actually perform?

That shift is at the heart of LEED v5, the newest evolution of the world's most widely recognized green building rating system.

Our firm's Denver office, a tenant improvement within a historic 1919 office building in Capitol Hill, recently became the first project in the world to achieve LEED v5 Interior Design + Construction Gold certification.

More than an industry first, the project provides an early look at how the next generation of sustainable buildings is moving beyond design intent toward measurable performance, decarbonization, resilience, and occupant well-being.

The 11,555-square-foot workplace earned 63 points under LEED v5 and served as a pilot project for implementing the new rating system. As the most significant update to LEED in more than a decade, LEED v5 shifts the focus from sustainable design alone to measurable outcomes throughout a building's life cycle. The framework emphasizes decarbonization, quality of life, conservation and restoration, and accountability for long-term performance.

For Group14, pursuing LEED v5 wasn't simply about earning a certification. Designing the office gave the team an opportunity to experience the LEED v5 process



Madi Gore, LEED AP BD+C, LFA
Sustainability Project Manager, Group14 Engineering



The workplace was intentionally designed to support collaboration, employee wellness, and future growth while demonstrating how high-performance strategies can be successfully integrated into an existing building.

firsthand – not as consultants, but as the owner.

“Our new office is an opportunity to align how we work with what we believe buildings should deliver,” said Celeste Cizik, president of Group14. “As expectations around performance, resilience, and carbon continue to evolve, we see our own office as a way to test those ideas in practice and better support our clients in navigating that shift.”

After more than doubling in size over the past decade, Group14 relocated to the office in January. The workplace was intentionally designed to support collaboration, employee wellness, and future growth while demonstrating how high-performance strategies can be successfully integrated into an existing building.

Being our own client gave us the opportunity to experience LEED v5 from a completely different perspective. Instead of advising an owner, we became the owner. We worked through the same decisions, tradeoffs, and implementation challenges our clients experience. The lessons learned from this pilot project will directly benefit future projects pursuing LEED v5.

“Pursuing LEED v5 for our own office gave us practical insights that will help clients navigate the next generation of high-performance buildings,” said Laura Charlier, sustainability director at Group14. “The experience reinforced that high-performance buildings are defined by measurable outcomes – not just design intent.”

As a tenant improvement within an existing building, Group14 focused on strategies within its control that aligned with LEED v5's priorities.

The project reduced lighting power density, implemented plug-load reduction strategies, prioritized ma-



Group 14's Denver office, a tenant improvement within a historic 1919 office building in Capitol Hill, recently became the first project in the world to achieve LEED v5 Interior Design + Construction Gold certification.



The project was completed through a collaborative effort involving Group14 and project partners including Tenant Planning Services, Provident Construction Co. and MEP Engineering.

terial reuse and low-carbon material selection, incorporated continuous indoor air quality monitoring, and reduced projected indoor potable water use by 45.5%.

Together, these strategies demonstrate how existing buildings can reduce environmental impact while creating healthier places for people.

The project also demonstrates how adaptive reuse supports high-performance building goals. Rather than constructing a new facility, we transformed space within a building originally constructed in 1919, reducing embodied carbon through material reuse and thoughtful product selection. The building is owned by the Colorado State Land Board, and lease revenue helps fund Colorado's K-12 public schools.

"Group14 was founded on the premise that businesses can be a force for good," said Cizik. "We believe the built environment should create value not only for building owners and occupants, but for the broader community. This office reflects that philosophy in everything from its location and design to its long-term impact."

The project was completed through a collaborative effort involving Group14 and project partners including Tenant Planning Services, Provident Construction Co. and MEP Engineering.

As LEED v5 adoption grows, the lessons learned from the world's first LEED v5 ID+C Gold certification will help owners and project teams deliver buildings that demonstrate measurable performance, not just sustainability goals on paper. Building performance is no longer just a sustainability objective. It's an asset strategy.\

mgore@group14eng.com



Montview Flats
Littleton, CO



www.calconci.com



**We Build:
FOR COLORADO**



A Year Later: What Happens After the Ribbon-Cutting?

The building is occupied, residents have moved in, and the design team has shifted their attention to the next project. For most developments, the ribbon cutting represents the finish line, and success is often measured by schedule, budget and design execution. These metrics only tell part of the story. The true measure of a building's success unfolds over time as residents establish routines, staff develop workflows, and the building begins to influence daily life. One year after opening, our design team returned to The Grand at Broomfield Assisted Living and Memory Support to answer the question: Does the building perform as intended?



Angela Gunn
Associate Principal,
OZ Architecture



The Grand at Broomfield is an assisted living and memory support development, which the design team revisited a year after completion to determine if the building performed as intended.

This question lies at the heart of a post-occupancy evaluation. A POE is a structured process conducted after building occupation (typically six to 12 months after opening), to evaluate how a completed building performs against its original design goals. POE services can range from understanding space utilization to monitoring indoor environmental quality. In our case, an assisted living evaluation should involve three fundamental outcomes:

- **Health:** How did design decisions support physical, cognitive, and social well-being (i.e., access to daylight, acoustic comfort, material selection, opportunities for movement and social engagement)?
- **Safety:** How did the environment protect residents while maintaining autonomy and dignity (i.e., circulation patterns, staff visibility, furniture arrangements, door operations, and life-safety strategies that allow residents to navigate confidently without feeling institutionalized)?
- **Welfare:** How did inclusive and equitable design principles perform in practice (i.e., spaces are accessible and comfortable across changing levels of acuity, ease of accessing outdoor environments, and a residential-scale setting that accommodate diverse physical and cognitive abilities)?

Before returning to The Grand at Broomfield, our team established benchmarks by revisiting the project's original design objectives and operational priorities. Equally important was determining how information would be gathered. Staff interviews, resident conversations, and structured observations each reveal different aspects of how a community functions. No single method

tells the complete story, and the most valuable conversations often extend beyond whether occupants simply "like a space." Preparing thoughtful questions and creating an environment where participants feel comfortable sharing candid feedback are essential to obtaining meaningful insights. The original design drivers we created years earlier became the framework for our POE questions:

■ **Are spaces fostering wellness and social interaction between residents?** The community was designed around a variety of gathering spaces, rather than relying on a single amenity. A mix of dining venues and activity areas create opportunities for residents to socialize according to their comfort level and interests. During the POE, staff noted high utilization of these



The post-occupancy team revisited the project a year after completion.

shared spaces and that residents naturally gravitate toward areas with activity and visual connection. Smaller lounges prove successful in encouraging spontaneous conversations, while remaining equally comfortable for residents who prefer quieter settings. The variety of social spaces also provides program flexibility, allowing multiple activities to occur simultaneously.

■ **Were strong indoor and outdoor connections created that maximize the use of natural light?** Access to daylight and nature (large windows, carefully positioned amenities, and multiple outdoor destinations) were intended to reinforce circadian rhythms. The POE confirmed that these interior/exterior connections are among the community's greatest strengths. Residents move naturally between environments, increasing opportunities for recreation and conversation. Sunlit lounges are occupied throughout the day, and courtyards are active extensions of interior living spaces. Additional shaded seating areas, seasonal planting for year-round interest, and expanded opportunities for outdoor programming could further increase use.

■ **How effectively does the building connect residents to the surrounding neighborhood?** Older-adult communities often risk becoming inward-focused environments, separated from the neighborhoods they

inhabit. One of the design goals was to create a community that felt intrinsically connected to its surroundings. Early conversations focused on a scale, material palette, and overall design language that was a natural extension of the neighborhood. Local artwork displayed throughout the building contributes to a stronger sense of place. During the POE, we learned continued development outside of The Grand at Broomfield is strengthening pedestrian connections to adjacent trails, parks, and nearby destinations.

■ **Does the community maintain a cohesive residential character across assisted living and memory support?** Perhaps the most consistent feedback centered on the community's residential atmosphere. From exterior architecture to interior finishes, furnishings and appropriately scaled living spaces, the design intentionally avoids institutional cues while also supporting operational needs. Residents and families describe the environment as warm, welcoming and homelike. Staff note that residential-scale living and dining spaces feel comfortable for daily use and help reduce anxiety among new residents transitioning into community living. These design moves extend consistently across assisted living and memory support acuties, creating

Post-Occupancy continued, Page 73

It's not just about what we build.
It's about how we build it —
side by side, every step of the way.

We're here for the journey.



Building Authentic Partnerships®





elements

slate + 3d-identity + constructive + floorz + peoplelab

design the experience

The best environments are intentional—
bringing strategy, design, and delivery together to create
experiences that work, wherever they happen.

elementsofplace.com

Severance Middle School

GH²hipps
CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

PROVIDING AN EXCEPTIONAL BUILDING EXPERIENCE

Greenwood Village • Colorado Springs • Fort Collins • Wyoming

Since 1952

www.GHPhipps.com

303.571.5377

Anythink Nature Library

*Thank you to
our sponsors*



SWINERTON

TITLE

**Turner
nti**



**Gresham
Smith**

Genuine Ingenuity

BITES & BOOZE

rand*
CONSTRUCTION



CoStar™

REFEREE



MOA ARCHITECTURE

DJ

Court Sponsors

BNB
BNBuilders



PROVIDENT
CONSTRUCTION CO.



Engineers+
Consultants



CONSTRUCTION

MERCHANTS & Co

Steelcase

Howell
Construction



RULON
INTERNATIONAL


CORENET
GLOBAL

Colorado
Chapter

SECURE YOUR TEAM

— *and join us on* —

SEPTEMBER 17TH | 1-6PM

— *for the* —
**15TH ANNUAL
BOCCE
BASH**

*We are excited to announce
our new venue!*

INFINITY PARK

4500 EAST KENTUCKY AVE., GLENDALE

FOOD, DRINKS, BOCCE & MORE!
SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE!

REGISTRATION
— *is open!* —

COLORADO.CORENETGLOBAL.ORG

Community Engagement: Community Planning Begins with Engagement

Successful community planning begins with meaningful engagement. We understand that no two engagement efforts are the same. Rather, each requires a tailored approach that respects the unique context of the community we're serving. We're committed to collaborating with diverse communities to create customized and authentic strategies that invite and inform.



Chris Moore
Chief Executive
Officer, DTJ Design

Our recent Colorado projects have reinforced four key lessons for effective community planning.

■ **Meet people where they are.** Effective engagement starts with understanding your audience: their history, culture and traditions. Tailoring outreach to meet people where they live and work leads to greater participation and more meaningful feedback.

In line with [Broomfield's Open Space, Parks, Recreation, and](#)

[Trails Plan](#), pop-up events at local spots like farmers markets and recreation centers, along with QR codes placed at over 30 high-traffic locations (e.g., playgrounds and trailheads), simplified residents' access to wayfinding and Broomfield's identity. The combination of in-person and digital outreach bridged the gap between data collection and public involvement, affirming decisions were grounded in measurable data.

• *Dacono's Music & Spirits Festival* served as a strategic engagement opportunity for the [City Center Vision Plan](#), allowing us to connect with over 5,000 attendees in a celebratory setting. By hosting the festival at Centennial Field, which is within the planning area, residents had a unique chance to give input while experiencing the space on-site.

■ **Embrace interactive participation methods.** People invest more thoroughly when participation is interac-



Broomfield Days draws 35,000-plus residents for the city's largest annual festival of community celebration and entertainment.



The Erie Community Open House engaged residents in shaping future parks and recreation through interactive mapping activities.



The Dacono Music & Spirits Festival features live music, food trucks and family activities at Centennial Field.



Dacono residents provided input on the City Center vision concepts and design elements at the Open House.

tive rather than passive. Moving away from a formal format to a flexible, drop-in style lets people contribute freely and makes the process less intimidating.

