

### **Program Summary:**

This project is a modern interpretation of a classic Italian American pizzeria, serving as a warm, casual, refined anchor for an existing retail development.

### **Program Statement:**

The client had a simple request: a warm, homey pizzeria. As an infill development reclaiming parking in a renovated lifestyle center, there was little compelling context to inspire the design. The project's conceptual framework centers on a fictional narrative created to guide the design; an Italian grandmother immigrating to the American South, opening a restaurant, and raising a family whose successive generations might leave a mark on the space. This fiction became the design's organizing logic, governing every material decision, spatial gesture, and decorative layer. Working from an unfinished structural shell, the design team introduced fenestration, architectural finishes, custom millwork, and FF&E conceived as a deliberate amalgamation of eras. Warm woods, historic paint colors, glazed tile, and red travertine establish material permanence, while playful contemporary accents introduce the contrast that accrues naturally when a space passes through different hands. The bar anchors the room as its most expressive element with wiggle-profile trim, marble, travertine, and walnut. Vintage frames, family photographs, and carefully selected accessories complete a composition that feels accumulated rather than staged. The project demonstrates that narrative, when structural rather than cosmetic, produces spaces with a quality of rootedness that is otherwise very difficult to manufacture.

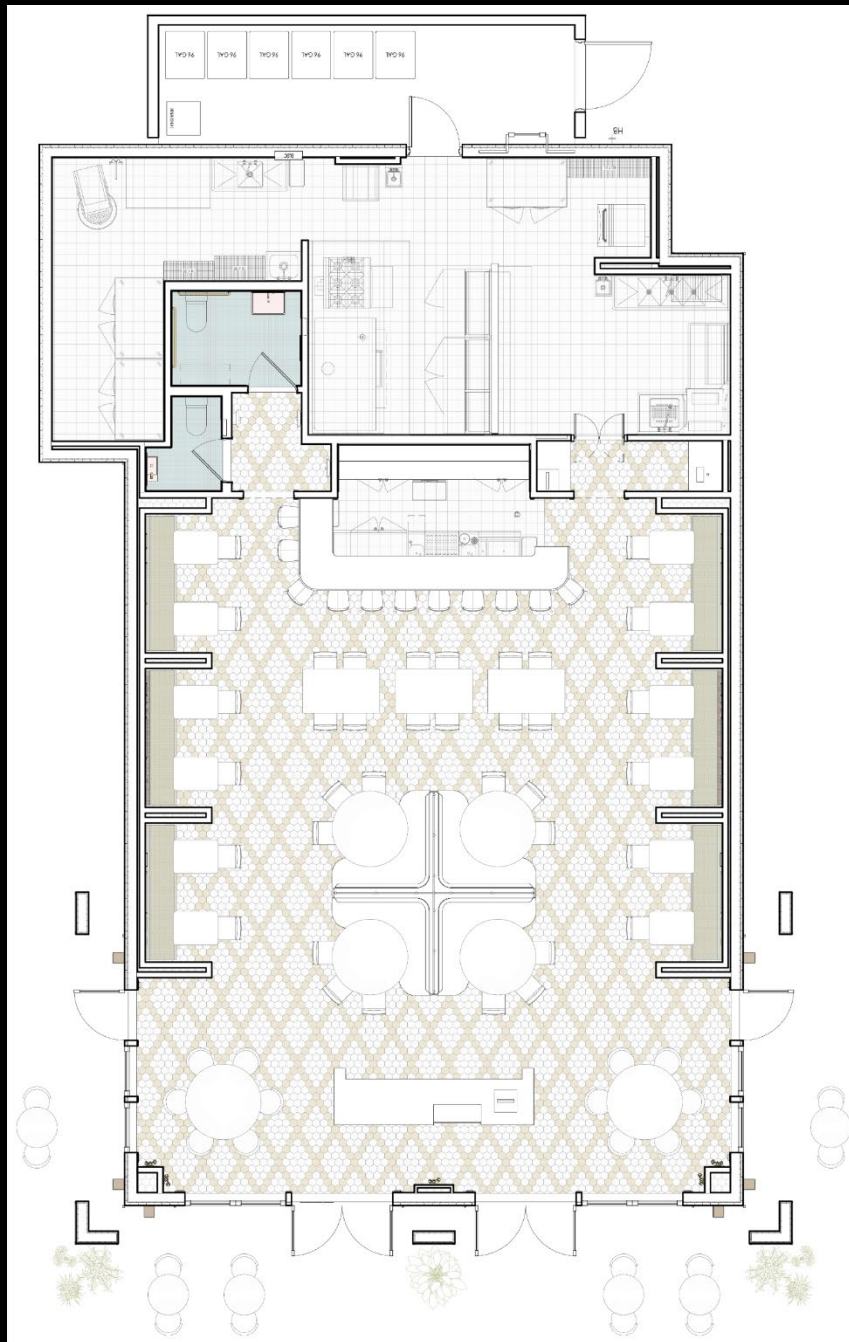
## **IA-80.01**

Building Area: (sf)  
**2,390**

Cost per Square Foot:  
**\$502**

Construction Cost  
**\$1.2M**

Date of Completion:  
**February 2025**



# IA-80.02

## FLOOR PLAN

Working with the structural frame and roof, the design team undertook space planning, interior design, and custom FF&E. The pizzeria is organized symmetrically around a central axis, beginning with a custom host stand flanked by sculptural, round tables perfect for a family-style meal. Banquette-lined niches along the perimeter provide intimate seating moments, while a central custom clover booth introduces semi-private dining zones, reinforcing both functionality and a sense of layered spatial experience.



