

Program Summary:

This law office renovation resulted in a reimagined layout that exquisitely supports the firm's culture and employee productivity, while providing the necessary balance between privacy and communication.

Program Statement:

Prior to their relocation, the client's former office was divided, uncollaborative, and consisted of various maze-like corridors that no longer served the growth and success of the company.

In response to this need, our overarching goal was to design a 13,400 SF space that fostered employee interaction and reconnection. The reimagined layout harmoniously aligns with the firm's culture, aims to maximize employee productivity, and achieves a successful balance of privacy and communication.

The perimeter of the office now encompasses private attorney offices, creating a sense of enclosure, while the central core houses collaborative areas and supporting administrative staff. A central plaza anchors the space, featuring a grand reception area, a spacious conference room, and a library, all meticulously designed to elevate the occupants' experience. The spaces include bold and modern finishes, upgraded lighting design, custom millwork and ceiling systems, and an expansive conference room "Jewel Box" of butt-jointed glass. A multi-purpose breakroom includes a full state-of-the-art kitchen with ample storage and surface space, providing employees with a valuable amenity for team potlucks, holiday celebrations, team-building events, and everyday breaks.

IA-90.01

Building Area: (sf)
13,400 SF

Cost per Square Foot:
\$112

Construction Cost
\$1.5M

Date of Completion:
January 2023



IA-90.02

INTRODUCTION

Prior to their new relocation, the client's former office was divided, uncollaborative, and consisted of various "maze"-like corridors that no longer served the growth and success of the company.

In response, our overarching goal was to design an efficient and modern 13,400 SF space that fostered employee interaction and reconnection.

The perimeter of the office now encompasses private attorney offices, creating a sense of enclosure, while the central core, or axis, houses collaborative areas and supporting administrative staff.

RENDERING





IA-90.03

CENTRAL AXIS

The progression from the reception area, leading to the conference room and then culminating in the library, creates a central axis within the open office plan.

The spaces include bold and modern finishes, upgraded lighting design, custom millwork and ceiling systems, and an expansive conference room “Jewel Box” of butt-jointed glass. A versatile library allows for a more casual collaborative space for various meeting styles, and a multi-purpose breakroom includes a full state-of-the-art kitchen with ample storage and surface space for employees to gather.



IA-90.04

DESIGN STRATEGIES

One of our main design strategies focused on leveraging the existing building structure to influence and inform the interior layout.

The recessed North wall creates a spatial and formal division, organically guiding the programming. By integrating the library within the elongated corridor of private offices, natural light can permeate the open office space and central areas.

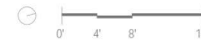
The forms within the central axis harmonize with the building's architecture, evident in the floor finish pattern, ceiling structures, and millwork design.

The reception area, conference room, library, coffee bars, and cubicle zones are visually delineated as distinct blocks, reflecting their unique functions.



FURNISHED FLOOR PLAN

- PRIVATE SPACES
- PUBLIC SPACES
- CIRCULATION



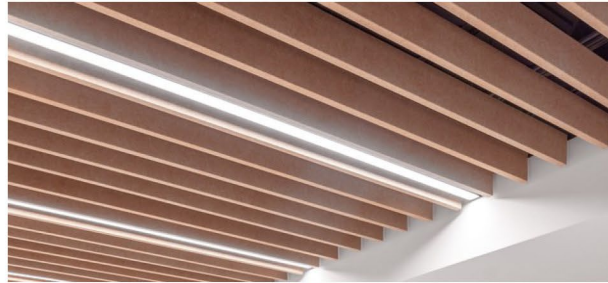
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DESIGNING FOR COLLABORATION + PRIVACY

An important design directive was to seamlessly integrate both private and collaborative spaces -- a necessary and important factor for any law firm.

We strategically selected materials that would promise privacy, but not further divide the space or prohibit light from permeating: frosting on conference room glass, wood slats to provide a "translucent" barrier, and a dynamic furniture package.





