



STRUCTURETONE

Organization *Insights*

Ajax | Govan Brown | LF Driscoll | Pavarini Construction | Pavarini McGovern



the **Building Repositioning** issue

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A Message from
Jim and Bob

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Competition for space is fierce in cities across the globe. With little room (or time) to build new, creating modern, functional spaces out of existing buildings is critical. From gut renovations to core and shell reconstruction—and everything in between—building repositioning has become one of the most efficient and effective ways for owners to make the most of their assets.

This issue of STO Insights highlights some of the building repositioning projects the Structure Tone organization has delivered, whether the work involved transforming a former data center into a state-of-the-art outpatient medical building (p.12), modernizing an historic retail center into a mixed-use attraction (p.30) or building a new 17-story building atop an existing former factory (p.22). We also spoke with four of the country's leading developers to get their perspectives on building repositioning as a strategy, and where they see the market headed next (p.10).

up and interior construction projects across a diverse range of markets, from K-12 and higher education, to city, county and state government, to healthcare and historic restorations. Please read more about their impressive expertise and services on page 16.

In this issue, we are also extremely proud to spotlight the newest member of the STO family: Ajax Building Corporation. With multiple offices in Florida and Georgia, Ajax manages a mix of both ground-

James K. Donaghy
Executive Chairman

Robert Mullen
CEO



COMING SOON!

Building Conversations, a new podcast

We're launching a podcast! Powered by the Structure Tone organization, Building Conversations is a podcast created by construction professionals, for construction professionals. Starting this summer, join us each month for an expert discussion on a different construction trend and discover the many ways the construction industry is moving forward. Building Conversations will be available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and our website. Stay tuned for the official launch!

Photo, above: Peter Dant Photography



FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE: Govan Brown's HQ



Once a heavily industrial area, the Junction neighborhood in Toronto has steadily transformed over the years into a sought-after place to live and work. When Govan Brown decided to relocate its headquarters to the Junction, however, the success of that revitalization had not yet been realized.

"It was a bit of a sketchy area and the building we were considering looked like it hadn't had any investment for decades," says John Brown, Govan Brown senior partner. "When we actually bought it, at one point I thought, 'What did we just do?!' But once we saw the potential of the building, it all started to make sense."

Since then, Govan Brown completely transformed the building from a former metal processing plant into a modern, inspiring, collaborative workplace, and the surrounding neighborhood has become, arguably, the "hippest" part of town.

BUILDING A BRAND

The idea to move came after years of operating in the same, small office space. By 2012, staff numbers had skyrocketed and the space had become incredibly cramped. What's more, the office simply wasn't up to the standards of a productive work environment.

"There were no meeting spaces, no café areas, no brand," says Brown. "There was nothing to make us stand out as an interiors business."

The new building essentially provided Govan Brown with a blank slate. The industrial building's high ceilings lent themselves to an open-plan lay-

out, but the team needed to reinforce a good deal of the structural infrastructure and reconstruct the building's MEP systems before the true reconfiguration could begin.

In addition, there were, of course, a lot of unknowns—plus the full workload of their clients' projects to manage. The key, says senior partner Jon Taylor, was to plan ahead. They assigned a dedicated project team to manage the Govan Brown HQ project so that the rest of their staff could remain focused on their client projects. They also factored in plenty of time for the surprises they knew would arise.



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“

The way you plan for the unknowns is to accept that there will be some," says Taylor. "The experience really was a testament to good construction management."

42,000sf collaborative, productive workplace, including open-concept work stations, a board room and other meeting areas, a café and even a carpenter's shop where employees can work on innovative ideas.

The office is also well stocked with places for play—from an in-house gym and clubhouse complete with games like pool and foosball to a roof deck lounge with a stone fireplace and BBQ facilities. All of these features are surrounded by the exposed wood and brick reminders of the building's history, blended with more modern finishes and furniture.

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD

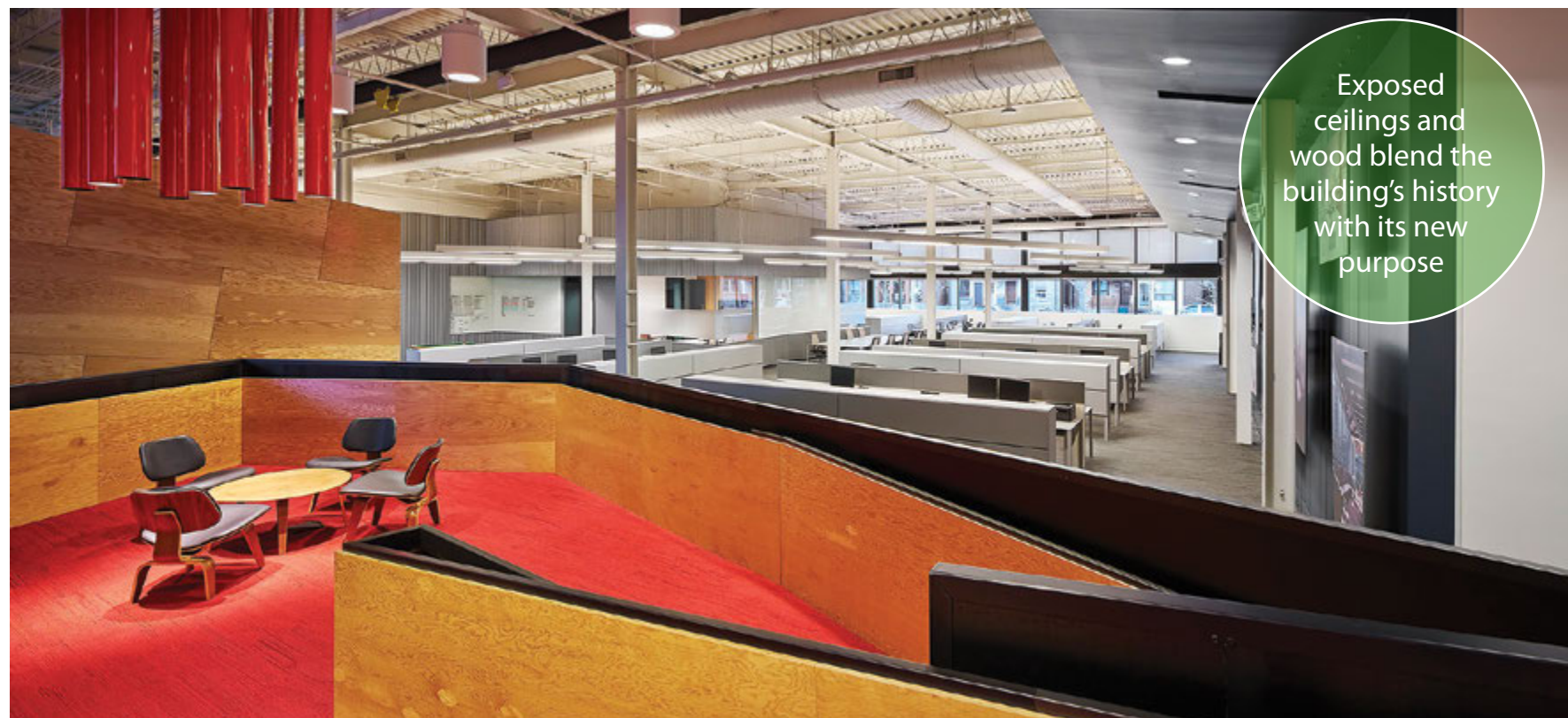
So the project team dug in, working with architect Giannone Petricone Associates to create a

Project Details

- Size:**
42,000sf
- Client:**
Govan Brown
- Architect:**
Giannone Petricone Associates
- Engineer:**
Smith + Andersen
- Sector:**
Commercial
- Completion:**
November 2013

After a few years in the new space, the Govan Brown team can attest that the office has become a key factor in employee recruitment and retention and a priceless showpiece for demonstrating Govan Brown's capabilities as an interior contractor—and what you can do with an extremely challenging site.

"We approach clients with a higher sense of empathy now," says Taylor. "Having lived and breathed the process, it helped us better understand what goes into repositioning a building and made us better construction managers. We're still very, very proud of it."



Exposed ceilings and wood blend the building's history with its new purpose



Rendering, right: Richard Johnson

Above ▲
A rooftop deck is one of the office's many amenities

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

70 Hudson St, Jersey City

Large floor plates, modern building infrastructure, public transportation and stunning waterfront views of Manhattan—all the ingredients of a perfect location for a corporate headquarters. At least that was the hope of Spear Street Capital when the firm purchased 70 Hudson Street, an office building in Jersey City, New Jersey, in 2016.

The metal feature wall was custom designed to represent the Northern Lights

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Above ▲ The project activated the formerly cavernous lobby with inviting seating and features

While the building, which was built in 2000, had excellent bones, Spear Street knew they needed to modernize some elements to attract new tenants. That meant identifying the assets the building already had, what kind of tenants they wanted to attract and what upgrades would help them meet their goals. With the hopes of drawing interest from large, established companies—from financial corporations to tech firms—Spear Street decided to target the area that gives everyone their first impression: the lobby.

MODERNIZE AND ACTIVATE

The team brought in Studios Architecture and Structure Tone to transform the existing lobby into the kind of modern, dynamic space that tenants would be drawn to.

“The original lobby had what I would call a traditional ‘corporate America’ kind of look,” says Joseph Durando, Structure Tone project manager. “Lots of green marble, brass and gold, woodwork...it was very nice but a bit old-fashioned.”

To modernize the space, the project team essentially updated everything the eye can see, from the flooring and wall finishes, to the furniture, to the organization of the space itself. The floors were redesigned with poured epoxy-based concrete, while the walls, ceilings and elevators were updated with intricate moulding and other millwork. All of this work was happening concurrently, making organization and communication central to the work plan.

“All the trades were working at the same time,” says Vincent Confreda, Structure Tone area manager. “For the floor, we had to closely manage when we do the concrete pours and where we stop so you can’t see any change in color between sections.

