

CITY OF TACOMA

University of Washington Tacoma **Culture, Arts and Communication** TWRT 350: Principles Of User Centered Design Instructor: Emma Rose **City of Tacoma Project Lead: Chris Bell**

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Introduction

For this LCY project, two teams of students created two unique design proposals intended to increase the utilization of the seventh-floor break room in the Tacoma Municipal Building. The two groups utilized the process of user-centered design to design a space that promotes collaboration and increased productivity for City employees.

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The user-centered design process included: surveys, interviews, background research, observations, and usability testing. Students identified the following user needs:

- The break room is currently underutilized.
- The City values the promotion of large events, such as the wellness fair, that are hosted in the room.
- The room also needs to be versatile for

everyday use, such as a space for lunches and small-group work.

Based on these needs, students generated multiple layouts as a part of the iterative design process.



Recommendations

Both final designs are intended to accommodate three user needs: a functional lunch space, the accommodation of large groups of people, and a versatile layout to host larger events annually.

Design Option 1 utilized a biophilic design scheme for the room to increase productivity and employee happiness. The main design features are movable, soundproofed glass doors to the break-out rooms. This creates a flexible space that can be open during larger events.

Design Option 2 highlights the open seating areas and promotes relaxation with a variety of chairs and sofas. This design suggests a neutral color

scheme such as greys and blues. The proposal would install physical walls to permanently close off the break-out rooms, including the installation of smart boards.

While the two teams generated separate designs, both proposed the following similarities:

- 1. Composite flooring for durability.
- 2. Construction of break out rooms for individual discussions.
- 3. Technology installation, such as smartboards or televisions.
- 4. Calming design, such as biophilic elements or neutral tones.