

FORGE

Veterans Community Living Center

Concept

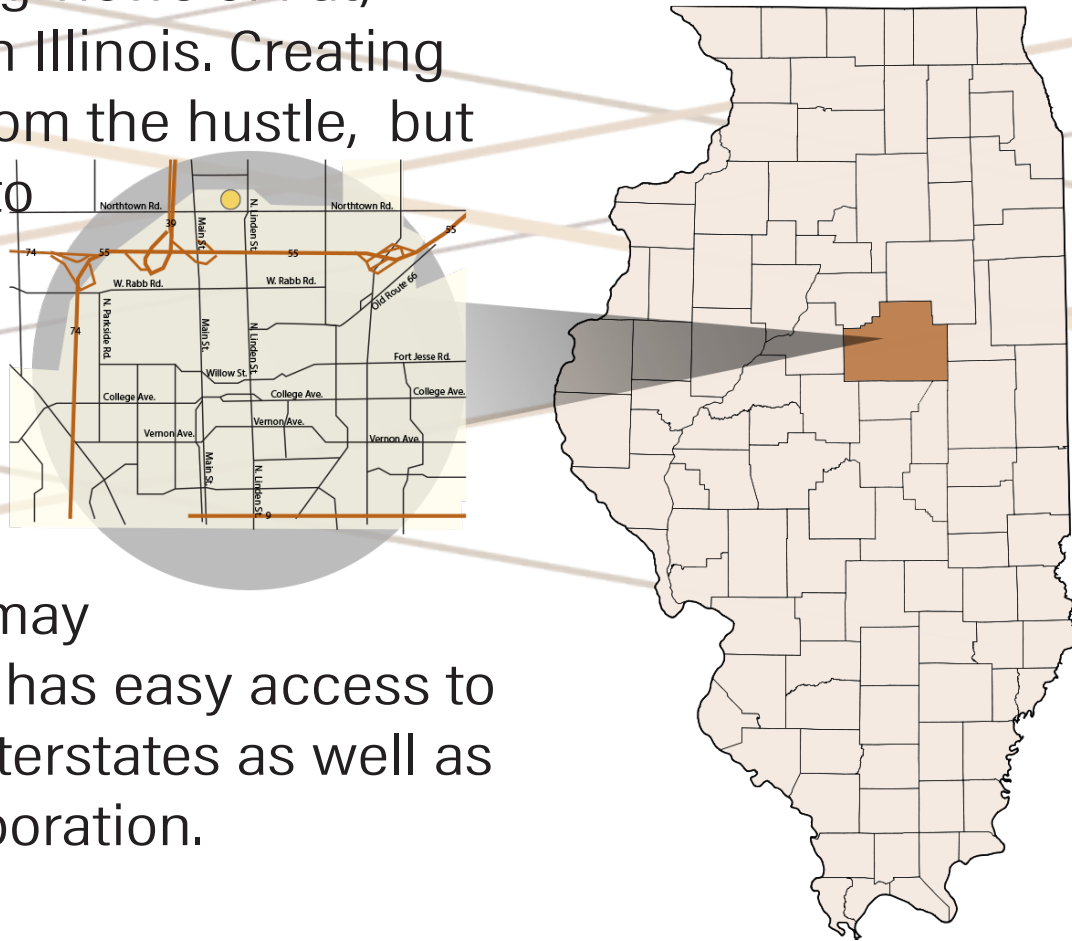
FORGE is a community living center that supports the needs of veterans and creates a sense of belonging. The feeling of loneliness is a global problem, and often an additional challenge that veterans must face after leaving the service. Here at Forge, we wanted to provide safe and flexible space to help veterans forge a new life outside of the service. The building is based on an industrial contemporary model, and takes into consideration important factors such as: barrier free design, health and cleanliness accommodations and safe spaces for support from the community.

Design Process

Location

2031 Warehouse Rd. Normal, IL

It has relaxing views of flat, open fields in Illinois. Creating an escape from the hustle, but is still close to the city for jobs and other resources the veterans community may need. Forge has easy access to two major interstates as well as public transportation.

