

# WORKSPACE TALK

Connecting People & Workspaces - August 2023

## Articles of Interest on Workplace Strategies

Thank you for picking out this installment of the State Properties Commission's Workspace Talk, a periodic newsletter that shares articles of interest to professionals and agency administrators where workplace strategy is a responsibility.

This issue will provide a synopsis of and link to a few articles which examine the advantages and disadvantages of both renovating an office versus moving. With many state agencies working on the strategy for continuing office work in a work from home / hybrid work / work from office environment, it may turn out the current configuration of an office does not fit with the long term strategy the agency is planning. In such a case, the question of whether it is more effective to move versus more effective to renovate an existing office becomes fundamental. With the State not able to fund renovations to leased space, SPC can help with negotiating potential concessions from a landlord to fund a rebuild, but frequently this will come only near the end of a lease term. Not all agencies will face this decision, and SPC does not advocate for or against renovation versus moving, but it is hoped these articles will provide food for thought in either case.

The articles summarized below, and available via the embedded links, provide ideas to consider as administrators make decisions about optimal office layouts and amenities. If you or your agency leadership would like to discuss this topic in more detail, please do not hesitate to reach out to Lee Nelson, Assistant Director, at 404-656-5550 or [lee.nelson@spc.ga.gov](mailto:lee.nelson@spc.ga.gov), or Frank Smith, Deputy Executive Director, at 404-656-5602 or [frank.smith@spc.ga.gov](mailto:frank.smith@spc.ga.gov).

## Renovating vs. Relocating Your Office Space

### RI Workplace | 2022

A good introduction to the positives and negatives of the "renovation versus relocation" question, especially how it relates to the long term goals of an organization. Bringing in the proper internal stakeholders to make sure that the decision fits the strategy and can be supported by existing staff is important.

A few of the major pros and cons to each option the article points out include:

- \* *Renovation advantage:* It can help an organization stay in a location it might not otherwise be able to afford. With many state leases in smaller cities and towns where there is a dearth of alternatives means that renovation is the only real alternative much of the time.
- \* *Renovation disadvantage:* Construction during a renovation is almost always disruptive to the current staff and workflow, with the extent of disruption dependent on the extent of renovation. Achieving a true work environment changing facility will almost universally require a major renovation.
- \* *Relocation advantage:* Relocation to a better area can excite and unite your team and give them a boost in motivation and may help retain top talent.
- \* *Relocation disadvantage:* Relocating may mean higher rent as well as the costs associated with the move, and there are almost always unanticipated expenses.

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# How Your Office Space Impacts Employee Well-Being

Forbes | January 2019

Sometimes the question is whether a relocation or renovation should be considered at all. This article discusses the effect of an updated office environment with wellness characteristics and its effect on work productivity, staff retention, and employee well-being. Cost certainly is a major factor in the equation, but the article claims definite benefits to a considered rework of an office that may have been designed years or even decades ago.

New theories of space design include offering private rooms to take a call, quiet spaces for meditation, and fun, comfortable areas that foster collaboration. Thinking about building office spaces with different environments to maximize employee wellbeing is important. Employees need to feel comfortable and calm in their physical work settings to produce their best work.

## Choosing Between Relocation and Renovation

Spacia | March 2022



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This is another look at the advantages of relocation versus renovation. A little less on point for a public agency as it discusses issues such as tax regimens in different locations, but still plenty of nuggets to stimulate thinking.

Some advantages it points out to relocation include improved operations from updated configurations, improved amenity base, as well as a potential better location near clients, potential reduction in cost, and saving on capital expenses (not necessarily applicable here - state agencies cannot spend capital on building improvements to leased properties). Some advantages to renovation include rebranding ability (touched on in an earlier Workspace Talk), improved functionality with hybrid or other workplace strategies, long-term investment, and simplicity in not having to coordinate a move. Useful tips that are recommended include get feedback from your staff, analyze your current location to determine its pros and cons for remaining, consult experts (like SPC!).



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## 7 Tips You Need to Know Before Your Office Restack

Density | October 2022

Sometimes a relocation is not an option because, well, there is no building to which to relocate in the market area. As such, this article is included in anticipation of a renovation / restack. Instead of downsizing, many organizations are evaluating the state of their existing offices to see how they can transform their workplaces into collaborative spaces for their teams for greater productivity.

Without intending to be a spoiler, some of the tips include:

- \*Communicate with staff to create a space that facilitates their daily workflow;
- \*Keep your business moving by utilizing hybrid resources during any renovation;
- \*Set a realistic timeframe to coordinate a myriad of moving parts, using realistic expectations for the restack;
- \*Rethink the workplace to help your agency become more agile and effective as more workers choose an alternative work-life balance.