Open house events that incorporate a casual atmosphere, interactive map features, and engaging visuals encourage purposeful discussions and natural flow. Easy-to-understand walkable maps helped members physically identify where they live or work, personalizing conversations in the [Erie Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Strategic Plan Update](#). Activities also included sticky-dot prioritization to visualize programming preferences, marble jars to prioritize funding, and coloring stations for children.

- **Laying the groundwork:** The success of the interactive activities doesn't happen by chance. To make the experience accessible, board displays must be designed with clarity and comprehensibility: clear plan graphics, photos, and digestible content. <Dacono's Open House> proved that format of physical space also makes a difference. When participants enter, it's crucial to first outline goals, key questions, timelines, and essential details. People need to understand the *what, when, where, how and why*, including the intent of the project and event and what kind of contribution is needed from them.

- **Ensure inclusivity through multilingual, generational and cultural outreach.** Language should never be a barrier to participation. Offering materials and opportunities in multiple languages demonstrates respect for all voices. However, it goes beyond translation. Equally important is the accurate interpretation of spoken thoughts and cultural context. Successful engagement across languages requires specialized expertise to establish that both translation and interpretation are handled and documented with accuracy.

Multilingual engagement was essential for *Dacono's strategy* as 29% of the population identified as Hispan-

ic or Latino. Materials, including the website, surveys, project timeline, FAQs and event signage, were translated to Spanish. Partnering with the *Pride of the Glens*, we held targeted outreach events, including a focus group at the Pride of the Glens potluck and a pop-up booth at the Hispanic Heritage Celebration.

Recognizing *Broomfield's demographics* – where the second-largest racial group is Hispanic (13%), followed by Asian (7%) – we emphasized equity and inclusion by offering surveys, [executive summaries](#), and [project pages](#) in five different languages: English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese and Hmong. A second session was organized specifically for Spanish speakers to review the recommendations from the first session, contributing to the “Community Values and Priorities Conclusions.”

- **Engage broadly, include deeply.** Adapting to a range of audiences keeps relevance and accessibility front and center.

- **Agency staff members:** Stakeholders vary widely, including business owners, HOA representatives, arts and cultural organizations, mobility advocates, youth sports leagues and others. The goal is to be as broad and diverse as possible – including those traditionally underrepresented – to reflect the full range of community values, priorities and lived experiences.

During *Erie's PROST project*, we conducted a Cultural Academy event for the Erie staff. Staff members who will actually implement the PROST plan need their own pathways that acknowledge their unique expertise. This unified staff and public perspectives, addressing maintenance and operational concerns to confirm plans are not just publicly popular but also operationally feasible.

- **Focus groups:** Focus groups were integral toward

Community Engagement continued, Page 73



The Dacono Hispanic Heritage Celebration celebrated Hispanic culture with music, dance, food, and City Center visioning activities.



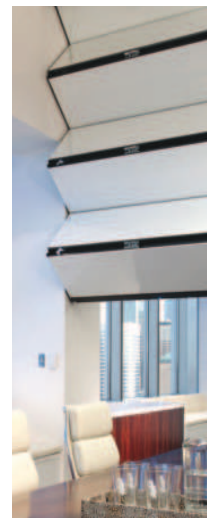
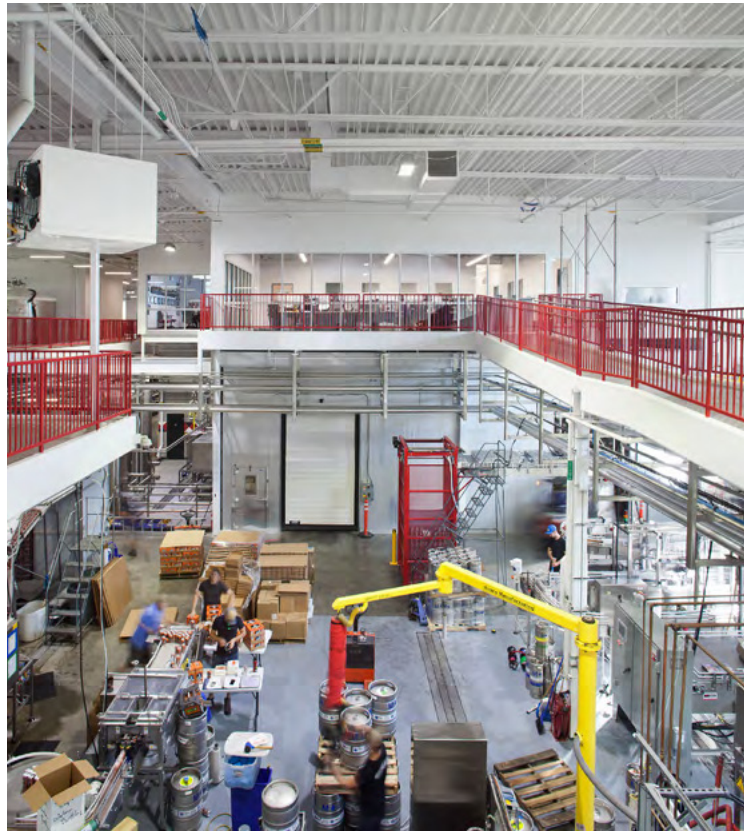
Erie parks and recreation staff shared internal perspectives on community programming at the Cultural Academy.

BUILD WHAT MATTERS

Manufacturing *Matters*.

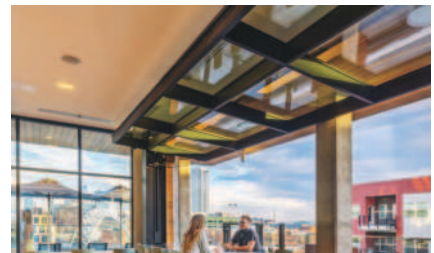
We build the facilities that
keep Colorado industries
moving forward.

 **SAUNDERS**
www.saundersinc.com



powersproducts.com

DAYLIGHTING • FIRE + SMOKE SEPARATION • SPACE FLEXIBILITY
303-791-1010





Cowboy Moving.com

DEPENDABLE LOCAL MOVING

303-789-2200

Certainty Eclipses Speed as Top Driver of Colorado Construction Strategy

According to DPR's Q2 2026 Market Conditions Report, Colorado healthcare systems and developers are increasingly prioritizing predictability over speed, a shift that is reshaping how complex projects are planned and delivered.

■ **What has business looked like for the company over the past year, and what's the outlook more broadly?** Our work in Colorado has reflected the steady strength of the broader Denver and Mountain States market. While larger national markets often generate more headlines, what stands out here is consistency, particularly in healthcare and technically complex projects such as advanced technology, aerospace and manufacturing.

A significant portion of our regional expansion has been driven by deep relationships with healthcare systems like AdventHealth, Craig Hospital and CommonSpirit, along with a focus on projects that require exceptional coordination and technical execution. As a self-perform contractor, we manage critical scopes of work with our own workforce, providing greater control over quality, schedule and outcomes.

Looking ahead, healthcare remains the region's strongest driver, with additional momentum in advanced technology and specialized manufacturing. The pipeline is strong, but owners are becoming more selective and deliberate about where and how they invest, which is shaping a more disciplined and strategic growth environment.

■ **What are the implications of the shifts happening in the construction industry?** In Colorado, the challenge is delivering increasingly complex projects in a constrained environment. Labor availability, geographic spread, and logistical challenges all play a role in how projects get built here.

In healthcare, for example, the tolerance for disruption is extremely low. We're seeing owners prioritize outcomes over speed, particularly when projects are being built adjacent to or within active hospital campuses. That makes predictability critical.

This reflects a broader national shift: Schedule certainty has overtaken speed as the top priority. It's pushing more decisions earlier in the process, from procurement to staffing strategy, and reinforcing the importance of integrated delivery teams that can align early and reduce risk before construction begins.

■ **What's next for the regional construction industry?** Colorado is entering a phase of steady, disciplined expansion. The fundamentals, like population growth,



Scott Miller
Mountain States
Lead, DPR

DPR Q2 2026 Market Conditions Report: Key Takeaways

Industry Insights

- Schedule certainty has eclipsed speed as the top priority, especially in complex environments like healthcare and occupied campuses, where early decisions drive outcomes more than late acceleration.
- Integrated delivery and early collaboration consistently outperform traditional models, reducing late-stage redesign, minimizing disruption, and improving reliability amid labor, regulatory and operational constraints.

Mitigated Supply Chain

- The supply chain is functioning, but volatility has shifted from availability to pricing, driven by fuel costs, tariffs, geopolitics, and concentrated demand in power- and data intensive sectors.
- Early planning and visibility are now the primary risk mitigators, as procurement timing, material sourcing, and logistics decisions made upstream increasingly determine cost and schedule certainty downstream.

National Market Insights

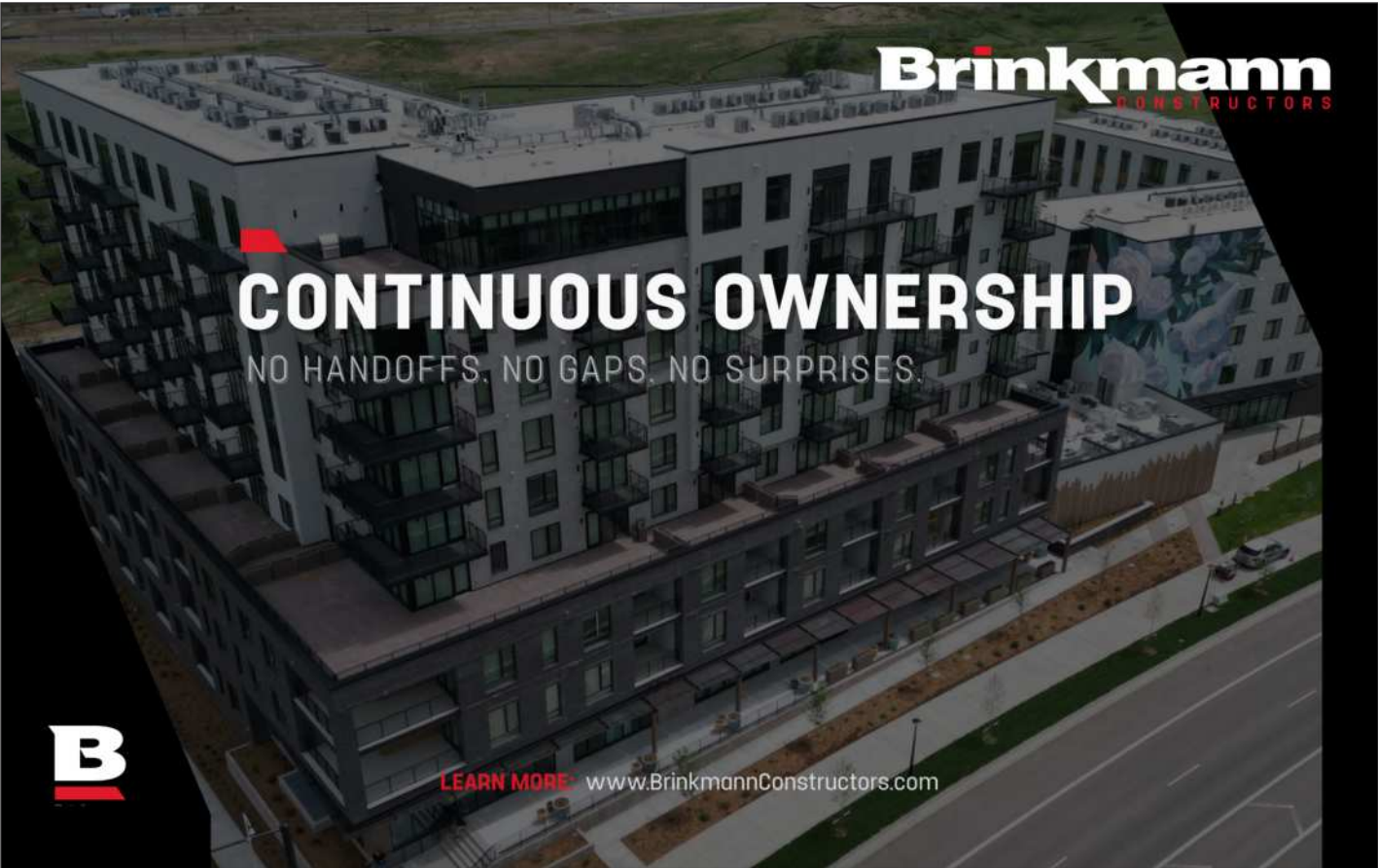
- Life sciences: Manufacturing remains the anchor as companies advance capacity tied to long term pipelines and the approaching patent cliff, while R&D investment stays targeted amid funding and real estate headwinds.
- Healthcare: Capital investment is returning, but projects face stricter scrutiny—favoring strategies that improve speed to care, operational performance, and delivery certainty rather than growth alone.
- Commercial: Demand favors high quality, experience driven assets, while aging inventory faces repositioning pressure — creating opportunity for adaptive reuse, renovation, and phased upgrades.
- Higher education: Deferred maintenance and research facilities dominate near term activity as institutions balance financial pressure with unavoidable infrastructure and STEM investment needs.
- Advanced technology: Advanced manufacturing and data centers remain strong, but success increasingly depends on early alignment, power strategy, labor planning, and disciplined execution rather than rapid expansion.