The elevators were being modernized at the same time, too, so it was definitely tricky to coordinate all the moving parts.”

SUPPORTING THE ARTS

Perhaps the biggest challenge—and the most striking feature—of the project was the custom feature wall. Created by Ferra Designs, the wall was designed to depict the Northern Lights in grayscale, immediately drawing people’s attention and creating a distinctive talking point. The wall features a series of aluminum panels with strategically sized and placed holes and stains to achieve the artistic effect. Accordingly, the panels themselves had to be installed meticulously.

▼ Below Each aluminum panel was fabricated and installed individually



Project Details

- Size:** 8,000sf
- Client:** Spear Street Capital
- Owner’s Rep:** CBRE
- Architect:** Studios Architecture
- Metal Fabricator:** Ferra Designs, Inc.
- Sector:** Commercial
- Completion:** October 2017

With over 50,000lbs of aluminum across the panels, structural stability was critical. The original design had transferred the structural load of the panels to the lobby floor; however, as construction began, the project team discovered the floor load was already near maximum capacity. The team went back to the drawing board to redesign the substructure, shifting the load instead to the wall substructure with additional steel supports. Every piece of steel and aluminum was not only fabricated with painstaking accuracy, but also marked with a unique identification number so it was clear where and how it should be installed.

“The team at Ferra are true artists, so the fabrication process took some time,” says Durando. “We worked very closely with them to keep up to speed on every stage and have everything ready for installation.”

CREATING COMMUNITY

The award-winning effort at 70 Hudson Street did the trick—the building is nearly completely leased. Spear Street is now working on upgrades to its sister building at 90 Hudson, including retail programming to generate foot traffic and create community around the two buildings.

“It was a pleasure to collaborate so well with all the partners on this project,” says Confreda. “With such a great space and these beautiful views, this truly is an incredible place to go to work every day.”

All images these pages: Courtesy of STUDIOS Architecture. Photography by Alan Schindler

Modern ribbon windows allow natural light to flow through each floor

Commercial Evolution: Reviving Grayson Heights

On any repositioning project, unforeseen challenges are par for the course. But when SA Quad Ventures and Stream Realty Partners decided to completely rebrand their nearly 80-year-old property on the outskirts of downtown San Antonio, Texas—a building with an already complicated construction history—adaptation was the name of the game.

Built in the 1940s, Grayson Heights once housed Bank of America's South Texan data center operations. However, when the bank relocated their data center almost a decade ago, the space was never filled. Hoping to restore the building's purpose, the owners partnered with Structure Tone Southwest to transform the facility into a Class A office building that aligns with today's modern standards.

PLANNING AHEAD

It was clear from the start that the building had a few inherent challenges. Originally a two-story structure, Grayson Heights was first expanded in the late 1950s. Then in the 1970s, the former owners added an adjacent five-story tower. Considering these two major renovations were completed in different decades—each with its own distinct construction methodology—the project team knew construction could get complicated.

Preconstruction lasted a full six months, during which the team worked closely with the design team and meticulously planned the removal and replacement of the interior HVAC, electrical, plumbing and fire alarm systems without disturb-

Project Details

Size:
39,000sf (construction area)
60,000sf (total building)

Owner:
SA Quad Ventures

Owner's Rep:
Stream Realty Partners, LP

Architect:
RVK Architects

Engineer:
Team Mechanical TX, Gerard Electric

Civil Engineer:
Melas & Myers

Sector:
Commercial

Completion:
April 2019

ing the existing three tenants. "We thoroughly investigated the existing infrastructure and MEP systems," says Dale Dmitrzak, senior project manager at Structure Tone Southwest. "We were in constant communication with the design team from day one."

PROBLEM SOLVING

Despite this extensive preconstruction effort, there were obstacles the team couldn't have anticipated. The design for the tenant spaces called for open floor plans with high, exposed ceilings. But when demolition began, they discovered unexpected electrical services and plumbing behind several walls located in the center of the floors. Not to mention, asbestos was seemingly everywhere they turned—meaning construction was delayed until the area they were working in was asbestos-free. The toxic material was so prevalent in the 1940s structure, the team continued to find traces in the mastic and damp-proofing behind masonry even after the building was abated.

"We were finding challenges every time we opened a wall," Dmitrzak says. "We worked with

the client to get as close to their vision as possible while sticking to the budget."

With limited ceiling heights, meeting airflow requirements while achieving an open office look was going to be tough. To reduce some of the bulkiness in the ceilings, the client opted to install a variable refrigerant flow (VRF) system. This unconventional option is minimal in size, energy efficient and eliminates most the need for supply and return air ductwork. After the VRF was installed, the team painted the remaining services in the ceiling and raised the electrical and mechanical spheres higher, giving the space an airier feel.

BELOW THE SURFACE

Transforming the 18,000sf basement into leasable space posed another interesting challenge. Lacking two means of egress, the team installed an elevator and connecting stair on the two-story side of the building to bring the basement up to code. Working with a structural engineer, they used massive steel supports to handle the concentric loading while cutting holes in the slab of the first and second floors, as well as the roof.

Unfortunately, elevator work in the basement was not as smooth. When the team excavated for the elevator pit, there was far more groundwater than expected. First thinking the water was from an uncharacteristically rainy season, they soon discov-

All images these pages: "Kevin Bowers Photography 2019"

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The exterior was partially stripped to reveal the original brick façade



Above ▲ Cutting-edge VRF systems were used to increase ceiling height

ered there was an underground stream running directly below the building. To ensure flooding wouldn't be an issue for future tenants, the team designed and installed a permanent pump system with floats to keep the water table from encroaching on the building.

A TEAM EFFORT

Outside, Bank of America's 10-lane motor bank was demolished, and the additional space was used to expand the existing parking lot for new tenants. The

team also installed contemporary ribbon windows and, in some areas, stripped the beige paint off the façade to expose the original, 1940s red brick.

Throughout construction, the client occupied the fifth floor of the tower and was able to experience the project's challenges firsthand. Their proximity made solving some of the project's unexpected issues much simpler.

“

When you're repositioning a building, you have to marry the client's vision with the existing building's capabilities," says Mark Jones, regional vice president of Structure Tone Southwest's San Antonio operations. *"Being practically on-site, Stream Realty got to see what that really looks like and we were able to work through the challenges together."*

Now finishing up the extended parking lot, the Southwest team has also begun working on the building's interiors. In fact, they're even fitting out spaces for two of Grayson Heights' new tenants. ◀



Above ▲
The New York City skyline

BUILDING REPOSITIONING: What the Market Experts Are Saying

In most major cities, land is scarce, but the building market remains hot. That means the existing building stock has tremendous opportunity to be repositioned to meet tenants' expectations for modern spaces and amenities. So what is the repositioning market like right now? What factors make a repositioning successful? We spoke with some of the nation's leading developers to answer these questions and get their take on where the market may be headed next.

Why are you interested in repositioning older assets versus acquiring newer ones or building from the ground up?

Farrell: It takes so much more creativity to reposition an older building than to build a new ground-up project. And there are relatively few developable sites of raw land in New York City. But the opportunity to reposition existing buildings is unlimited. Additionally, a lot of tenants today, particularly technology tenants, are all about authenticity. They are arguably more interested in that repositioned older building than that shiny new glass and steel building.

Levinson: There are 400Msf of old buildings in New York so it's a very sustainable market to be in.

Pitchford: In Dallas, we're not specifically interested in repositioning—we're interested in great opportunities. Sometimes those involve repositioning an older asset. When it does, it's likely you're buying something at well below replacement cost so that even if you have to put in significant capital reinvestment, you still end up with a significant net positive. That's not always true, but it's true when the deal is a smart one.

How do you identify which assets to reposition?

Pitchford: It all starts with that old joke about the fundamentals of real estate: location, location, location. We pick assets that are in fundamentally great locations, first and foremost. Then we make sure it has good bones that can be repositioned into a modern, best-in-class asset.

Levinson: The building has to be available at a price that we can buy knowing we'll have to spend a lot of capital to reposition it. Because our DNA is so rooted in tenants' needs, we can build with a high degree of confidence that what we're offering is what tenants want. Every property we have repositioned has been 100% leased by the time it's done.



400 S. Record
Dallas, TX

Piccinich: We're always analyzing the leasing, operations and financing activity within our portfolio. Sometimes we acquire assets with future redevelopment potential, like One Madison. Ultimately, executive management determines what properties we target, and we execute on the program.

Farrell: We also think about where we can add value. If it's complicated, if it's large, it might be an opportunity that could be daunting to another real estate company. We have a deep track record of ground-up development and repositioning. That higher degree of difficulty is a competitive advantage for us.

What are some of the biggest challenges of repositioning?

Farrell: The uncertainty of the existing conditions. In 100-year-old buildings, either the as-builts are unreliable or there are renovations that took place over the years, and those as-builts are unreliable. So it has a compounding effect that raises the degree of difficulty.

Piccinich: Programming changes that occur well beyond the early planning stages. Sometimes they're tenant driven, sometimes they're owner driven. Either way, our goal is to accommodate these requests without impacting the schedule. It's critical that we have a dynamic and properly phased work schedule that considers the existing tenancy and logistics to avoid change orders that can add significant costs and time.

Levinson: Getting projects through entitlements is a big challenge. Technology is also changing all the time. We simply assume we'll have to maximize technology in every project. The hard part is when we're planning a building that will be occupied three years from now—it could all change by then. It's really hard to be at the front of it when the front keeps moving.

What is the market like right now for repositioning?

Farrell: The market is quite strong considering tenant demand in tandem with investor interest. Repositioning is a redevelopment opportunity

where you can buy a cash-flowing asset that will remain cash-flowing while you're creating value.

Pitchford: There's a strong demand across many of our markets for a successfully repositioned older space. If it can look older and authentic, and yet have the feature comforts and amenities of modern, Class A+ office building, then that's a winning formula.

