

A vibrant workplace built for health and well-being

Perkins & Will's Austin East Side Office
Austin, Texas



Austin's urban identity celebrates artistic expression in music, film and architecture. Blending this creative culture with new corporate branding, Perkins & Will's Austin East Side office presents an energetic and eclectic mix. Communal open spaces encourage collaboration. Glass-enclosed "huddle rooms" optimize acoustics for improved concentration and focus, while providing transparency and connection to the larger team.

Products in use

- Rockfon Alaska[®]
- Rockfon Artic[®]

The 15,000-square-foot studio spans the street level of a three-story, masonry-clad building. Beyond the traditional façade, a modern, warm and welcoming interior greets Perkins & Will's staff and visitors.

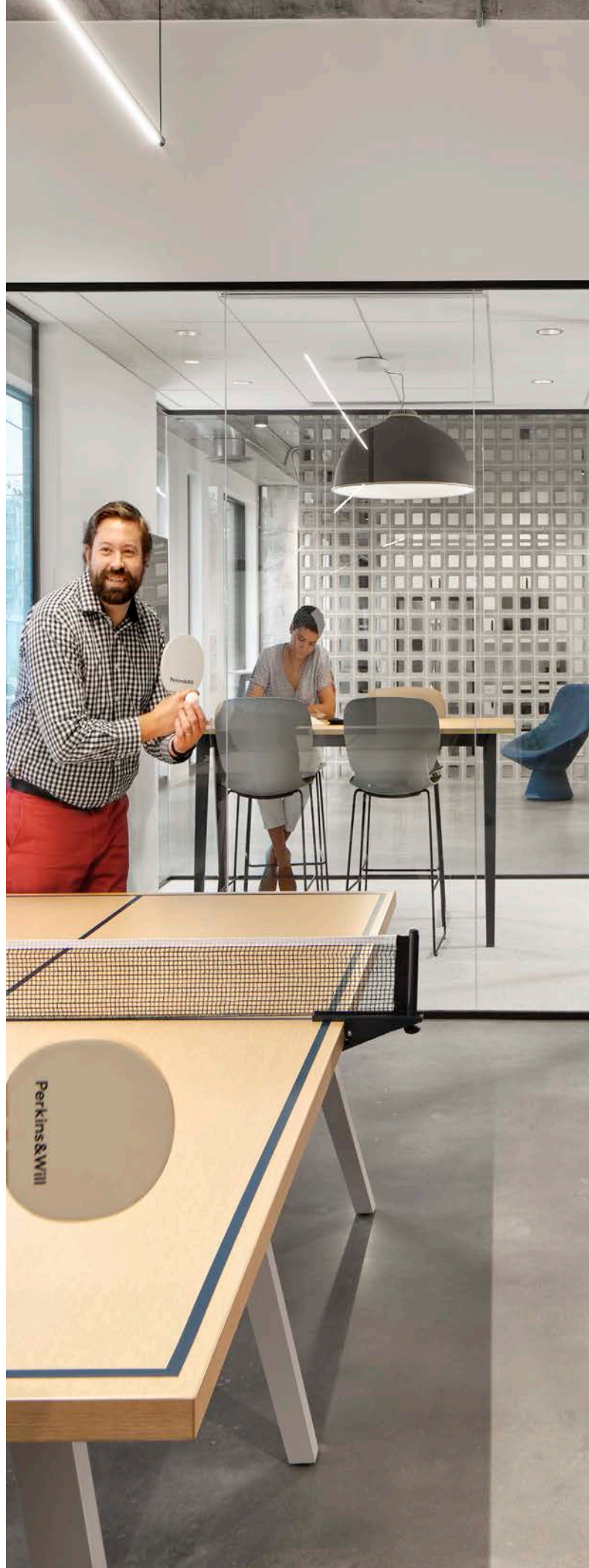
The space reflects the firm's global, visual brand and commitment to human-centered design, personalized to Austin's unique setting. The office was designed and built in alignment with the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED® v4.1 Gold certification for commercial interiors to create a healthy and environmentally responsible workspace.

