



MODERNIZING MID CENTURY: A CONDOMINIUM COMMON SPACE COMPILATION



THE COMMON SPACES OF THIS MID-CENTURY CONDOMINIUM BUILDING WERE GIVEN A MUCH NEEDED REFRESH - BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO THE LOBBY AND HALLWAYS FOR ALL RESIDENTS TO ENJOY.

COMPLETED IN 2025, THIS REVITALIZATION PROJECT REIMAGINES THE LOBBY OF A 1964 CONDOMINIUM BUILDING PERCHED ON THE SOUTH BLUFF OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER IN ST. PAUL, OFFERING PANORAMIC VIEWS OF THE CAPITOL AND CATHEDRAL. WHILE THE ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURE REMAINED STRUCTURALLY SOUND, THE INTERIOR FINISHES HAD BECOME DATED AND UNINVITING. THE DESIGN CHALLENGE LAY IN RESPECTING THE BUILDING'S MID-CENTURY ROOTS, WHILE BRINGING A RENEWED SENSE OF BRIGHTNESS, WELCOME, AND REFINEMENT TO A HIGH-TRAFFIC, SHARED ENVIRONMENT.

STARTING WITH THE EXTERIOR APPROACH TO THE MAIN ENTRY, DATED FINISHES WERE REPLACED WITH MODERN MATERIALS. THE ENTRY CANOPY, ONCE A ROUGH SAND-COLORED AGGREGATE IS NOW CLAD IN RIBBED EBONY PANELS ENHANCING IT'S ARCHITECTURAL APPEAL. NEW CUSTOM-FABRICATED LIGHT FIXTURES AND LASER-CUT SIGNAGE ROUND OUT THE ENTRY FACADE.

THE RIBBED CANOPY FLOWS THROUGH THE ENTRY VESTIBULE AND CULMINATES ABOVE THE NEW LOBBY DOOR ASSEMBLY. THE RIBBED MATERIAL IS FEATURED AGAIN ABOVE THE EXPANSE OF MAIBOXES LINING ONE SIDE OF THE SPACE - SERVING AS PROTECTION FOR PACKAGE DELIVERIES.

IN THE LOBBY, NEW TERRAZZO FLOORING PROVIDES A DURABLE YET ELEGANT FOUNDATION, COMPLEMENTED BY UPDATED RAILINGS FEATURING LASER-CUT METAL PANELS. A CUSTOM-DESIGNED MURAL WALLCOVERING BRINGS A BOLD, MODERN NOD TO THE BUILDING'S MID-CENTURY LEGACY, INFUSING THE SPACE WITH

PERSONALITY. ADDITIONAL UPGRADES INCLUDE REFRESHED PAINT, UPGRADED LED LIGHTING, NEW CARPETING AND A NEW DOOR ASSEMBLY.

THE HALLWAYS ON ALL 4 FLOORS WERE ALSO UPDATED WITH NEW LIGHTING, NEW SIGNAGE, REFURBISHED UNIT ENTRY DOORS, REFRESHED MILLWORK, AND A NEW PAINT SCHEME. TO FACILITATE THE NEW LIGHTING OUR TEAM INSTALLED A SHALLOW DROPPED DRYWALL CEILING UNDER THE EXPOSED STRUCTURAL CONCRETE PANELS. THIS ALLOWED ENOUGH ROOM FOR CONCEALED WIRING AND SHALLOW RECESSED WAFER LIGHT FIXTURES.

