



ARTHUR J. ALTMAYER BUILDING

Woodlawn, Maryland

The Arthur J. Altmeyer Building in Woodlawn, Maryland, was realized through the U.S. General Services Administration's Design Excellence Program, an initiative to create and preserve outstanding public buildings for generations of use and enjoyment.

April 2022

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The prospect of creating a daylight-filled, collaborative work environment was personally exciting, and it motivated all of us during the iterations of design.

Matthew Kreilich
Architect





HISTORY OF THE ALTMAYER BUILDING

When President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law in August 1935, a countdown began. A newly formed Social Security Board had approximately 16 months to register eligible employers and workers for what was then known as Federal Old-Age Benefits; on New Year's Day of 1937, those Americans would begin making payroll tax contributions into the social insurance program. Roosevelt's appointees Arthur Altmeyer, Vincent Miles, and John Winant, with the support of a small staff and the Post Office Department, oversaw issuance of Social Security numbers to more than 30 million people in less than a year and a half.

In addition to application forms and Social Security cards, the sprint to 1937 could be measured in real estate. From its administrative headquarters in Washington, DC, the Social Security Board opened 151 field offices where local boards issued numbers and responded to inquiries. (Today, the Social Security Administration runs more than 1,200 such offices.) More challenging to Altmeyer and his two colleagues was establishing an operations headquarters equal to the Bureau of

Old-Age Insurance's record-keeping duties. In addition to a behemoth size, the ideal building needed to structurally accommodate the weight of the bureau's paper files and storage cabinets, as well as the collating and posting machines that would process records.

The search for an operations center turned up no available facilities in Washington, DC. Working with planners from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Social Security Board instead found lease space in Baltimore's Candler Building. Named for Coca-Cola Company founder Asa Griggs Candler, the 12-story building was originally constructed in 1912 as a bottling factory and warehouse, although it also housed other manufacturer tenants. Social Security took occupancy of converted office space in the Candler Building in October 1936 and, by the close of December of that year, it had hired 2,500 employees to issue Social Security numbers, update earnings records, and calculate benefits there.

Conducting business from the Candler Building was supposed to be a temporary fix, because the Treasury Department,



which managed federal construction from the nation's birth until 1939, was simultaneously preparing a Social Security Building not far from the U.S. Capitol. Architect Charles Klauder's scheme for the headquarters was notable not only for its Art Deco and Egyptian Revival stylings, but also for the reinforced floors inlaid with electrical grids and cabling that suited a massive accounting outfit. The start of World War II preempted the Social Security Board from moving in, however, and the building was turned over to multiple divisions of the War Department upon its completion in 1941. Social Security's Washington, DC, offices were moved to Baltimore and the federal government's six-month lease of the

Candler Building would ultimately extend to 24 years.

Throughout this period, the Candler Building continually irritated its occupants, according to Richard Gabryszewski of the Social Security Administration History Museum & Archives. Insufficiently plumbed and lacking air-conditioning, the historian reports that the vintage skyscraper "was woefully suited to be a proper office building," as evidenced by long queues for restrooms and early employee dismissals during heat waves. In 1942, the year when all employees remaining in Washington, DC, were transferred to Baltimore, "the Social Security Board even contemplated moving the entire operations division to

the Chicago Merchandise Mart” to remedy poor working conditions, Gabryszewski adds. At the same time, the Candler Building had also reached full capacity. Between the 1940s and 1960, Social Security expanded its Baltimore real estate inventory to include leases in at least a dozen other buildings.

After successfully campaigning legislators to fund another purpose-built facility, the federal government combed 57 properties as potential sites for a headquarters. In July 1955, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) acquired the Weiss Dairy farm in Woodlawn, Maryland, on behalf of Social Security for \$130,000.

GSA was founded by President Harry Truman in July 1949 by way of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act. The law transferred to GSA the duties of the National Archives Establishment, the Federal Works Agency (which had taken over the responsibility of public buildings from the Treasury Department), the Bureau of Federal Supply and the Office of Contract Settlement, and the War Assets Administration. GSA, in turn, assumed the

roles of finding a site for Social Security operations and of orchestrating design and construction of a headquarters in Woodlawn.

To fulfill these obligations, the new agency considered the immediate need of emptying the Candler Building as well as Social Security’s long-term growth. Although documented confirmation has been lost, GSA most likely tapped Baltimore-based architect Richard Ayers to design an Administration Building that would catalyze the former dairy farm’s transformation. Renderings of the 10-story office began circulating for approval just one month after the land purchase. In parallel GSA created a campus plan for the 140-acre site, which also encompassed an Operations Building, auditorium, and cafeteria. Groundbreaking for the Administration Building, then also known as the Woodlawn Building of the Bureau of Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance, took place in November 1957.

The 210,000-square-foot structure opened in 1960, and it was renamed the Arthur J. Altmeyer Building in 1973.



