



The Apartments at City Center | Washington, DC

SR/A

# The Future of Amenity Spaces

In the Era of COVID-19

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## WHY DID WE CREATE THIS RESOURCE?

The COVID-19 pandemic has left virtually no corner of our world and lives untouched. From learning new ways of greeting others without touching them to learning how to get work done while your toddler crawls on you, we are all adapting to live, in many ways, entirely different than we did before. We believe it is our duty in this time of upheaval to share our expertise to help make people's lives as safe and healthy as possible. With over 16 years of multifamily design experience, we at SR/A Interior Design, want to do our part to help you, the people who manage and build multifamily spaces, create safe and functional experiences for your residents. To that end, we offer you...The Future of Amenity Spaces.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "SABICOLE". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font. Below the signature is a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right, serving as a decorative underline.



# HEALTH & CLEANLINESS

## IMMEDIATE

Had anyone other than medical professionals ever washed their hands for even close to 20 seconds before the pandemic? Now, we are all counting to 20 while we wash our hands and thinking about the cleanliness of everything we touch. Outside of turning your amenity space into a laboratory, achieving a sterile environment may seem elusive, but every layer of safeguard can be helpful. In this section, we share tips that can contribute to keeping a space clean, and people feeling safe and secure.



Modera Sedici | Washington, DC



Credit: Decor Aid



Credit: Greenery Repair Tech



## PPE Stations Can Fit Seamlessly into an Existing Design

Most people generally try to avoid making trips to the doctor's office or hospital, and we think having PPE stations (personal protective equipment, for those of you living under a rock the past few months) that remind you of those places should be avoided too. With a little bit of creativity and thought, we believe you can provide PPE stations and other cleaning devices that don't bring unwanted memories of your last trip to the hospital.

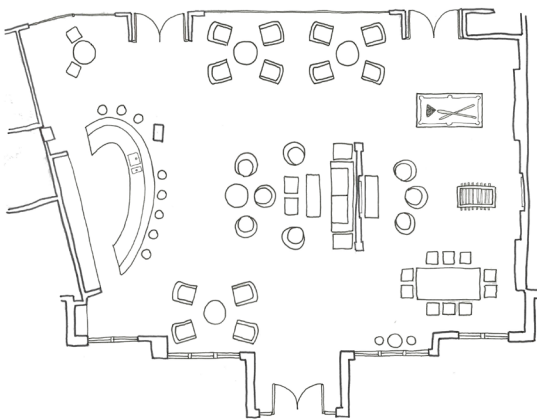
### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage residents to bring their own blankets or slipcovers to use on common room furniture. Though evidence of transmission via physical contact with items remains low, this barrier provides a level of mental comfort for residents to ease them back into the idea of using public spaces (*left*). Incorporate greenery into common areas to improve indoor air quality and lift residents' mood (*middle*). Air purifiers are a relatively easy way to improve the air quality in an amenity space, just be sure to select one that coordinates with the design, rather than sticks out like a sore thumb (*right*).