healthcare demand, and ongoing investment in infrastructure, remain strong, but the projects themselves are becoming increasingly more complex and specialized.

For us, that means continuing to lead in healthcare while expanding in adjacent markets like advanced technology and aerospace, where similar levels of precision and coordination are required.

We're also seeing a shift in owner and client expectations. Strategies like prefabrication, early collaboration, and integrated delivery are no longer differentiators; they're expected. In a market where labor and logistics can be challenging, these approaches are essential to maintaining schedule and quality.

Ultimately, success comes down to delivering greater certainty. Whether delivering a major hospital expansion, a highly technical facility or renovations in operational environments, clients are looking for partners who can provide confidence in the outcome.



Brinkmann
CONSTRUCTORS

CONTINUOUS OWNERSHIP

NO HANDOFFS. NO GAPS. NO SURPRISES.



LEARN MORE: www.BrinkmannConstructors.com



ELITE
SURFACE
INFRASTRUCTURE



ASPHALT PAVING & MILLING



EARTH & UTILITY



CONCRETE SERVICES

ELITE SURFACE INFRASTRUCTURE

Over 140 years of combined
experience in heavy civil
construction

ESI is the largest company in
Colorado that self-performs
asphalt, earthwork, utilities and
concrete for new and maintenance
commercial, municipal and
government projects.

We are uniquely resourced to
deliver quality service on your
timeline and within your budget.

Leverage over a century of
expertise to increase the lifespan of
your projects.



ELITESI.COM ► INFO@ELITESI.COM | 303-841-0292 115 | INVERNESS DRIVE EAST, SUITE 100 | ENGLEWOOD, CO

Construction Industry is Combatting Labor Shortages

Hiring for any position in the construction industry is competitive in this market. It seems counterintuitive because there are some companies whose workforce is contracting. However, there are larger macroeconomic forces in play that are leading to an ongoing labor shortage, particularly in skilled labor. In 2025 the Association of General Contractors conducted a national survey that found 92% of construction firms reported difficulty hiring, and 45% of firms reported labor shortages that are causing [project delays](#). In Colorado, the industry faces an estimated deficit of 30,000 workers for all job types, a gap that will widen as the construction sector is [estimated to grow 32% by 2030](#).

According to the [economic forecast by the state of Colorado](#), the “labor market is declining in Denver and Boulder County as people leave the area due to higher housing prices and a higher cost of living.” Despite wage growth increasing year over year, people are permanently leaving Colorado’s work force, a phenomenon that has continued since COVID’s great employment exit. In addition, the rate at which people are retiring from the workforce far exceeds that of those entering it. This is particularly true in skilled labor, where [one in five construction professionals is over the age of 55](#). Although there is a growing movement that extolls education in the trades for young professionals, there is still a cultural divide regarding the importance of this work. Our society cannot optimally function unless we have skilled electricians, plumbers, carpenters and laborers. The increased demand for data centers, chip manufacturing projects and power plants has left a deficit in the available skilled workforce. This coupled with strict immigration policies and an aging workforce that is retiring in record numbers has left the construction industry with a substantial labor shortage.

Despite the number of projects decreasing in the Denver metro area and beyond, there are larger and more complicated projects that are dominating the landscape. Projects such as data centers, industrial buildings, and hospitals are employing most construction professionals and skilled workers. For example, “Demand for electricians capable of precision wiring has surged due to the [rapid increase in data center construction](#).” In addition, the Denver International Airport infrastructure expansion has consumed available labor. Although the volume of nonresidential projects has declined year over year, the average size of projects has increased substantially.



Erica Arnold
Talent Acquisition
and Development,
PG Arnold

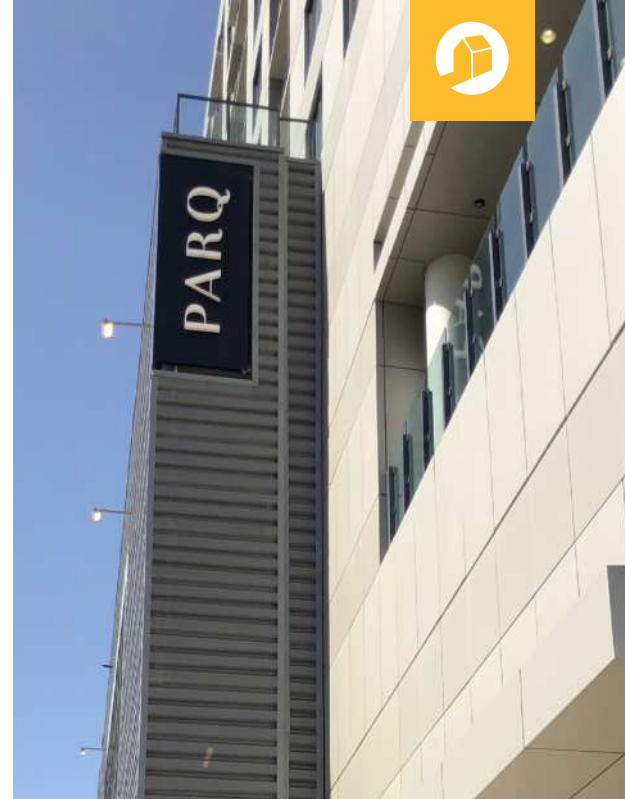
Stricter immigration policies have exerted additional compression on the construction labor force. A new study by Construction Coverage, a construction research company, found immigrants make up 27.7% of Denver’s construction workforce, higher than the national average of 26%. Statistics show that over half of drywallers, roofers, painters and laborers are foreign-born, which is [far above the overall industry average](#). Although most of these workers can work legally in the United States, immigration laws can change daily, affecting Temporary Protected Status visa holders, people seeking asylum, and those waiting for a permanent residency visa.

Understaffed jobs can lead to burnout, which can yield turnover. This creates inefficiencies, safety risks, compromises quality and leads to higher costs. So, what is to be done? There needs to be a shift in how our society views working in the trades, or construction in general. Statistically the construction industry offers the highest wages for undergraduates entering the workforce. According to Colorado State University, 97% of its May 2026 Construction Management graduates had secured a job before graduation. The average [base salary in Colorado](#) was \$81,542. In 2024 in Colorado, “The [overall median wage for construction and extraction occupations](#) is approximately \$28.80 per hour, with average skilled trade earnings ranging from \$30 to over \$46 per hour.” It is important to note that the current minimum wage is \$15.16 per hour.

Colorado school districts are offering career and technical training and changing the perception of working in construction, especially in skilled labor. Programs like Jefferson County’s Warren Tech and Boulder County’s Apex allow high school students to get formal classroom training, hands-on experience and opportunities for employment after graduation. With a four-year bachelor’s degree costing well over six figures, technical training can offer a higher return on investment with immediate and almost guaranteed employment at a competitive wage.

In 2025 [Colorado’s construction industry](#) consisted of 8.3 million workers and contributed \$33 billion (5.8%) of the state’s gross domestic product of \$569 billion. This is not insignificant. As an industry we must continue to develop and invest in those entering the construction workforce and engage, train, and retain our current employees. AI is coming for a lot of jobs, but it cannot install an HVAC system, put up drywall, or paint trim – not yet. \\

erica.arnold@pgarnold.com



ARTHOUSE DESIGN

PARQ ON SPEER

SIGNAGE | EXPERIENTIAL GRAPHIC DESIGN | WAYFINDING

Mid-Century Modern(ization)

Decision-making for school districts facing aging facilities

Many Colorado school districts are managing a portfolio of aging facilities built between the 1950s and 1980s that now need significant work. Building systems and finishes have reached the end of their useful lives, and spaces designed decades ago often no longer align with how districts want to teach today. The choice to renovate or replace an aging facility isn't always clear-cut – districts benefit from a robust decision-making process to determine the best use of resources as they modernize their campuses.



Joel Williams
Studio Director,
Quattrocchi Kwok
Architects

■ **Educational vision.** School districts should be intentional about how they want students to learn. Educational models range from traditional lecture-based instruction to small learning communities to project-based learning and beyond, and each requires a different kind of space to fully engage with the pedagogy. Clarifying the intended model first lets architects test whether the existing space can accommodate it – and if not, what needs to change.

■ **Master planning.** Before allocating resources to specific projects, districts also need to verify the condition of existing facilities. On older campuses, building systems and finishes will likely need significant repair or replacement, and newer systems tend to be more energy efficient – reducing both operating expenses and long-term maintenance costs. With conditions understood, districts can identify specific projects for each facility and use a master plan to prioritize resources. District need almost always outpaces budget, so a method blending quantitative data with subjective observation is essential to determining which projects deliver the greatest value.

In my practice we help manage this prioritization with a system called Indicators of Quality (IoQ), which is based on scoring a facility or project across six criteria: *supports educational programs; community support; learning environment; maintenance and operations; safety and security; and code compliance.*

The IoQ system blends objective measurement with subjective observation into a system that communicates priorities clearly to stakeholders. Districts can weight individual IoQs to reflect their own goals – one might weight “learning environment” higher to prioritize technology-forward renovations, while another prioritizes “safety and security.” The system stays consistent while flexing to each district’s needs. And by comparing scoring results across a campus or district, the projects that



Tim Maloney with Technical Imagery Studios
The complete campus replacement project for Lake Elementary School in San Pablo, California, included a new front entrance to improve safety and security.

have the potential for greatest impact aligned with district goals rise to the top.

■ **To renovate or replace.** This is the key question, and the answer is not always straightforward. Renovation is often less expensive than full replacement, but lower upfront cost doesn't always mean better long-term value. A few criteria help guide the decision:

- **Educational vision:** If the current space configuration supports the district's educational vision, renovating existing systems and finishes may be the right call. If a different learning model requires significant reconfiguration, replacement may be the better path.

- **Safety and security:** Perimeter fencing can typically be added independent of other work, but building a single point of entry may be more involved. Older campuses often centralized administrative offices in a way that doesn't support a new “front door,” and relocating them can require enough work to favor new construction.

- **Accessibility:** Older facilities frequently lack accessibility features now expected as standard. Ramps, elevators and properly sloped walkways can often be added to an existing campus, but accessible clearance at doors and restrooms sometimes needs more space than older buildings provide.