Piccinich: There is an incredible market right now in NYC for redeveloped properties. Owners and tenants are ultimately attracted to buildings at a favorable cost basis that are close to public transportation, have large floor plates and a well designed infrastructure, all of which provide the right ingredients for redevelopment.

Where do you see this trend headed next?

Piccinich: I think we're at a tipping point with office densification. Many tenants are looking for a balance of private and open office floor plans, as well as multi-purpose meeting space. Coworking will continue to evolve and there's a growing interest in shared amenity spaces.

Pitchford: In markets where entitlements are difficult to obtain, usually a repositioned asset already has all those things. But we see that this trend of repositioning assets is here to stay and it's just a matter of do you have the patience and wisdom to pick the deals that will be successful.

Farrell: Tech tenants continue to grow, and many of them are more focused on existing buildings that have a true architectural identity. So you're going to see a lot of those tenants gravitate toward these types of assets—they'll be in more demand.

Levinson: I wouldn't even call this a trend. It's well established. People want new features, not necessarily new buildings. We're also very focused on incorporating health and wellness into our buildings now. It's certainly a focus for us going forward as we reposition assets. ◀

OUR EXPERTS



Above ▲
Thomas Farrell, Partner, Cove Property Group (New York)



Above ▲
David Levinson, Chairman & CEO, L&L Holding Company (New York)



Above ▲
Ed Piccinich, Chief Operating Officer, SL Green (New York)



Above ▲
Joseph Pitchford, Managing Director of Development, Crescent Real Estate (Dallas)

Quality Care, Close to Home

In the last few years, Westchester County, New York, has become somewhat of a healthcare hub. With its proximity to Manhattan, the area offers suburban patients the convenience of local service with the caliber of care found in the large hospital networks in the city.



HSS Westchester created a new building within an existing one

By 2016, the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) had taken notice and was expanding its Manhattan base into the suburbs. A former IBM complex in White Plains, New York offered just the right location—but it needed some major upgrades to become a premier outpatient center.

A BUILDING WITHIN A BUILDING

The building in question is a 50,000sf former data center within a 620,000sf complex. HSS and its design team from EwingCole reimagined the space to include modern staff offices, exam rooms, physical therapy space, a rehabilitation pool, sports performance services and state-of-the-art X-ray and MRI equipment. To achieve that transformative vision, Pavarini North East Construction essentially had to take the old building down and start from scratch.

"We basically built a brand new building within an existing building," says Pavarini project manager James Dunn.

The team gutted the interior and rebuilt it, including installing all new MEP services independent from those of the larger complex. The electrical switchgear had to be separated from the larger system, and new generators and a cooling tower were added to the roof to accommodate the extra power requirements of medical equipment.

The plumbing got a major upgrade as well. Creating 20 exam rooms meant adding 20 sinks and their associated infrastructure. What's more, the facility includes a hydrotherapy pool on the first floor, which brings with it specific drainage needs, water-resistant materials and other specialty components.

SUPPORTING MODERN MEDICINE

With large medical equipment now part of the interior, the building also needed some structural adjustments. Most notably, it needed a structural system robust enough to support a state-of-the-art MRI machine—which weighs up to 8 tons.

"We had to make some substantial enhancements to the building structure to receive and house an MRI machine above the ground floor," says Dunn. "We added a large amount of high-strength steel to support the tremendous concentrated load."

The MRI also affected the project's scheduling. The magnet inside an MRI needs to stay cool, so the MRI suite and its HVAC system had to be ready by the time the MRI arrived. And with a hard delivery date, there was little wiggle room in the schedule.

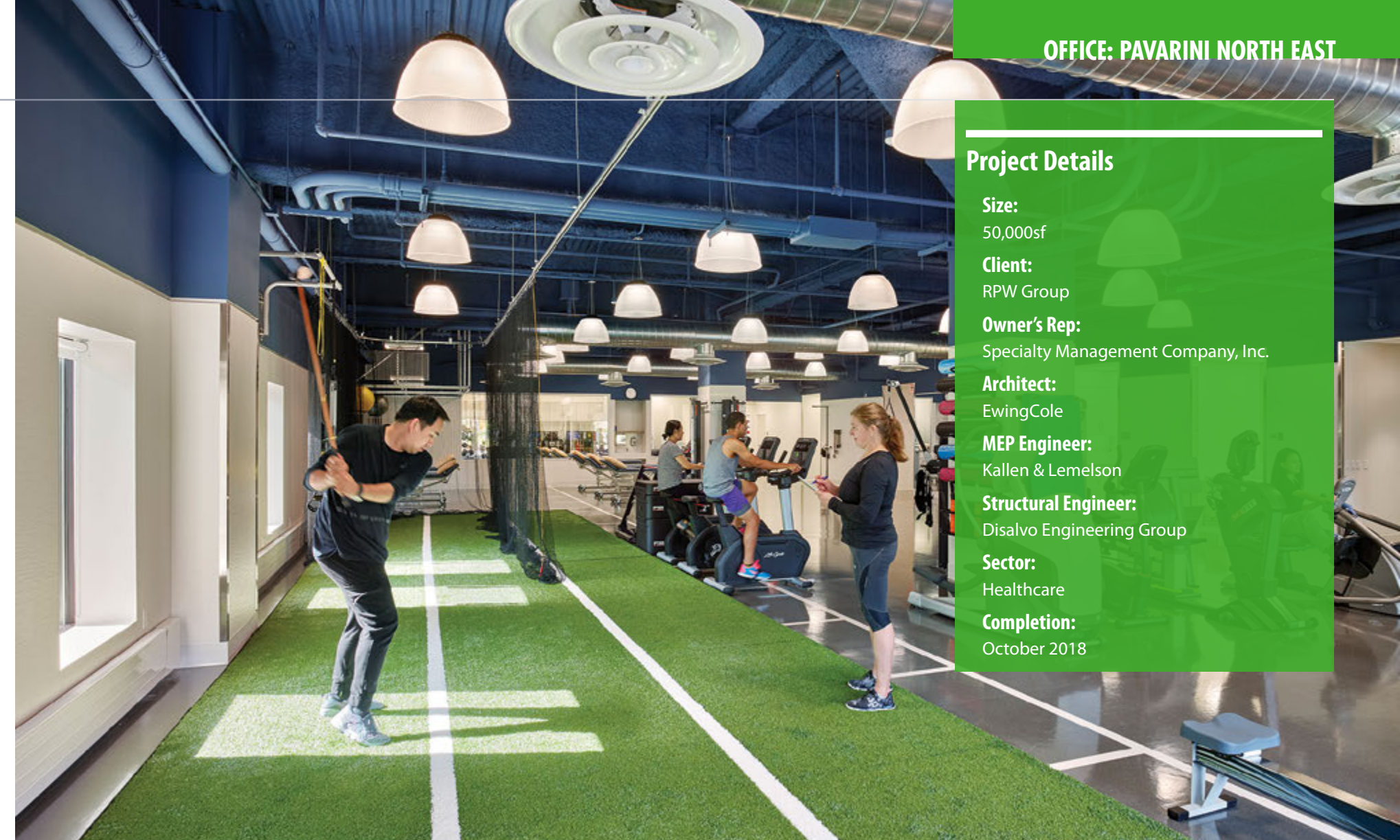
"It really came down to detailed preplanning," says Tom Patterson, Pavarini estimating and preconstruction manager. "Essentially everything had to be in place before we could slide the machine into the building."

FROM CONCRETE TO GLASS

Creating a new building out of an old one extended to the exterior as well. The existing building's façade featured precast concrete panels, which didn't necessarily match HSS's vision of a bright, welcoming environment. The Pavarini team went to work removing the precast panels, using a small brock machine to chip holes in the panels to knock out small sections at a time.

"The panels spanned two floors, resting on the first," says Dunn. "We worked from the top down by removing the nonstructural infill first, then cutting through the structural portion. As we worked down, we folded each section down over the next to be removed."

All images these pages: "Harkin Mason Photography, LLC"



Above ▲

The new facility includes sports performance and physical therapy services

Project Details

Size:
50,000sf

Client:
RPW Group

Owner's Rep:
Specialty Management Company, Inc.

Architect:
EwingCole

MEP Engineer:
Kallen & Lemelson

Structural Engineer:
Disalvo Engineering Group

Sector:
Healthcare

Completion:
October 2018

As those panels came down, the team rebuilt the façade with glass curtainwall to fill the interior with natural light. All of this work, however, was happening within one section of a larger, occupied campus—meaning the Pavarini team had to be especially vigilant when it came to safety and especially aware of the potential impacts of their work on those around them.

"We developed a noise and vibration mitigation plan for the site that included controlling noise

with sound partitions and limiting vibration by separating the precast concrete structures from the main building structure before demolishing the precast," says Dunn. "We also set up extensive signage and fencing around the perimeter of the site and developed an overall site logistics plan with the site owners. As the project progressed, we altered the plan to best accommodate the construction and the tenants."

VISION ACHIEVED

When the project was completed, HSS hosted a grand opening, and staff, doctors and patients have been flocking to the location ever since.

"People rave about what a beautiful facility it is," says Patterson. "When we helped HSS move in, every office was full with doctors who want to work from this location."

These incredible results, as the project team acknowledged, didn't come without challenges. Just ask HSS CEO and president Louis Shapiro.

"It's a beautiful campus, but to really do this project, you needed to have a vision," he said. "Because this building that we're in now was not pretty. It was concrete."

With that vision achieved, HSS Westchester now allows Westchester County residents access to world-class care, right in their own community. ◀

Left ◀

The new glass façade replaced dark concrete panels

A VERTICAL VENTURE: 520 Madison Avenue

Perfectly positioned in the heart of Midtown, the famed Plaza District has long been one of Manhattan's most sought-after commercial neighborhoods. But trendy downtown developments and sleek skyscrapers taking shape on the far West Side have sparked a shift in this prestigious area. The towers that line the streets of NYC's most expensive office market are raising the bar to compete with the flashy high-rises popping up throughout the city—and real estate giant Tishman Speyer is leading the way at 520 Madison Avenue.