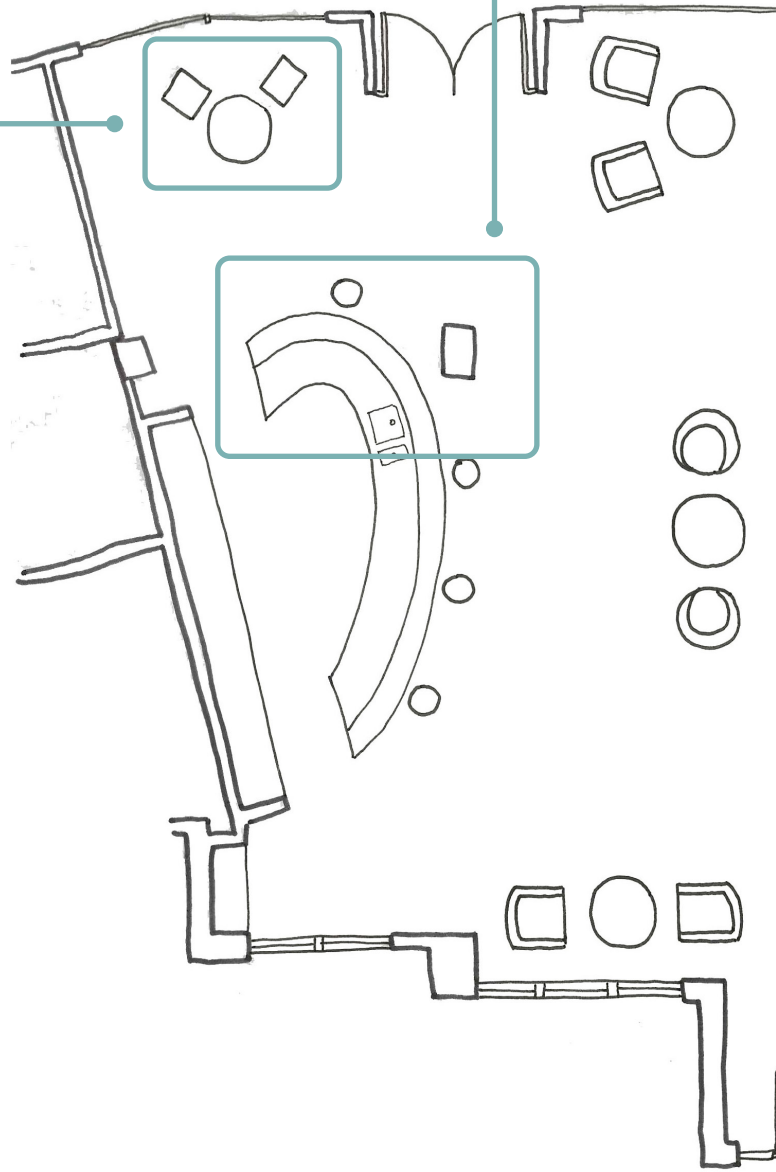
Intimate seating is a must right now. Surprised? Everyone needs a change of scene after being cooped up in their homes. Mental health is just as important as physical health. Give people a spot to feel comfortable out of their homes, but also ensure the chairs are lightweight and movable, so residents wishing to use the table alone can do so.

Ask your building engineer to study the airflow patterns in your amenity space. Any seating directly in the airflow path gives the occupant of that seat a higher risk of breathing in the airborne germs, which can cause COVID-19 if they are present in the space.

One of the biggest uses of amenities spaces right now is remote work. Spacing out existing barstools creates separate work zones for residents. A bonus is that the hard surfaces countertops are typically constructed from, such as quartz, can usually stand up to more aggressive cleaning than furniture.