Supporting LEED criteria, locally sourced products in numerous colors, textures, and organic, natural materials are incorporated throughout the interior. Sustainable ceiling materials and products that benefit people's health, safety and wellness, as well as the economic and environmental advantages of energy efficiency, lower emissions, reduced waste and other responsible practices.

Hand-picked by Perkins & Will for its Austin East Side office, Rockfon Alaska and Artic ceiling panels are manufactured with stone wool, a material produced from natural, abundant basalt rock and recycled content. Stone wool inherently resists fire, moisture, humidity and does not support mold, mildew or other potentially harmful microorganisms. Further contributing to indoor environmental and air quality, the stone wool ceiling products installed in Perkins & Will's office have been UL Environment's GREENGUARD Gold Certified for low-emitting products.

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Along with sustainable, healthy building materials, Austin East Side office prioritizes access to daylight, energy efficiency and occupant comfort. The bright, smooth white surface of Rockfon Alaska and Artic ceiling panels enhance and extend natural light more deeply into the office interior. Reflecting up to 86% of the light, these panels contribute to energy savings by minimizing the need for electric lighting, and their associated energy costs and emissions. The diffused, reflected light also decreases glare on computer monitors and screens, reduces workers' eye strain and potential headaches, and improves their productivity.



Optimized acoustics further supports the architectural team's comfort, job performance and satisfaction. The huddle rooms feature sound-absorbing Rockfon Alaska 2-by-6-foot ceiling panels, which achieve a Noise Reduction Coefficient of 0.90 NRC. Rockfon Artic ceiling panels have a 0.75 NRC and were installed in the hallways and shared service areas, where a more active atmosphere is preferred and speech privacy is not needed.

Rockfon's district manager, Chris King, said, "Perkins & Will picked the vibrant east side of Austin to relocate their office. We are proud to be associated with a firm that cares about designing sustainable, healthy spaces for themselves and their clients. We appreciate their thoughtful selection of products, like Rockfon stone wool ceilings, to support their project goals."

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In addition to pursuing LEED Gold certification, the project also was designed to earn Fitwel® healthy building certification. As a Fitwell Legacy Champion, Perkins & Will was the first company to pursue Fitwel certification for all of its North American offices. Solidifying its commitment to evidence-based, healthier workplace design, the company has committed to certify all of its North American offices.

Demonstrating some of the wellness and environmental strategies outline by Fitwel and LEED, the Austin East Side building has a high walk-ability score for pedestrians with access to a nearby transit hub. Lower level parking prioritizes electric vehicles and car pools, and provides bicycle storage.

Perkins & Will's open-plan workplace also has access to outdoor courtyard space and a wellness room. The studio is equipped with active workstations, movable technology, a high-tech model workshop with 3-D printers, a materials library, free-standing conference rooms and flexible walls.

The glass-fronted huddle rooms and work zones are visually connected, yet physically separated by semi- or fully transparent dividers, breeze block partitions and chainmail curtains that add to the minimalist and raw aesthetic of the space. The flexible, adaptable configuration ensures design teams can meet evolving client needs.

According to Perkins & Will, "The new office showcases a modern, yet inclusive, aesthetic that aids in both placemaking and storytelling. Inspired by the spontaneity of Austin's street art scene, the office's columns feature bright pops of Perkins & Will brand colors as a representation of the unified practices and diverse cultures that set the studio apart from its contemporaries. These stripes also help define work zones into vignettes that are outfitted with furniture pieces informed by the color combinations on each column."

The design team said they kept color accents "low to the ground, such as on the legs of furniture, providing bursts of design inspiration, while maintaining a neutral base palette for visualizing design projects in progress."

Global design principal at Perkins & Will, Manuel Cadrecha, AIA, LEED AP, summed up his visitor experience in the Austin East Side office saying, "Your office is beautiful! It is fresh, inventive, and filled with joyous unexpected elements."

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