Project Details

Size:
20,600sf

Client:
Tishman Speyer

Architect:
MdeAS

MEP Engineer:
AMA Consulting Engineers, P.C.

Consulting Engineer:
Thornton Tomasetti

Structural Engineer:
Active Design Group

Wind Consultant:
RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists

Code Expeditor:
Gillman Consulting

Sector:
Commercial

Completion:
January 2019

At its highest point, the scaffold was 570ft off the ground

Built in the 1980s, 520 Madison offers premier office space in a prime location, but as part of a larger initiative to revamp a few of their well-established properties, Tishman Speyer set out to create more commercial space at the top of the 43-story building. To make room for tenants on the 42nd and 43rd floors—plus a 2,200sf landscaped terrace—the mechanical equipment room (MER) on the 43rd floor needed to be relocated to the roof and elevator access had to be extended to the top level. Tishman Speyer brought on the Structure Tone team to help lead the way, but before they could get to work, they needed a dynamic approach that could get the job done within Tishman Speyer's tight timeframe.

SUPERIOR SCAFFOLDING

Rather than encase the entire building in scaffolding, the team decided to build a unique scaffolding system on the roof that extended slightly down the face of the building.

"It was like the superstructures usually done on bridges," explains Michael Mucci, Tishman Speyer senior director. "It allowed us to build on top of a building full of tenants without building into the structure."

However, to safely build a scaffold of this size at 570ft in the air, the team had to prepare for every process and possible complication.

Detailed design. Designing this complex concept took over 15 iterations of scaffolding drawings—each of which was reviewed by Structure Tone, the steel and scaffolding contractors and two engineering teams. The primary engineer monitored the loads this 60-foot framework would impose on the building, while the third-party engineer proofed the design.

Swift winds. To ensure the scaffold was designed for the correct windspeeds, the team enlisted a firm that specializes in wind modeling and forecasting. The company built a scale model of the building, scaffold and every building within a 1,600ft radius. After testing the model in a wind tunnel, they concluded the design should be enhanced from the 110mph winds specified by New York City code to withstand winds of 130mph.

Hanging hazards. Demolishing the façade around the top floors meant the crew was breaking and removing thousand-pound slabs of granite with only the scaffold separating the huge stones from the street below. The team came up with a process to secure and test each slab, so they couldn't slip before or during removal.

Unpredictable weather. Any rain, snow or winds exceeding 30mph meant all work on the scaffold came to a halt. The team analyzed two weather reports per day and prepared for weather events up to five days in advance. Before and during snowstorms, extra laborers came in to scatter ice melt and monitor the site overnight. When the storm was over, more laborers came in to help shovel the scaffold and work

"We tried to plan for everything," says Ron Pennella, Structure Tone project manager. "So, when we ran into challenges along the way, we were able to stay on schedule."

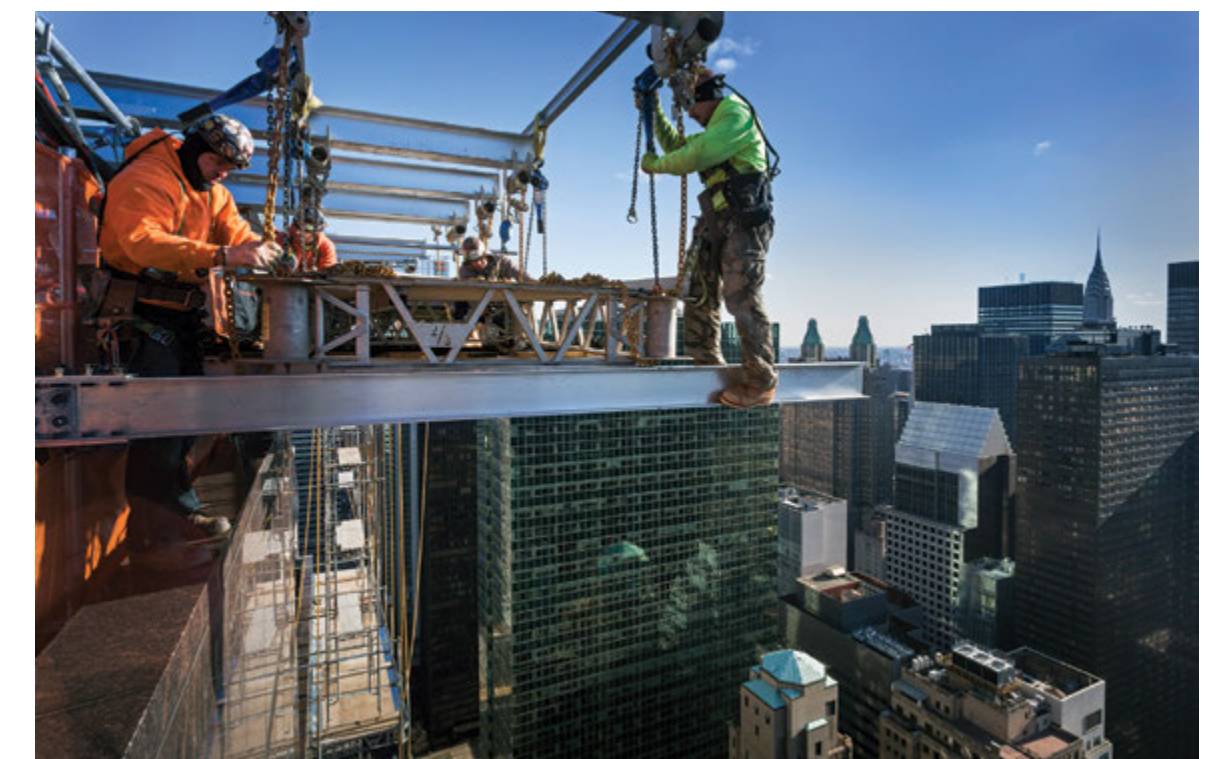
areas on the roof. The roofers even used their butane torches to help melt the snow.

THROUGH THE ROOF

Getting materials and equipment to the jobsite also required some creative problem-solving. The only way to transport the necessary components to the roof was through an 8ft-deep freight elevator in the basement—meaning all elements had to come in at 7ft, 11in. Once on the top level, each piece was hooked onto a trolley beam, wheeled out of the freight car and lowered into place.

"The size and weight of the components were critical," says Pennella. "Everything had to be brought in and erected by hand with a tremendous amount of care."

That level of care extended to the mechanical equipment room migration as well. At 8,000lbs a piece, lifting the elevator motors to the 43rd floor in an occupied building required extensive research and communication between the project team and building management. To move the equipment without disturbing tenants, the team cut a 10x10ft hole in the roof and built a temporary, waterproofed structure from the scaffolding over it. Then, they installed a chain fall hoist and gently lifted the equipment from the 43rd floor to its new location on the roof.



Above ▲
Parts of the scaffold extended up to 6ft over the edge of the building

Though the migration went smoothly, punching a hole in the roof triggered a series of unforeseen air pressure-related issues known as the stack effect. Fairly common in high-rises, the stack effect refers to the difference in outdoor and indoor air pressure that can cause a building to act like a chimney—all the heat rises to the top in the winter and vice versa in the summer. In addition to affecting temperature regulation, the stack effect can disrupt the way elevators operate. Thankfully, there was a simple solution: windows! The team cordoned off areas with temporary walls and opened the windows on select floors to relieve the pressure.

MEANT TO BE

Matching the building's new façade to the original was a concern from day one. The stone used for 520 Madison's façade was sourced from an open-pit quarry that shut down years ago. Determined to find a match, the team connected with the quarry owners in South Dakota, who found stones that had been quarried 37 years ago. Those slabs were shipped to Canada to be cut and finished, and then to New York to see if they'd match the existing façade. As it turns out, those blocks were part of the batch quarried for 520 Madison's original exterior in 1981—Tishman Speyer's very first development.

Ultimately, thanks to an amazing team effort, this phase of 520 Madison's was delivered three months early, within budget and without a safety incident. "From the inception of the bid, Structure Tone had the most dynamic approach and the right team to tackle a project like this," says Mucci. "I don't think there are many other firms in the city who could have done what they did." ◀