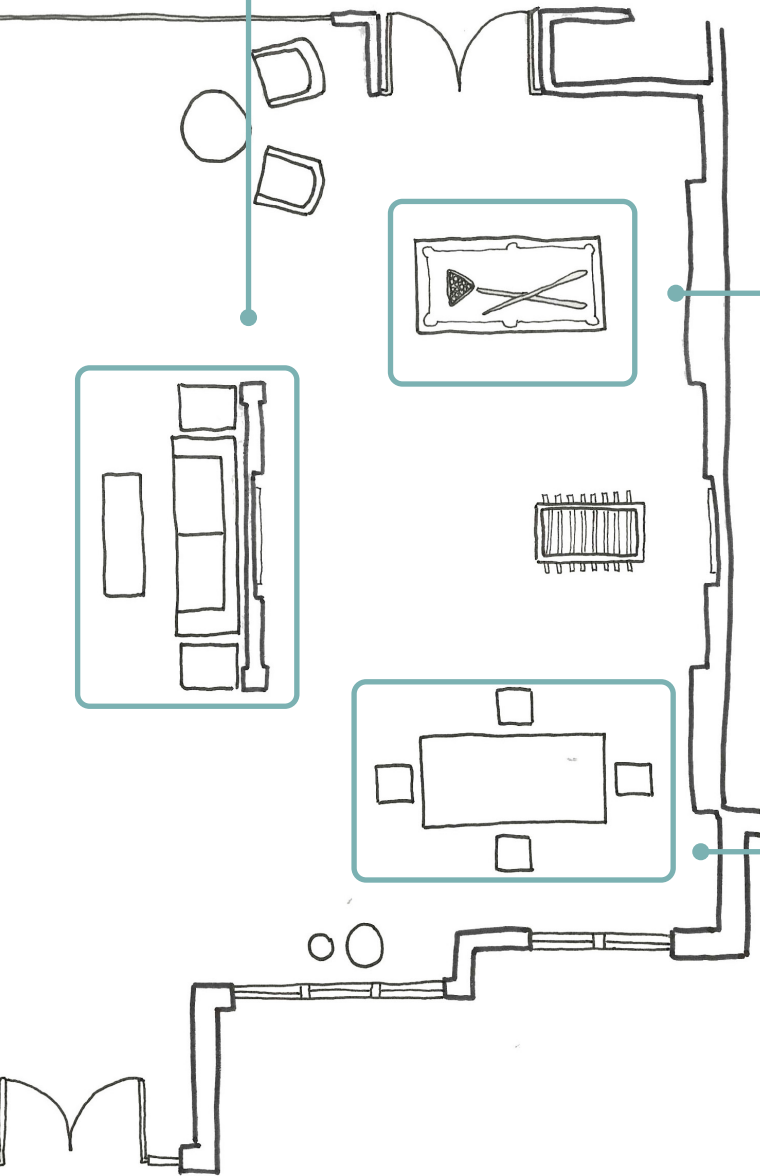
EXISTING FURNITURE PLAN



FURNITURE PLAN ADJUSTED FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING + AIRFLOW



Don't rush to get rid of all your sofas. These large pieces of furniture may seem out of vogue in today's climate, but sofas often anchor a design. Check out page 21 for another great tip to keep sofa sitters safe.



Keep gaming tables - everyone needs some fun right now! But do reduce seating near them. Give the players plenty of space to be socially distanced from each other and other occupants in the space. Also, clearly state your cleaning protocol for any equipment, so residents feel safe picking up that pool cue.

Be sure to check the recommended cleaning guidelines for all furniture (found through your designer or vendor) before using harsh cleaners. Some materials can withstand COVID-19-induced intense cleaning, whereas others cannot. This information might help you decide which pieces of furniture need to go into temporary storage.

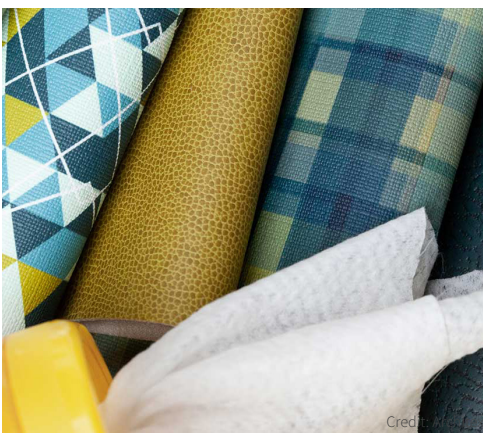
R CIRCULATION



# HEALTH & CLEANLINESS

## MID & LONG TERM

Deep cleaning is no longer something your parents do once a year in the spring. Now everyone is implementing intense cleaning techniques and products all the time. Not all products or materials can handle the intensity of cleaning they will face in a post-pandemic world. Our recommendations will help you avoid destroying your furniture, etc. in the fight for cleanliness.



## Wait, Don't Touch!

What is better than a clean door handle? One that doesn't have to be cleaned at all! Increasingly the way to go will be products that don't require anyone touching them with their hands - cutting down on cleaning costs, and more importantly, people getting sick.

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Utilize outdoor and healthcare-grade textiles which can stand up to deep cleaning and have a higher resistance to germs and mold (*left*). Adopt thorough cleaning guidelines to ensure materials and items in amenity spaces are kept sanitized without damage (*middle*). Add removable cushion covers to your sofas and lounge chairs that can easily be laundered and exchanged regularly (*right*).