FROM OPENING DAY TO OBSOLESCENCE

The speed with which GSA conceived and executed a home for Social Security was emblematic for the new agency. As President Truman's and subsequent administrations protected and expanded New Deal-era social welfare programs, the United States economy experienced uninterrupted prosperity. That combination of forces created great demand for federal facilities, launching a wave of construction among GSA and its counterparts. Between 1960 and 1976, for example, GSA undertook more than 700 capital projects nationwide.

The federal government's late-midcentury investments yielded iconic buildings such as the Air Force Academy and National Air and Space Museum; this group also includes GSA-led commissions like the Chicago Federal Center designed by Mies van der Rohe. Yet the Administration Building in Woodlawn represents another, more dominant thrust of the building boom, in which cost and schedule drove decision making. Like hundreds of building projects of the era, GSA relied on an austere version of modernism to produce the Administration Building quickly and

within budget. One historian described the overall look and feel of the headquarters as embodying "the ideal of anonymous, competent performance."

Although completion of the Administration Building did not garner public attention as an architectural achievement, Social Security employees themselves were "delighted with their new working situation," according to an oral history of Jack Futterman, who had begun his career in the Candler Building in 1936 and retired from the Social Security Administration in 1972. "It increased the stature...of Social Security from a number of different offices, which were helter skelter...to a building built especially for us."

Due largely to the presence of asbestos, in the decades following opening day, GSA was unable to update the office to keep pace with emerging technologies and new attitudes about work. When Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski announced funding for its modernization in 2016, the Altmeyer Building appeared largely unchanged since its inception. Original

systems had been utilized beyond their typical lifespans, and 450 employees went to work in compartmentalized offices flanking a single corridor that mirrored the building's east-west axis.

Prior to Senator Mikulski's announcement, GSA had determined a scope of work to suit the forthcoming funding. Brian Muller, a longtime GSA professional based in the agency's Mid-Atlantic Region, explains that a 2014 feasibility study concluded that renovation would save \$12.7 million in taxpayer funding compared to other development options. Yet he further points out, "With any renovation, we would have had to do a full demolition just to remediate the asbestos." In response, GSA advertised for a modernization team that would strip the Altmeyer Building to its concrete frame and conceive a contemporary workplace interior for approximately 800 occupants that includes an all-new facade and environmentally high-performing systems.

The commission also encompassed renovation of the adjoining auditorium's 12,400-square-foot interior, but it stopped

short of the Altmeyer Building's basement, where boilers and chillers provide heating and cooling to the entire Social Security Administration campus in Woodlawn. The modernized building would have to tie into this steam plant, while the modernization process had to leave plant operations uninterrupted.

GSA chose the national contractor Hensel Phelps as construction manager as constructor, and through its Design Excellence Program, the agency selected a partnership of the Minneapolis-based Snow Kreilich Architects and HGA as lead designers. "As the public has come to expect of the Design Excellence Program, the choice of designers represents GSA's insistence on experience, innovation, and maximum community benefit," says Chuck Hardy, who was named acting chief architect of the agency in 2020. Other members of the design team included Philadelphia-based Olin Partnership as landscape architect and Studio NYL, of Boulder, Colorado, as facade consultant. GSA's Muller was named project manager of the Altmeyer Building modernization on behalf of the agency in 2017.







We had to achieve environmental performance downstream of the boiler plant, through a combination of systems, envelope, and layout.

Sarah Berseth
Mechanical Engineer

A PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN BUILDING ENVELOPE

The lead designers had allocated design responsibilities prior to their selection by GSA. Snow Kreilich would steer the new envelope and public interiors, with HGA taking on workplace interiors and engineering duties. Shortly thereafter in 2016, the group paid its first visit to the Altmeyer Building, and Snow Kreilich design principal Matthew Kreilich remembers the experience vividly. Upon arriving at the Altmeyer Building, the architect wondered how a 10-story structure could appear so squat to the ground. Inside, “I felt like I could have been in a classic film depiction of a government agency building—double-loaded corridor, absolutely zero views.” Kreilich also noted that the building systems were palpably obsolete: “Walking from the building’s north side to its south side, there was an approximately 20-degree change in interior temperature.”

Sarah Berseth, a mechanical engineer and office director at HGA who accompanied Kreilich on this walkthrough, determined that the unpredictable interior climate was the result of several forces. “The existing ventilation system brought in

limited amounts of outside air, and for the induction units installed at the perimeter, it’s challenging to provide good thermal comfort,” Berseth explains. “When you also consider that the envelope was failing—and that the office configuration placed most people right next to it—you have this perfect storm of systems, envelope, and layout.”

