



A Time of Reinvention for Offices and Cities

Property professionals know the office of the future must be a destination, not an obligation, for tenants.

By John Salustri

BOMA
International
DEEP DIVE

OUR SPONSORS:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE OVERVIEW Page 2

PROPERTY MANAGERS SPREAD THE WORD Page 5

OF CRIME, COMMUTES AND COVID-19 Page 9

NEXT STOP: METROBURB? Page 13

HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS Page 17

KEEPING THE BUZZ ALIVE Page 20

THE OVERVIEW

If office occupancy is not yet what it was prior to the pandemic, it is not for want of trying. Property managers have been working vigorously for some time now to tackle the dual challenges of ensuring workers' health and safety while also making office buildings even more inviting. How often in the past two-plus years has the phrase "experiences that cannot be matched at the kitchen table" been bandied about? This is, obviously, a direct response to the perceived comforts of working from home (WFH).

Of course, property managers are not alone in addressing this challenge. Many business and community leaders want people back in their stores and on their sidewalks, even if it is on a new-normal, hybrid work schedule. Yes, there are a growing number of employers that are opting for permanent WFH policies, including outliers such as Airbnb chief executive Brian Chesky, who has described the office as an "anachronistic form."

His, however, is far from the majority opinion. In fact, Rich Handler, CEO of investment bank Jeffries Group, may well have spoken for most decision makers when he told *Fortune* magazine: "If you want a job, stay remote all the time and be efficient in a very limited way. If you want a career, engage with the rest of us in the office and use WFH only when flexibility is essential, mental health calls and life balance needs help."

Needless to say, office buildings do not exist in a vacuum, but rather they connect to the larger community, in terms of the jobs they represent, the revenue they generate and the amenities they offer. City designers see that connection clearly and stand side-by-side with building owners and managers who are seeking and finding ways to make their environments healthy, modern and, closer to the point, inviting.

And, looking to the bigger picture, infrastructure improvements, such as upgrades to roads, bridges and mass transit, all play a role not only in greater efficiencies, but in greater social equity as well. Many cities are now going further still, overcoming their own well-documented challenges with communal spaces reimagined for greater neighborhood and community enjoyment.

Elected officials and community leaders also are riding this rise-from-the-ashes wave, using techniques that range from enticements to more gladiatorial strategies, such as those recently wielded by New York City Mayor Eric Adams. In May of this year, his chief of staff reportedly sent a letter to all 300,000 municipal workers, warning: “All city employees should be advised that, absent a reasonable accommodation, you are required to report to work in person for every scheduled workday, and hybrid schedules of any kind are not permitted.”

Property managers, for the most part, are embracing a softer approach. Many knew all along that the office contributes significantly to productivity and socialization. And, while WFH proponents embraced the demise of office space usage as a result of COVID-19, property managers never lost sight of the vitality and the value offices bring to businesses, workers and surrounding communities.

Further fueling this vitality is another major influence: fatigue—whether it be Zoom-, mask- or WFH-related. These conditions began to materialize as early as mid-2020. No matter the cause, they are increasingly leading to one likely remedy: getting back together in revitalized workplaces.

Engagement, socialization, community, even fun and excitement, are descriptions being used by proponents of in-office work to characterize this new age of business we are entering.

But these are not just words. They evoke what work perhaps rarely was, but should have been, and today increasingly mark the difference between drudgery and personal and professional fulfillment. And we’ll add another concept to the mix: reinvention.

Nowhere is this realization more evident than among those who see most clearly how form—the building—follows a reimagined function.



“You can throw the old playbook out. We have to reinvent ourselves to create a different landscape and bring people back to our office environments.”

— Glenn Good, Brookfield Properties

PROPERTY MANAGERS SPREAD THE WORD

“Employees are looking for ways to interact with each other at work and have a little fun, too,” explains one property manager. It’s this spirit that inspired the many initiatives BOMA local associations launched in cities around the United States this past year. Two notable examples are Chicago Returns and, in Minneapolis, Block Builders.

In the Windy City, a year-long-plus informational and social media campaign culminated this past May with Chicago Returns Week, a “celebration of all things downtown,” says one contributor. “We had more than 40 member buildings hosting events. We used the week to bring tenants in, build excitement about being downtown and encourage them to come back.” Breakfasts, happy hours, raffles and live music events rounded out the celebration.

Block Builders was BOMA/Greater Minneapolis’ celebratory take on the theme, playing largely on the city’s love of sports and culture. “The downtown environment has always been much like a college campus,” one host says, explaining how the events capitalized on that region’s active, education-focused culture. “We’re all here, we have our work to do, and during break time, we’re out and about and meeting new people.”