IA-90.06

MILLWORK

The design of the custom wood slat walls in the reception and library areas were inspired by the building's elevation and existing fenestration patterns.

The 4-story building exudes solidity and grandness, only visually divided by vertical narrow columns of windows. Voids were strategically integrated into the slat walls, offering a compelling break in the structure.

In contrast to the building's mass, the walls were designed to achieve a harmonious balance between positive and negative space.

This deliberate approach allows for both spatial separation and functional delineation, while also allowing visual transparency and daylight filtration.

In the conference room and reception, a custom ash wood ceiling baffle design provides visual interest while also softening the acoustics of the open space.



IA-90.07

RECEPTION AREA

Upon entering the office space, visitors are greeted by a magnificent reception area featuring a striking monolithic quartz stone reception desk that anchors the space.

Ash wood flooring and sections of the reception desk contribute to the overall design of the room.

Dynamic lighting moments, including cove lighting and seamless wall wash lighting, enhance the overall atmosphere.

The reception area consists of exquisitely high-end finishes and meticulously crafted custom millwork, seamlessly marrying a modern design with a corporate aesthetic.



RENDERING



IA-90.08

CONFERENCE ROOM JEWEL BOX

Referred to as the “office jewel box”, the all-glass conference room consists of a custom-length state-of-the-art table integrated with seamless device charging stations, conference call capabilities, and video chat functionality.

With four doors at each corner, the room offers convenient access from various points within the office floorplan. To ensure occupant comfort, multiple hybrid lighting and temperature controls were installed.

The conference room showcases a distinctive custom ash wood ceiling baffle design, echoing the visual interest and acoustic softening found in the reception area.



RENDERING



IA-90.09

LIBRARY

The multi-functional and versatile library is flanked by the only two windows in the entire office, making it a significant focal point.

Divided into three distinct seating areas: two casual lounge sections and a central 6-person brainstorming table.



RENDERING



IA-90.10

LIBRARY

A custom 12' ash wood slat wall adds captivating visual interest, acoustic softening, and a display area for the firm's industry awards.

To enhance functionality, the existing bookshelves are enveloped in new custom encasements. The blue accents on the bookshelves and encasements are powder coated, ensuring a seamless blend between the old and the new elements.



RENDERING



IA-90.11

MULTI-PURPOSE BREAKROOM

Aesthetically, the breakroom provides a visual difference from the rest of the office floor; polished concrete floors and an exposed roof deck contribute to its unique character.

A decorative wall covering of the Mississippi River, complemented by a custom ash wood bench lining the wall, adds visual interest and serves as a focal point.

A full state-of-the-art kitchen with ample storage and surface space provides employees with a valuable multi-purpose amenity for team potlucks, holiday celebrations, team-building events, and everyday breaks.





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CHALLENGES + SOLUTIONS: DAYLIGHTING + CEILING HEIGHT

Other than windows in the individual offices, there were only two exterior windows in the main public areas, posing an immediate daylighting challenge.