EACH UNIT NOW HAS A REWORKED ENTRY. THE DOORS WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR DATED APPLIED MOLDINGS - SANDED AND PAINTED A MUTED BLUE WHICH CONTRASTS BEAUTIFULLY WITH THE CUSTOM-MADE WARM STAINED OAK SIDE PANELS. SIMPLE BLACK DOWN LIGHTS HIGHLIGHT THE BRUSHED ALUMINUM UNIT NUMBERS. COMMON SPACE DOORS TO UTILITIES, STAIRWELLS, AND LAUNDRY ROOMS ARE PAINTED TO MATCH THE NEW TRIM. NEW MARMOLEUM FLOORING AND FRESH PAINT IN EACH LAUNDRY ROOM KEEPS THEM CLEAN, SIMPLE, AND INSTEP WITH THE OTHER IMPROVEMENTS. NEW CARPET, CUSTOM METAL PANELS, AND MODERN LIGHTING UPDATE THE TWO MAIN STAIRWELLS.

THE RESULT OF THESE BUILDING-WIDE RENOVATIONS IS A BALANCED BLEND OF VINTAGE INTEGRITY, MODERN AESTHETICS, AND CONTEMPORARY COMFORT TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF CURRENT RESIDENTS.

BEFORE: THE CONCERNS

HALLWAY (H*):

1. NO LIGHTING IN CEILING
2. EXCESSIVE DARK BROWN TRIM
3. 20 YR. OLD TIRED CARPET
4. DATED 'SUPPER-CLUB' DOORS
5. INVISIBLE SIGNAGE
6. CARPET BASE TRIM

LOBBY (L*):

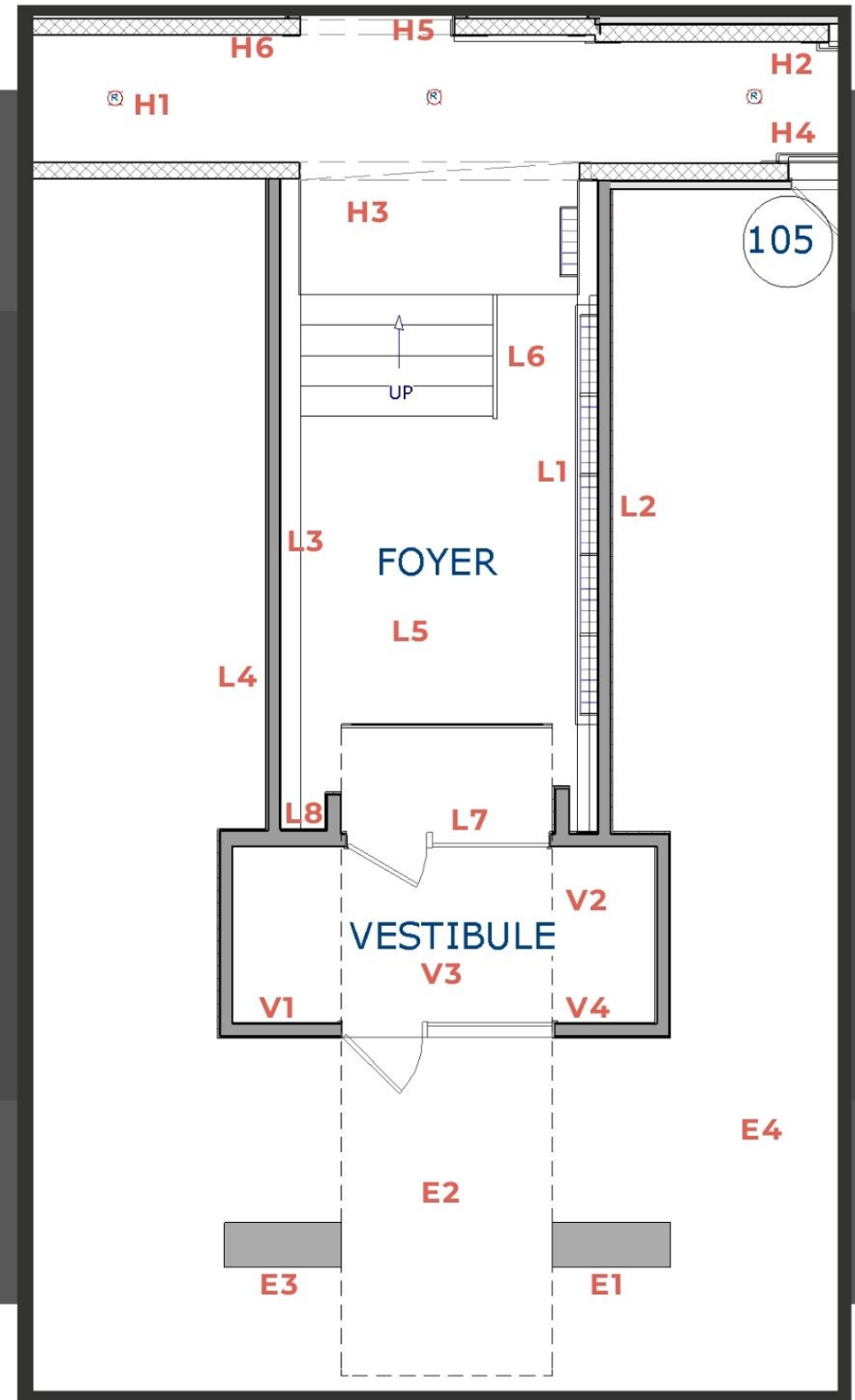
1. MAILBOXES MUST STAY
2. HELP WITH 'DINGS' FROM PACKAGES
3. DRAB WALLS
4. INCONSISTENT LIGHTING
5. OUTDATED IN-LAID CARPET AND TILE
6. NON-CODE COMPLIANT RAILING
7. DATED ENTRY DOOR
8. ACCESS GRATE DOES NOT FUNCTION