Block Builders, timed with the 2022 NCAA Women’s Final Four basketball tournament coming to town, featured a range of themed events. They included Basketball Pong, in which contestants could bounce basketballs into five-gallon buckets, as well as Pop-a-Shot competitions, bean bag tosses, mariachi bands to coincide with Cinco de Mayo and more.



“More than 45 buildings participated in Chicago Returns Week. In addition to sharing resources with building members, who in turn share them with their tenants, our events have increased tenant awareness and enthusiasm about returning to the office.”

— Amy Masters,
BOMA/Chicago

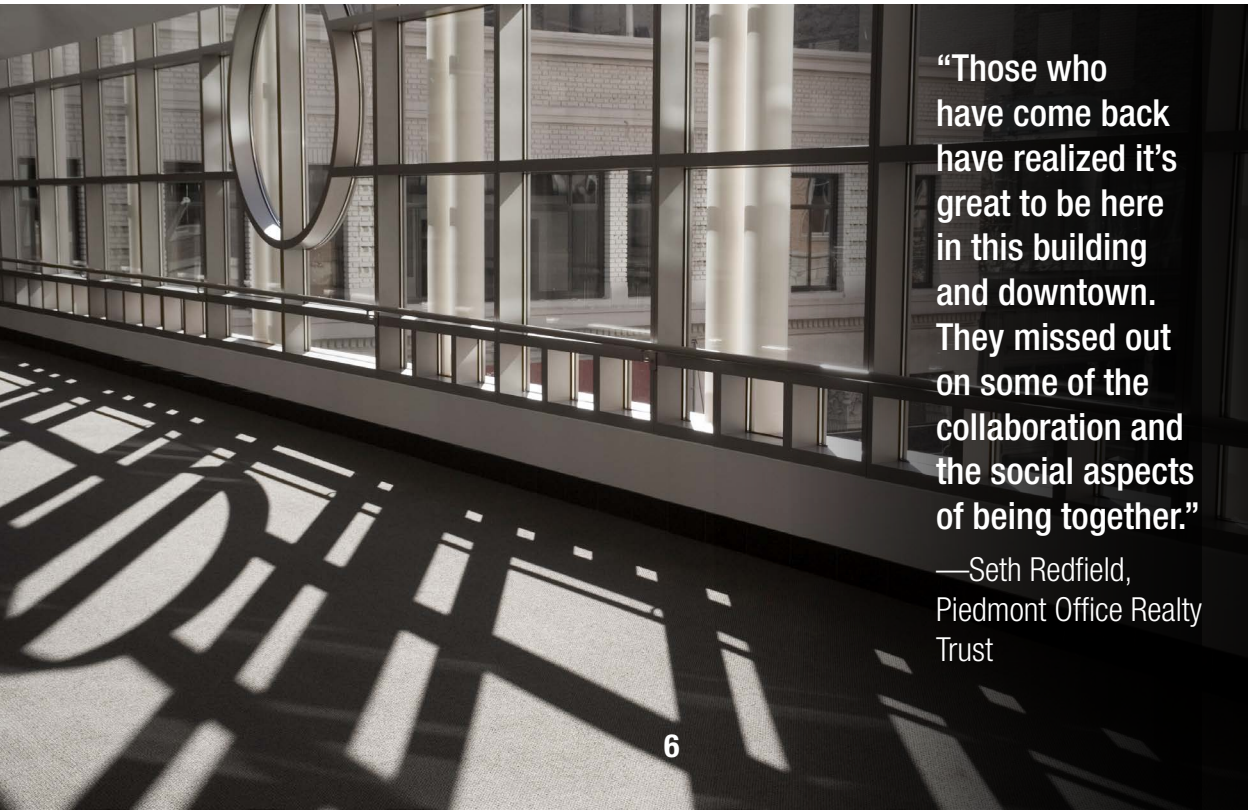
There was an inspiration wall, where those walking through in the Minneapolis Skyway System (referring to the 9.5 miles of second-level walkways connecting downtown office buildings) could express their return in writing. “It was moving to see the words of encouragement people wrote to each other,” says one contributor, “including complete strangers.”

But by no means were Chicago and Minneapolis the only cities that celebrated working downtown. “We’ve been encouraging tenants to return to offices for two and a half years,” notes another contributor from San Francisco. A key priority, he says, was to make sure their buildings were safe and healthy. Another “was to make sure we communicated that message to all of our tenants.” He credits the early work of BOMA International with producing re-entry guidance to ensure that “when people were ready to come back to work, our buildings were ready for them.”