- **Sustainability:** Creative reuse of existing buildings is the most sustainable option, since it preserves structures rather than sending them to a landfill. Reducing carbon footprint and energy use lowers both operating costs and environmental impact, but construction waste is just as important a factor. Envelopes and systems can often be upgraded – but some facilities can meet high-ef-



Tim Maloney with Technical Imagery Studios
Historic renovation and repurposing of a 1920s shop building for San Mateo High School in San Mateo, California, included seismic upgrades, new technology and added daylight.

efficiency goals without work extensive enough that replacement becomes the better option.

• **Regulatory review:** In some jurisdictions, renovations over a certain limit can trigger compliance with current codes, which are tightening everywhere. Stormwater management is a key consideration in Colorado, and re-

quirements are increasingly stringent, structural analysis models are more sophisticated, and whole-building energy modeling is now standard. It's common for what appears to be a simple renovation at the outset to grow into a much more complex project as the full expectations of building and planning departments are overlaid.

■ **Summary.** Whichever path a district ultimately chooses, the decision shouldn't come down to price alone. A renovation that fails to meet accessibility standards or a shifting educational vision isn't a bargain – it's a project that may need to be redone too soon. Conversely, replacing a building that only needs updated finishes and modest reconfiguration wastes both budget and a genuine opportunity for sustainable reuse. Weighing educational vision; safety and security; accessibility; sustainability; and regulatory review against a project's specific realities is what turns renovate-or-replace from a gut call into an informed decision. That same rigor, extended across an entire portfolio through tools like the IoQ system, gives districts a defensible roadmap to a revitalized, 21st-century learning environment that serves students and staff for years to come.\

joelw@qka.com

YOUR PROJECT. FINANCED BETTER.

Deploy Tax-Advantaged Capital
for Historic Redevelopment.

Unlock Low Cost, Long-Term Capital.



realestate@rethos.org

rethos.org

Historic Rehab Loans
by Rethos offers tax-
advantaged capital to
projects using state
historic tax credits.

- Any industry
- Any project
- Any size

Connect with us to
move your project
forward.



Plans, Policy, and the People Behind Them

Colorado is building the policy infrastructure for housing progress. Civic capacity makes it work better.

Colorado has done something genuinely difficult in recent years by building a serious, coordinated policy response to a housing crisis many states have addressed only at the margins. Proposition 123, passed by voters in 2022, redirected a fraction of state income tax revenue into a dedicated affordable housing fund generating roughly \$350 million per year.

Accompanying that initiative, Senate Bill 24-174, signed in 2024, requires local governments to complete housing needs assessments by the end of 2026 and housing action plans by 2028, with accountability built in through required progress reports.

The state created a Local Planning Capacity Grant to fund the staff positions communities need to execute plans they have already written. It released methodology guidance and assessment tools so that smaller communities without internal planning capacity can participate more fully. Across the state, communities are commissioning studies, hiring housing staff, opting into Proposition 123.

Though the work is hard, the investment in this policy infrastructure is real. Yet policy infrastructure, however well-designed, works best alongside civic capacity: the organized ability of local leaders to make decisions together. Communities that are developing that capacity will be most likely to translate a completed housing needs assessment into housing that actually gets built and into staying power over years.

The Proposition 123 experience illustrates the need for this capacity. The original funding mechanism required communities to increase their affordable unit stock by 3% annually to remain eligible for funding, a provision designed to hold local governments accountable for results. By April, upward of 90% of enrolled local governments were at risk of disqualification because they could not meet the target, in some cases because the goal exceeded the total number of building permits a community issues in a year.

The 90% at-risk number speaks to a gap between the laudable policy ambition and the community capacity level. The Legislature responded by adjusting the framework rather than abandoning accountability, and investing in civic capacity is a key ingredient to improving those outcomes.

Civic capacity is essential because, whether at the state level or the local, building housing requires execution involving relationships with the full range of ac-



Alex Dadok
Consultant, Alex
Dadok Consulting



Loveland Feed & Grain

tors who have to say yes for a project to happen: lenders, landowners, contractors, housing authorities, state agency staff and local elected officials.

It also requires the institutional memory to know what has been tried, what failed, and why, so that the next effort does not repeat the same mistakes. And it needs the staying power to absorb setbacks or political winds without losing momentum, because real estate development almost always takes longer and costs more than plans anticipate.

Loveland, profiled last year in these pages, demonstrated what civic capacity alone can build. A citizen group organized around an arts-based housing vision for the historic Feed & Grain site. They raised private funds, attended City Council meetings, and promoted the concept for years.

When the historic Feed & Grain proved too expensive to restore, civic leaders adapted and built 30 new live/work units on the same site first. They eventually completed the original goal of renovation in 2024. These leaders' work seeded the Colorado Space to Create initiative,

which brought affordable housing to artists in Trinidad, Ridgway, Carbondale, and Salida. Loveland's success demonstrates that civic capacity works and validates the state's instinct to invest in local government infrastructure to support it.

Glenwood Springs shows how this infrastructure can supercharge such civic capacity efforts. There, in 2022 the city and a local nonprofit convened an Ad Hoc Affordable Housing Committee, a diverse group of community stakeholders, to develop housing funding strategies and recommendations for City Council.

One committee member was so engaged that he ran for and won a seat on City Council and now serves as council liaison to both the Workforce Housing Fund Advisory Board and the Housing Commission. Other committee members stayed engaged through nonprofit boards, government agencies, and community organizations after the committee concluded.

The city of Glenwood Springs passed the voter-approved 2C lodging tax to fund workforce housing and established a Workforce Housing Fund Advisory Board. The city received a \$150,000 DOLA Local Planning Capacity Grant to hire a housing director to implement land-use code changes, fee waivers and the lodging tax strategies.

Glenwood Springs is now running multiple programs funded through that tax alongside state and federal dollars, helping dozens of families to access and remain in

affordable housing. This includes an 88-unit affordable apartment building as well as down payment and rental assistance, significant wins for a city with high housing costs and a large service industry workforce.

It makes sense that the state's policy and investment in planning work best in places where that civic capacity is organized and aligned. Communities need to be as intentional about building civic capacity as they are about completing their planning.

That means identifying who will own the implementation work, as well as cultivating and listening to a broader coalition that includes private-sector voices who understand housing as an economic development issue. It means making space for the civic leaders who are often doing this work informally, without title or budget, and finding ways to support and sustain them.

Colorado communities can change their operating environment if they remember that civic capacity is infrastructure that is as important as planning documents, government funding, or bricks and mortar. The state has done its part with policy and local government grants. Foundations, chambers, economic development organizations, and nonprofits that resource this capacity are not just supporting housing. They are building the infrastructure that makes every other thing work.\

alex@alexdadok.com





Acquilano

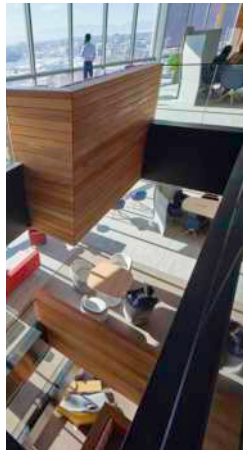
INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

40 years of design!



Since 1986, Acquilano has been designing the future of work. As we celebrate 40 years of serving Colorado's leading companies, we remain inspired by what's next and committed to creating exceptional workplace experiences.

acquilano.com / 303.893.5355



CELEBRATING 18 YEARS

CODA

CODA CONSTRUCTION GROUP

www.codacg.com | 303.757.3033



IIDA Rocky Mountain Chapter

Upcoming Events 2026



View all event details
on our website!



IIDA RockCon

The wait is over—RockCon is back.

RockCon is our signature vendor fair celebrating the incredible design community across the region. This event brings our community together for a day of connection, discovery, and inspiration.

Save the date and join us.
September 23rd at Reelworks.



IIDA Pret-a-Porter

Are you ready for it? Pret-A-Porter is back.

This is where product meets artistry—where materials meant for the built environment are reimagined, transformed, and reborn as runway-ready garments.

It's all happening November 6th.
Save the date!

P
R
E
T



Join IIDA today!

Love design? Love community?

Come volunteer with the IIDA Rocky Mountain Chapter! IIDA members are the best, brightest, and most forward-thinking interior designers, manufacturers, educators, students, and leaders in the industry.

Interested?

Reach out: office@iidarmc.org

Visit our website: iidarmc.org

IIDA

Rocky
Mountain
Chapter



Vertically Integrated

There's nowhere to grow but up in the



WORDS: SEAN VINCENT O'KEEFE

Bound by Colfax, Broadway and Speer, the Golden Triangle district of Denver is distinctive for a tri-sided border and an eclectic mix of real estate. Combining museums, galleries, restaurants and charming boutique spaces with high-rise multifamily residential, offices and governmental buildings, the Golden Triangle is one of Denver's most eclectic communities. Like people, places have purposes. The Golden Triangle has led many lives. Evolving from an enclave of Victorian homes built in the late 1800s, the neighborhood became known as "Automobile Row" when properties along Broadway were converted to auto dealerships, supply stores and surface parking lots. The Golden Triangle remained hardscrabble and low-slung for the most part until the early 1990s, when Denver embarked on a renaissance that has seemingly never ceased.

Sparked by Michael Graves' addition to the Denver Public Library, which opened in 1995, the Golden Triangle has since become a tapestry of culture, connectivity and a burgeoning community. With nowhere to go but up, prospects increased exponentially in 2021, when the Denver City Council approved zoning changes in the Golden Triangle allowing base-building heights to increase from 200 to 250 feet for standard buildings, and up to 325 for point towers that provide income-restricted housing or restore historic landmarks – the first such increase in building height restrictions in the neighborhood since 1994.

"We love the Golden Triangle," begins Kelly Kaine, director of development at Greystar. "It's such a unique intersection of civic, cultural, commercial and residential. Contextually, its modern design meets old school charm. In the past five years, new residential construction has grown enormously. Our newest development, The Parson, resides along Speer Boulevard, enjoying direct proximity to Cherry Creek and amazing views of downtown and the mountains."

Founded in 1993 in Charleston, South Carolina, Greystar is a global leader in rental housing, investment management, development and property management. In 2019, Greystar opened Parq on Speer, a 16-story luxury residential tower at Ninth and Speer. Seven years later, Kaine and her team proudly introduce The Parson, a 17-story high-rise at 10th and Speer.

