

## Community Spotlight

# The peak of design: Workplaces in mountain towns

Mountain towns provide a unique social and cultural setting that differs greatly from those of a big city, especially when it comes to a workplace. Designing office projects to meet the standards and challenges of small mountain towns is a delicate process of balancing guidelines and restrictions, supply and demand, and keeping up with current and future trends.

The intimate setting of mountain towns creates a sizable challenge of balancing design guidelines with restrictions. Towns often have more stringent codes for buildings due to many factors, such as climate and weather, height restrictions and limited space. As designers, we work to create a strong brand identity while facing not only physical code restrictions, but also design restrictions within the town. Often, there are visual guidelines that communities will put in place to keep the town feeling uniform – specifically to keep the mountain town charm appeal prevalent for visiting guests. Keeping the visual appeal of the mountain town also is challenging when you want to elude a commercial look in an area dominated by residential use. Because mountain towns are popular tourist destinations, maintaining that charming allure while meeting these strict guidelines and restrictions makes building and designing office projects a challenge.

Additionally, many mountain towns have limited buildable space



**Brandt Vanderbosch**  
Principal and founder, Vertical Arts Architecture, Steamboat Springs

to utilize. Finding a usable location that will continue to attract tenants and consumers over time is one of the most important factors to consider when looking for a site to build a new office project. Having adequate space for the right-sized project in the best area helps to create a viable rental model

for tenants. There are numerous ways to create a usable space that will continue to draw tenants, one of which includes incorporating unique features that appeal to a wide variety of employees. For example, having outdoor space, kitchens, proximity to transit and places to park, and, largely, adjacency to outdoor recreation such as skiing, biking or hiking are all favorable amenities since many individuals move to mountain towns to enjoy these types of activities. Building new office projects is about more than just creating a usable space for today; it is about looking to the future and creating a space that will continue to be practical and desirable through time.

Once the proper location and basic needs of future tenants are met, the next focus for designing an office project in a mountain town is to incorporate current trends in



David Patterson Photography

The lobby in Steamboat's newest and largest office building, the 26,000-square-foot, four-story Deer Park Office Building features a blend of modern and rustic elements combining reclaimed wood, patina steel, slate flooring and Telluride stone.

design elements. A trend that never fails to bring the mountain town charm into a space is using modern materials with classic form. This often translates to using natural materials with timeless style that will continuously attract visitors. When many of us think of mountain towns, we think of the use of wood and stone – the essence of a log cabin in the mountains. In this sense, materiality is a trend that is here to stay. To draw in current tenants, however, one of the most prominent trends is representing a company's style in the lobby area. The lobby is an area that the company can show their unique values and hobbies through design and

artwork. It is the first impression people will have of the company when they walk into the space, so it is important to allow flexibility for the tenants to best express their company's personality.

Mountain towns are a magical place, and there's no reason the office projects within the towns shouldn't have the same charm. Although there always are challenges in any type of design project, there is no reason to fear them; there is so much potential for success by tackling the challenges head on and using the obstacles as an advantage to design an eclectic space that will appeal to current and future generations.▲



## COLORADO REAL ESTATE JOURNAL | OFFICE PROPERTIES Quarterly

While the Colorado Real Estate Journal continues to run an office news section in each issue of the newspaper, **Office Properties Quarterly** features the most interesting projects and people, trends and analysis, and covers development, investment, leasing, finance, design, construction and management. The publication is mailed with the Colorado Real Estate Journal newspaper, a 4,000-plus distribution that includes developers, investors, brokers, lenders, contractors, architects and property managers.

**READ THE NEXT EDITION:**  
Wednesday, March 21

**RESERVE YOUR SPACE BY:**  
Wednesday, February 28

**AD SIZES:**  
Quarter Page \$395  
Half Page \$595  
Full Page \$995  
Full Color \$200 Additional  
Frequency Discounts Available.



- Market Reports
- Development & Investment Updates
- Design & Construction Trends
- Capital Markets
- Corporate Real Estate
- Legal Updates
- and more

### ADVERTISING

Lori Golightly | 303-623-1148 x102 | lgolightly@crej.com

### SUBMIT EXPERT ARTICLES

Michelle Askeland | 303-623-1148 x104 | maskeland@crej.com

### MEDIA KIT & SAMPLES

crej.com/OfficeProperties