And celebrations continued coast-to-coast, including in San Francisco, where summer block parties and return events of various types “created opportunities to celebrate together.”

The events captured precisely what a team of executives at architecture and design firm Gensler described this way: “Joy, and joy of work, is an important part of the human experience. The future of work must be a destination, rather than an obligation, and create opportunities for engagement, interaction and fun.”

In most cases, BOMA local associations worked closely with other business groups and municipal leaders to create buzz and lift all local economic boats equally. Tourist groups, local chambers of commerce and, in the Windy City,



“Those who have come back have realized it’s great to be here in this building and downtown. They missed out on some of the collaboration and the social aspects of being together.”

—Seth Redfield,
Piedmont Office Realty
Trust

World Business Chicago, an economic development organization, helped tie in municipal groups, such as the Chicago Police Department and, as important, the local transportation authorities.

In Minneapolis, Mayor Jacob Frey, who took office in 2018, “has been spending every Wednesday at one of our buildings and greeting workers as they come to work,” says one property professional.

Smart move. Face time for elected officials is most always a potential vote in the bank. But there’s a benefit to the workers as well.

Elected officials “can use it as a listening session, an opportunity to hear from people about what’s going on and their concerns,” she says. “It also gives us a chance to highlight to our tenants that we want their voices to be heard, which is something else you couldn’t get at home. We’re bringing the leader to you.”

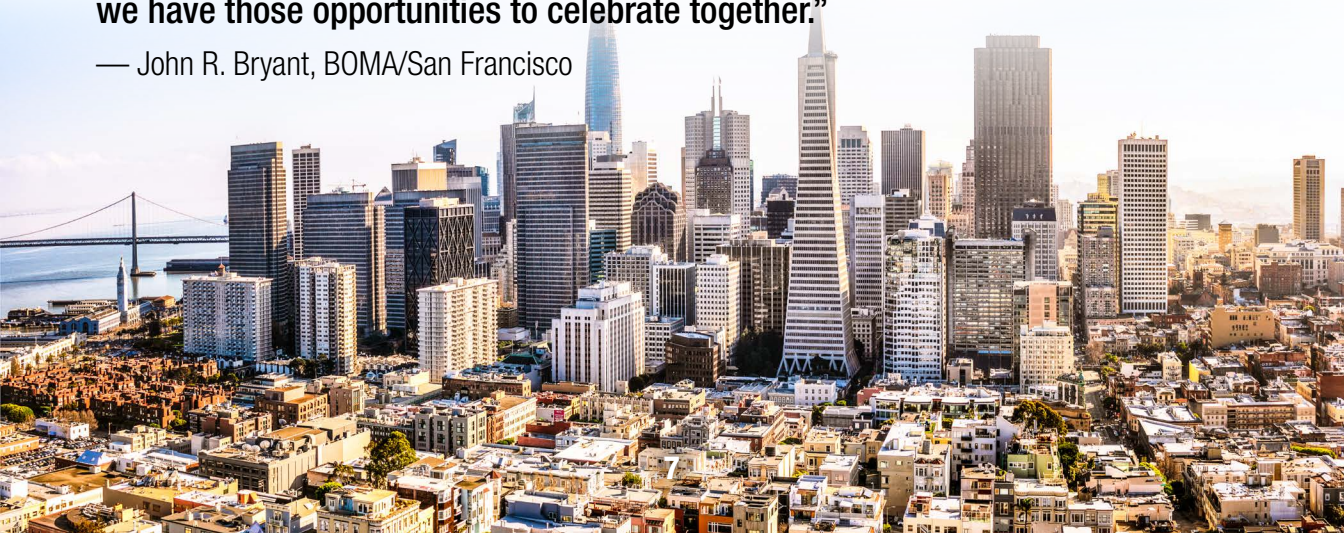
In San Francisco, “The mayor’s office is spearheading the charge and has been working very hard to get people to come back,” meaning workers and tourists alike, says one contributor. Mayor London Breed also attended BOMA/San Francisco’s “signature block party event we had last year to welcome the people coming back.”

Catherine Stefani, a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, took part in a recent neighborhood coalition meeting at which BOMA/San Francisco participated. “She heard for the first time from real estate professionals who live in the city about the challenges we’re facing. It was enlightening for her.” This was especially true, the contributor says, of the retail challenge. “The people that are coming back are finding that there’s nothing much to come back to, such as retail.”

You can chalk that up in large part to a number of factors—namely crime, commutes, COVID-19 and, as we see later, even climate change.