VESTIBULE (V*):

1. INEFFICIENT LIGHTING
2. CARPET CANNOT STAND UP TO TRAFFIC
3. SAND TEXTURE MUST GO - IT'S EVERYWHERE
4. OLD LOCKBOX HOLDERS NEED TO GO

EXTERIOR (E*):

1. FAILING LIGHTING
2. GOODBYE SAND-COATED SURFACES
3. DATED EXTERIOR SIGNAGE
4. CONSULT ON FUTURE UPDATES



AFTER: THE PLAN

HALLWAY (H*):

1. BRING DOWN CEILING 3", ADD LIGHTING
2. REMOVE UNNECESSARY TRIM
3. REPLACE CARPET
4. REMOVE PANELING ON DOORS TO SAVE \$\$
5. UPDATE SIGNAGE
6. NEW PAINTED BASE TRIM

LOBBY (L*):

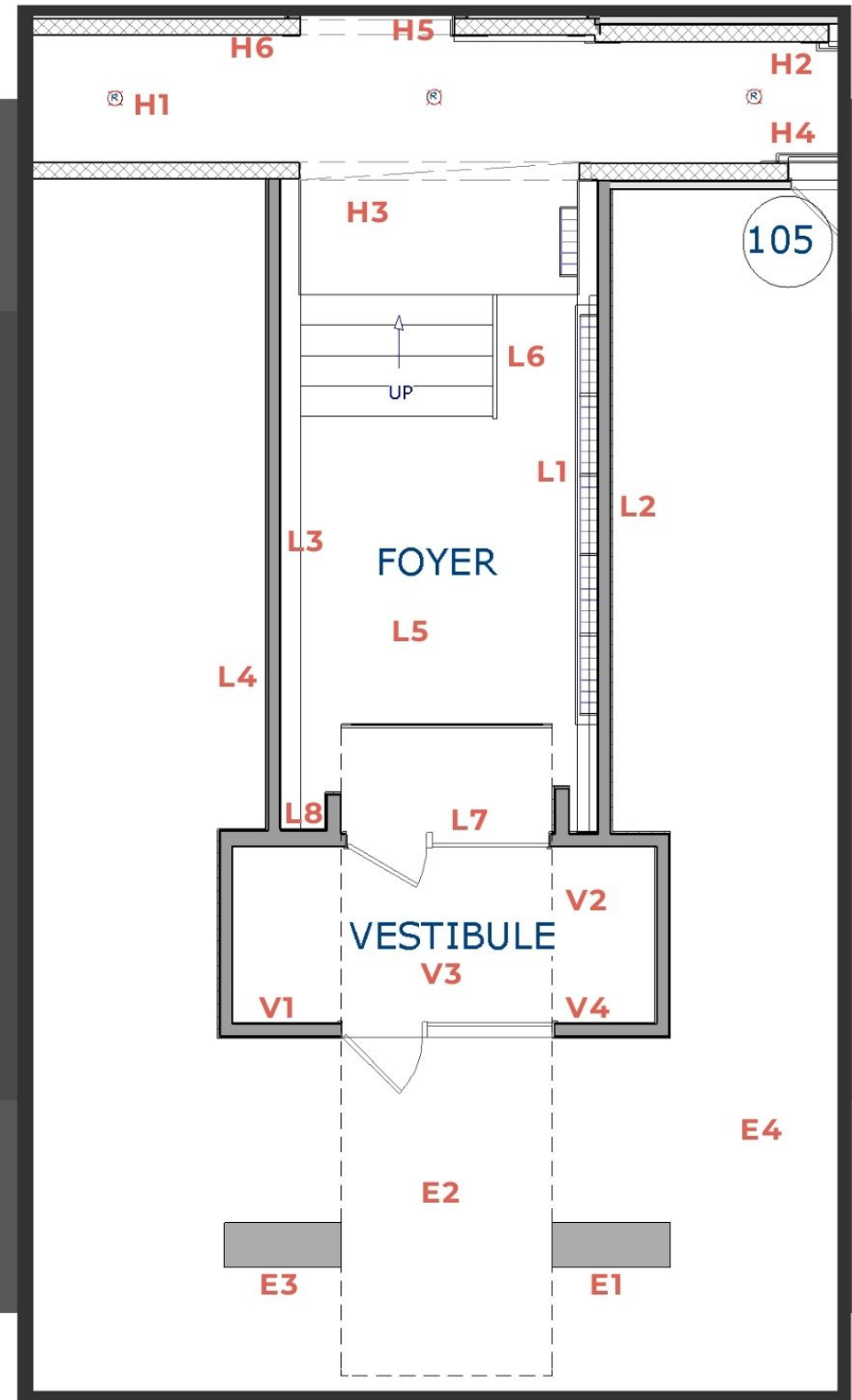
1. MAILBOXES STAY
2. ADD PROTECTIVE PANELING BEHIND MAILBOXES
3. CUSTOM MURAL
4. UPDATE LED LIGHTING
5. INSTALL TERRAZZO FLOORS
6. ADD NEW CUSTOM RAILING
7. NEW ENTRY DOOR SYSTEM COMPLIANT WITH EXISTING FOB
8. NEW ACCESS GRATE TO MATCH RAILING

VESTIBULE (V*):