Yet Berseth also realized that the basement heating and cooling plant might prevent her colleagues from turning the Altmeyer Building into the comfortable, energy-sipping workplace that GSA and its client had envisioned. “There are inefficiencies with steam plants. Yet we had to tap this plant’s available capacity,” she says. “We therefore had to achieve environmental performance downstream of the plant, through the same combination of systems, envelope, and layout.”

Weighing approaches to heating and cooling that were compatible with the Altmeyer Building’s basement plant, Berseth ultimately determined that a VAV (variable air volume) system, installed alongside energy recovery wheels that

pretreat outside air using conditioned exhaust air, was most efficient. Perhaps more important, the steam plant's limitations compelled Snow Kreilich and HGA to design the new building envelope according to an integrated method. In this approach to modernization, the project's various disciplines would achieve the desired energy performance mutually.

The design process traditionally behaves much like a conveyor belt. An architect produces a set of drawings, into which engineers and consultants must insert the systems and other elements that allow the architect's scheme to function. For the Altmeyer Building commission, Snow Kreilich collaborated with Berseth and her colleagues from day one, providing facade concepts on which HGA conducted rough energy simulations. The architects revised their concepts in response to HGA's data, all the while making sure with Studio NYL that proposals were executable within the given budget.

This back-and-forth validated accepted wisdom. For example, it is a truism among designers and builders that north-facing

glass provides a building's occupants with pleasant, evenly distributed daylight. Meanwhile, south-facing glass must work hard to resist solar heat gain, or buildings otherwise require more air-conditioning inside. HGA's preliminary energy models confirmed that Snow Kreilich should glaze the Altmeyer Building's north elevation, while cladding the other three elevations in glass and aluminum panels. The south face, where incoming sunshine is both intense and consistent, features the least fenestration of those three sides.

To reinforce that conclusion, Snow Kreilich and HGA arrayed a flexible office layout largely along the Altmeyer Building's transparent north elevation. A new elevator core ascends the building inside the south elevation at its midpoint; work vignettes surround that core and its adjoining, largely unoccupied spaces in a U formation. HGA's engineering team, in turn, relegated most ductwork and VAV boxes to the south side of the building, to enhance the openness of the workspace. "The prospect of creating a daylight-filled, collaborative work environment enjoying panoramic views

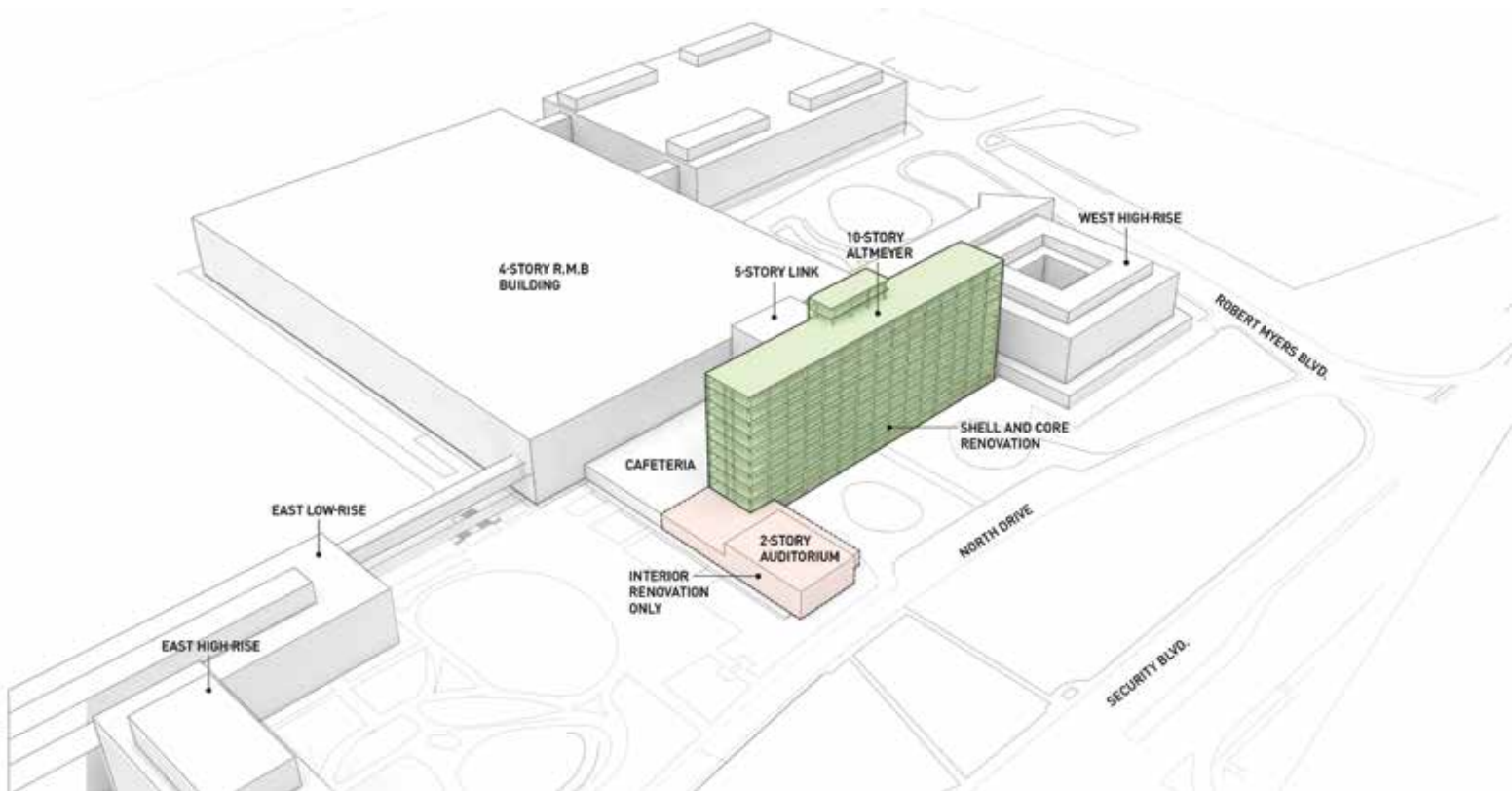
was personally exciting, and it motivated all of us during the iterations of design,” Kreilich says.