# DIVISION OF SPACE

## LEASING OFFICES

From Burger King's giant socially distanced crowns to a German café offering customers hats with pool noodles attached, we have never given more energy and attention to staying six feet apart from other humans. After 16 years of designing award-winning multifamily properties, it's no stretch to say we have quite a bit of expertise and experience with space planning. Our team brainstormed ways to create safe distances for people to go about daily life safely. And when ample space is just not possible, we believe there are shield solutions available that don't make you feel like you're in a prison visiting room.



Credit: ManaparasProtecto



Credit: Jacoblund/Getty Images



## Rethink the Leasing Office

A trend we were already seeing before COVID-19 is now cemented - bring leasing discussion out into the amenity spaces, which often provides more room for potential residents and staff to spread out. This change of venue also offers residents a chance to absorb and experience amenities, while perhaps even picturing themselves living at the property. Taking leasing staff out from behind a formal desk also creates a deeper sense of connection, which we can all use more of in these socially distanced times.

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Thinking forward, semi-private integrated workspaces aren't just for units - these can be incorporated into new leasing office designs and amenity spaces (*left*). Allow safe communication in areas where private interactions are necessary with shield solutions that don't remind you of a bank (*middle*). If you have a few empty units and tight leasing space, we recommend turning those vacant units into temporary leasing offices that keep your staff working on-site and safely (*right*).



# DIVISION OF SPACE

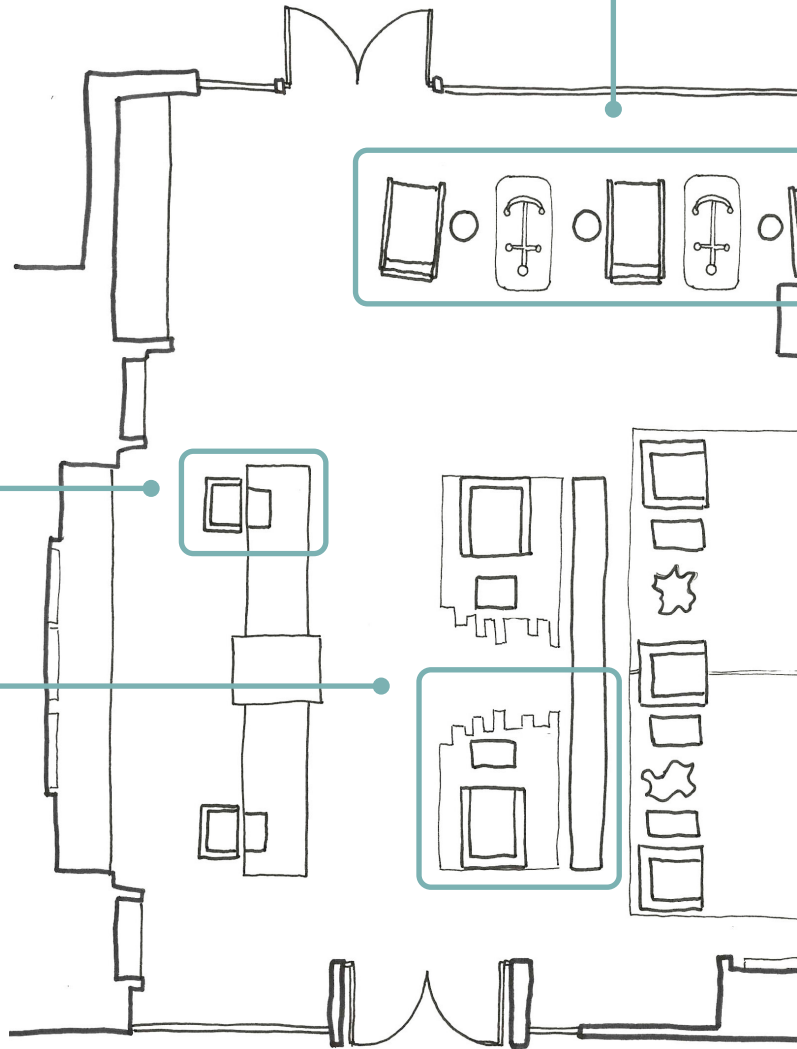
## AMENITIES

They say that necessity is the mother of invention. COVID-19 has necessitated the need to stay separate while in the same space and has birthed many immediate solutions to make this happen. Spread out furniture layouts and added screens don't have only to feel functional, but can be aesthetically pleasing too. Here are some of our favorite solutions.