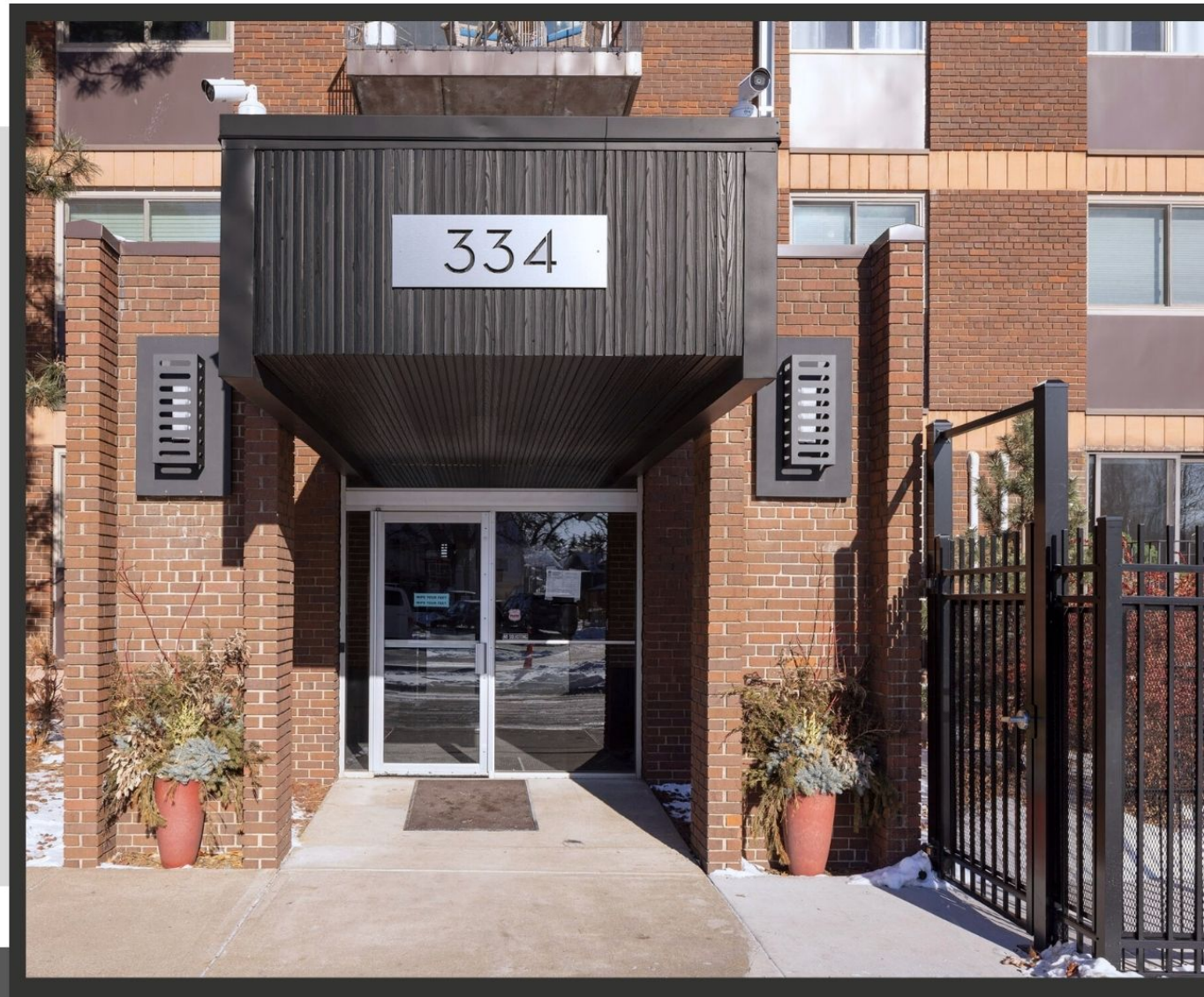
1. CUSTOM LIGHTING
2. HIGH TRAFFIC CARPET INSTALLED
3. RIBBED PANELING THROUGHOUT
4. OLD LOCKBOXES REMOVED

EXTERIOR (E*):

1. NEW CUSTOM LIGHTING
2. GOODBYE SAND-COATED SURFACES
3. UPDATE EXTERIOR SIGNAGE INCLUDING PLACEMENT
4. CONSULT ON FUTURE UPDATES



b4



WITH A LIMITED BUDGET, THE GOAL WAS TO GET AS MUCH AESTHETIC UPDATE AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT NEEDING TO DISMANTLE AND REDO EVERYTHING.

