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Reimagining Vintage Office Design Competition Winners

Winning teams identified for [Charlotte Center City Partners \(CCCP\)](#) and [CBI](#) Design Competition

January 10, 2023 – CCCP and CBI are pleased to announce the results of a design competition to reimagine vintage office to add a range of additional destinations and economic activities to strengthen Uptown as a regional asset.

Six teams submitted thoughtful and innovative proposals to reimagine five Uptown buildings (two proposals were for the same building). The teams consisted of combinations of architects, designers, developers, non-profits, construction companies, property managers and property owners.

All six submissions will be on display from Wednesday, January 10 at 400 South Tryon. The six teams' submittals share how they identified, reimagined, and how the future of Uptown can be better balanced with more attainable residences, experiential retail, modern work environments, and engaging civic uses.

“Downtowns across the country are being reshaped by the impacts of the pandemic and monetary policy,” said James LaBar, SVP of Economic Development for CCCP. “We believe this design competition eliciting innovative ideas is the most viable and Charlotte-informed way to learn how older office spaces can evolve to meet the ever-changing ways of working and learning, gathering with family and friends, and enjoying exceptional living and visitor experiences.”

The competition Selection Committee identified common threads throughout the submissions.

- Targeted private and public investments can improve key metrics, including lower vacancy rates, strengthened existing office markets, securing the tax base, and additional public benefits towards our community’s most vexing challenges.
- Selective demolition can create more engaging, diverse, and programmable spaces for the public
- Ground level design to support more vibrancy and interactions for more people than just the buildings’ tenants
- Adding residential uses in parts of buildings in order to achieve a mix of uses as well as increasing the number of Uptown residents
- Place-based, specific building ideas informing programmatic goals for Uptown
 - Examples: Add student housing, enhanced pedestrian connectivity, better east/west links, more active and walkable blocks
- Braided capital between private and public as well as federal, state, and local will be needed to turn these proposals into projects

- Office conversion projects that are flexible and have tangible public benefits will be more compelling to attract public investments
- Lastly, due to the scale of the challenge and fierce peer city competition, we will need to work on both the supply and demand sides with new office conversion tools and policies as well as targeted economic development retention and attraction efforts

“CBI believes that good design is good business,” said David Longo, Chairman and CEO of CBI. “The built environment, when leveraged correctly, will positively impact culture, collaboration, learning, and innovation. These elements are critical to the success of the organizations we serve.”

The highest scoring teams are the following:

Tie for First Place:

- | Buildings | Project Teams |
|------------------|--|
| • 526 S. Church | Asana Partners, SK+I Architecture, MRP Realty |
| • One Wells | Progressive AE, Childress Klein, Archer Western, Cushman Wakefield |

Tie for Second Place:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| • First Citizens Plaza | Perkins + Will, Balfour Beatty Construction |
| • 500 North Tryon | Gresham Smith, DPR construction, Do Greater Charlotte |

Both CCCP and CBI believe this competition is a remarkable opportunity to explore the potential for vintage office spaces and create urban alchemy.

"The potential for vintage offices being repurposed or repositioned has a series of challenges: from architectural complexity to financial puzzles," said LaBar. "The submittals all contain innovative ideas to transform Uptown's vintage offices into more neighborhoods, better opportunities for local entrepreneurs, new hospitality venues for visitors, enhanced public spaces for non-profit investments, and pandemic-informed offices to attract and retain tomorrow's businesses and talent for Center City and the Charlotte region."

The two highest scoring submittals each received a \$15,000 prize. The next two highest scoring submittals received \$2,500 each.

For more information or for interviews, please contact Moira Quinn.

About Charlotte Center City Partners

Charlotte Center City Partners boldly envisions and activates strategies and actions that will assure Charlotte Center City is a welcoming and equitable, economically vibrant, culturally rich, and beloved place for all. For complete information about Charlotte Center City Partners, visit www.charlottecentercity.org.

About CBI

CBI is a solutions-oriented organization focused on helping our clients leverage the power of the workplace. For complete information on CBI, visit [CBI – CBI Workplace Solutions \(cbi-nc.com\)](http://CBI – CBI Workplace Solutions (cbi-nc.com))