

# Center for Urban Entrepreneurship (CUE)

Built in 1928 as the Rochester Savings Bank, this National Historic Landmark located at 40 Franklin Street was designed by McKim, Mead & White in the Byzantine architectural style. The building was recently acquired by the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) to establish a new urban satellite campus in Downtown Rochester.

In the epicenter of Rochester's burgeoning 'Downtown Innovation Zone', RIT's Saunders College of Business envisioned this building as the ideal location for the Center for Urban Entrepreneurship (CUE). The CUE's mission is to help reshape the regional economy and build wealth within the urban community by being a central resource for entrepreneurial programs and research.

Our design team was charged with renovating vacant space for the CUE on the first floor. The CUE's leadership wanted the new environment to portray (in their words) a *"start-up feel that was edgy and urban, but also warm and welcoming."*

The design strategy was to respect the historic building shell by carefully inserting a contemporary space that is differentiated, yet compatible with its context. Drawing from the spirit of resourcefulness, building materials that were once covered up are reused as features. The concrete ceiling structure is revealed to express volume. Exposed ductwork and conduit run above suspended wood and metal lath acoustical clouds. Structural clay 'speed tile' is repurposed as a decorative element. The reception desk is composed of structural steel members. And glass storefront allows natural light to permeate deep into the interior spaces, while visually connecting inhabitants with the surrounding urban environment.

Building Area: (sf)

**+/-6,000sf**

Cost per Square Foot:

**n/a**

Construction Cost

**n/a**

Date of Substantial Completion:

**2015**

Location of Project:

**Rochester, NY**

Type of Project (check one):

Residential

Single Family

Multi-Family

Commercial/Industrial

Small Project – <\$2 Million

Large Project – >\$2 Million

Institutional

Small Project – <\$2 Million

Large Project – >\$2 Million

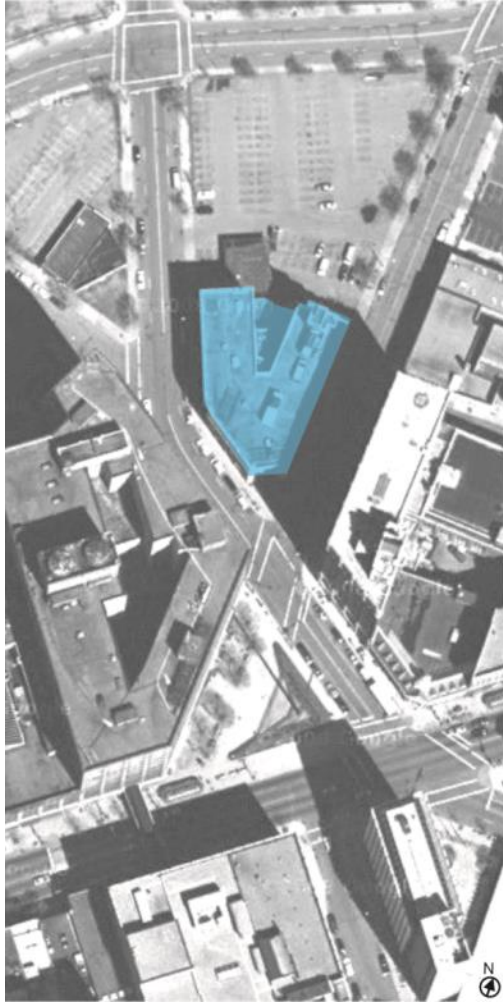
Interior Design and Environment

Urban Design



**CENTER FOR URBAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP (CUE)**

The first downtown business incubator of its kind, the CUE looks to be a major contributor in the newly-formed Rochester Downtown Innovation Zone.



CENTER CITY – ROCHESTER, NY

1. Rotunda
2. Elevator Lobby
3. Reception
4. Resource Lounge
5. Staff Offices
6. Director's Office
7. Business Incubator
8. Meeting Room
9. Flex Space
10. Kitchen
11. Assembly Room
12. Bank Hall



## EXISTING CONTEXT

Built in 1928 as the Rochester Savings Bank, this National Historic Landmark located at 40 Franklin Street was designed by McKim, Mead & White in the Byzantine architectural style.

Exterior view from the south  
(right, building in center).

Interior of Bank Hall (below).





**RECEPTION & RESOURCE LOUNGE**

The design strategy was to respect the historic building shell by carefully inserting a contemporary space that is differentiated, yet compatible with its context.



PRE-RENOVATION

## ELEVATOR LOBBY / CUE ENTRANCE

The building's original blueprints called for punched openings into the tenant space from the elevator lobby. These openings were realized in this project, and now provide the main entrance for CUE and brighten the lobby with natural light.