FOR THE EXTERIOR CANOPY REFRESH, THIS MEANT WORKING WITH THE EXISTING COLOR PALETTE OF THE BUILDING AS A WHOLE. WE INSTALLED NEW RIBBED CLADDING, DESIGNED AND FABRICATED CUSTOM LIGHT FIXTURES AND UPGRADED THE SIGNAGE FOR BETTER VISIBILITY. THE RESULT GETS THEM STARTED ON A FUTURE EXTERIOR RENOVATION.

b4



THE ENTRY CANOPY WAS A SAND-COLORED ROUGH AGGREGATE ATOP A PLYWOOD BACKER BANDED BY BROWN METAL-WRAPPED FRAMES. THE METAL BANDING WAS PAINTED TO MATCH THE CLADDING. THE RIBS WRAP DOWN THE FRONT AND FLOW TO THE FRONT ENTRY AND THROUGH THE VESTIBULE TO THE LOBBY INSIDE.

THE CUSTOM LIGHTING IS POWDERCOATED THE SAME TONE, WHILE THE ADDRESS IS A MATTE ALUMINUM REFERENCING THE INTERIOR FINISHES BEYOND.



b4

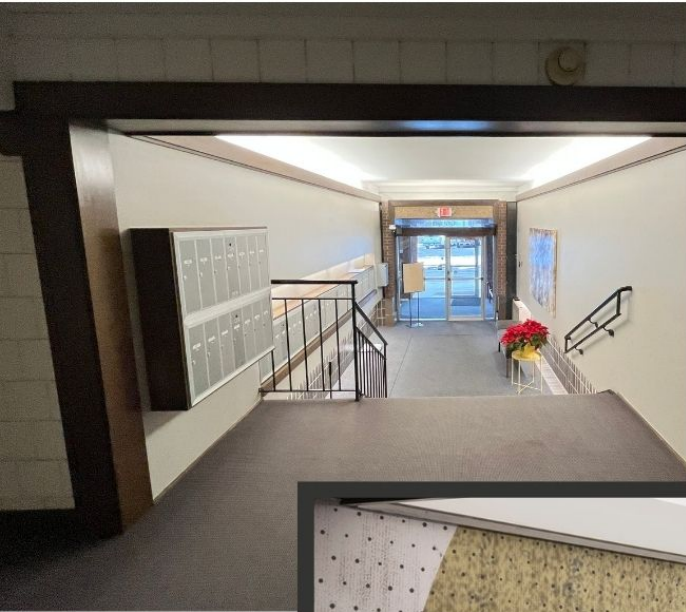


THE RIBBED CLADDING FROM THE EXTERIOR WORKS ITS WAY THROUGH THE VESTIBULE, COVERING THE ROUGH SANDY TEXTURES WITH A CLEAN LINEAR PATTERN. A NEW ENTRY DOOR SYSTEM FURTHER MODERNIZES THE SPACE.