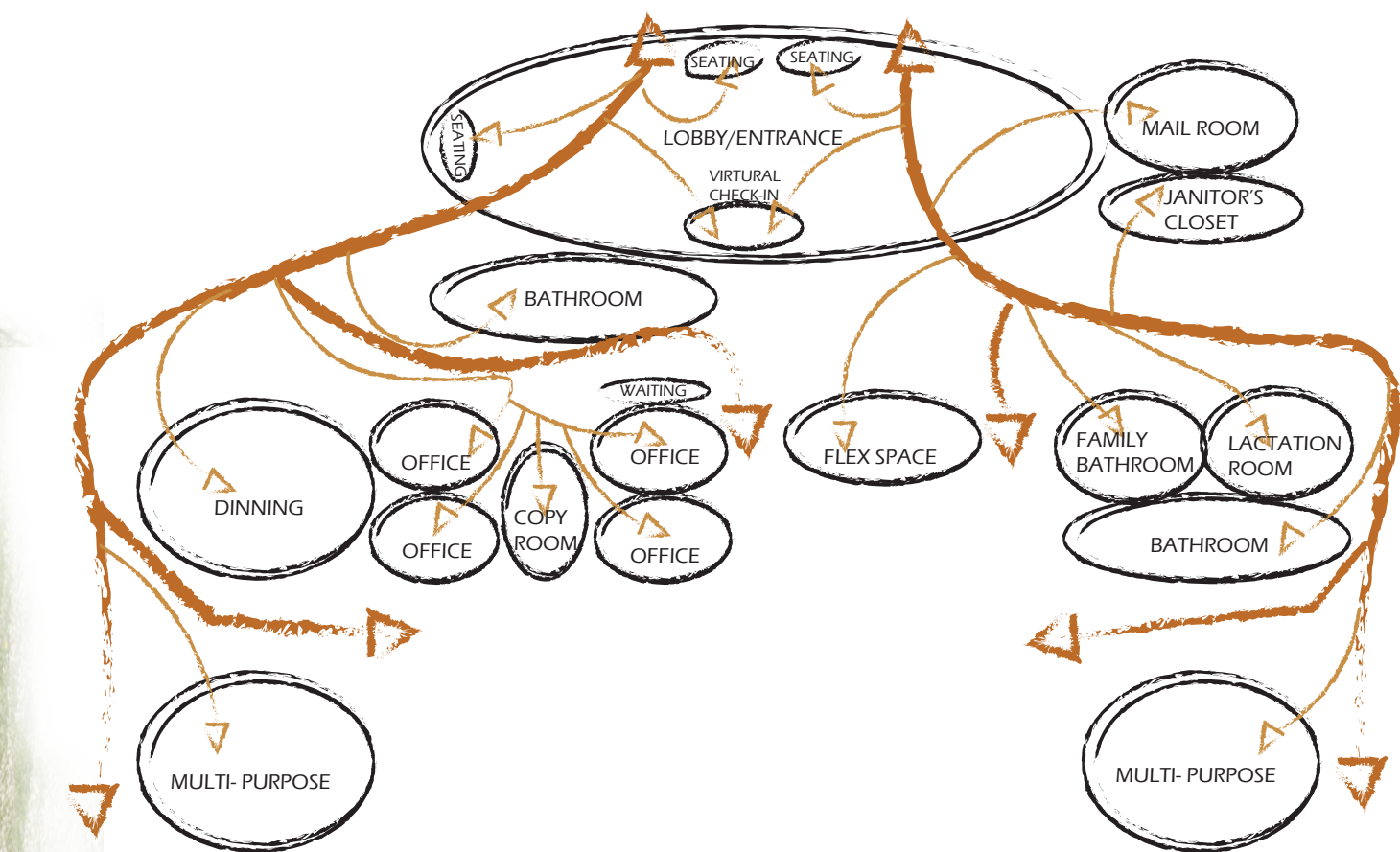


Social Sustainability Research

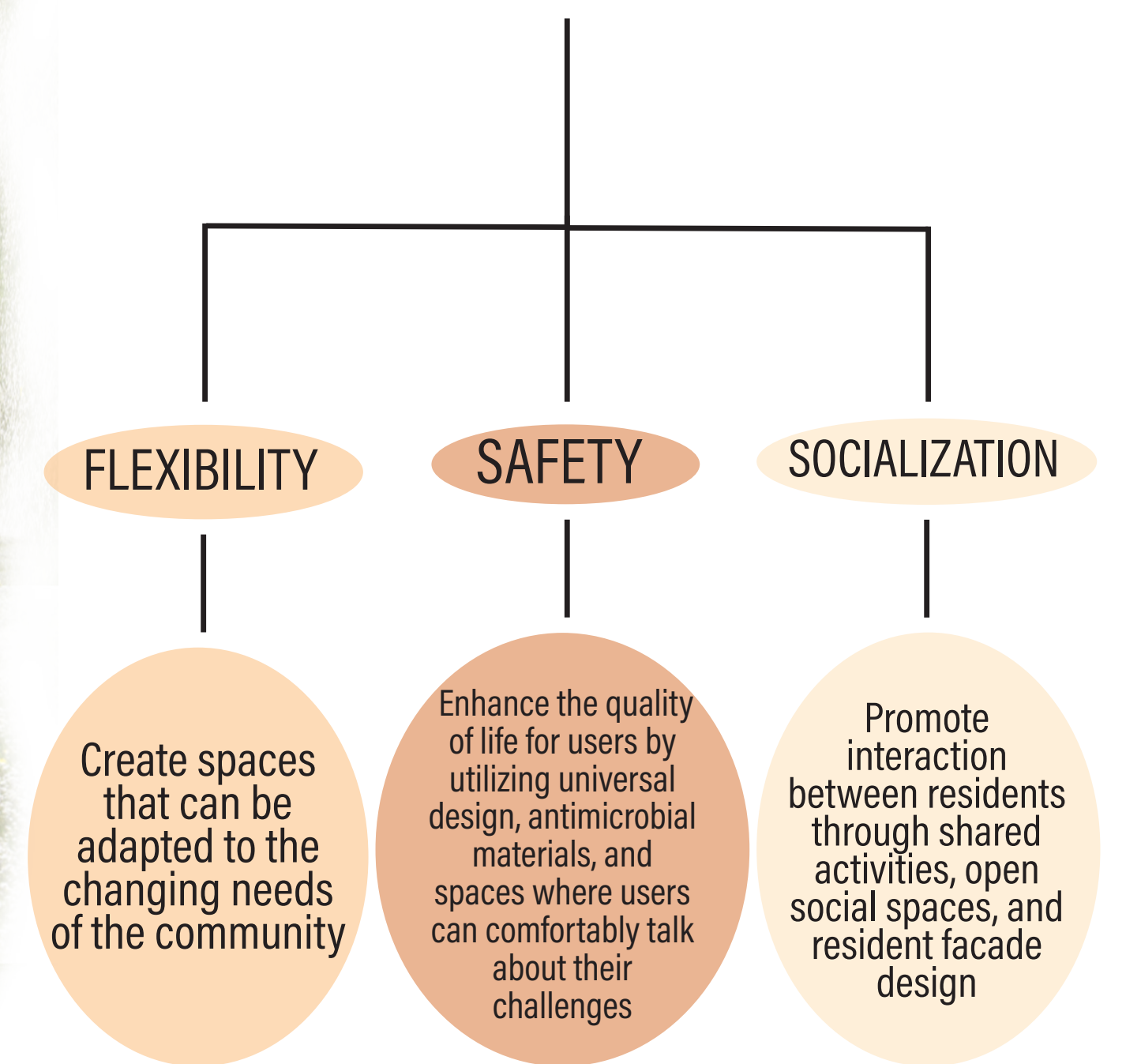
- One-in-ten Americans say they feel lonely or isolated from those around them all or most of the time, and rises significantly for those who feel weak ties to the communities they live in (Bialik, 2018). Vivek H. Murthy, former U.S. surgeon general, states loneliness is an epidemic and businesses need to design in ways that encourage work life balance and allow for people to build on the need for community.
- Social sustainability is "a process for creating sustainable successful places that promote wellbeing, by understanding what people need from the places they live and work. Social sustainability combines design of the physical realm with design of the social world – infrastructure to support social and cultural life, social amenities, systems for citizen engagement, and space for people and places to evolve." – Social Life

Challenges for Veterans Research

- A Qualitative Study of Volunteers of American Service Providers & Veteran Clients states that veterans have a hard time adapting to civilian life since they had been trained to follow military ethos and ideology, but leaving the military they had not been un-trained or "de-mili-tarized"
- Employment: Oftentimes veterans have a hard time finding and keeping civilian type jobs for a multitude of reasons.
- Health: mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.