“Any time we can get together to celebrate the community of commercial real estate, we make sure we have those opportunities to celebrate together.”

— John R. Bryant, BOMA/San Francisco



OF CRIME, COMMUTES AND COVID-19

These types of engagement events are scheduled to continue. BOMA/Chicago, for instance, plans to revitalize Chicago Returns in the fall to coincide with school re-openings. The combined offerings of information and entertainment are having a positive effect on cities and communities. But observers said it is clear to many people that the greatest challenges looming are not within buildings, but rather in the broader landscape. Think worries about crime, long commutes and, of course, the ever-present reality of new COVID-19 variants.

Much like property managers themselves, “The first job of any mayor is to make sure the city is safe and clean,” says one contributor. “And safety is both a real and perceived issue.” He notes that crime overall has risen during the pandemic, both violent and non-violent.

“I don’t believe the issue of safety encompasses what the landlord or property manager is doing or not doing,” says one property professional. “I believe it’s the concern individuals have about the safety of the community and on the streets, their safe passage from home to the office. These are legitimate concerns.” That was why the events mentioned previously also offered a healthy dose of input from city officials and first responders explaining what they could do to alleviate those concerns.

Transportation authorities suggest a similar trend. Even in the face of Zoom fatigue, it is clear that remote work is a growing alternative to working in an office, in part due to the worries of potential exposure to COVID-19 and other bugs that come with riding buses, trains and subways.



“The property professionals in our city are proactive in protecting their tenants, so they look at their HVAC systems and other technologies to see how we can make things better and safer. That’s been a big priority.”

— Sarah Anderson,
BOMA/Greater Minneapolis

As Phil Murphy, director of U.S. Insight for Avison Young, stated during a presentation at the recent 2022 BOMA International Conference & Expo in Nashville, “Commuter rail traffic is at 30 percent, but it’s nearly 100 percent on the weekends,” he said. “People are ready to go out, but they’re not willing to commute, because they no longer have to.”

Results from a soon-to-be-released BOMA International survey reveal that 70 percent of responding organizations were in the office full time prior to COVID. Today, that figure has dropped to 39 percent, with more (47 percent) saying they are now taking a hybrid approach. The research, the third in a series co-sponsored by Yardi and Brightline Strategies, polled nearly 1,300 office-space decision makers and influencers.

Gallup bears this data out. In a December blog, chair Jim Clifton wrote that, “I recently asked a team of our advanced analysts to establish an over/under for how many U.S. employees will not be returning to the office full time.” The response choices were “Never,” “Always” and those who would return on a hybrid plan.

“When we asked the ‘nevers’ and the ‘blends’ why they want to be at home,” he writes, “they said it 1) eliminates their commute.” Not surprisingly, the second highest response concerned work-life balance. (To counteract that trend, 80 percent of BOMA survey respondents said they would or have already sweetened the pot with employee stipends for commuting.)

Trains, planes and public gatherings still carry the risk of exposure to COVID variants, and while on one hand, we have normalized within this new reality, complacency is not an option, Dr. Deborah Birx reminded attendees at BOMA International’s recent annual conference. “This is not the flu,” she said.

Birx, who served on the White House Coronavirus Task Force from 2020 to 2021 said ongoing health challenges—from long COVID and late-onset diabetes to cardiovascular events and brain shrinkage—should be taken seriously. With that in mind, she described MERV-13 filtration alone as “20th century technology.”

And many experts agree, advocating for air purification and better ventilation in addition to MERV-13. “The problem is the amount of time it takes for the contamination to get through the filter,” one says. “If you’re doing two air changes per hour, it’s a 30-minute cycle to move all the air in a room through the returns and the filter. Meanwhile, people in the space are re-contaminating it.” There are systems available now for active air disinfection, she adds.


This is not news for most property managers. “We do much the same,” says one contributor. “We not only have hospital-level filtration, but we also have bipolar ionization, which is essentially a purification system. And we’re not aware of anyone who has had a building-transmitted case of COVID.”

Two-plus years since the initial outbreak, BOMA International’s research tells us, businesses are clearly normalizing within the parameters of virus threats. In fact, decisions made with an eye toward COVID-19 and its variants ranked third in the survey, giving way to more recent concerns. Inflation (83 percent) and the supply chain (80 percent) outranked COVID and its variants (73 percent) as more top-of-mind worries.

We should note that 86 percent of survey respondents still see their offices as “vital to conducting a successful business/operation,” a fact that also bodes well not just for the office buildings themselves, but for the cities in which they stand.

“Cities are resilient and durable,” as one contributor notes. “They’ve always had their ups and downs, but the future of our cities is still bright.”