Iterative design and energy modeling also helped Snow Kreilich and HGA arrive at the most appropriate solution for the north elevation, though this process yielded some surprising information. As Berseth explains, “You might believe that decreasing the amount of glass in each facade panel would reduce energy demands inside the office, but there came a point where energy-usage projections stalled, because the models found thermal bridging around the [enlarged] window edge.” In addition to striking the right balance between glass and framing materials, the final design of the north elevation includes a ceramic frit applied to the glass that controls for variables like glare. In an ombre-like effect, the frit also offers visual gradation to the east and west elevations.

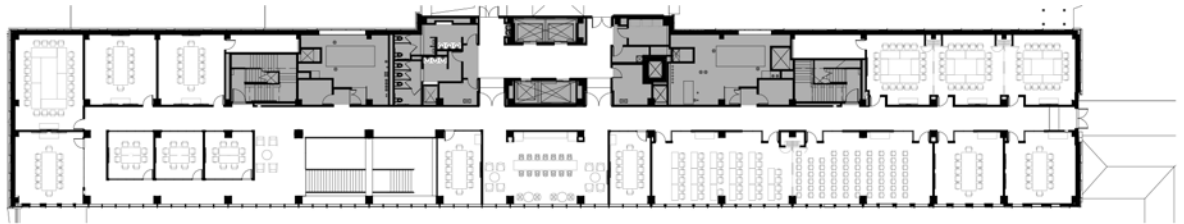
During an independent critique of the project team’s progress, which GSA also conducts as part of its Design Excellence Program, a private-sector expert suggested introducing the facade manufacturer

to the team through a method known as design-assist. By incorporating the manufacturer’s input early on, the designers and engineers could tailor the Altmeyer Building’s new building envelope to the resources at their disposal—and, through more energy modeling, ensure that any alterations were performance-neutral. “They would say, ‘Here’s what’s possible in the system and here’s where you can get cost savings,’” Kreilich says of the manufacturer’s feedback. “By the time we issued construction drawings, the design team and the contractor were pretty much perfectly aligned on how the facade would look and what it needed to accomplish.”