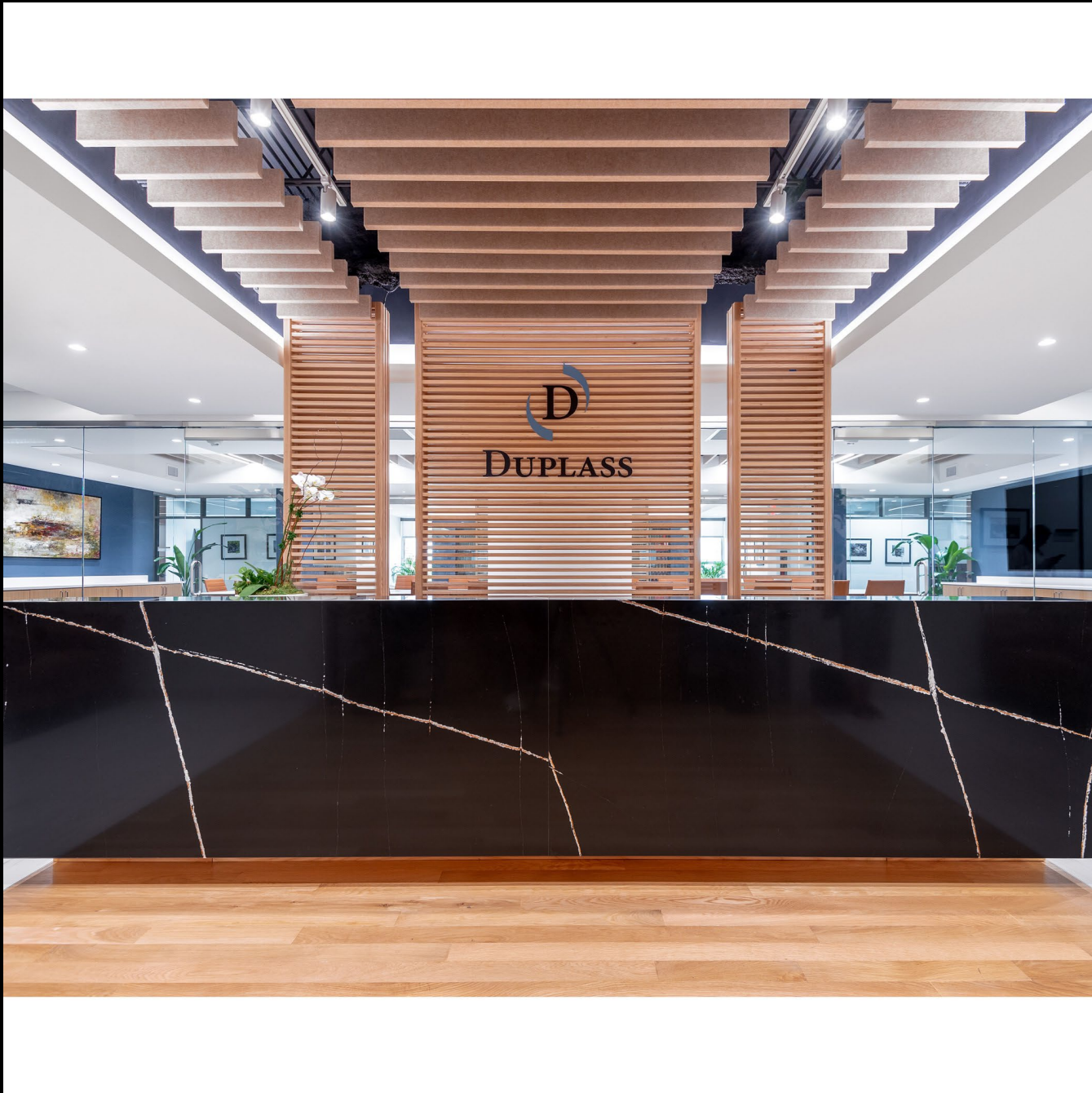
Through various daylighting exercises, we were able to maximize daylight by incorporating clerestory windows above each private perimeter office door. This preserved attorney privacy, adhered to budgetary constraints, and flooded central areas with natural light.

To fulfill the client's request for a spacious floor plan, our goal was to raise the existing 8' ceiling height to 9'. However, we faced constraints due to mechanical ducts and plenum space.

Working closely with the mechanical engineers, we designed an 8' ceiling soffit around the perimeter of the building to accommodate the relocated ducts.

This allowed us to achieve the desired 9' ceilings, while effectively concealing the mechanical components.





IA-90.13

CONCLUSION

To continue pushing forward the AIA's 2030 Challenge, we added this project to the 2030 Design Data Exchange (DDx) platform to accurately benchmark and track the building's energy performance.

The result: a captivating, meticulously designed, reimagined layout that harmoniously aligns with the firm's culture, aims to maximize employee productivity, and achieves a seamless and successful balance of both privacy and collaboration – a crucial balance for any law firm.