

Activate Your Outdoor Spaces

Good views, comfortable seating and a connection to the outdoors offer respite for tenants

"People love to be outside," says Kate Macaulay, project manager at The Architectural Team Inc. It's a sentiment that all facilities managers and building owners should take note of. If given the opportunity, tenants *will* utilize exterior spaces – and they'll appreciate them as amenities.

When working on a renovation for NextCorps' headquarters in Rochester, NY, Macaulay activated the rooftop as an occupant-accessible terrace space. It's now recognized as a strategy that worked very well for the company.

Architecture and design firm HLW wanted to celebrate 915 Wilshire's renovated lobby as a piece of art, so they relocated all seating to the new outdoor portico, keeping the inside exclusively for circulation at the 22-story office tower in downtown Los Angeles.

When renovating or updating your building, consider how you can include outdoor spaces in any designs. Whether it's activating a rooftop or adding seating to a portico, outdoor spaces are "an inviting place for the greater community to spend time and recharge," says Louise Sharp, principal for HLW's Los Angeles office.

When it comes to materials and furnishings for the outdoors, she adds that durability and performance should be considered just as highly as aesthetics.

But if staying within a tight budget is a concern, focus on areas that provide plenty of natural daylight and good views. This can counterbalance more modest finishes, equipment and furniture, according to MB Real Estate.