# IA-80.03

## INTERIOR FINISHES

The interiors harmonize the components of classic design with allusions to playful design trends, reinforcing the narrative of an accumulation of belongings over time. Warm materials and historic paint colors form the cozy base of the space, while brighter pops of color and contemporary geometry bring the design into the present day. This curated chaos blends high-energy decor with an underlying structure that creates visual harmony. It is a deliberate mix of styles, textures, and eras.





## IA-80.04

### FUNCTIONAL AND FUNKY

Ceiling and floor treatments reinforce visual continuity. A consistent floor tile grid is echoed above in acoustical ceiling panels, while concealed mechanical systems maintain a clean appearance. Lighting is kept warm and varied to create the homey ambiance desired by the client.



# IA-80.05

## EXTERIOR/INTERIOR CONNECTION

Exterior design decisions extend and reinforce the interior concept. Trim detailing draws from historic trattoria precedents, while a deep green façade and haint blue porch ceiling root the building in the visual language of the American Southeast. Fenestration and awning selections were carefully considered to strengthen the indoor/outdoor connection, allowing the restaurant to operate with an open, café-like atmosphere. Entry doors with beveled detailing and hand-painted signage further bridge exterior and interior, revealing warm walnut finishes when opened and inviting visual continuity.





## IA-80.06

### NOSTALGIC DECOR

Each dining niche features family photos from across the ownership and design team, along with public domain-sourced art, all curated and arranged within an eclectic mix of thrifted frames.



# IA-80.07

## BAR DESIGN

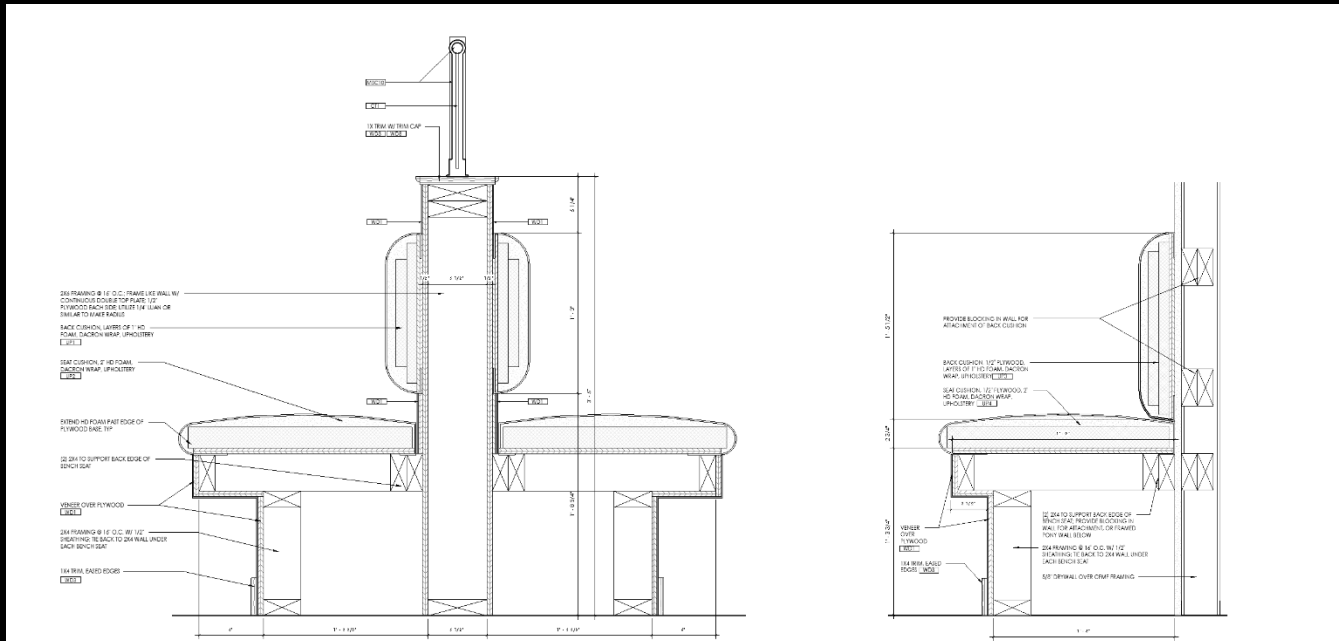
The bar surrounded by wiggle trim detailing provides an eye-catching backdrop upon entering the space. Warm LED integrated lighting highlights the swirled marble bar top, rustic red travertine apron, and walnut counter edge trim, contributing to the overall rustic but elevated interior.



# 1A-80.08

## CUSTOM FF&E

Custom seating was given careful consideration, and their configuration supports the overall space management and circulation within the restaurant. Banquettes were installed within the nooks and can support multiple small tables that may be combined within a single nook for larger groups. Their diverse floral upholsteries give each niche a distinct identity within a cohesive whole. Meanwhile, the clover booth creates semi-enclosed dining spaces within the center of the room, divided by small curtains hung from brass rods for a warm, shiny accent.





## IA-80.09

### WARMTH

Where the walls aren't covered with thrifted art and family photos, warm walnut millwork adds a touch of elegance. Its natural grain provides a sophisticated look without being overly busy, letting some of the "louder" décor elements breathe.

# IA-80.10

## TASTEFUL KITSCH

A blend of intentional, curated design choices and playful accessories makes the space feel sentimental and nostalgic, rather than cluttered.





# IA-80.11

## CONCLUSION

This project reimagines a classic Italian-American pizzeria as a layered, story-driven space that feels both timeless and personal. Through careful space planning, custom furnishings, and a curated mix of nostalgic and modern details, the design achieves a balance of comfort, character, and refinement, establishing a welcoming community anchor that feels as though it has evolved organically over generations.