"The Parson targets top-of-the-line luxury living. We believe these apartments are among the nicest in Denver. The Parson offers an incredible amenity package," continues Kaine, who doesn't mind sharing one of Greystar's keys

Golden Triangle

PHOTOS: Nic Rentfrow



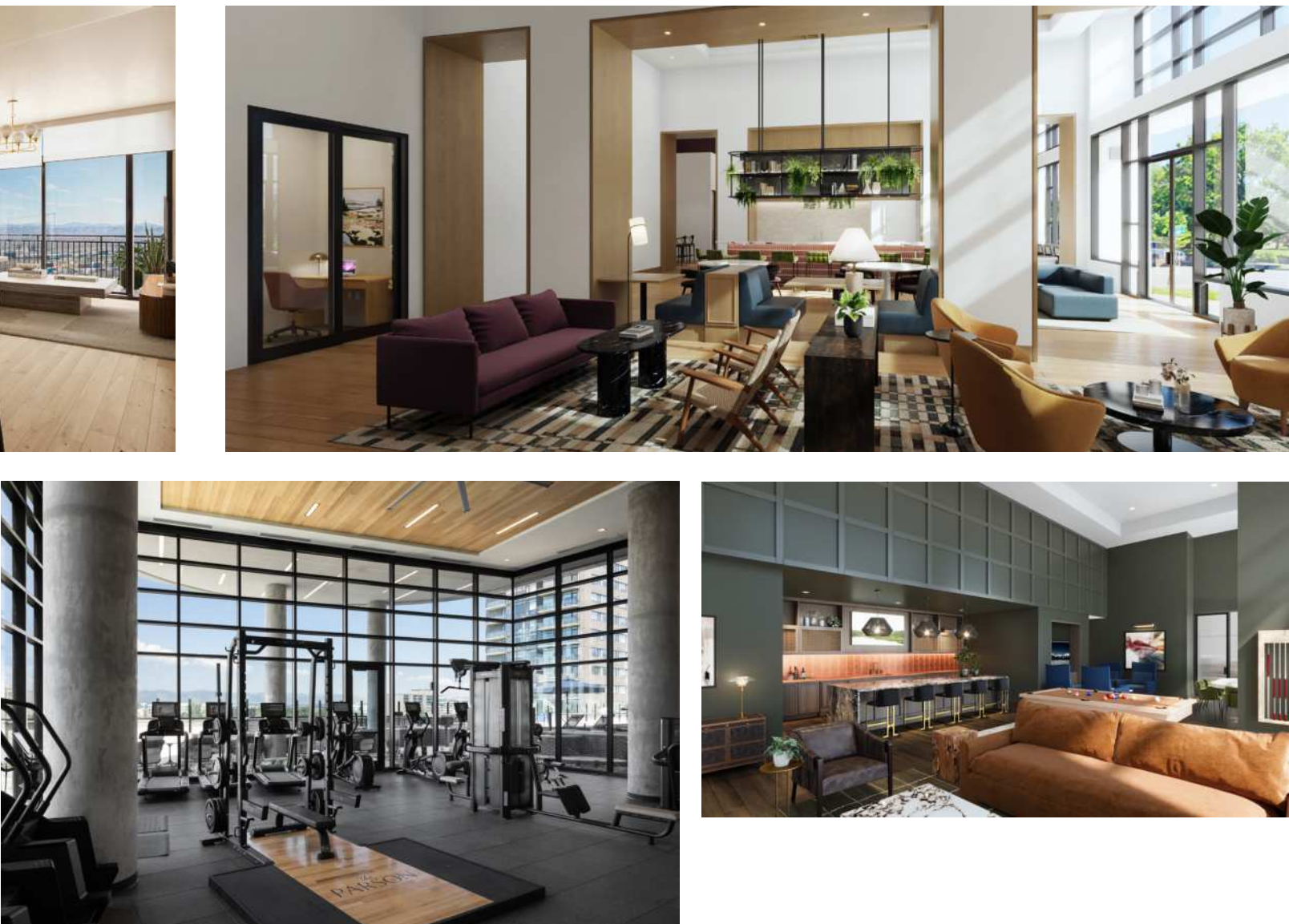
to success. “Greystar is vertically integrated. We have in-house expertise in general contracting and property management. Our development team leverages these local expert resources throughout each project to ensure holistic thinking informs everything we develop. The design firms we work with develop relationships with our construction team and property managers to maximize results.”

The firm chosen to design both The Parson and the adjacent Parq on Speer is Houston-based Ziegler Cooper Architects. Denny Simon, principal, was a key figure in the development of both projects.

“While Parq on Speer is clad in metal panels with red sandstone accents, for The Parson, we wanted a more residential feel. So, we chose brick as the primary building material with accents of metal,” says Simon. “The garage podium and residential tower façades facing downtown have a more traditional arrangement of symmetrical, punched window openings. By contrast, on the Cherry Creek façade, facing the mountains, we introduced a curve. This form is also on the opposing corner of Parq on Speer, where the two buildings interact.”

At 17 stories, The Parson adds vertical density to the Golden Triangle’s western edge. The property’s 309 residences range from studios to three-bedroom penthouses. The ground floor includes the main lobby, resident amenities, retail and a motor court. The parking structure fills the podium to level 4. Levels 5 through 17 are residential.

“We’ve divided the amenities package into multiple spaces. On level 1, there is an expansive



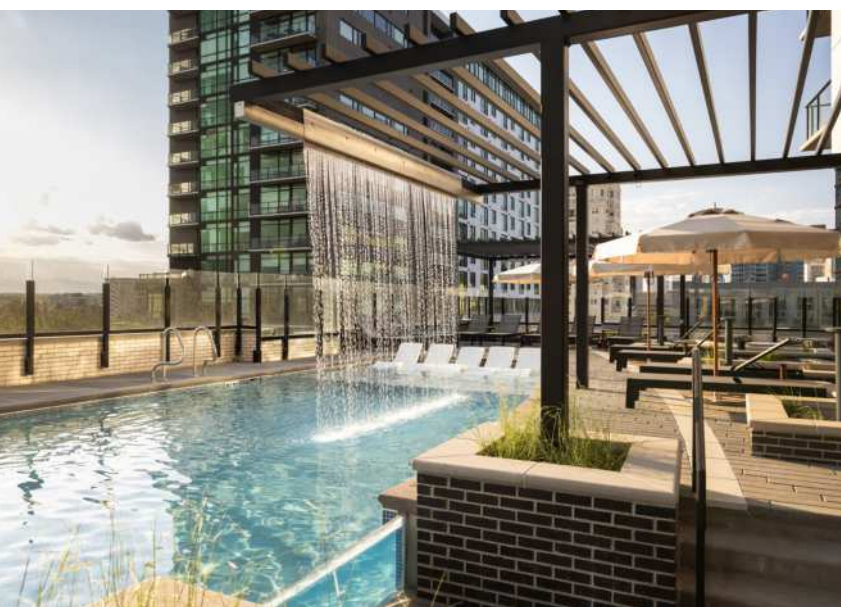
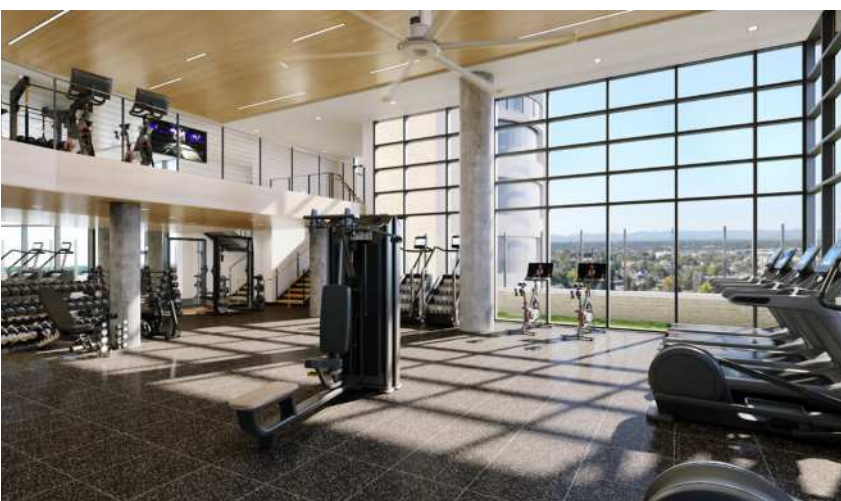
coworking space – nine fully furnished personal offices for rent monthly. The indoor-outdoor dog park is joined by a lobby bar and gathering area where the operations team will host events,” shares Simon. “On the north end of level 5, The Overlook club room features a gas range and a chef’s kitchen so residents can host gatherings. There is also an elegant cocktail lounge overlooking the pool deck with city and mountain views. Moving south on level 5, The Den offers a darker, moody sports bar vibe, with multiple TVs, a poker table, and a pool table. The wellness suite includes a sauna, towel warmers and sparkling water on tap. The gym is a two-story space that occupies the bullnose facing the pool deck, which is animated by fire pits, grills and a waterfall trellis. There is an additional south-facing courtyard on level 5, featur-

ing more grills, a pizza oven, soft seating areas and large-screen TVs.”

Simon echoes Kaine’s sentiment about the benefits of an integrated team.

“During design, we discovered an easement running through the center of the site. We had a clear-height design of 18 feet that had to be adjusted to 23 feet throughout the level 1 drive aisle,” says Simon. “That meant cutting 5 feet out of the spaces above. To resolve this, we elevated the pool deck on level 5 by 5 feet. Raising it also helped from a view and vista standpoint. That 23-foot ceiling height runs through level 1, so the lobby is impressive.”

Having full alignment with the GC and all facets of the property management team when accounting for those



5 feet saved a lot of time. Simon also illuminates the great design partnerships ZCA enjoyed with local landscape architect Norris Design, and the interior design team at ESG Architecture and Design of Minneapolis in making The Parson shine.

“Greystar strives for high-quality in every facet, which means top of the line in everything. From a design and finish standpoint, these apartments rival for-sale condominiums in quality. Hardwood floors throughout, gas stoves with an in-wall oven and microwave combo; many residences have a wet bar with a wine fridge. Rather than doing built-in desks, we introduced a new concept for the modern resident, an urban mudroom at the apartment entries with coat hooks, shelves, and benches,” continues Simon. “In the penthouse suites, which range from 3,000 to 3,500 square feet, we’ve gone further. The large, open kitchens feature Monogram appliances and a butler’s pantry. Penthouses include fireplaces, freestanding tubs with dual closets, wet bars, and access to the sky lounge, an amenity open only to penthouse residents. At 17 stories, the views from the sky lounge are truly spectacular.”

Despite the seamless working relationship during construction through Greystar’s construction arm, getting the project built wasn’t cut-and-dried.

“I forgot to mention that there was another building being built at the property line at the same time,” says Simon. “They were ahead of us, but the proximity between the foundations of the two buildings is a few inches. The coordination between the two projects was exceptional.”

Kaine is pleased.

“From a floor plan, finishes, and amenity standpoint, I think these are the nicest apartments in Denver,” she says, appreciating the time and talent it takes to comb through a seemingly unending array of considerations to come away with just the right alchemy.

“I’m proud of The Parson, and equally proud of the design, construction, and development teams that pulled this off. Considering the millions of work hours involved, whether in the office or in the field, it’s important to point out that a project like this becomes part of people’s lives over the years it takes to deliver,” concludes Kaine. “Now, we look forward to seeing The Parson’s first residents enjoy everything Denver has to offer. We all feel good about the contribution to context that The Parson makes in the Golden Triangle.”\



Design Rooted in Meaning

THE MARLOW | DENVER, CO
MULTIFAMILY

Spaces that inspire connection — through
beauty, intuition, and the feeling of home.

MULTIFAMILY | MODEL HOMES | STUDENT HOUSING | SENIOR LIVING | ACTIVE ADULT



@DesignByTRIO
TRIOdesign.com

More than a Library: Connecting with Nature

Located in Thornton, Anythink Nature is a first-of-its-kind library.



Anythink Nature, the first-of-its-kind library – now open in Thornton – focuses on helping visitors connect to the natural world.

The landscape design will rehabilitate Colorado's shortgrass prairie landscape, while planting beds adjacent to the building illustrate a wide range of native Colorado species. The project also features an indigenous garden which includes a variety of plantings significant to Native Americans.

Its entry is celebrated with a sculptural column that evokes natural imagery, native cottonwood trees, the shaping power of wind, and the wandering nature of the curious mind.

At the heart of the "With Nature" experience, a locally quarried red-stone vapor fireplace creates a warm, centering moment within the library. While the vapor flame offers the visual comfort and ritual of a traditional fire without producing heat, warmth is thoughtfully integrated into the heated cast-concrete hearth, inviting visitors to settle in and stay awhile. Framed by expansive north-facing glass, quiet seating, and views to the restored prairie and sky, the space encourages visitors to slow down, gather and reconnect with the natural



Cynthia Steinbrecher, IIDA
Principal, Davis
Partnership
Architects



INTERIOR PHOTOS: Kyla Chambers Photography



Nature is woven directly into the architecture through a ribbon of living plants that sweeps across the warm bamboo walls.

world. Rooted in the Environmental Kinship Model, the architecture reinforces the idea that humans are not separate from nature but cohabitants within it.

