



Warehouse to Office Rehab

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The Montana Chapter of the American Institute of Architects is pleased to announce CTA Architects Engineers is the recipient of the 2005 Excellence in Design Citation Award for 2005. CTA will now be able to compete at the Regional level in 2006.

The client, a regional professional services firm with 290 employees in 12 offices in the Western United States, was in need of a new corporate headquarters. The client needed 50,000 sq. ft. of space to accommodate a technical and professional staff of 120, executive and support staff, a variety of meeting, conferencing and training spaces, an IT department, storage spaces, and room for future expansion.

The company chose to purchase a 1920 warehouse on the edge of the city's redevelopment area. The brick, concrete and timber constructed warehouse was four-stories plus a basement and an adjoined one-story brick building with a connected 40' x 100' 1960 metal building. The design team proposed a different approach to the renovation: leave it in its raw and true state. The floors were cleaned and preserved with their unique patina. Conduits, wire trays, ductwork and VAV boxes were exposed as was the brick and timbers of the building.

In order to maintain and encourage communications with all employees, a large, open atrium was centered and extended from the basement through all the floors. The design is dramatic and meant to entice people into the atrium as a meeting place and as a unifying element to the five floors. As the atrium arose above the second floor it offered a view of an unsightly roof. In its place, an outdoor terrace roof top garden only added to the sustainable design commitment.

Visitor parking was located to the north. To preserve the integrity of the historic entry to the south, the solution was to link the entries with a linear gallery intersected by the atrium and the reception desk. The gallery can be used for rotating art exhibits and for community and company events.

The company committed to the philosophy sustainable design. Design choices worked with the existing materials to maximize cost effective designs. The design extensively reused the building's interior and exterior materials—recycling and reusing 75% of the original building materials. The steel-framed single pane windows were replaced with energy efficient windows. The steel-framed windows were reused as picture frames and light fixtures.

Steel plates from the original floor were used as wainscot around the elevator lobbies and countertops in high abuse areas such as the print room. A focal point of the entry is the reception desk where steel and reclaimed timber columns from the atrium area were used to build a bigger-than-life reception desk.

The building serves as a marketing tool for the company—telling its customers of their innovative and cutting-edge nature.

The Montana Chapter of the American Institute of Architects is located in Billings, Montana. For more information, visit www.aia-mt.org or call 406-259-7300.