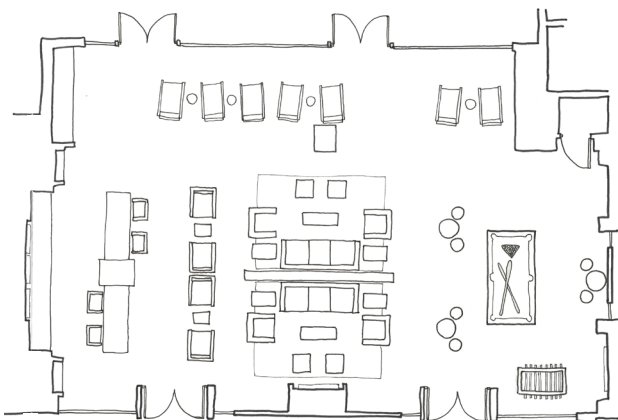
Indicate locations for seating on a communal table with vinyl decals or placemats to ensure there is no question about where to sit.



Utilize vinyl floor decals that connect back to the design (in this example, the property's waterfront location) to indicate proper spacing between seating.



Carpet tiles are an inexpensive solution to carve out a separate space within a larger room.

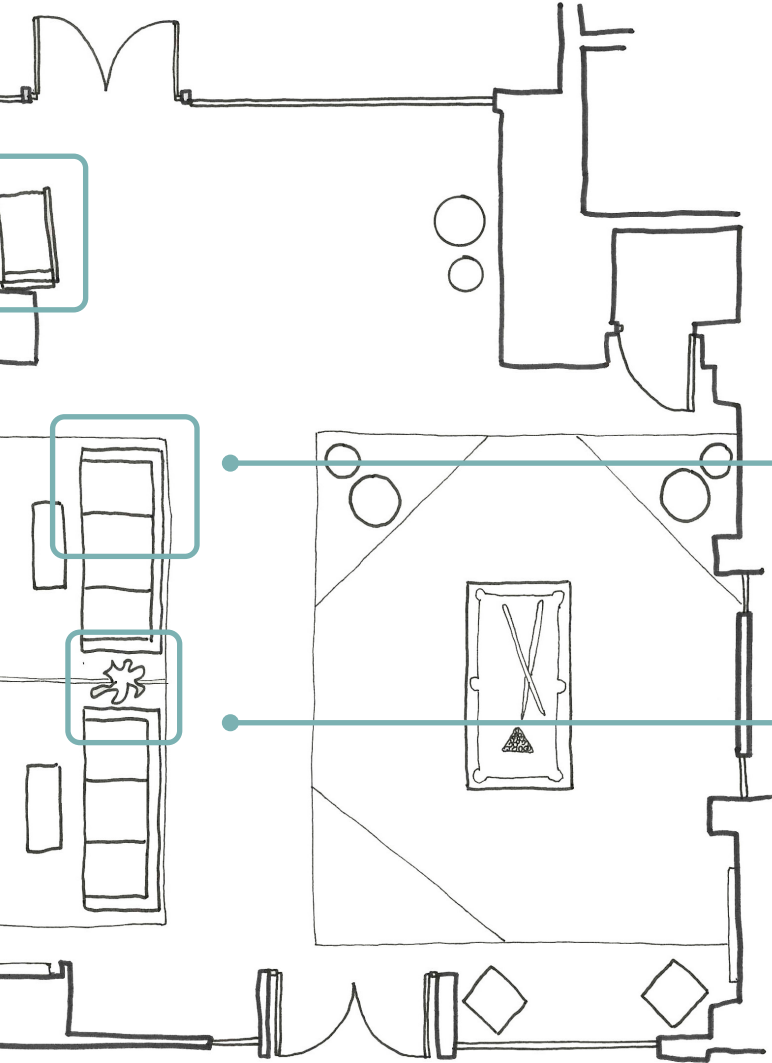


FURNITURE PLAN SHOWING CREATIVE WAYS TO SOCIAL DISTANCE

EXISTING FURNITURE PLAN

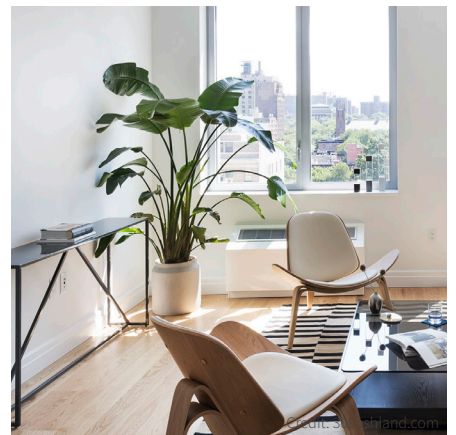
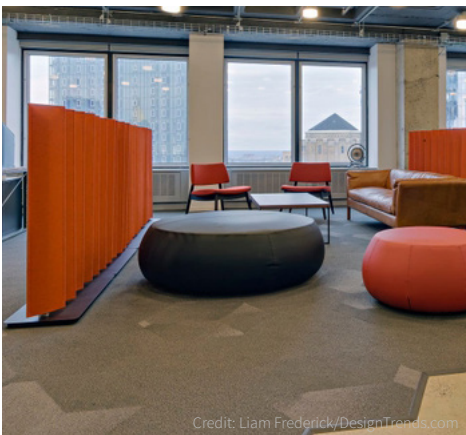
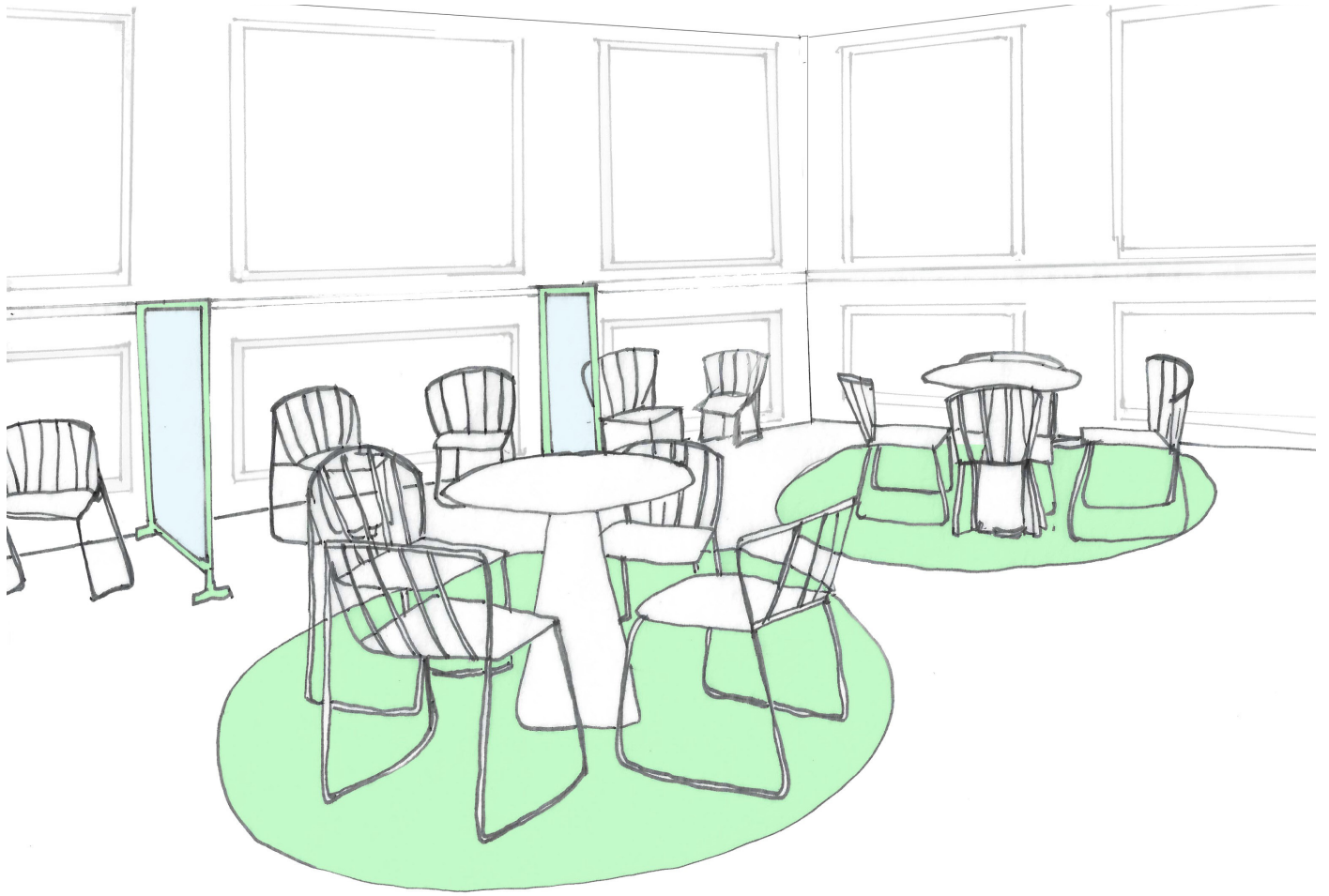