The library's central spine becomes a path of discovery, where architecture, landscape and moments of curiosity unfold together. Organic skylights draw daylight deep into the space, while flowing terrazzo patterns underfoot invite exploration and reveal 50 native Colorado animals cast in brass along the way. A sculptural sweep of greenery interrupts the warm bamboo walls, blurring the boundary between architecture and landscape.

Nature is woven directly into the architecture through a ribbon of living plants that sweeps across the warm bamboo walls, bringing movement, texture, and life into the heart of the library. Mirroring this gesture, a ribbon of windows curves along the opposite side, creating a quiet harmony between landscape and light, interior and exterior. Just beyond the glass, the open-air Kinship Garden continues the experience, allowing the architecture to become a threshold between the interior landscape and nature itself. Curving terrazzo paths and organic skylights carry that same meandering language throughout, reinforcing the Environmental Kinship idea that nature



Anythink Library's quiet seating, and views to the restored prairie and sky, the space encourages visitors to slow down, gather and reconnect with the natural world.

is not simply outside the building, but something we are continually in relationship with.

Locally sourced granite boulders are pulled directly into the architecture, appearing to crash into benches, interrupt the floor and become part of the furniture itself. Rather than simply referencing nature through pat-



The library's central spine becomes a path of discovery.



Boulders reinforce the idea that the library and landscape are not separate experiences, but one continuous environment.



The Dark Room offers a dramatic counterpoint to the library's light-filled spaces, creating a quiet retreat for reflection, imagination and connection.

tern or material, the design brings the raw landscape physically indoors, creating unexpected moments for sitting, touching, climbing and discovery. The boulders blur the line between built and natural, reinforcing the idea that the library and landscape are not separate experiences, but one continuous environment.

The Dark Room offers a dramatic counterpoint to the library's light-filled spaces, creating a quiet retreat for reflection, imagination, and connection. Curved walls wrapped in Shou Sugi Ban, the Japanese art of charring and preserving wood, envelop visitors in rich texture and the subtle scent of a campfire, while a constellation of tiny lights transforms the ceiling into a night sky. Inspired in part by Indigenous talking circles, its circular form creates an intimate place to gather, share stories, or simply sit in meditative silence, another expression of what it means to be With Nature.\\



Back to (Boulder) Basics: DTJ Knows People Learn Better Together

When DTJ began searching for its next Boulder location, we evaluated a range of spaces throughout Boulder County. The process wasn't simply about finding square footage. It was an opportunity to think carefully about the environment we wanted for DTJ's people and the culture we wanted to support, our two most important assets.

As we explored options, we kept coming back to the magic offered in downtown Boulder.

There's an energy in urban environments that is difficult to replicate. You encounter different people, different activities and a broader range of experiences throughout the day.



Lee Payne
Partner and
Director of
Architecture,
DTJ Design





For us, being downtown also creates opportunities for staff to walk to lunch, grab coffee together, ride their bikes to work, or take advantage of transit options. Those moments may seem small, but they help people build relationships beyond project work.

In many ways, our decision to return to downtown was rooted in a belief that connection matters. It isn't only connection to the city, but connection to each other and the work we do, and it's the design keystone of our new space.

For decades, DTJ has been an interdisciplinary practice where architects, landscape architects and planners work closely together on projects. One of the things many longtime employees talk about when reflecting on their careers is how much they learned simply by being around other people. They overheard project discussions. They asked questions. They became curious about a design challenge happening nearby and joined the conversation. Learning happened organically.

As workplace design has evolved in recent years, we've seen many offices move toward greater separation, whether through individual offices, virtual meetings, or work patterns that limit interaction. While those approaches have benefits, we wanted to preserve something that has always been central to DTJ's DNA: the ability to learn through osmosis.

Our new space was intentionally designed to create visual and audible connections between people of all levels and experience. People can see work happening around them. They can hear conversations about projects, and they can observe how others solve problems. Those everyday interactions become opportunities for mentorship and professional growth.

The design also reflects another long-standing part of our culture: The best idea wins.

Despite the digital tools available today, some of the most valuable design conversations still happen around a table. We remain a firm that hand sketches ideas, rolls out drawings, marks up plans, and works collaboratively through challenges. Because of that, we dedicated significant space to large charette tables, writable surfaces, and flexible meeting areas that support real-time creative collaboration.

Just as important as supporting collaboration was creating an environment where people feel energized every day. That

led us to move away from conventional office aesthetics in favor of natural materials, abundant plantings, hospitality-inspired furnishings, and spaces that encourage employees to step away from their desks and connect. Throughout the office, biophilic elements help reinforce that same sense of well-being. Integrated planters, wood accents and natural textures provide a connection to nature that can often be difficult to achieve in workplace environments.

One of the most important spaces in the office is our café. With large windows and views of the Flatirons, it's more than a place to eat lunch; it's where employees can take a break from their desk, have informal conversations, and connect with colleagues in a different setting. Some of the strongest workplace relationships are built in those unscheduled moments.

Shortly after moving in, we started seeing the benefits of these decisions. Teams are interacting more frequently. Employees are spending time together outside of formal meetings. Knowledge is being shared naturally across disciplines. The office feels active, collaborative and connected. The energy and enthusiasm are at a much higher level.

As designers, we spend our careers creating places for people. The move downtown gave us the opportunity to apply those same principles to ourselves. More than a new workplace, the office has become a reflection of what we believe design should do: Bring people together, support learning, and create meaningful connections.\

The Marlow: Inspired by Historic Colfax Avenue

Located at the crossroads of the upscale Park Hill neighborhood and historic Colfax Avenue, which Playboy Magazine once called “the longest, wickedest street in America,” The Marlow is a beacon for the vibrant energy that courses through this central Denver neighborhood. This colorful street is bursting with eccentric eateries, bars, historic music venues, boutique shops, and iconic pit stops that draw visitors and locals alike.

Much like Colfax and Park Hill, the magic of The Marlow is in the collision of past and future, of edge and sophistication. The palette pays homage to these contradictions with a striking pastiche of deep colors, rich textures, and classic patterns, layered with just enough grit to feel subversive. The resulting design offers a new twist on nostalgia, where warm and welcoming spaces are infused with the free-wheeling energy of Colfax.

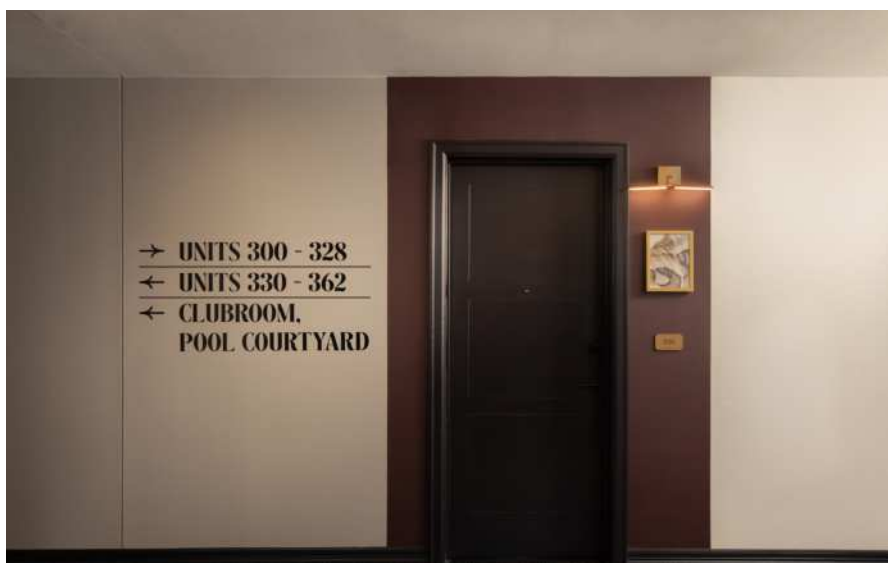


Angela Harris
Chief Executive
Officer and
Principal,
Trio Design



PHOTOS: Kyle Fitts Photography





→ UNITS 300 - 328
→ UNITS 330 - 362
→ CLUBROOM,
POOL COURTYARD





The Buddhist center reflects an approach to architecture that is grounded in environmental responsibility, long-term resilience, and respect for community use.

SGI-USA Denver Buddhist Center Blossoms Downtown

The SGI-USA Denver Buddhist Center represents more than a new building, it reflects an approach to architecture that is grounded in environmental responsibility, long-term resilience, and a deep respect for community use.

From the outset, the project was envisioned as a space that could support both spiritual

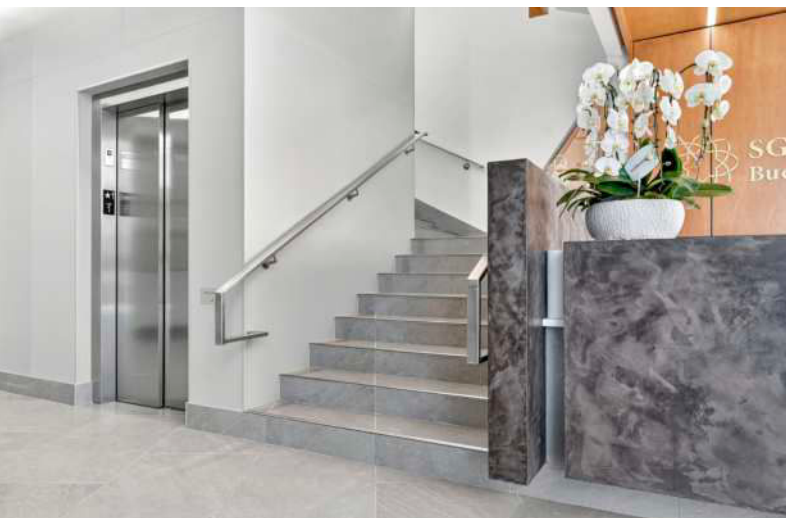


Peter Ewers, AIA
Ewers Architecture

practice and everyday gathering, while also responding thoughtfully to the challenges of urban construction and sustainability. Achieving that balance required a design approach that prioritized performance without compromising how the members interacted with space.

Selected for their commitment to sustainability, community development and reputation for building excellence, PG Arnold Construction completed the build-out on time and under budget.

The building operates entirely on electricity, eliminat-



The design approach prioritized performance without compromising how the members interacted with space.





Its design responds thoughtfully to the challenges of urban construction and sustainability.



High-performance buildings can be thoughtful, durable and deeply connected to the communities they serve.



PHOTOS: Inhouse Media

The building relies on roof-mounted photovoltaic panels to generate its annual energy needs.

tion, education, and other community uses.

Durability and resilience were also key considerations. The building envelope incorporates continuous insulation across walls and roof surfaces, improving overall energy performance and occupant comfort. At the ground level, materials were selected for longevity and protection, including graffiti-resistant finishes and laminated glazing that provides both impact resistance and sound mitigation from the traffic on Speer Boulevard.

The landscape design extends the project's sustainability goals beyond the building itself. Rain gardens filter stormwater and direct it to underground storage, where it is released gradually into the city's system. This approach reduces strain on municipal infrastructure while contributing to a more sustainable urban environment.

Projects like the SGI-USA Denver Buddhist Center demonstrate that high-performance buildings can also be thoughtful, durable and deeply connected to the communities they serve. When sustainability is approached as an integrated design priority, rather than an add-on, it enhances how a building functions, feels and endures over time.\

ing the use of natural gas, and it relies on roof-mounted photovoltaic panels to generate its annual energy needs. This strategy not only reduces the building's carbon footprint but also allows for long-term operational stability and efficiency.