He points to downtowns as centers of “commerce and worship and social interaction and culture.” Echoing the comparison of kitchen tables to office environments, he adds: “You couldn’t replicate that elsewhere.”



“We’re using 21st century medical technologies, from testing to vaccines. But, in many cases, we’re only using 20th century techniques indoors to prevent the initial infectious spread.”

— Deborah L. Birx, MD, ActivePure Technologies

NEXT STOP: METROBURB?

Making cities and buildings more inviting to returning populations has become top of mind, it seems, for both property professionals and city planners. Take the iconic 110-story Willis Tower in Chicago, owned by EQ Office, a Blackstone portfolio company.

Tamala Ballard, the EQ Office property manager, told BOMA International recently, it is incumbent upon property owners and managers “to create and maintain workplaces that workers will be excited about...creating environments that are warm, welcoming, hospitable, inspiring, collaborative and enabled by cutting-edge technology.” Ballard oversees operations at Willis Tower and was a key player in Chicago Returns.

Her sentiments dovetail nicely with those of building ownership on the heels of the completion of the tower’s \$500-million renovation earlier this year. David Moore, EQ Office’s senior vice president and portfolio director, said in a statement that the mission was to reimagine and repurpose the tower “to better serve the city, the Loop neighborhood, and the diverse set of companies and their employees that call it home.”

Importantly, he added: “The role of the office and the way that people work has evolved over these past few years, and our focus on creating a human-centered workplace with unmatched activation and energy will ensure that Willis Tower continues to inspire our city and its workforce for decades to come.”



“It also is incumbent on us as building owners and managers to create and maintain workplaces that workers will be excited about...creating environments that are warm, welcoming, hospitable, inspiring, collaborative and enabled by cutting-edge technology.”


—Tamala Ballard, EQ Office

Also appealing to cities and their inhabitants is great neighborhood design, as long as they also bring employment opportunities and a robust transportation system, notes the Gensler 2021 City Pulse Survey. The survey states that up-and-coming cities such as Denver; Austin, Texas; and Charlotte and Raleigh, both in North Carolina, are booming “as people who are no longer tethered to downtown offices or are seeking more value and space look to relocate.” This is keeping with the 57 percent of BOMA survey respondents who “see less value in downtown/CBD office locations.”

“To keep residents and attract new ones,” the Gensler study states, “cities will need to focus on what people still love about urban living. Central business districts should strive to be less nine-to-five and more 24/7, providing place amenities and experiences that keep residents engaged after the workday ends.” Key to the choice for urban dwellers, the report states, are neighborhoods that are beautiful, authentic, safe, clean and pedestrian-friendly. “Rethinking zoning to provide more affordable housing choices is key.”

Social equity also factors heavily into this focus. (See *“Social Equity & Community,”* on page 21.)

But none of this means that older, so-called “legacy” cities are outdated. First, they are dripping with authenticity, says one contributor. “They have history, architectural character and great anchor institutions.” He cites cities such as Pittsburgh and Birmingham, Alabama, formerly the Number One and Number Two steel towns in the U.S. Both have “leveraged their assets, such as affordability, to compete with big, high-growth, global gateway cities,” where pricing is often out of reach for a younger, more mobile generation.



“Smart cities have a placemaking dividend, which simply means that people stay longer, come back more often and spend more money in places that attract their affection.”

— Ed McMahon, Urban Land Institute

Second, many municipalities, new and old, are adopting a “15-minute city” approach, meaning essential functions exist within a 15-minute walk or bike ride from where people live. This includes “jobs, commerce, healthcare, education and entertainment,” says the Urban Land Institute (ULI).

ULI, which attributes the growing popularity of the concept to the one-two punch of climate change and COVID-19, cites Minneapolis as a prime example in its Root District. It was a joint venture of city residents, business owners and design professionals who over a two-year period came together with the shared goal of creating a resilient destination district that is centered on art, food and culture. The goal of the Root District, and 15-minute cities in general, “is to create access-focused urban environments, which include food resources, green space, public art, maker spaces, jobs and other community resources,” says ULI.

That model is also being picked up in another trend: the metroburbs. Defined by one source as a “slice of urbanity in suburbia,” these are essentially self-contained cities, with all, or most, of the expected conveniences found within.

“It’s a definite trend,” says one contributor. “Today, almost no one is building a single-use research park. They’re almost all mixed-use.” He points to the Research Triangle, the mega-science and innovation center in North Carolina, so named for its proximity to Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and North Carolina State University. “For many years,” says the source, “they had three rush hours a day: Morning, evening and lunchtime, because there was nowhere to eat.”