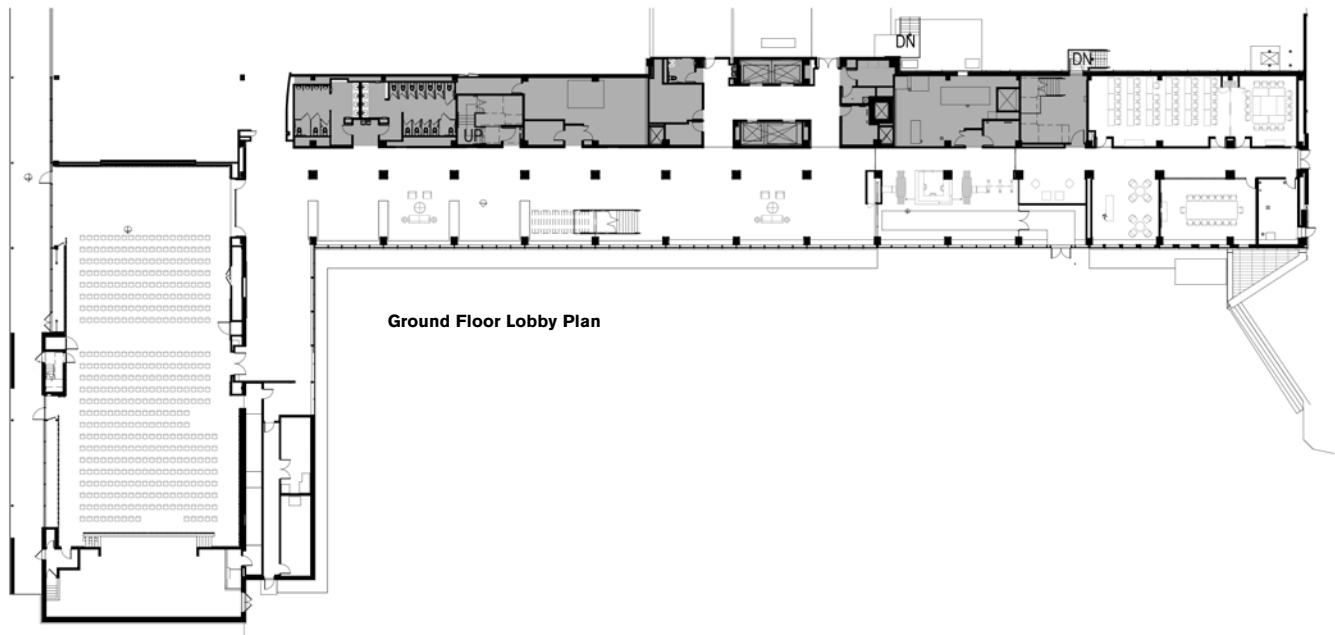
The modernization of the Altmeyer Building also included new glazing of the auditorium, which did not impact its existing masonry exterior. In addition, the design team appended a double-height rainscreen to the north elevation at the first and second floors, to lend the building the more vertical appearance that Kreilich had found lacking on his initial site visit.



Partial Campus Plan, Bird's-Eye View



Conference Center Plan (Second Floor)



Ground Floor Lobby Plan



Typical Office Plan



Typical Workstation Plan

DESIGNING THE INTERIORS

Mimicking its two-story exterior rainscreen, the Altmeyer Building's lobby interior today feels soaring. To achieve the effect, the modernization team removed part of the second-story floorplate and inserted a monumental staircase. Snow Kreilich principal Matthew Kreilich says the client deserved the dramatic change, because "The Social Security Administration thinks of the lobby as its living room—large events often take place in the auditorium as well as the front hall." He also points out that Hensel Phelps "did an amazing job" of removing, numbering, and reinstalling the lobby's existing marble panels: "We were able to tie together past and present through that stonework."

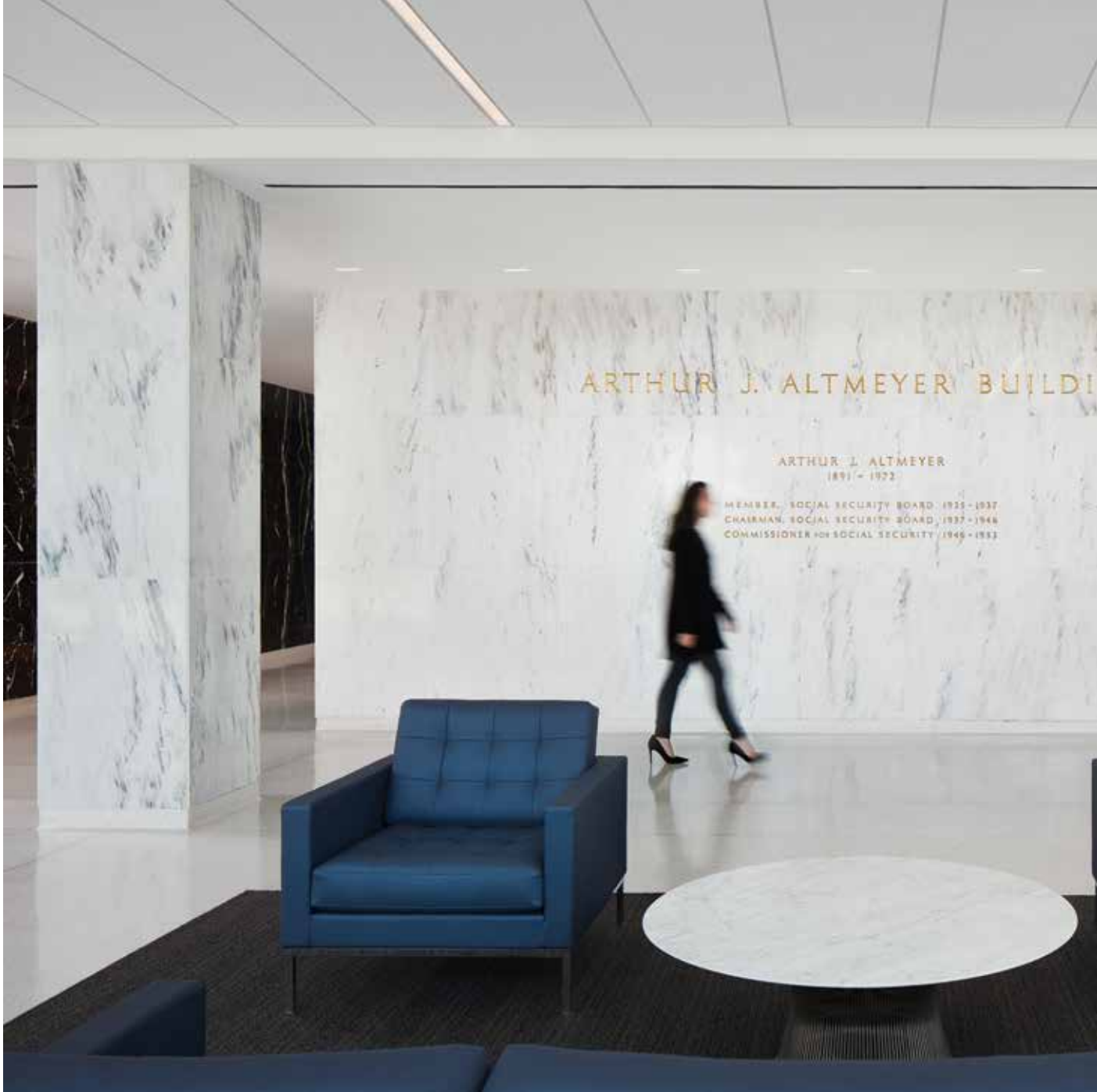
Of designing the Altmeyer Building's interiors, mechanical engineer Sarah Berseth adds, "I would say we had just as dynamic a dialogue," referring to the integrated design and digital modeling that so strongly informed the facade's development. To maximize the heights of upper-story office interiors, for example, HGA's engineering and workspace-design teams conceived a spine that consolidates most of the necessary ceiling ductwork,