DESIGN GOALS



Universal Design/ ADA Features

1. Roll-up spaces for wheelchair users
2. ADA max height for counters
3. Min. of 5ft turn around space
4. Wheel chair lift
5. All floor transitions are flush
6. Drawer microwave, accessible for wheelchair users

Social Sustainability Features

7. Multiple group seating options for socialization
8. All residential porch areas are open to walkways
9. Dining Area flows into a Multi-Purpose Space
10. Lounge Multi-Purpose Space
11. All residential facades incorporate windows
12. Walkways with minimal barriers
13. Bookshelves face out into pedestrian walkway

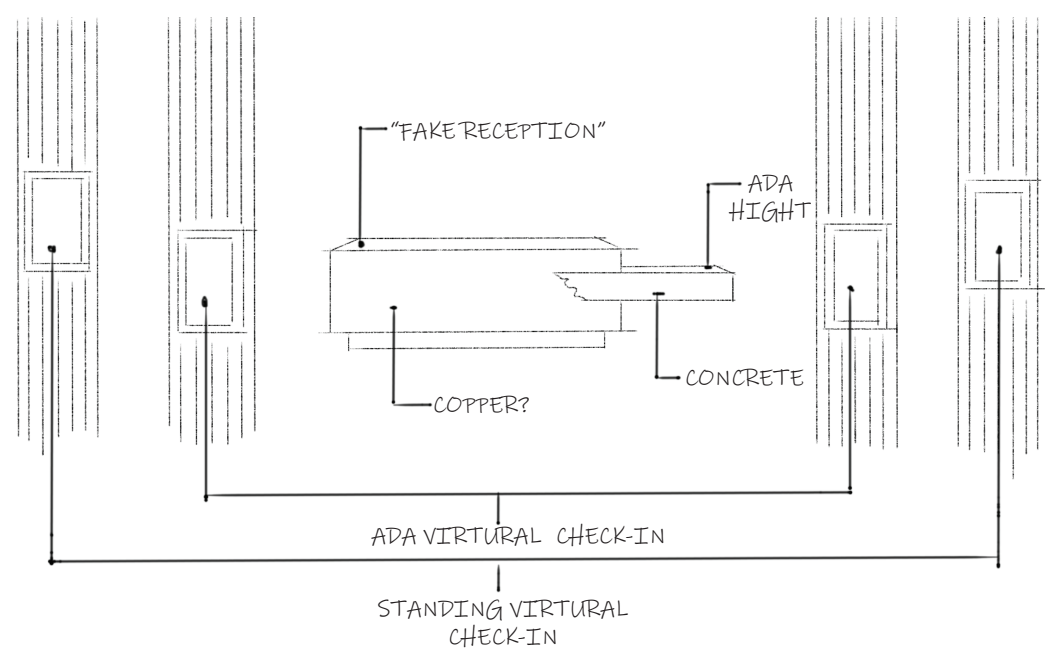
Features For Veterans' Needs

14. Flex Space is closed off so users can have a private experience for group counseling
15. Lounge type furniture used to help residents feel more comfortable talking about their experiences
16. Multi-Purpose Space can be used for book clubs, and resource center to help locate jobs
17. Multi-Purpose Space incorporates a stage which can be used for bigger group meetings or encourage new hobbies

Features For COVID-19 Safety

18. Virtual Check-In
19. "Fake" reception desk that can be utilized for post-pandemic times
20. Group seating spaces are spaced out in the Entry
21. Dining area furniture is mobile and can be spaced out
 - Facility uses commercial grade air purifiers
 - Plants with air purifying properties are used throughout
 - Materials and Finishes have antimicrobial properties or are bleach cleanable