To ensure safe seating on sofas, utilize quirky pillows with social distance messaging to ensure no one sits down when already in use. Just make sure the covers are washable!



Incorporating greenery as a divider has the dual benefit of acting as a physical barrier and lifting the mood of occupants.

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## Spread Out Without Sacrificing Design

Duct tape or a decal on the floor might be a good immediate solution for giving people visual cues for appropriate distancing. Yet, we believe there are more elegant and natural long-term solutions that can be implemented. Transforming your amenities to conform to current health and safety guidelines shouldn't mean you need to lose the space's aesthetic or intrinsic appeal.

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Utilize movable walls and screens to create flexible separation solutions (*left*). Embrace the future - ceiling hung transparent shields, and other new inventions are worth exploring to keep amenity spaces open and thriving (*middle*). Have a serious amount of excess furniture after thinning down your amenity spaces? Create additional, lightly furnished model units (*right*).





# NEW OPPORTUNITIES

## INCOME GENERATION

Did you know that the financial crises of 2008 helped birth Uber? Challenges present an opportunity for new ideas and ways of living and working to be created. The COVID-19 pandemic is no exception. The current wave of vacant retail spaces, which often anchor high-rise multifamily properties, are not just empty store-fronts but also an opportunity to provide additional on-site amenities for residents, such as pet grooming and boarding, and additional income generation for you. We want to help our partners seize this opportunity to help shape a healthier future for those who live in and use their “products.”



Credit: DattnerArchit



Credit: DesignBoom



## Add Value for Residents (and Yourself!)

With the overwhelming increase of remote work, access to convenient, affordable, and safe childcare has never been more important. An on-site child care facility will be a huge attraction for potential residents in many markets.

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

With concern over food supply and the food supply chain of custody on the rise, access to a rooftop community vegetable or herb garden will be a big attraction - add on the benefit of providing a relaxing, semi-private outdoor space steps from home, and you have a winner (*left*). Incorporate physical fitness elements within the building design - such as stairwell visual graphics - for those wishing to stay physically fit without exposing themselves to a gym (*middle*). Video meetings are the new norm - provide residents a dedicated room(s) with specialized acoustics and privacy, they can use for everything from sessions with their therapist to their weekly staff meetings(*right*).

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