and they used computer models to ensure uniform air distribution. Instead of placing desk surfaces at the perimeter, HGA also conceived a corridor just inside the north elevation, to minimize workers' exposure to temperature changes near that edge, which had been discovered while computing facade performance.

In all, the project team modeled the Altmeyer Building modernization more than 200 times. And its mutually reinforcing solutions achieve a 16.3 percent energy cost savings from the baseline established by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

Reflecting on the success of the Altmeyer Building project, Hardy, GSA's acting chief architect, says the project may serve as "a modernization template for myriad federal buildings of the same vintage." Kreilich concurs, "Reusing what's already constructed is smart, but not just from an energy-efficiency standpoint. If we want the best people working for government, then we have to create workspaces that are on par with the private sector."











A LANDSCAPE FOR MANY PERSPECTIVES

While the Altmeyer Building changed relatively little between 1960 and its recently completed modernization, the environment surrounding it evolved dramatically. With each new building erected, the former Weiss Dairy farm transformed ever more convincingly into a professional office campus.

The landscape directly encircling the facility underwent profound change, too. Native willow oaks supplanted open lawns, and vehicular circulation was threaded through those trees to connect a campus access road directly to the Altmeyer Building's north-facing doorstep. More recently, in May 1995 Social Security Administration employees planted a redbud tree near the building's front entrance to honor the 16 Oklahoma City-based colleagues who had perished a month earlier in the terrorist attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. A memorial garden comprising a water element and a slab of carnelian stone recovered from the bombing took shape around the redbud. Clusters of Indian blanket and black-eyed Susans—state flowers of Oklahoma and Maryland—were planted

there, as well. As part of its overhaul of the Altmeyer Building, GSA had included this immediate landscape in the renovation's scope of work. Although the agency described the assignment as a replacement of vegetation that had been disturbed by the facade replacement, project stakeholders embraced the vision presented to them by the landscape and planning firm Olin Partnership. The building's entry plaza "is roughly the size of two football fields, and we believed we could recraft that space into an extended threshold," says the Philadelphia-based landscape architect Sarah Miller, who is an associate at Olin. The design team established three interrelated goals for this undertaking, she adds: "We imagined a pedestrian-focused front door that also showcases a robust palette of native ecology, and we wanted our selection of plants and hardscape elements to exhibit the same care and consideration that the Social Security Administration had paid to the memorial garden."

Miller remembers her first site visit to the Altmeyer Building as "this magical experience." Located between the building's

north elevation and its access road, the mature willow oaks were so numerous that they created a kind of stage curtain for the front entry—the building threshold only came into full view at close range. While undoubtedly poetic, the lush foliage obscured sightlines of the security professionals charged with protecting the building and its occupants. In response, Olin selectively culled the view-blocking willow oaks, particularly those standing nearest to the facade. Unhealthy specimens were removed at the same time.