INITIAL RECEPTION SKETCH



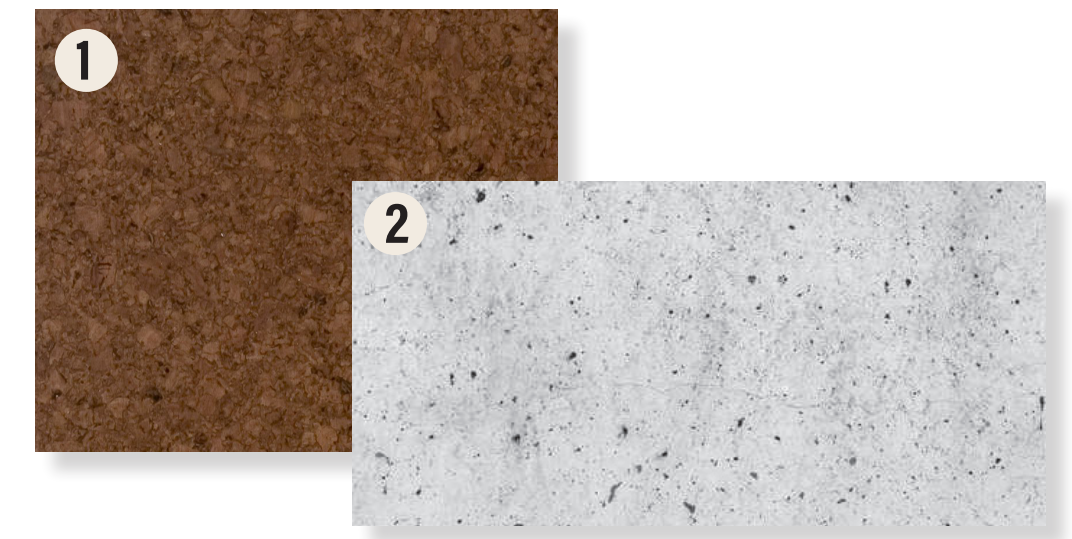
ADA CONSIDERATIONS: ENTRY

The two virtual reception units each have a check-in screen set at 40 inches. The reception desk has wheelchair transaction surface set at 34 inches. All pathways are barrier free and have a minimum width of 5 feet. All social seating areas have a minimum of 36 inches of clear floor space for wheelchair users to roll up and interact with other guests.



ENTRY AND RECEPTION

Flooring Material Selection



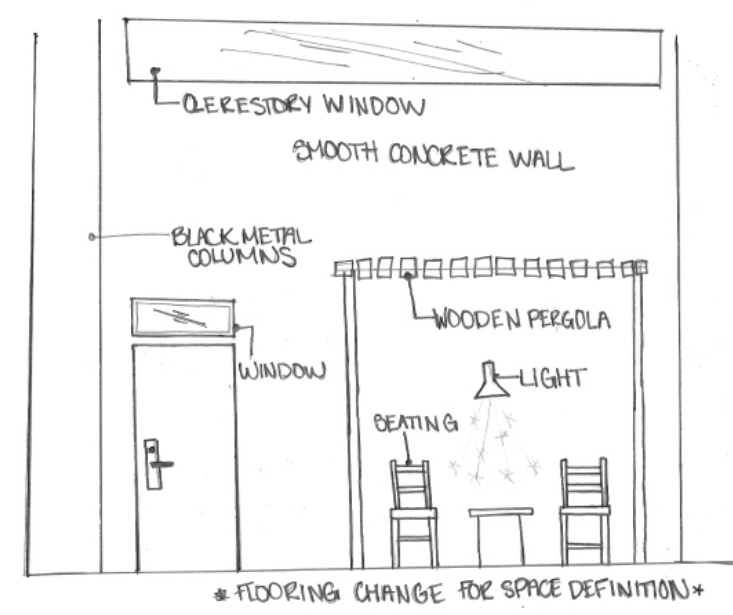
- 1. Cork Flooring**- Natural antimicrobial properties, antistatic, sound absorbing, recovers from compression
- 2. Concrete Flooring**- Mixed in the concrete is antimicrobial pretreatment, intermediate layer of antimicrobial coating, finished with high performance antimicrobial Polymer topcoat, and slip resistant sealer

COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS: ENTRY

Due to the pandemic, as designers we are challenged with a new way of thinking about health and safety in the interiors we create. When designing the entry area for Forge, we didn't want a traditional reception space with a receptionist, because that can increase the chances of contracting COVID-19. Our solution for this was to create a virtual reception where residents and guests can check-in. We added a "fake reception desk" to indicate where users go to check-in, since many people when entering a new place look for a reception desk. This "fake reception desk" can be converted into a functional reception desk during post-pandemic times.