b4

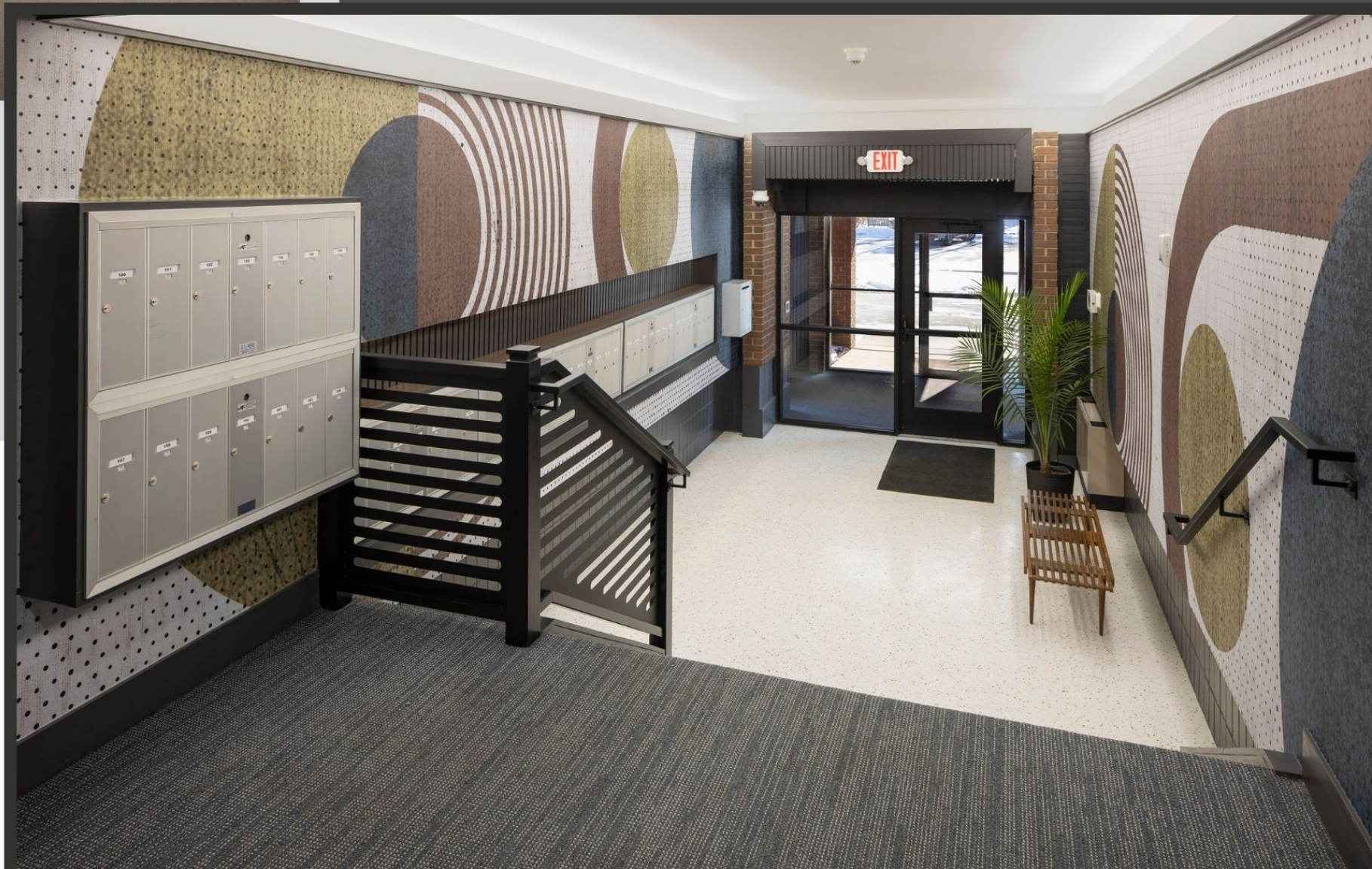


THE DARK FINISH OF THE ENTRY
DOOR ASSEMBLY IS TOPPED BY
THE CONTINUATION OF THE
CANOPY. THE LINEAR RIBBING
ONCE AGAIN TURNS VERTICAL
AS IT TERMINATES IN THE LOBBY.



THE LOBBY GOES FROM BLAND TO BA-BAM! WITH THE INSTALLATION OF A TERRAZZO FLOOR AND A CUSTOM-DESIGNED GRAPHIC WALLPAPER MURAL. THE DATED, MINIMAL METAL RAILING IS REPLACED BY A BOLD BLACK ASSEMBLY OF LASER-CUT METAL PANELS AND WOOD NEWELS AND RAILS. THE SAME METAL MOTIF IS CARRIED OVER TO THE TALL SKINNY ACCESS GRATE NEEDED BY THE FRONT ENTRY DOOR.

b4



b4



THE STUNNING TERRAZZO FLOOR WITH AGGREGATE OF COORDINATING COLORS PROVIDES A SETTLING BASE FOR THE BOLD GRAPHIC WALLS. THE WALL TILE WAS PAINTED TO MATCH THE RIBBED PANELING, WHICH ALSO WORKS AS A TOUGH BARRIER BEHIND THE EXISTING MAILBOXES TO PREVENT DAMAGE ONCE CAUSED BY PACKAGES.