Equally important was the quality of the interior environment. Natural light played a significant role in shaping the design. We added carefully proportioned roof overhangs and shade fins to bring in natural light while minimizing glare and unwanted heat gain. The result is a series of spaces that feel open, calm, and well-suited for medita-

The space can support both spiritual practice and everyday gathering.



Beyond the Bottle: The Future of Wine Retail is Built Around Community



Chestnut Cellars is opening this fall at FLORA in Denver's RiNo Arts District.

Most liquor stores follow a familiar script: endless shelves, thousands of labels and an expectation that customers already know exactly what they're looking for. For many people, that experience is intimidating rather than inviting. As consumer expectations continue to evolve, retailers are discovering that success depends less on carrying the largest inventory and more on creating a curated, memorable experience for their customers.

Today's consumers, particularly younger generations, are seeking places that offer connection, education and authenticity alongside the products they purchase. They want to understand the story behind a bottle, connect with the people and passion behind it, and feel confident exploring something unfamiliar. Retail environments that prioritize these experiences are increasingly becoming destinations rather than simple points of sale.

People don't remember every bottle they buy; they remember where they discovered it and who introduced them to it. The goal isn't simply to sell wine and spirits. It's to create a place where people feel welcome enough to ask questions, try something new, and become part of a community.

This shift is reshaping how independent retailers think about both business strategy and physical space.

Chestnut Cellars, opening this fall at [FLORA](#) in Denver's RiNo Arts District, was conceived around this very idea. Rather than functioning as a traditional liquor store, the shop was designed as a neighborhood gathering place where discovery happens naturally through conversation, education, and community programming.

The concept grew from the belief that wine should feel approachable rather than exclusive. While carefully curated products remain central to the business, the larger goal is creating an environment where customers feel comfortable asking questions, trying something new, and building relationships with local producers.

That philosophy influenced not only the retail concept but also the physical design of the approximately 600-square-foot space.

When a business is built around conversation rather than transactions, the architecture has to support that. Instead of asking how many shelves we could fit into the space, we focused on creating an environment that feels approachable, encourages people to linger and naturally brings people together.

Rather than maximizing inventory, the design balances industrial materials with warm textures, layered



Chris Gallegos
Founder, Chestnut Cellars



Marcus Appleby, AIA, NCIDQ
Commercial Innovation Leader, MOA Architecture

lighting and carefully curated displays that evoke the atmosphere of a modern wine cellar. Every design decision was intended to make discovery feel intuitive rather than overwhelming.

The best retail environments remove barriers. Whether someone is an experienced collector or buying their first bottle of wine, the space should feel equally welcoming. Architecture can communicate that before anyone ever speaks to an employee.

The design also intentionally supports programming beyond retail. Wine tastings, producer spotlights, and educational events require flexibility, allowing the shop to transform throughout the week from a boutique retailer into a neighborhood gathering place.

Those experiences are just as important as the products themselves. Wine has always been about bringing people together. Some of the best conversations happen over a shared bottle. We wanted Chestnut Cellars to create opportunities for those moments, whether someone stops in for five minutes or spends an evening at a tasting learning about a producer they've never heard of.

This philosophy reflects a broader evolution taking place within mixed-use developments. Increasingly, developers are looking beyond traditional retail tenants in favor of businesses that contribute to the identity of a neighborhood. Independent operators with strong local ties generate activity beyond standard business hours, encourage repeat visitation, and foster authentic community connections that national chains often struggle to replicate.

For FLORA, Chestnut Cellars represents more than another ground-floor tenant. It reinforces the development's broader vision of bringing together architecture, creativity, craftsmanship and local entrepreneurship to create an active destination within RiNo.

Architects are increasingly thinking about how commercial spaces contribute to the life of an entire building and neighborhood. Retail should activate the street, create opportunities for interaction and become part of the community's daily rhythm. When design and operations share that goal, the result is much more meaningful than a place to shop.

As Denver continues to grow, developments that successfully blend residential living with locally rooted businesses will help define the character of neighborhoods for years to come. Spaces that prioritize discovery, education and authentic human connection create value not only for tenants and customers, but also for the communities surrounding them.

Ultimately, we're both trying to create the same thing: One of us is doing it through wine, the other through architecture. But the goal is identical: Create a place where people want to gather, connect, and come back again.

In that sense, the future of retail may have less to do with what's on the shelves, and far more to do with the experiences that happen around them.\

SPECIALIZING IN HIGHLY CUSTOMIZED COMMERCIAL INTERIORS



HELLO@ELSYSTUDIOS.COM | 303.587.0350 | ELSYSTUDIOS.COM



SOLUTIONS & STRATEGIES FOR REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

WWW.LAIDESIGNGROUP.COM

303-734-1777



FOR DIGITAL PORTFOLIO



Continued from Page 17

ly standard, eliminating the learning curve for the framing crew while preserving the majority of the earthwork savings across the rest of the building.

■ **Does my wall slope too?** There are different ways to accommodate a sloped slab when it comes to concrete tilt panels around the building. Some prefer to follow the slope with rectangular panels and tilt the whole building. Some prefer to use rectangular panels but have some irregular panels at the ends of the long faces to ensure the ends of the building stay vertical.

The cleanest way in our experience is to execute a sloped slab in concrete tilt panels is to make each panel along the sloped slab a slight (we promise you can't see it) parallelogram. With this approach, the vertical edges of the panel

and vertical reveals stay true vertical. The horizontal edges and reveals follow the slope of the slab.

Experience matters with this approach, and it is important to confirm your design team and GC both have experience with this type of solution.

■ **Should I slope my slab?** For spec builders the question often is: "What is this loss in flexibility worth?" If it's worth less than the sloped slab saving, we often see the slab sloped, if not, it will generally remain flat. It's hard to have a rule of thumb here as the savings and value of flexibility will vary from developer to developer and site to site.

For build-to-suit, we would recommend evaluating the operations of the building and potential savings if the slab were to slope. It is not appropriate for all situations, but it is often an option worth considering.\

From the Ground Up

Continued from Page 21

users, off-site utility improvements, and the incorporation of an urban park.

While the leasing challenges facing the retail component continue to evolve, the broader redevelopment has already delivered meaningful value to the community. Streetscape improvements along West 58th Avenue have inspired adjacent property owners to invest in similar enhancements, creating a more cohesive and inviting public realm. As communities increasingly look to aging

commercial properties to meet housing demand, projects like Caroline Ralston Creek demonstrate that successful infill redevelopment requires more than a vision for higher density. It demands an integrated approach – one that brings together planning, entitlement strategy, infrastructure, design and community engagement from the outset. When those disciplines work in concert, redevelopment can transform underperforming properties into thriving neighborhoods that create lasting value for residents, municipalities and developers alike. \

Post-Occupancy

Continued from Page 35

continuity as residents' needs evolve.

Returning one year later to The Grand at Broomfield affirmed early design decisions, while some findings identified opportunities for refinement (both operational and physical) through relatively modest changes. By embracing POEs as a standard part of the design process, own-

ers can understand whether investments are achieving their intended outcomes, operators can receive insight into resident satisfaction and operational effectiveness, and design teams can walk away with measurable evidence to strengthen future decision-making.\

agunn@ozarch.com

Community Engagement

Continued from Page 39

Broomfield's goal of 40% Open Lands. Unlike meetings with agency staff or policy decision-makers, focus groups are structured, topical discussions involving eight to 12 participants representing different viewpoints on a shared issue. We convened specific subsets: recreation center users, cultural advocates, outdoor enthusiasts and developer/business groups.

Conversations between open space advocates and trail user groups highlighted how focus groups can surface both shared values and points of tension. While both support access to nature and the preservation of natural resources,

their priorities differ. Conservation-minded advocates may view trails as potentially harmful to sensitive areas, whereas trail users see them as essential for recreation and access. Bringing these perspectives together created space to acknowledge divergences while working toward alignment.

■ **Input shapes outcomes.** Transparency fosters trust and ownership by valuing public participation and incorporating it into the final plan. Tailoring approaches to each stakeholder group creates plans that are technically sound and aligned with the community's values and aspirations.\

cmoore@dtjdesign.com

The Value of Place

Why every square foot should strengthen the organization

For years, workplace conversations have revolved around space. How much do we need? How many offices fit? Can we reduce our footprint?

Those are important questions, but they are not the most important ones.

Today, organizations are asking something much bigger: How can our workplace help our business perform better?

That shift has fundamentally changed the role of the office. The workplace is no longer simply a place where employees complete individual tasks. It is where organizations build relationships, mentor future leaders, strengthen culture, create memorable client experiences and reinforce their brand. Every square foot has a job to do, and its value is measured by what it contributes to the organization, not simply by how efficient it is.

One of the biggest mistakes I see organizations make is establishing their program and square footage assumptions before having a deeper conversation about how they actually work and the culture they want to build.

The greatest value is created before a single floor plan is drawn. Through visioning, programming and comparative test fits, organizations can objectively evaluate multiple options before making a real estate decision. Sometimes the right answer is to remain where they are. Sometimes it is relocating to an entirely different building. The answer is different every time, but the process is always the same. Start by understanding the people, the culture and the business objectives, then let those



Sarah McGarry,
NCIDQ, IIDA, LEED AP
Co-Founder and
Principal,
Clic Design Studio



priorities drive the real estate strategy.

One thing I can confidently say after working with organizations across industries is that our clients are rarely asking for larger individual offices. Instead, they are asking for workplaces that help them recruit great people, strengthen collaboration, create better client experiences and build stronger cultures. They want environments that support focused work without sacrificing the spaces where relationships are built. That shift has fundamentally changed how we think about allocating space.

The Harris Law Firm's relocation into Denver's historic Granite Building on Larimer Square is a good example. Like many law firms, Harris previously occupied a traditional downtown high-rise where large private offices consumed much of the floor plate, and community spaces played a much smaller role. As the firm looked toward



its future, the conversation became much bigger than selecting a new address. It became an opportunity to rethink how the workplace could better support its people, strengthen its culture and elevate the client experience.

The Granite Building offered remarkable character, abundant natural light and a unique sense of place, but its 5,689-square-foot floor plates required a different planning strategy. Rather than trying to re-create the previous office, we asked a different question: What spaces would create the greatest value for the firm?

Ultimately, every attorney in the office three-plus days a week receives a thoughtfully planned private office of approximately 70 sf that supports focused work, confidentiality and day-to-day practice. We eliminated excess, not function. That decision allowed nearly 40% of the workplace to be dedicated to client experience, hospitality and community spaces. The result was not simply a better floor plan. It was a workplace intentionally designed around the moments that build stronger relationships, encourage mentorship and reinforce culture.

We're seeing the same philosophy applied across industries. Colorado Access, for example, used a smaller workplace footprint as an opportunity to create flexible training environments, gathering spaces and hospitality areas that better support both employees and the organization's mission. The organizations are different, but the strategy is the same. The goal is not to maximize square footage. It is to maximize the value that space creates for the people who use it.

That requires a different way of measuring success.

Real estate decisions are often evaluated by cost per square foot, lease rates or utilization metrics. Those numbers matter, but they tell only part of the story. The better question is whether the workplace is helping the organization achieve its goals. Is it supporting mentorship? Is it strengthening relationships across teams? Does it create an experience that reflects the company's values? Is it helping to attract and retain exceptional talent?

Those outcomes rarely appear on a spreadsheet, yet they often produce the greatest return on investment.

The most successful workplaces are not necessarily the ones with the most space or the newest finishes. They are the ones where every design decision supports a larger purpose, where individual work is balanced with meaningful opportunities for connection, and where the workplace actively contributes to the organization's success.