INTRODUCING



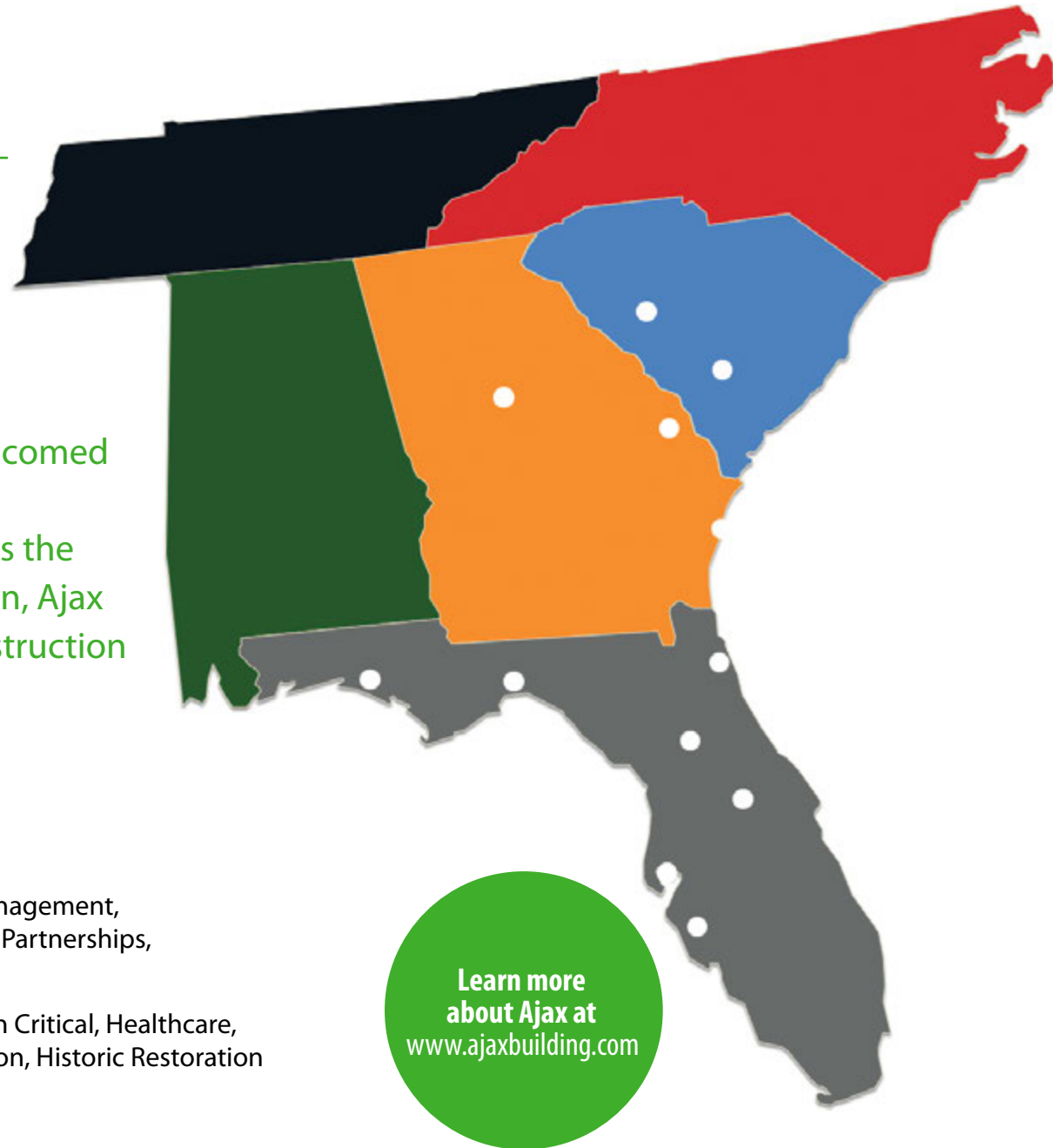
Last fall, the Structure Tone organization welcomed a new member of the family: Ajax Building Corporation. With over 200 employees across the US Southeast, in its over 60 years in operation, Ajax has become one of the fastest-growing construction companies in the region.

Founded: 1958 in Tallahassee, FL by JB "Block" Smith

Offices: Florida, Georgia and South Carolina

Services: CM at Risk, Design-Build, Agency Construction Management, Program Management, Virtual Construction, Public-Private Partnerships, Sustainable Construction

Key Sectors: Commercial, Government, Public Safety, Mission Critical, Healthcare, Research and Laboratories, Higher Education, K-12 Education, Historic Restoration



Learn more about Ajax at www.ajaxbuilding.com

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

	WILLIAM P. BYRNE President		MARC REEVES Director of Risk Management
	JAY SMITH Vice President		PAM FISHER Director of Human Resources
	DEREK GAMBLE Vice President of Operations		JUDD WEST Director of Preconstruction Services
	BRIAN DESOTELL Chief Financial Officer		JOE TUCKER Director of Field Operations

SIGNATURE PROJECTS

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
Earth, Ocean, Atmospheric Sciences Building
\$59M, 140,000sf

This new seven-story facility will be home to the offices, classrooms, teaching labs, research labs and academic spaces that support FSU's nationally recognized Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Science department.



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
Morsani Center for Advanced Healthcare
\$41M, 226,000sf

The Morsani Center combines world-class healthcare with a state-of-the-art building designed to facilitate learning. Ajax led the construction of this patient care facility, which houses everything from diagnostic imaging and ambulatory surgery to outpatient services and research centers.



FULTON COUNTY
East Roswell Library
\$6M, 17,000sf

East Roswell Library is a single-story LEED® Silver building whose design centers on connecting with the wooded surroundings.

"I have appreciated the exceptional care that the Ajax team has given this project. I would not hesitate to work with the team again or recommend your company's services." —Swalena Griffin, branch manager



Largo HS photos: "Matt Shoats for Good, East Roswell Library photos: "Teri Byrd, St. Petersburg Police Dept.: "Aerial Innovation, FSU EOAS photos: "Southeast Drone Technologies

PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS
Largo High School
\$55M, 257,715sf

The project included the construction of two new buildings that house classrooms, a student union and a 1,590-seat gymnasium, as well as a central energy plant and renovations to the existing auditorium.



CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG
Police Department HQ
\$61.8M, 163,300sf

Currently under construction, the new police headquarters includes a new main building with an Administrative Wing and Property & Evidence Wing, as well as a parking structure and central energy plant.





GIVING BACK: London's 30 Good Deeds

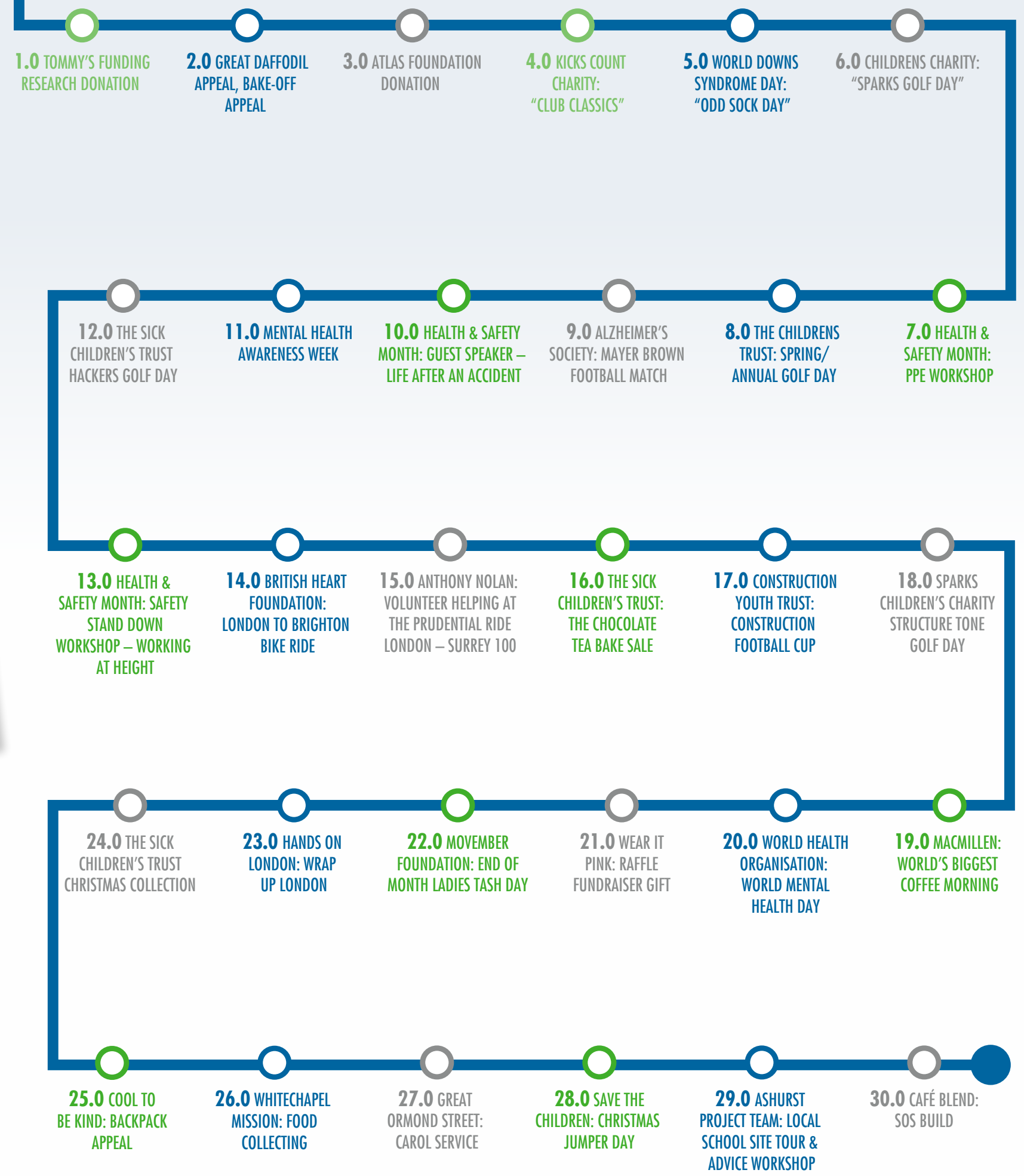
In 2018, Structure Tone London hit a major milestone—30 years of business in one of the world's most prominent cities. To celebrate this huge accomplishment, Structure Tone's London office decided to give back to the community they've built in for the last three decades. From 5Ks and bake-offs to organising industry fundraising events, the Structure Tone London team truly committed to making a difference in their community. Here are some of the great causes they supported throughout the year.



"Positively impacting our community has always been a top priority for us, but this year we kicked it up a notch. 2018 was about thanking London for 30 great years, which for us meant giving back to the community in any way we could," says Dean Manning, managing director of Structure Tone London. *"I'm especially proud of our London team. Their tremendous effort is what really brought this initiative to life."*



CHARITY & COMMUNITY TRACKER



WATERFRONT REVIVAL: American Water HQ

For decades, the Delaware River waterfront in Camden, New Jersey was a hub of industrial activity. But as manufacturing declined across the US, Camden suffered. Many factories closed and, over time, the waterfront was largely abandoned.



American Water's new HQ is helping revitalize the waterfront in Camden, NJ

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For the last several years, however, the city, state and development community have been working to restore the waterfront and create a social and economic center that draws workers, visitors and residents back to Camden.