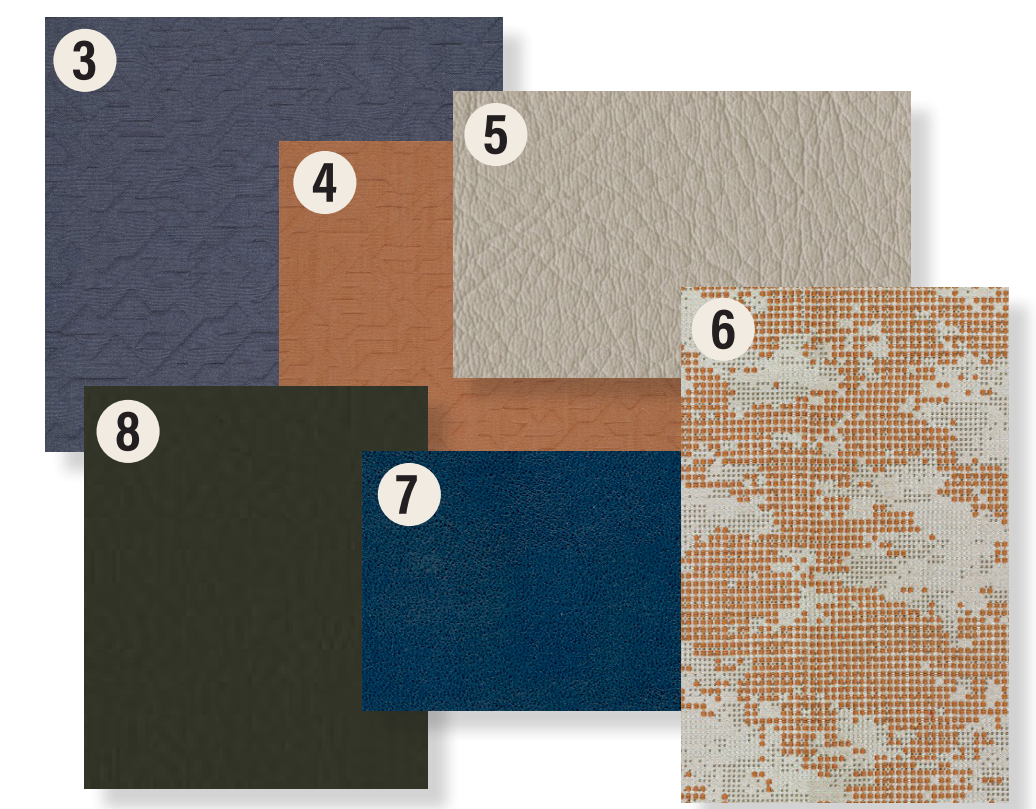
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY: FRONT PORCH

By the entry to all residential units, there is a space designed to be the "Front Porch". Historically, front porches are gathering spaces that encourage people to "sit and stay awhile". A porch allows the veterans to build community with one another in informal spaces and on their own time as they wish.



RESIDENTIAL UNIT FACADES

Upholstery Material Selection



- 3. Designtex, Mountainous (Navy)**- Bleach cleanable 10:1
- 4. Designtex, Mountainous (Orange)**- Bleach cleanable 10:1
- 5. Designtex, Spandau (Bone)**- Bleach cleanable 10:1
- 6. Designtex, Pixel Cloud (Oriole)**- Bleach cleanable 10:1
- 7. Architex, Jack Pot (Rivers)**- Bleach cleanable 1:5, antimicrobial
- 8. Designtex, Spandau (Forest)**- Bleach cleanable 10:1

INTERIOR FACADE ELEVATION



Other Materials & Finishes



- 9. Copper** (Wall Feature, Furniture Finishes, Light Fixtures) - Natural antimicrobial properties
- 10. Paint (Navy)** - Antimicrobial additive BioCote mixed into paint
- 11. Paint (Sand)** - Antimicrobial additive BioCote mixed into paint
- 12. Paint (Olive Green)** - Antimicrobial additive BioCote mixed into paint
- 13. Wood** (Ceiling, Furniture Finishes) - Coated with antimicrobial wood finish EcoTuff
- 14. Nickle** (Ceiling, Furniture Finishes, Columns) - Natural antimicrobial properties
- 15. Concrete** (Wall Feature, Residential Facade) - Antimicrobial Polymer topcoat

ADA CONSIDERATIONS: KITCHENETTE & MULTI-PURPOSE

Looking at the kitchenette, there is a prep-area for wheelchair accessibility that is set at 34 inches. Shelving units are set to ADA max height reach of 48 inches. Considering the ADA requirements, there is a built in drawer microwave that is accessible to all. The flow of space was maintaining the minimum width of 5 feet. The stage in the multi-purpose area has two ways to enter which are by stairs or a wheelchair lift that can help those that are handicapped.



SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY: DINING & MULTI-PURPOSE

The dining area is an open concept design, that has many different seating options that are moveable which helps promote collaboration while also keeping into consideration of "social distancing". Due to COVID-19, the kitchenette cannot be used, but during a post-pandemic time it will be open to use. The multi-purpose area is open to the dining area for bigger events that happen and can be closed off for smaller events if needed by the built in pull out wall panels.



DINING & MULTI-PURPOSE