When every square foot has a purpose, the workplace becomes much more than an office. It becomes one of an organization's greatest competitive advantages.\\

Workplace Considerations: Designing for Neurodiversity is a Growing Priority

When it comes to designing for neurodiversity, it's important to remember that not all people want to work the exact same way; there is a growing need for spaces that can adapt to dark and quiet spaces; multipurpose spaces should support a variety of people and their preferences; and this is becoming a larger need in the office when comparing to your work-from-home environment.

Today's workplace design is increasingly centered on recognizing that not everyone works, learns, or experiences spaces in the same way. Designing for neurodiversity has become a growing priority, with organizations seeking flexible environments that support a range of work styles and preferences. This includes creating adaptable spaces that can accommodate quiet, darker settings as well as multipurpose areas that allow people to choose the environment that best fits their needs. As employees continue to compare the office experience to the comfort of working from home, providing greater choice and flexibility in the workplace has become more important than ever.



Kacy Rhoades
Studio Manager,
Interior
Architecture
& Design

Accessible amenities

1. Applicable for both building amenities or amenities within a specific project/suite.
2. Amenities that are flexible and have the ability to morph based on user size or culture.
3. Wellness focused and hospitality driven.
4. Embracing modern technology.
5. Experience-based designs to support the culture and brand.

6. Access to exterior space is key.

Accessible amenities are evolving beyond basic functionality to create inclusive and hospitable wellness-focused experiences. Whether at the building level or within an individual suite, amenities must be able to accommodate different user needs, cultural preferences, and physical requirements. Hospitality-inspired features, modern technology integration, and experience-driven design help strengthen a company's culture and brand while enhancing overall well-being. Access to outdoor spaces has also emerged as a key amenity, supporting both physical and mental health.



Signs of sustainability

1. A couple of years ago, AIA changed the code of ethics to include health and well-being.
2. Design while considering all five senses.
3. Variety of choice in a space leads to a more healthy and productive environment. COVID gave us personal choice in our work environment so the office cannot take that away.
4. Biophilia is recognized by the brain and promotes relaxation.

Sustainability is increasingly being viewed through the lens of human health and wellness. This shift was reinforced when the American Institute of Architects expanded its code of ethics to emphasize health and well-being in the built environment. Designers are now



Empathy in design

1. Increased need for education for clients – need to know the “why” so that they have safe and data-backed decisions.
2. The idea of choice in a space.
3. Matching tasks to the right environment.
4. Design of spaces that support people finding their purpose while also feeling comfortable.

Underlying all of these trends is a growing emphasis on empathy in design. Clients increasingly seek education and data-driven insights that help them understand the purpose and value behind design decisions. Designers are responding by creating environments that offer choice, align specific tasks with the most appropriate settings, and support people in feeling both comfortable and purposeful. Ultimately, empathetic design prioritizes the human experience, ensuring spaces not only perform well but also foster well-being, belonging, and meaningful engagement.\

considering all five senses when creating spaces and recognizing that providing a variety of settings and choices can lead to healthier, more productive outcomes. The workplace can no longer ignore the personal autonomy individuals gained during the pandemic, making flexibility and user choice essential components of successful design. Additionally, biophilic elements continue to gain prominence, as connections to nature are proven to promote relaxation and improve overall well-being.

Hospitality shaping commercial design

1. Continued influence of hospitality and residential design in workplaces and learning environments.
2. Creating meaningful destinations instead of the traditional focus of function and efficiency.
3. Renewed emphasis in comfort, social connection, and bold designs with curated details.

The influence of hospitality and residential design on commercial environments also continues to grow. Rather than focusing solely on function and efficiency, organizations are creating meaningful destinations that encourage engagement and connection. This trend has led to a renewed emphasis on comfort, social interaction, and bold, thoughtfully curated design details that make workplaces and learning environments feel more welcoming and memorable.



BUILDING DIALOGUE \

Development Construction Architecture Engineering Interior Design

Colorado's Premier Commercial Design and Construction Magazine

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

2026 AD RATES

Two-page spread	\$1,750
Full-page	\$995
Half-page	\$595

FREQUENCY DISCOUNT

Participate in three consecutive issues and receive the fourth issue at no charge.

PREPAY DISCOUNT:

Receive a 5% discount for four-time insertion orders prepaid prior to the first issue.

AD SPECIFICATIONS

- E-mail a high-resolution PDF file to Heather Lewis at hlewis@crej.com
- All images within the ad should be 300dpi or greater at full size; All fonts should either be embedded in the PDF document, or converted to outlines
- Ads should be setup using RGB color
- Please include www before your web address to properly link to your website (for example www.crej.com)

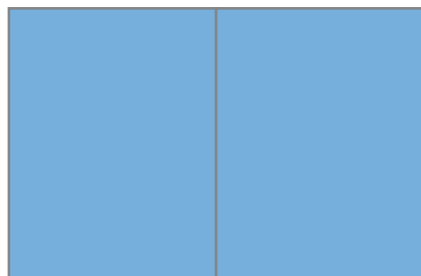
ISSUE DATE

March 2026
June 2026
September 2026
December 2026

MATERIAL DEADLINE

February 11
May 13
August 12
November 11

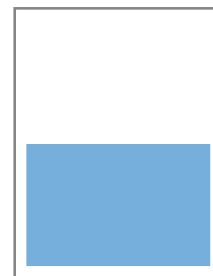
AD DIMENSIONS



TWO PAGE SPREAD
16.75" X 10.81"

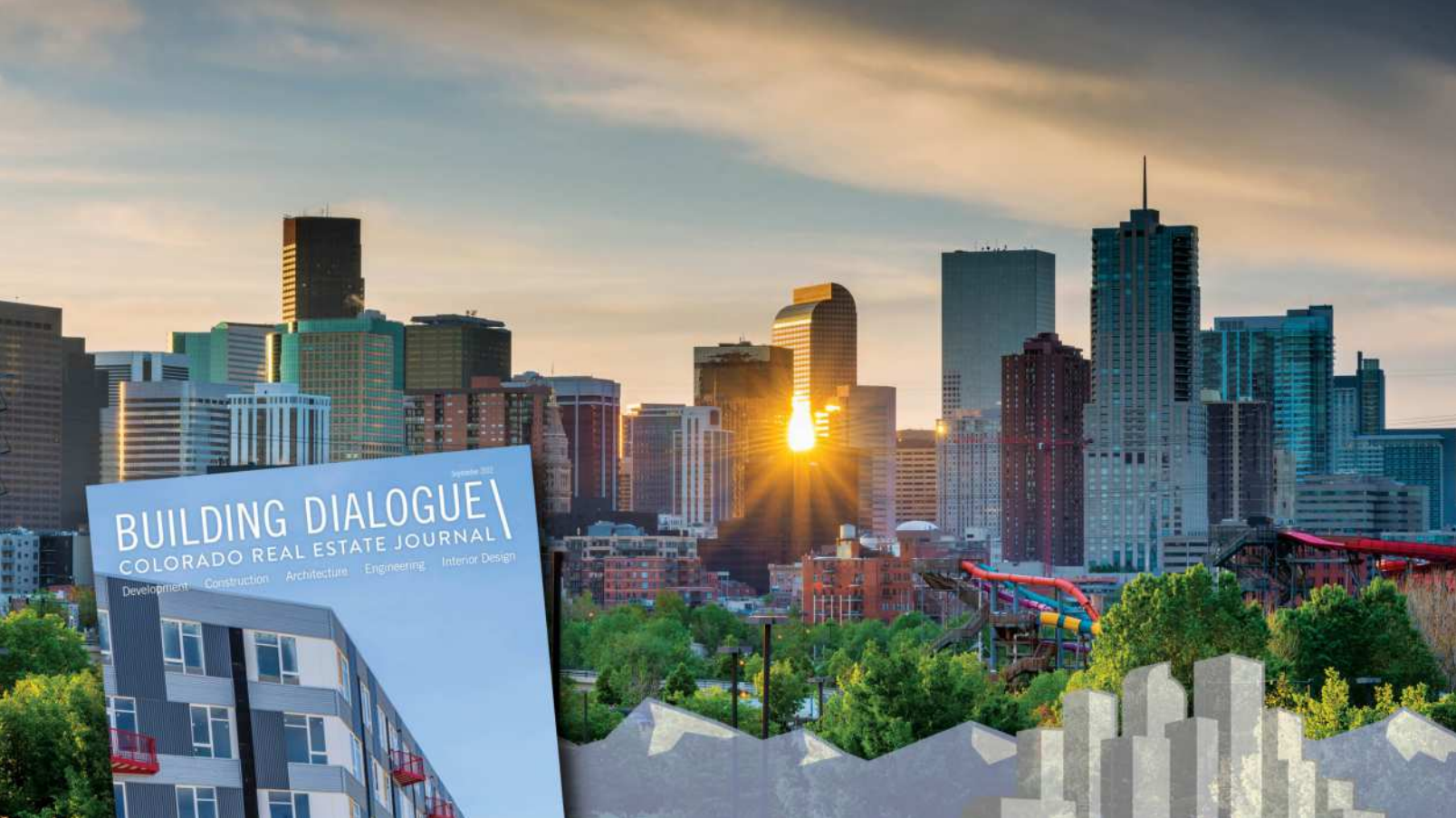


FULL PAGE
8.38" X 10.81"



HALF PAGE HORIZONTAL
7.38" X 4.64"

To reserve ad space, please contact Lori Golightly: lgolightly@crej.com or 303-623-1148 ext. 102
For editorial content, please contact Kris Oppermann Stern, Publisher: kostern@crej.com or 720-331-4087



Advertiser Index

Acquilano	50	CoreNet Rocky Mountain	37	Haselden Construction	18	Powers Products	40
Anderson Mason Dale	31	Cowboy Moving & Storage	41	Hord Coplan Macht	13	Rethos	47
Architectural Workshop	22	Cunningham	5	International Interior Design Assoc.	51	Saunders Construction	40
Arthouse Design	45	Douglass Colony	23	JE Dunn Construction	35	Saving the Wild	19
Boots Construction	22	EJCM	2	JNS - Johnson Nathan Strohe	12	SEH, Inc.	30
Brad Nicol Photography	18	Elements	36	Jordy Construction	21	SMPS Colorado	80
Brinkman Construction	30	Elite Surface Infrastructure	43	LAI Design Group	72	Studio 10 Interior Design	15
Brinkmann Constructors	43	Elsy Studios	72	Norris Design	17	Suter Media Relations	25
Calcon Constructors	33	EUA	9	Page/	11	Swinerton	12
Clic Design Studio	3	Gensler	7	Pinkard Construction	49	TRIO	57
Coda Construction Group	50	GH Phipps Construction	36			W.E. O'Neil	16



For the past 42 years, SMPS Colorado has come together with the industry's marketing elite to provide the premier forum for education and networking in the architectural, engineering, and construction communities.

EDUCATION

Making Client Experience Real

September 10 | 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

JE Dunn Construction

What does it take to build a successful Client Experience (CX) program? Hear from leaders at CDM Smith and Hensel Phelps as they share real-world lessons on launching, growing, and sustaining CX programs that strengthen client relationships and drive business growth.

MEMBERSHIP

SoCo Get to Know SMPS

September 30 | 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

Basis Partners

New to SMPS or considering membership? Discover the benefits of SMPS, explore professional growth opportunities, learn how to navigate chapter resources, and connect with fellow AEC professionals over light breakfast and networking.

MEMBERSHIP

Get to Know SMPS for Students

September 24 | 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER
FOR THESE EVENTS TODAY!**

READY TO LEARN MORE?

To Sign Up,
visit www.smpscolorado.org