One of the companies invested in that effort is American Water. The nation's largest publicly traded water and wastewater utility company was looking to consolidate its operations into one headquarters, and the Camden waterfront provided just the right opportunity.

FROM THE GROUND UP

The developer, Liberty Property Trust, enlisted the help of LF Driscoll and Jingoli to build the brand-new, 220,000sf, 5-story facility. To build along the water, however, meant starting with the ground. After years of industrial activity and inattention, the quality of the soil was a concern.

"The whole site was historic fill," says Tom Stefanko, LF Driscoll project director. "All soil we removed had to be reused on-site or disposed of through a special procedure."

The building's foundation is an auger cast pile system in which the team drilled down about 50 feet and replaced the soil with grout and a center-reinforcing bar and support. Those bars then connect to concrete-grade beams that support the building. Roughly 3 feet of new, clean fill caps the existing soil.



Above ▲ The building includes green roofs and views of the Philadelphia skyline

To complicate matters, the building sits atop an existing 84-inch combined sewer/storm outlet (CSO) that had to remain active throughout construction and tie into the overall site's water and wastewater infrastructure. As the team worked around the CSO outlet, they encapsulated every-



Above ▲ The atrium includes four-story "water walls"

thing in concrete and essentially built the rest of the building in three sections (north, south and central atrium) to allow the outlet to function.

While these soil precautions were necessary, they did affect the design. The project team raised the building pad to adjust for the added fill and carefully monitored the underground work to ensure the infrastructure did not impact the rest of the structure.

"We were taking these measures all while drilling piles for the building itself," Stefanko says. "Everything had to be coordinated very closely right out of the chute to make sure all elements aligned as they should."

MODEL TEAM

Coordination continued to be the operative word as the building began to take shape. The Driscoll team was working with two architects: RM Stern for the core and shell and Gensler for the interior. To ensure their designs synced up in the field, LF Driscoll leaned on the virtual design and construction experts in their Advanced Coordination Team (ACT). ACT works directly with the design teams to precoordinate their models into one unified model with ready-to-build contract documents. That precoordination created a baseline from which the entire team could work.

Virtual coordination also helped solve some challenges with the building's exterior. The building is primarily a steel frame with punched windows and glass curtainwall. However, the design uses the metal panels to trace the outline of the interior traveling stairs. In other words, from the outside,

viewers see almost a stepped look as the panels protrude outward and down, following the path of the stairs. The team worked out those challenges in the model before fabrication began.

"It was a complex design," says Stefanko. "Every panel had to be coordinated and modeled with the design team and our subs through the entire process to ensure it lined up just right."

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

While the building is beautiful in and of itself, perhaps the most striking features are the water walls in the atrium. Just as the name entails, water cascades down these four-story glass walls, making an immediate statement about American Water's mission.

Once again, coordination was critical, not only to install the walls correctly but to ensure the wall systems did not affect the adjacent elevator lobbies. "The whole atrium was designed around these walls," Stefanko says. "If anything was the slightest bit off, it could affect the walls or, vice versa, ruin the elevators."

The atrium also highlights water in a Learning and Innovation Center—an educational space dedicated to all things water and to highlighting the building's many sustainable features. The LEED Platinum building includes low-flow plumbing fixtures, green roofs, high-efficiency HVAC and glass systems, LED lighting and an extensive water reuse system.

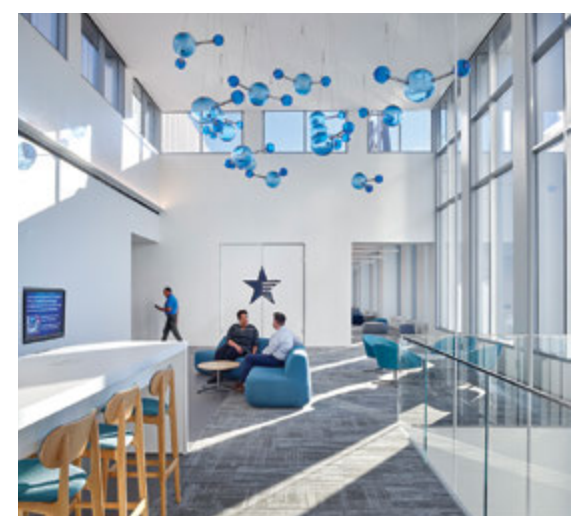
American Water celebrated its grand opening in December to great fanfare—and tremendous community support. The new building marks the

Project Details

- Size:**
220,000sf
- Client:**
Liberty Property Trust
- Architect:**
Robert AM Stern Architects/Gensler
- Engineer:**
BuroHappold Engineering
Rock Brook Consulting Group
- Civil Engineer:**
Pennoni
- JV Partner:**
Jingoli
- Sector:**
Commercial
- Completion:**
December 2018
- Certifications:**
LEED® Platinum

company's physical investment in Camden as well as continued support of nearly a dozen community programs, from schools to charitable organizations.

"The beauty of the building is one thing, but the impact it's having on the city is another," Stefanko says. "This project helped create a lot of local jobs and more opportunities for the community and is really making a statement about the future of the Camden waterfront. We are so proud to be part of it."



Above ▲ Water imagery and natural light flow through the space

BUILDING ON A BUILDING: Hudson Commons

Most building repositioning projects involve gutting an older building and starting fresh with modern infrastructure and interiors. But at 441 Ninth Avenue in New York City, Cove Property Group is thinking—quite literally—outside of the box. In addition to modernizing the existing 9-story structure, the team of Cove, Kohn Pedersen Fox and Pavarini McGovern is building another 17 stories above it, creating a modern commercial office building with the abundant lighting, high ceilings, outdoor terrace spaces and other amenities that appeal to today's tenants.



Above ▲
Demolition of existing slabs makes room for a new structural core

First built in 1962 as a manufacturing facility, the building has changed hands a few times over the years, most recently functioning as an office building for EmblemHealth. Cove recognized the building's potential and developed a repositioning plan that respected that history.



The repositioning projects that tend to be most successful are the ones that respect the heritage of the existing building," says Tom Farrell, partner at Cove Property Group. "At 441 Ninth, the character of the overbuild in and of itself has an industrial quality to it. We didn't turn our backs on the industrial heritage of the podium building—we embraced it."

LET THERE BE LIGHT

One of the first features the design tackled was lighting. As a former factory, the interior was dark. The new design adds glass panels on the first floor and expands the existing windows vertically by nearly 4ft, adding nearly 80% more vision glass to the space. The 17 new stories include an all-glass façade with expansive ceiling heights on each floor to ensure tenants get plenty of light.

That design took quite a bit of research to make sure the older structure could support the change.

"We laser scanned the whole envelope of the building to find a way to double the size of the windows and strategically demolish portions of the masonry," Farrell says. "But none of that is possible unless we knew how the wall maneuvered in and out, whether it was 5 or 10mm, and how those spandrel beams wandered and meandered up and down. Laser scanning the building from the outside gave us a 3-dimensional accurate road-map to figure out how to engineer the windows."

DOWN TO THE CORE

Making these changes—and particularly adding a whole new building—meant structural reinforcement was more important than ever. After stripping the building to its core and shell, Pavarini McGovern headed into the basement, digging under the existing foundation elements to enhance the 15 building footings.

The team also brought up a new core, from New York City bedrock up through the top of the building. Once the core was to the top floor, they began the structural steel program.

"We waited for the core to be completed to start the structural steel so the steel and tower crane did not catch the concrete core," says Michael McFadden, Pavarini McGovern superintendent. "The integrity of that core and the 172 reinforced columns is what allowed us to put a new 17-story building on top of a 9-story one."

Reimagining the former EmblemHealth building through a total repositioning and vertical expansion



Project Details

Size:
700,000sf

Client:
Cove Property Group

Architect:
Kohn Pedersen Fox

Structural Engineer:
WSP

MEP Engineer:
Cosentini Associates

Sector:
Commercial

Completion:
July 2019

Certifications:
LEED® Platinum Pending

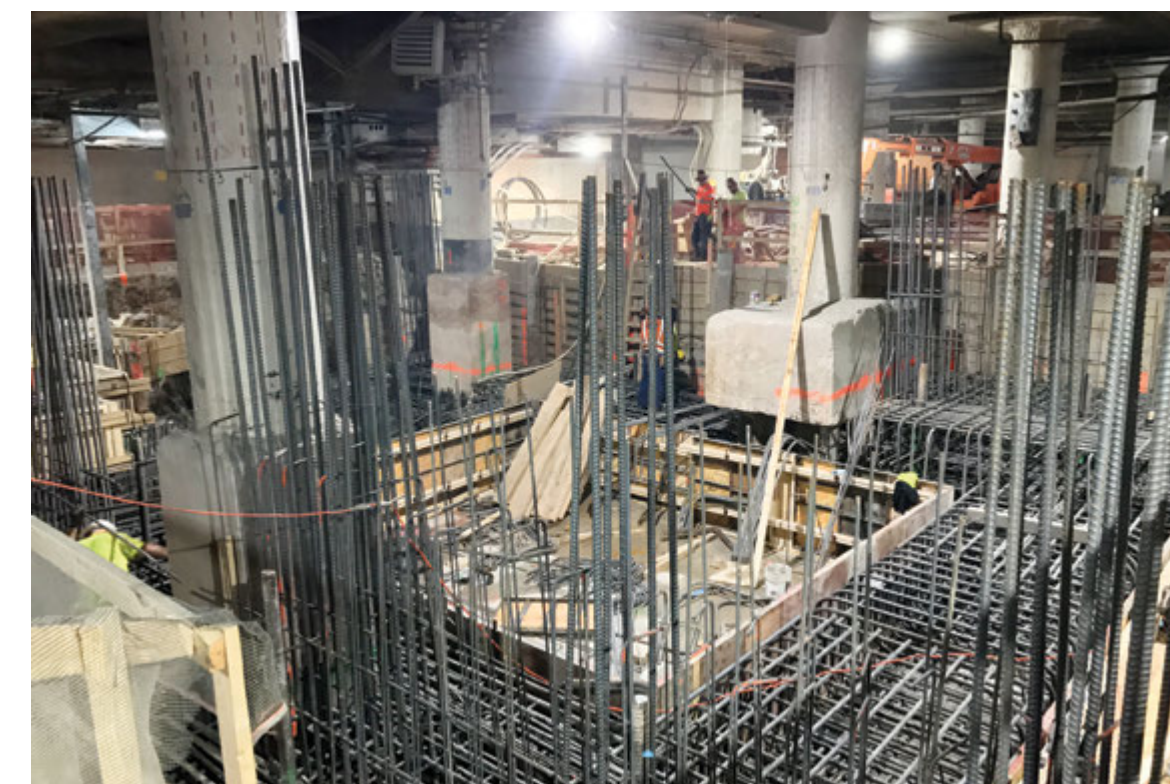
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To reinforce the columns, PMG used a somewhat unique method: shotcrete. Shotcrete involves spraying concrete out of a hose and nozzle at 80mph onto the column. Once signed off on by the structural engineer, the rebar cage around each column is filled with the spray concrete and becomes a structurally sound component.