THE OPEN STAIRS WERE REBUILT AND WRAPPED IN THE SAME BROADLOOM CARPET THAT IS INSTALLED IN THE HALLWAYS.

b4



OUR TEAM OF CARPENTERS AND METAL ARTISANS FABRICATED THIS CUSTOM-DESIGNED RAILING SYSTEM. WOOD NEWELS AND RAILS ARE INFILLED WITH METICULOUSLY-PLANNED, LASER-CUT & POWDER COATED PANELS. TUBE STEEL IS USED TO CREATE THE HANDRAILS AND THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY IS PAINTED.





b4

THE BUILT-UP HEAVY OAK DETAIL ABOVE EACH UNIT ENTRY DOOR WAS REMOVED, AND THE REMAINING TRIM WAS PAINTED A WARM WHITE TO BLEND WITH THE SURROUNDING WALLS. THE DOORS WERE UPDATED WITH NEW HARDWARE AND LOCK SYSTEMS, WHILE THE UNIT NUMBERS ARE NOW HIGHLY VISIBLE AND AESTHETICALLY PLEASING.





b4



THE ORIGINAL 1964 DOORS WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR DATED DECORATIVE TRIM, FILLED AND SANDED AS NEEDED (SOME FULLY REPLACED), AND PAINTED A SOFT, YET POWERFUL BLUE. THE ADJACENT AREA THAT WAS ONCE A TEXTURED WALLPAPER AND OVERSCALED LIGHT FIXTURE IS NOW A WARM AND INVITING RIBBED OAK PANEL WITH DISCREET, MODERN LIGHTING



b4



THE ADDITIONAL LIGHTING IN THE HALLWAYS MAKES FOR ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC CHANGES. THE CEILINGS OF EACH HALLWAY WERE FURRED DOWN TO ALLOW FOR WIRING AND WAFLER LIGHT FIXTURES UNDER THE CONCRETE STRUCTURAL SLABS. METAL STUDS WERE FASTENED TO THE CONCRETE, AND THEN NEW DRYWALL WAS INSTALLED FOR A BEAUTIFUL SMOOTH CEILING WITH PLENTY OF ILLUMINATION.

REMOVING THE BULKY DARK TRIM LIGHTENS THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE. NEW BROADLOOM CARPETING LAID WITH THE PATTERN PERPENDICULAR TO THE LENGTH OF THE HALLS GIVES THE FEELING OF MORE WIDTH IN THE RELATIVELY NARROW CORRIDORS.



b4

THE CONNECTION FROM THE LOBBY TO
FIRST FLOOR HALLS WAS OPENED BY
REMOVING THE BULKHEAD, ALLOWING
AN EXPANDED VIEW OF THE NOW
WELL-LIT CORRIDOR..





THE SPARSE LAUNDRY ROOMS WERE
REFRESHED WITH MARMOLEUM
FLOORING AND NEW PAINT ON THE
DOORS AND WALLS.

UTILITARIAN DOOR ASSEMBLIES WERE
LEFT MONOCHROMATIC SO THE
ENTRY DOORS COULD STEAL THE
ATTENTION. UPDATED SIGNAGE WAS
KEPT SIMPLE AND STRAIGHT
FORWARD.

b4



b4





b4

IN THE TWO PRIMARY STAIRWELLS, NEW CARPETING WAS INSTALLED ON THE STEPS AND CUSTOM-DESIGNED METAL PANELS WERE INSTALLED AT EACH LANDING. PAINT WAS BRIGHTENED TO THE NEW COLOR PALETTE, AND THE LIGHT FIXTURES BOAST A MUCH NEEDED UPDATE.

THE REMAINDER OF THE RAILINGS WERE NOT ADDRESSED DURING THIS PROJECT FOR BUDGETARY REASONS.





WHETHER COMING OR GOING, THIS SPACE
LEAVES A LASTING IMPRESSION OF
MID-CENTURY MOXIE AND **MODERN MOJO!**