Not so today. What is called the Hub RTP features 1,200 residential units, more than 100 million square feet of office space and 16 acres of parks and green space. All of this is within one of the five most popular relocation states in the nation.

Looking further north, New Jersey is home to a 472-acre metroburbs anchored by the former Bell Labs building in the city of Holmdel. The two-million-square foot building, once a center of innovation, lost its luster in the face of changing technologies and the breakup of the Bell Systems monopoly, and in 2007, the asset was sold off. Today, however, it is being reborn, with offices, shops, dining and entertainment venues, all within the facility. (Lead developer Ralph Zucker, who reportedly coined the word “metroburbs,” also has a similar project on former Bell land in Chicago.)

Clearly, there are two dynamics currently taking place today. As we reimagine our cities, old and new, how we envision work—and therefore the places where we work—are also being reimaged.

That is the message property managers and owners are sharing with the public. The question is how successful have they been.

HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS

While property managers and local city officials beat the drum for coming back, population numbers still lag—severely in some cases—pre-COVID levels.

As Avison Young reports, while there has been a steady increase in foot traffic in major cities, that tracks “significantly below” pre-COVID levels. “The widespread return after major holidays and after diminishing health-related concerns that many hoped for has yet to materialize,” it said.

And property professionals are feeling the pinch, although the degree of pain varies from city to city. CommercialEdge data bear this out. “In June, the national vacancy rate ticked down 20 basis points month-over-month, but year-over-year it registered a 20-basis-point increase, stabilizing at 15.2%,” says the firm. “Office markets where vacancy rates trended down in June remained concentrated in the Sunbelt and areas with significant life science industries.”

For instance, Boston was the national bellringer in terms of occupancy in June, and the only one in the Top 50 cities to log a vacancy below 10 percent (9.6% to be exact). At the other end of the spectrum, Houston and Atlanta sustained the highest vacancies, 23.8% and 20.3%, respectively. CommercialEdge puts the Twin Cities at 14.0%; Chicago at 19.5% and San Francisco is at 17.4%.

Just as vacancies vary from city to city, they also fluctuate from property to property. “Prior to the pandemic,” recounts one contributor, “on a typical weekday, we would have around 3,500 people in the building.” In April 2020, it dropped to about 200. “So, it went down to less than 10 percent of the previous normal. Then we had a very nice upward swing through the fall of 2020.”



“To bring tenants back to the office, we came up with a social media campaign, captivating videos, facts about why it’s beneficial to be in the office. A lot of that had to do with the social aspect and interaction.”

— Ashley Duffy, Zeller

Ebbs and flows occurred as vaccines were distributed, mask mandates were lifted and then variants (such as delta and omicron) reared their heads. “And we went back down to around 15 percent again,” he said. “But since then, we’ve been on a rise and we’re now about 50 percent of normal on a typical day.” By “typical,” he means Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, the least popular days, at least anecdotally, for most employees to work from home.

With adjustments for local attitudes, the pattern is being replicated in many cities. “The reality is that recovery is coming in fits and starts,” says a source. “As soon as we think we’ve turned the corner and we’ve hosted incredibly successful events, we see new variants of COVID, and that changes the dynamic.”

But if that’s the case, how can anyone claim success? The answer seems to be in keeping the message alive.

Through the peaks and valleys, the essential messaging of the service and value—even the fun and excitement—to be found in office buildings has remained constant. The direct correlation between a campaign such as Chicago Returns and increased occupancy numbers might be hard to measure. But, as one property manager states, “Any positive activity downtown that encourages people to participate is a success in our judgment. We can get people excited to be down here and see that good things are happening in our building.”

Steve Poechmann, RPA, agrees. As the property manager with Shorenstein Realty Services told BOMA International: “[Minneapolis’ Block Builders event] was a great opportunity to showcase our building...while reconnecting with tenants that have returned to the office in some capacity.”

As stated before, the efforts taking place in cities such as San Francisco, Chicago and Minneapolis seem ripe for repeating, not only in those places where the format proved effective, but also in locales that still need help.



KEEPING THE BUZZ ALIVE

The buzz being created in these and other cities is transferable to other cities, as our sources indicate. And while the fun and games are important, at the core of the messaging is information—both collecting it and sharing it.

“We really focused on reaching out and having monthly and quarterly meetings with every tenant,” says one manager. “We asked how things are going, what were their return plans, and how we could support their efforts to accomplish whatever they felt was best for their organizations.”

Open forums also let multiple tenant decision makers learn what others were doing.