The project team hosted a topping off celebration last fall, and the project is now on track to be fully completed in the summer of 2019. For McFadden, the entire effort has been a labor of love.

"What I've been most proud of to date is that we are pushing the schedule, maintaining quality and, most importantly, maintaining our safety record. That's the number-one goal for us at all times." ◀



Above ▲
Existing foundations and column footings were strengthened with steel rebar and over 330 yards³ of concrete in a single pour



A view into a refurbished MCC plant room



Upgrading building systems means all current conditions must be assessed rigorously

TECHNICAL SERVICES: The Cornerstone of Refurbishment

Gary Fleming, Technical Services Project Manager



Above ▲ Gary Fleming, technical services project manager, Structure Tone Dublin

In refurbishment projects, a building's technical systems (aka "MEP" systems) are perhaps the most important piece. Why? These systems are the heart and veins of the building. In other words, a refurbished building won't be a success without modern, functional infrastructure. But addressing these systems early—and thoroughly—is vital.

DILAPIDATION REPORTS ARE KEY

Once we get into a building, the first task of our technical services team is to ascertain what exactly we are dealing with. Typically we are taking over base-build systems that are a number of years old and often suffering from less-than-perfect maintenance regimes. This refurbishment also often involves the primary plant items of these mechanical and electrical systems, such as boilers, AHUs and electrical power infrastructure.

Copies of the building's Operation & Maintenance manual and safety file help provide some of that research, along with all maintenance records. With this information in hand, the tech services team can deploy the chosen electrical/mechanical contractor to carry out a complete survey of the building systems across all disciplines of the relevant electrical and mechanical systems. This "dilapidation" report needs to be as in-depth as practically possible. The more detailed knowledge we have about the actual performance and condition of the systems versus the designed performance, the more we can protect the project team and our clients from inheriting problems.

WATCH FOR THE GAPS

A common potential issue we encounter is gaps in the systems. To prepare for those as much as we can, we assess all the building's hard services systems. This assessment may not always involve the typical mechanical and electrical system which we are augmenting as part of the fit-out, but it may be important nonetheless to have survey data. Systems such as underground drainage, lifts, bird control systems and storm and sump drain systems can be easily overlooked during initial dilapidations, yet become legacy problems if not fully documented.

TIME IS MONEY

While the main scope of the dilapidations survey is to outline the condition of the received building systems, it is crucial that we highlight any poten-

tial cost or programmed impact the report result may have on contracted works. These potential impacts should be identified and investigated early so that the construction team can come to the client with potential resolutions or alternatives.

WHERE'S THE UTILITY?

Finally, we do a deep dive into the status of utility connections, typically the water supply and foul waste, electrical power, fire protection, gas intake systems and telecoms. Discrepancies or shortcomings between these systems and what we are trying to build must be identified early since it can take significant time to rectify a large delta between required and delivered service capacities. These assessments can include everything from testing water quality and boiler/chiller performance to ensuring delivered air rates and fire protection system loop capacity are as expected.

While such a thorough analysis of a building's technical systems may seem above and beyond the norm, it can save the owner years of costs and headaches. In one recent example in Dublin, after receiving our water quality analysis of the heating and chilled water systems, it became apparent that the recently completed base-build system was not in good condition. We advised the client team accordingly and, through diligent efforts,

were able to ensure the base-build team completed a second cleaning. That added step ultimately delivered a clean system that avoids potential fu-

ture problems to the fit-out works or to the client's ongoing maintenance. ◀



Above ▲ The Dublin Technical Services Team: Gary Fleming, Keith Richards, David Guinan and John Fleming

Photos above: left and right: © Donald Murphy Photography

BUILDING ON LEGACY: 3535 Market Street

3535 Market has long served medical tenants

Project Details

Size:
40,000sf

Client:
HCP, Inc.

Architect:
L2Partridge

Engineer:
Vinokur-Pace Engineering Services, Inc.

Owner's Rep:
CBRE

Building Manager:
Lincoln Harris

Sector:
Commercial

Completion:
December 2018



Above ▲

The once dark lobby is now bright and welcoming

Philadelphia is famous for a lot of things. The Liberty Bell. The signing of the Declaration of Independence. Cheesesteaks. But perhaps a lesser-known claim to fame is the city was home to the first hospital in the country, Pennsylvania Hospital. Since that hospital's opening in 1751, the city has continued to be a healthcare leader, drawing patients, doctors, researchers and investors from across the globe.

HCP, Inc. is one of the largest healthcare real estate investment trusts in the US. With Philly's robust healthcare market, the company set its sights on adding a Philadelphia building to its portfolio, ultimately finding the right opportunity at 3535 Market Street. However, the property's anchor tenant, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, had already announced plans to leave the building for its brand new facility (built by LF Driscoll)—meaning HCP would need to make some changes to attract new tenants.



We assumed we would eventually have to do a major repositioning of the building,” Billy May, HCP director of asset management, told the Philadelphia Business Journal. *“We can't make a new building but want to get as close to market as possible.”*

All photos these pages: ©2019 Jeffrey Totaro

LIGHT AND BRIGHT

To do so, HCP hired the team of L2P and Structure Tone, developing a plan to update the 1970s-era

building both inside and out. On the exterior, the team reskinned the first two floors, replacing dated precast concrete with a metal panel curtainwall and low-iron glass that allow passersby to see the modern new space inside.

Inside, the team gutted the unoccupied 8th through 16th floors to prepare them for new tenants. They also upgraded the core restrooms on the upper floors and completely renovated the 12th floor, which features HCP's building management offices and a new 10,000sf conference and amenity center.

The most striking renovation, however, is the lobby. In a complete redesign, what was once a dark, cold space now features a grand aluminum panel canopy and ceiling, terrazzo flooring and bright, clean tones.

“With the white terrazzo, teak wood, and white and beige tile, the space is just so much brighter and more welcoming,” says John Donnelly, Structure Tone project manager. “It's a phenomenal difference.”

OLD BUILDING, FAMILIAR CHALLENGES

The transformation didn't come easily, of course. The building's age meant that many existing

conditions had to be remediated to improve the building envelope and systems. “The building is almost 50 years old, so some elements were never updated as the codes changed,” says Donnelly. “We had to work very closely with the architect and owner to find feasible solutions.”

These unexpected issues also tightened the budget. “We had to work with the client and design team to shuffle some priorities and make sure we stayed on track,” says Donnelly. “If the team hadn't been so collaborative, it would have been much more difficult to meet the project's goals.”