The remaining willow oaks stand at a relative distance from the Altmeyer Building, nearer to its access road, and Olin treated the inherited condition as a feature of its landscape scheme. The curtain of trees identifies the edge of the plaza, while only hardscaping directly abuts the building perimeter. In between the two zones, Olin dotted the plaza with islands planted with various trees and perennials that are lower in height and less densely foliated than the willow oaks. This sequence, from lush to more sparing, “reflects how someone’s mindset may change as they walk toward the building,”

Miller says. “And when you do get inside the lobby and experience its beautiful, light quality, you can turn around and look back out into this warm palette of plant and hardscape materials and feel cozy. Framing this project in terms of the pedestrian arrival experience was critical to its success.”

The zonal configuration also succeeded, in part because it supports one’s experience of the Altmeyer Building beyond arrival. The open spaces in the plaza’s middle zone, for example, accommodate outdoor activities that might range from a lunch among Social Security colleagues to an agency-wide remembrance ceremony. By using curving shapes for these garden beds and adjoining circulation areas, Olin created multiple access points in and out of the plaza, which invites different experiences from day to day and season to season. The organic geometry also is visually pleasing to behold from inside the Altmeyer Building’s upper floors. Hardy further points out that removal of vehicular circulation means that all occupants and visitors cross the plaza in essentially the same way. “The high-ranking political appointee enters the



Altmeyer Building just as a career public servant would,” Hardy says. “The plaza has a leveling effect, which embodies an equitable workplace culture.”

Miller also points out that the curvilinear arrangement of spaces was intended as a counterpoint to the Oklahoma City memorial, which now hems more closely to the auditorium. “Earlier iterations of the design were rectilinear,” she recalls, “It was much more solemn and subdued, and in collaboration with the design and client teams, we came to the determination that this was not the best atmosphere for a multiuse space.” To pay respect to the memorial, Olin added 16 redbud trees to the plaza’s middle zone. “These are the only new trees on site, and they are meant to envelop someone in the tribute experience without having the memorial dominate the space.” The redbuds rise from a carpet of ferns and sedges that also includes swaths of wildflowers and spring- and fall-blooming bulbs. All species are endemic to the Piedmont region of the East Coast.

A showcase for native plants, an equalizing social environment, an activity venue, a

sanctuary for contemplating a historic event—the completed plaza welcomes many uses and interpretations. While such multidimensionality is a mark of excellence of any public space, Hardy says, “it is a necessity for GSA. For those Americans who may never set foot in a GSA facility, a high-quality landscape represents our commitment to a local community and humanizes the work of federal government.”





As the public has come to expect of the Design Excellence Program, the choice of designers represents GSA's insistence on experience, innovation, and maximum community benefit.

Chuck Hardy
Acting Chief Architect, GSA





G262-ALT
ALTMAYER
MULTIPURPOSE

THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TEAM

Owner

U.S. General Services Administration
Public Buildings Service
Mid-Atlantic Region

Yomi Adewale, Leonora Borzilla, Jason Danielson,
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Christopher Mattingly, Lina Montgomery, Brian
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Porter, Michael Ryer, Maureen Steward

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Anderson, Steven Anzulis, Allen Ashby, Ulana
Baczynskyj, Frank A. Baker, Kelly Barr, Timothy
Beavers, Brian Bichell, Seth Binstock, Charles
Blanding, Dan Bowen, Doug Bowen, Maxwell Boyd,
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Burns, Kyle Butler, Dan Callahan, Ricky Cassell,
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Eddington, Donna Ellis, Matthew Foley, Russ Franey,
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Robert Griffin, Steve Gunther, Ron Haley, Marshall

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Howell, Joel D. Hutton, James Johnson, James Julian,
Denny Justiniano, Jeff Kahl, Michelle King, William
Kirkpatrick, Charles T. Klein, Paul E. Knuckey,
Claude J. Lacombe, Reniery Lanza-Rubio, John
Larwood, Brandon S. Leslie, Wesley Lewis, Bryan
Linscott, Samuel J. Makuch, Marc Mason, George
Maze, Hocine Menasria, Gary Mende, Rodger G.
Metzger, Doug Miller, Trina Minor, Max R. Moore,
Michael D. Nelson, Kevin O'Brian, Olukunle Ojo,
Robert W. Olah, Carl Pasquali, Mitch Pittinger,
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Vincent J. Pruchniewski, Sean M. Pruitt, Eric D.
Purdy, Mark Riley, James M. Ritenour Sr., Eric M.
Rockwell, Robert A. Rockwell Sr., Sean D. Rogers Sr.,
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Regina B. Smith, Timothy M. Sollers, James B.
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Michael V. Tebo, Candice Thompson, Robert F.
Thorne III, Josh Upman, James Walker III,
Scott Wallace, Donald Waters, Ryan L. Welkner,
Kevin R. Wheeler, Jeffrey S. Wilson, Craig S. Woods,
Willie Woodward