PRE-RENOVATION

## RECEPTION

Formerly vacant office space (left), the new reception area (below) serves both the CUE staff and the incubator businesses. It also offers visitors access to the resource lounge.



## INCUBATOR

The incubator space provides a variety of flexible work spaces for entrepreneurs. A mixture of translucent and clear glass panels balance privacy, views and light. The space offers an inspiring and dynamic atmosphere that promotes collaboration and innovation within its urban context.



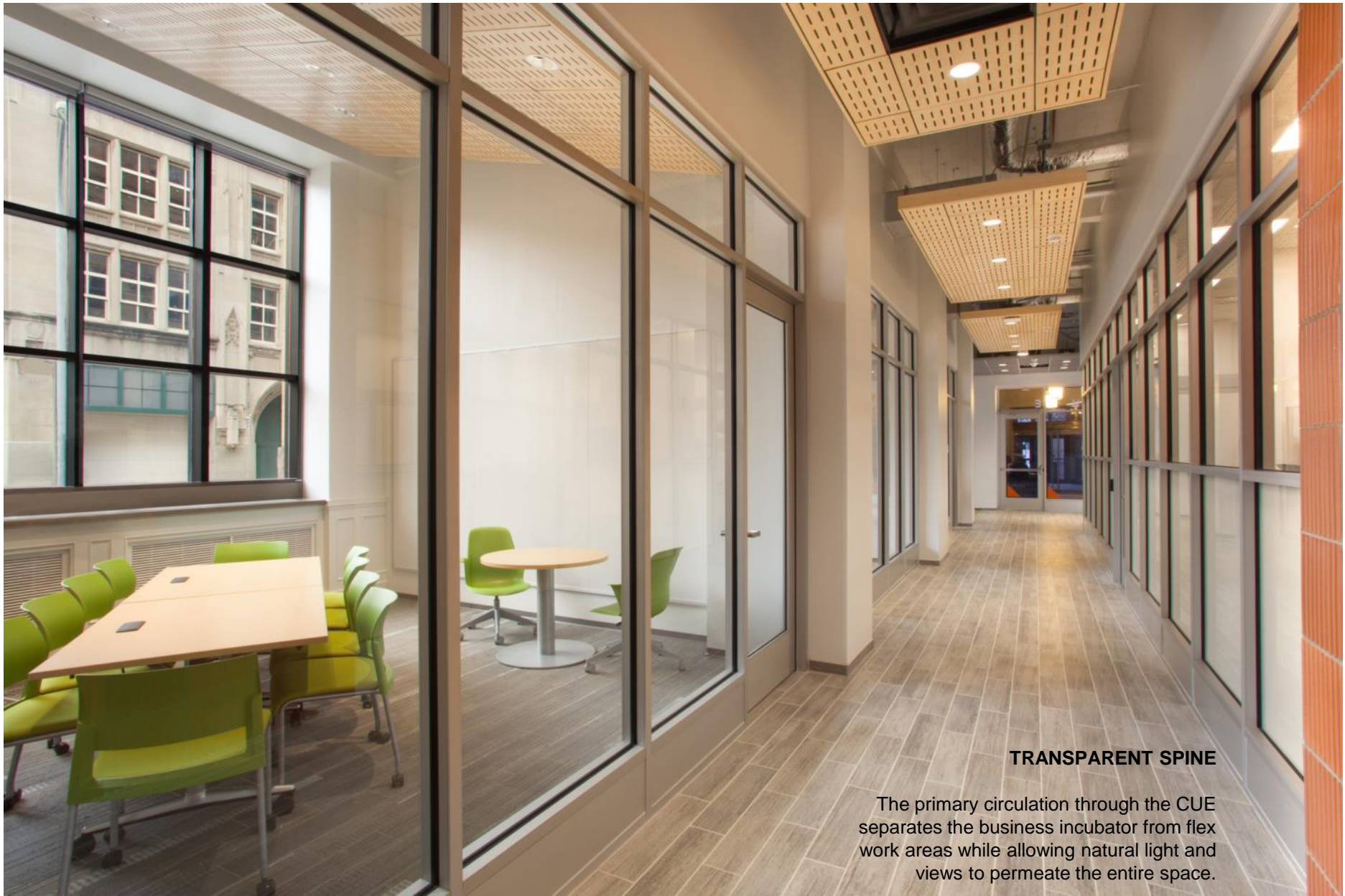




**RECEPTION DESK  
& LOBBY BEYOND**



**RESOURCE LOUNGE  
& RECEPTION BEYOND**



**TRANSPARENT SPINE**

The primary circulation through the CUE separates the business incubator from flex work areas while allowing natural light and views to permeate the entire space.



**CENTER FOR URBAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP (CUE)**

The overall design strategy was to respect the historic building shell by carefully inserting a contemporary space that is geared for urban entrepreneurs and compatible with its context.