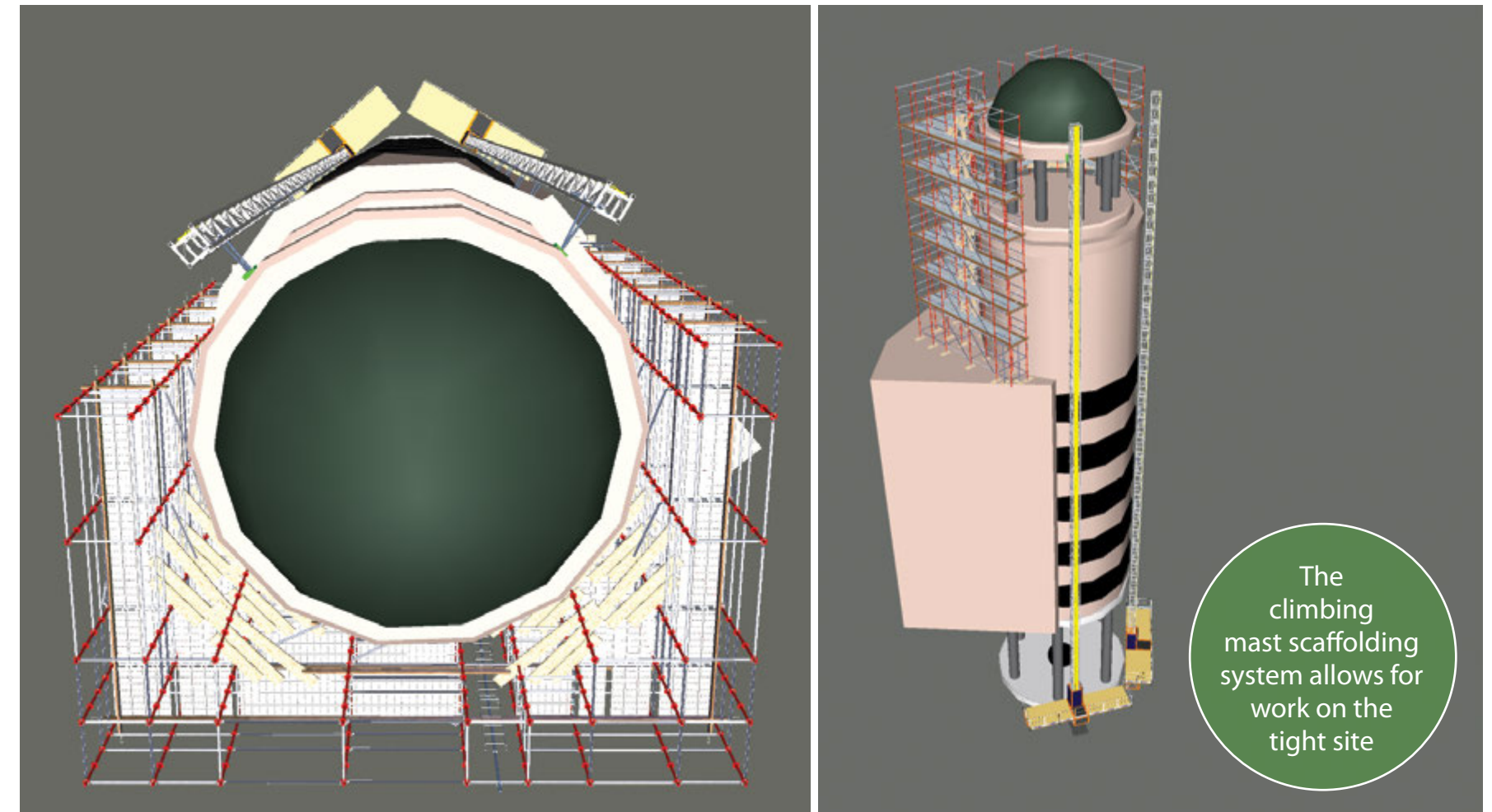
REPOSITIONED FOR SUCCESS

With the repositioning now complete, HCP is working on signing new tenants, and they are getting interest from medical groups as well as academia and corporations. That kind of attraction is further proof that the repositioning market is ripe.

“Updates like those at 3535 Market attract all kinds of tenants,” Donnelly says. “And for owners, it's much more efficient to update the lobby and exterior than to build a whole new building. It certainly adds a competitive edge.” ◀



The refurbished 2401 Cedar Springs will be a landmark in the Uptown Dallas skyline



The climbing mast scaffolding system allows for work on the tight site

UPTOWN OVERHAUL: 2401 Cedar Springs

Occupied by a single tenant for 30 years, the former GuideStone building in Uptown Dallas had simply become part of the visual landscape.

"Because it had been there so long with the same tenant, it just wasn't on people's mental radar screens," says Joseph Pitchford, managing director at Crescent Real Estate, who recently purchased the building. "But it's in a tremendous location and has great bones, so we knew if we did a proper job on repositioning it we could really increase its value."

The Crescent team enlisted the help of Corgan Architects and Structure Tone Southwest to begin the top-to-bottom transformation, which will include everything from completely opening up the lobby to creating an entirely new entrance experience.

DOWN TO THE BONES

The interior of the 200,000sf, 7-story building is being completely redesigned and rebuilt. With the former traditional-style office layout now gone, the building will feature white-box office space, plus all the amenities of modern office building, from a fitness center and meeting areas to coworking suites and dining options.

But knocking down walls to get to those bare bones did expose some unknowns.

"When we peeled back the onion layers to get to the core of the building, we discovered some infrastructure challenges," says

Christopher Lang, Structure Tone Southwest senior project manager. "Some of the systems weren't quite up to current standards."

Some of the fire-rated partitions, for example, were not up to code, and the HVAC system's air intake was not going to be sufficient. The project team launched a series of design charrettes to figure out how to bring more air into the building, whether that's hoisting new units to the roof or other system measures.

The interior will also feature an entirely new lobby with multiple entrances, abundant light and higher ceilings.

"We're big believers in what we call a 'through lobby,'" says Pitchford. "A much more open, brighter lobby makes the customer feel more comfortable and have a much better experience in the building."

CREATIVITY AT WORK

Outside, the revamped building will have an entirely refreshed façade with a new curtainwall system, striking new entryway, valet parking drop-off area and outdoor patio, among other features.

The primary challenge in making those changes, however, is the site. Situated at the corner of Cedar Springs and Maple Avenue, the building has very little frontage to the very busy streets, meaning worksite space is extremely limited. In preparing for the project, the Structure

Tone team proposed a creative way to manage that space safely and economically.

"We're using a gas-powered scaffolding and climbing mast system," Lang says. "It acts like an elevator of sorts to climb up the building so we can keep the work organized vertically within the tight site."

A key focus area for the scaffolding system is the entryway. The existing building featured a large cupola above the entrance. Inspired by that signature feature, Corgan redesigned the entryway to replace the cupola with a large, six-story glass cylinder.

"This glass rotunda on the front will take this somewhat hidden building into an incredibly dynamic, visible and dramatic structure," says Pitchford. "It's really going to be beautiful."

While construction on the cylinder hasn't begun yet, the project team has been working very closely to plan that phase down to every detail—and dollar.

PLANNING AHEAD

So far the team has completely gutted the interior of the building and is preparing to begin the exterior work. And while there have been some delays in getting going, the team has been able to take advantage of that extra time to get everything lined up for go-time.

"We've done a lot of value engineering on the glass systems in particular," Lang says. "We've been able to work with the designers to get a little creative on the glass types and curtainwall to keep it under budget."

All renderings these pages: ©2019 Courtesy, Corgan Associates and Crescent Real Estate



Above ▲ The "through lobby" adds another entrance to the building

"We've spent a lot of time working with the client and the project team on the budget," says Lang. "We don't always get this much time to really experiment with different materials and ideas, and that's paying off."

Crescent's senior project manager, Adam Soto, agrees. "A lot of issues can come up in repositioning that don't occur with a ground-up building," he says. "So far, the Structure Tone team has been very adept at solving those problems and keeping the project on track." ◀

Project Details

- Size:**
200,000sf
- Client:**
Crescent Real Estate
- Owner:**
GPIF 2401 CS LLC
- Architect:**
Corgan Architects
- MEP Engineer:**
Telios
- Civil Engineer:**
Hart Gaugler + Associates
- Structural Engineer:**
Click Engineering
- Sector:**
Commercial
- Completion:**
Early 2020



The restored façade will include glass curtainwall on the first two floors

In the Heart of the Hub

The area of Boston known as Downtown Crossing has long been the city’s shopping hub. By the late 1800s, department stores like Jordan Marsh and Filene’s had established themselves there, and retailers ranging from clothiers to jewelers lined Washington Street, one of the district’s main thoroughfares.

399 Washington Street is right in the middle of this retail hotbed. Built in 1881, the five-story building housed a number of retailers over the following decades, settling as a Barnes & Noble in 1976. But as the years went on, the businesses along Washington Street began to struggle, and the district started to lose its luster as a shopping and tourist destination. One after the next, the flagship stores closed, including the Barnes & Noble in 2006. For the last 13 years, 399 Washington remained vacant—which didn’t help Downtown Crossing’s image problem.

By the mid-2000s, however, developers began reinvesting, including building a 60-story residential tower, adding a grocery store and wooing large retailers like Old Navy and Primark as well as major companies such as Havas and Arnold Worldwide. In 2017, L3 Capital and LaSalle Investment Management seized the opportunity to become a part of this overall revitalization, pur-

“We were excited about adding this premier asset to our portfolio in such a dynamic corridor,” says Tim Phair, cofounder and managing principal of L3 Capital. “The building has long been on our radar as an incredible repositioning opportunity.”

chasing 399 Washington Street with a whole new vision in mind.

PRESERVATION WITH MODERNIZATION

The Chicago-based ownership team brought in Chicago-based OKW Architects and owner’s rep RL Edward Partners and enlisted the Boston-based team at Structure Tone to reposition the

historic building into a new office and retail destination. The property will maintain the character of the original brownstone while offering the infrastructure and amenities of a modern commercial building.

The project involves “white boxing” the entire interior plus rebuilding the core and shell, from restoring and updating the façade to rebuilding the passenger elevators and installing new MEP and fire alarm systems. Given the building’s age and long-time neglect, the project has posed a few challenges on the construction side:

- 1. Surprises.** Knocking down walls in a 130-year-old building is bound to come with some surprises. “We would open up a wall and find another wall behind that, and another behind that,” says Michael Cantalupo, Structure Tone project manager. “And since we didn’t really have up-to-date drawings, those unknowns made it difficult to plan.”



Above ▲
The property will offer retail and office space



Rendering above: OKW Architects and L3 Capital

Above ▲
The team will begin rebuilding the interior infrastructure this spring

Project Details

- Size:**
77,825sf
- Client:**
L3 Capital/LaSalle Investment Management
- Owner’s Rep:**
RL Edward Partners
- Architect:**
OKW Architects
- Sector:**
Commercial
- Completion:**
December 2019

- 2. Power.** With no tenant in the building for 10-plus years, the electrical system had practically been abandoned. The project team had just enough power to get through the demolition phase.
- 3. Distance.** The owner and architect are based in Chicago, meaning frequent visits during demo and planning were not feasible. The engineering team is Boston-based, however, so local collaboration was not a problem. Ownership is always “extremely accessible and collaborative,” says Cantalupo, and once redevelopment begins, they will be on-site regularly.

ON ITS WAY

As of winter 2019, the team has put up scaffolding and removed the paint from the façade as they prepare to install new glass curtainwall panels on the first two floors. Inside, demolition is complete; the next stage is to begin rebuilding all the infrastructure systems. The project is expected to be fully complete by the end of 2019.

“We’re really excited to see this moving forward,” says Cantalupo. “It’s rewarding to be part of an effort that is helping bring this area back to life with a whole new vision.”



70 Hudson Street, ©Courtesy of STUDIOS Architecture, Photography by Alan Schindler

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