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Harold Clark, Andrew Dapp,
Mike Mologne, Lal Zoliana

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Julie Snow, Principal

Matthew Kreilich, Project
Lead Designer

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Matt Tierney, Kathryn Van Nelson

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Alexandria, Virginia

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Deb Young, Senior Project Manager

Paula Storsteen, Project Interior
Designer

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Dustin Harford, Mark McDonald,

Kimberly Mezger, Aaron Mullins,
Benjamin Nilsson, Sar Schnucker,
Sonja Shields, Jason Vanselow,
Corinne Wichser, Mark Zevenbergen

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Doss-Smith, Jake Turgeon,
Reuben Verdolijak

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Dillon Kaup, Chris O'Donnell,
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Will Babbington, Josh Moore

BIM Consultant

GA Design
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Construction Manager

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Steve Day, Mourtada Diallo, Danielle
Dove, Rob Duckworth, Dwane
Evans, Alexander Goga, Jeff Handley,
Matt Henderson, Justice Henecke,
Derek Hoffine, Spencer Howell,
John Hudson, Brandon Johnston,
Sharnai Lloyd, Josiah McCutcheon,
Zach McLellan, Chris Mihalick,
Jase Mock, Liz Naehle, Troy
Narducci, Mary Neil, Nick Savas,
Nick Singletary, Scott Tyk, Jason
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Dan Oppenheim

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Wiles Mensch Corporation/Sorba
Engineering
Reston, Virginia

Matt McComas, Scott Miller

Plumbing Engineer

HGA
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Marlene Bennett

Lighting Designer

HGA
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Chrysanthi Stockwell

Landscape Design

Olin Partnership
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Anneliza Kaufer, Sarah Miller

Sustainability Consultant

Sustainable Design Consulting
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James Reinertsen,
Christopher Davis

Blast and Security Consultant

Hinman
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Eve Hinman, Kyle Haas

Fire Protection and Life Safety

Summit Fire National Consulting
St. Paul, Minnesota

Chris Leaver, Natalie Buckman

Vertical Transportation Consultant

Ashland Elevator
Shrewsbury, Pennsylvania

David R. Smith, Shawn Clasing

Acoustics/AV/IT/Security

Polysonics Corporation
Warrenton, Virginia

Steve Boudreau, Allan Rea,
Michael Rees

Field Testing

Building Envelope Consultants
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J.P. McDonald, Scott Vicino

Environmental and Industrial Hygiene

Applied Environmental
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Fred Eberle, Chris Sidur,
Manuel Grimaldo

Geotechnical Engineer

Engineering Consulting Services
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Matthew J Dumrauf,
Ralph Pridgen

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Jeff Marshall, Mike Linzey

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Mark McGuire, Roberta Christie

Glazing Subcontractors

Icon Exterior Building Solutions
Lutherville-Timonium, Maryland

Rob Murphy, Jim Hoefflich

FacadeTek

Indianapolis, Indianapolis
Evan Shook

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National Peers**

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Krueck Sexton Partners
Chicago, Illinois

Les Shepherd
Leo A Daly
Washington, DC

David Altenhofen
RWDI
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Construction Excellence
National Peers**

Bob Hixon
McDonough Bolyard Peck
Fairfax, Virginia

Mike Kening
Holder Construction Company
Atlanta, Georgia















U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION AND THE DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

Public buildings are part of a nation's legacy. They are symbolic of what government is about, not just places where public business is conducted.

Since its establishment in 1949, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has been responsible for creating federal workplaces. The agency provides all the products and services necessary to make these environments healthy and productive for federal employees and cost-effective for American taxpayers. As builder for the federal civilian government and steward of many of our nation's most valued architectural treasures, GSA is committed to preserving and adding to America's architectural and artistic legacy as it executes its mission.

GSA established the Design Excellence Program in 1994 to better achieve the mandates of public architecture. Under this program administered by the Office of the Chief Architect, GSA has engaged many of the finest architects, designers, engineers, and artists working in America today to design the future landmarks of our nation. Through these collaborative partnerships, GSA is implementing the goals of the 1962

Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture: producing facilities that reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the federal government, emphasizing designs that embody the most compelling contemporary architectural thought; avoiding an official style; incorporating the work of living American artists in public buildings. In this effort, each building is both an individual expression of design excellence and part of a larger body of work representing the best that America's designers and artists can leave to later generations.

To find talent most suited to this vision, the Design Excellence Program has simplified the way GSA selects architects and engineers for new construction and major renovation projects, enhancing opportunities for emerging, small, disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses. The program recognizes and celebrates the creativity and diversity of the American people.

The Design Excellence Program is the recipient of a 2003 National Design Award from the Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, and of the 2004 Keystone Award from the American Architectural Foundation.



U.S. General Services Administration

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