Such engagement is key. “Engage your tenants in as many activities as possible,” says one contributor. “Work and home life have been blurred, and employees are looking for ways to interact with each other at work and have a little fun along the way.” Charitable events are another way to involve both the tenancy and the broader community, she adds.

The relationship between the building and the city shouldn’t be forgotten either. “The city or municipality doesn’t know what they don’t know,” another source says. “By staying engaged with your local leaders, you can provide direct feedback on the office market and stay part of the conversation.”

That includes local authorities such as transit and first responders. “What issues do you need to push with them in order to help solve the problems expressed by your tenants and move forward?”

At the end of the day, success in sending the message of building and community value comes down to one factor: “Tenant employees are looking for options and solutions,” one property manager states. “The more you engage with them, the better off we all are.”

“Here in Chicago, we created a kitchen cabinet of respected competitors to see how we could work together to promote a return to the office.”

— Kent Swanson, Riverside Investment and Development Co.



Social Equity and Community

In a previous Deep Dive, we discussed the linkage between infrastructure upgrades, office buildings and improved social equity. As a recent Urban Land Institute (ULI) report indicates, that infrastructure also includes parks and green spaces.

Denver, for instance, “has adopted a goal to have all residents be within a 10-minute walk of quality open space,” Allegra “Happy” Haynes told ULI recently. The executive director of the Denver Department of Parks and Recreation noted that her team “took existing data from the city’s Equity Index and overlaid it with information about the location of quality parks and the city’s investments in neighborhoods for the last decade.” The result was the Parks and Recreation Equity Index Map.

The map outlines departmental priorities by identifying “where we need to make more investments and pay more attention to various communities,” she said. “This has led to investment based on the change in how the Parks Department incorporates specific neighborhood factors and values as they make decisions.” Importantly, as we saw in the Minneapolis

Root District, “all decision making is now driven by neighborhood engagement.”

A notable example of that inclusion is the focus given to a West Denver neighborhood considered one of the lowest-income areas of the city, where growth was traditionally hobbled by disinvestment. “We wanted to let them know that they deserved the best we have to offer,” she said. The result is a destination park with rail links and nearby walking trails. “The park provides a complex and multi-faceted experience that challenges and engages users of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.”

No matter the specific location, be it big town, small town, suburb or metroburbs, the social equity piece must remain a goal in modern design and operations. “Most successful cities, the most successful commercial buildings and the most successful corporations are those that are inclusive in their embrace of people of all backgrounds,” says one contributor. “Equity is going to be at the center of a lot of the healing we’re doing in society.”

In Denver, the parks and recreation department adopted a goal to have all residents be within a 10-minute walk of quality open space, the Urban Land Institute reported. The city’s focus is on “where we need to make more investments and pay more attention to various communities.”

—Allegra Haynes, Denver Department of Parks and Recreation



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Generously sharing their time and expertise were:

Sarah Anderson, President and CEO, BOMA/
Greater Minneapolis

Deborah L. Birx, MD, 2020-2021 White
House Coronavirus Task Force member, and
Chief Medical and Science Advisor, ActivePure
Technologies, Dallas

John R. Bryant, Chief Executive Officer, BOMA/
San Francisco

Amy Carenza, Chief Commercial Officer,
ActivePure Technologies, Dallas

Ashley Duffy, Director of Events for Pioneer
Court, Zeller, Chicago

Glenn Good, BOMI-HP, RPA, FMA, LEED Green
Associate, CPM, General Manager, Brookfield
Properties, San Francisco

Amy Masters, Director of Government and
External Affairs, BOMA/Chicago

Ed McMahon, Senior Resident Fellow
and Charles Fraser Chair on Sustainable
Development, Urban Land Institute, Washington,
D.C.

Lori Olson, Vice President and General
Manager, Zeller, Chicago

Seth Redfield, Senior Property Manager,
Piedmont Office Realty Trust, Minneapolis

Kent Swanson, Executive Vice President and
Chief Financial Officer, Riverside Investment and
Development Company, Chicago

Research work contributing to this paper includes:

From ABC News:

“Mayor Adams Sends Stern Letter to NYC
Employees: ‘You Are Required to Report to
Work in Person,’” by Joe Torres, June 1, 2022.
<https://abc7ny.com/work-from-home-nyc-municipal-employees-return-to-office/11915890/>

From Avison Young:

“The Vitality Index: Measuring the Pace of Our
Return to Downtowns,” July 18, 2022.
<https://www.avisonyoung.com/return-to-office-vitality-index>

From BOMA International:

“Welcome Back: How Two Cities Reanimated
Their Downtowns,” By Linda K. Monroe, June
2, 2022.
https://www.boma.org/BOMAKnowledgeCenter/Topics/Tenant-Experience/Welcome_Back.aspx

From *Business Insider*:

“Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky . . . Calls the Office
an ‘Anachronistic Form’ and ‘From a Pre-
Digital Age,’ by Sarah Jackson, May 8, 2022.
<https://www.businessinsider.com/airbnb-ceo-brian-chesky-office-anachronistic-from-pre-digital-age-2022-5>

From CommercialEdge:

“National Office Report,” July 2022.
<https://www.commercialedge.com/blog/national-office-report/>

From EQ Office:

“EQ Office Announces Completion of Willis
Tower Redevelopment Project,” May 24, 2022.
<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220524005376/en/EQ-Office-Announces-Completion-of-Willis-Tower-Redevelopment-Project>

From *Fortune Magazine*:

“Returning to the Office Can Determine
Whether You have a ‘Job’ or a ‘Career,’ Bank
CEO Says,” by Chloe Berger, June 27, 2022.
<https://fortune.com/2022/06/27/office-work-determines-job-career-path-jefferies-ceo/>

From Gallup:

“Bet on It: 37% of Desks Will Be Empty,” by
Jim Clifton and Ben Wigert, Dec. 7, 2021.
<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/357779/bet-desks-empty.aspx>

From Gensler:

“Insights From Gensler’s 2021 City Pulse Survey and the Impact on Rising Cities,” August 2, 2021.

<https://www.gensler.com/blog/insights-from-genslers-2021-city-pulse-survey-and-the-impact?q=rethinking%20cities>

“Why It’s Time to Demand More From Our Workplace Experience,” by Elizabeth Brink, Natalie Engels, J. Kevin Heinly, Janet Pogue McLaurin, July 11, 2022.

<https://www.gensler.com/blog/why-its-time-to-demand-more-from-our-workplace-experience>

From Hub RTP:

“Experience.”

<https://hub.rtp.org/experience/>

From NJ.com:

“Is This the Coolest Office Building in New Jersey? A Look at Life Inside Bell Works,” by Jessica Remo, May 22, 2018.

https://www.nj.com/entertainment/2018/05/inside_bell_works_holmdel_nj_former_bell_labs.html

From NewCities:

“The Increasing Allure of the ‘Metroburbs,’” by Ralph Zucker, April 17, 2020.

<https://newcities.org/the-big-picture-increasing-allure-metroburbs/>

From PODS Blog:

“Where Are People Moving to? Cities With the Highest Move-in Numbers,” by Alex Keight, April 27, 2022.

<https://www.pods.com/blog/2022/04/moving-trends>

From the Urban Land Institute:

“Legacy Cities: From Rust to Revitalization,” by Thomas Eitler, Ed McMahon, Tom Murphy, Trish Riggs and Ellen Shadle, April 18, 2022.

<https://knowledge.uli.org/en/reports/research-reports/2022/legacy-cities.html>

“What Cities Can Learn from Minneapolis’s Commitment to Community,” by Rebecca Muchow, July 18, 2022.

<https://urbanland.uli.org/economy-markets-trends/what-cities-can-learn-from-minneapolis-commitment-to-community>

“Envisioning Park Quality for All: How Happy Haynes Is Transforming Neglected Parks Into Community Assets,” by Lisa Rother, July 1, 2022.

<https://urbanland.uli.org/sustainability/envisioning-park-quality-for-all-how-happy-haynes-is-transforming-neglected-parks-into-community-assets>

From Voice of America:

“Why Homicide Rates in the US Spiked 30% During COVID-19 Pandemic,” by Dora Mekouar, Feb. 2, 2022.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/why-homicide-rates-spiked-30-during-the-pandemic-6420391.html>

Photography Accreditation

Cover: kupicoo / E+ / Getty Images

Page 3: 79848202 © Monkey Business Images | Dreamstime.com

Page 5: xavierarnau / E+ / Getty Images

Page 6: YinYang / iStock / Getty Images Plus

Page 7: georgeclerk / E+ / Getty Images

Page 9: bee32 / iStock / Getty Images Plus

Page 11: runna10 / iStock / Getty Images Plus

Page 13: courtneyk / E+ / Getty Images

Page 14: RyanJLane / E+ / Getty Images

Page 17: AzmanL / E+ / Getty Images

Page 18: Leonardo Patrizi / E+ / Getty Images

Page 20: gradyreese / E+ / Getty Images

Page 21: 95278312 © Photoquest | Dreamstime.com

OUR SPONSORS: