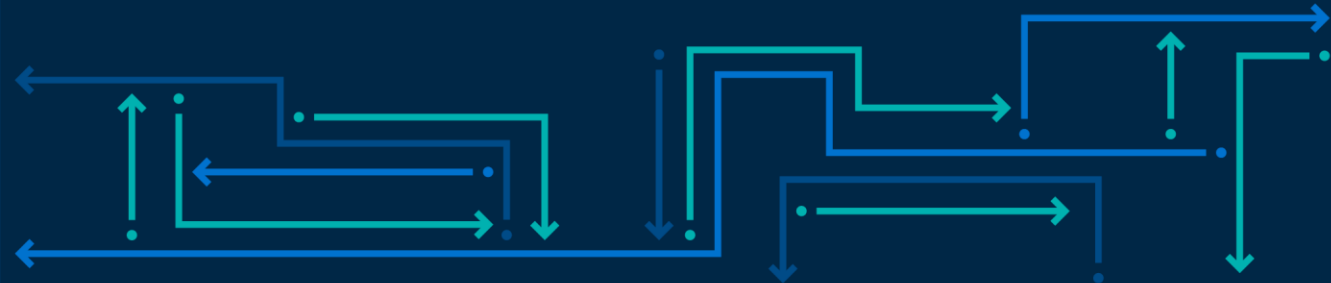# Aligning Administrative Office Space with Hybrid Workplaces

A Working Session for Senior Facilities Officers

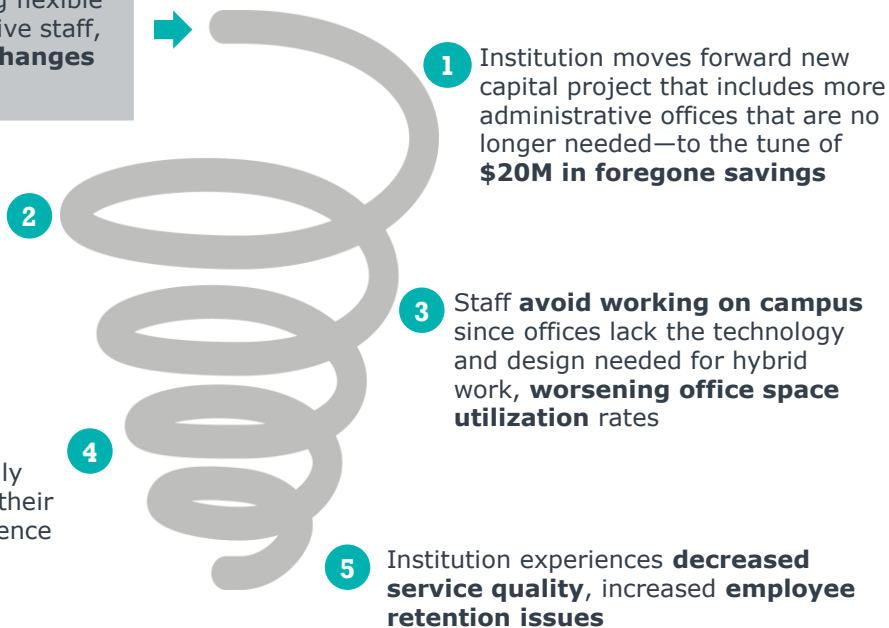# The Risks of Foregoing Office Space Updates

Space Decisions Affect Resource Utilization, Staff Morale, and Productivity

Representative Consequences of Misaligned Space and Workforce Strategies

After permanently embracing flexible work options for administrative staff, campus leaders **postpone changes** to office space strategy

1 Institution moves forward new capital project that includes more administrative offices that are no longer needed—to the tune of **$20M in foregone savings**

2 Campus leaders **foot the bill for operating and maintaining** thousands of square feet of underutilized administrative offices

3 Staff **avoid working on campus** since offices lack the technology and design needed for hybrid work, **worsening office space utilization** rates

4 Staff **productivity lags** and employees become increasingly **disengaged**, frustrated with their work environment and experience

5 Institution experiences **decreased service quality**, increased **employee retention issues**

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Seizing the Moment for Office Space Reform

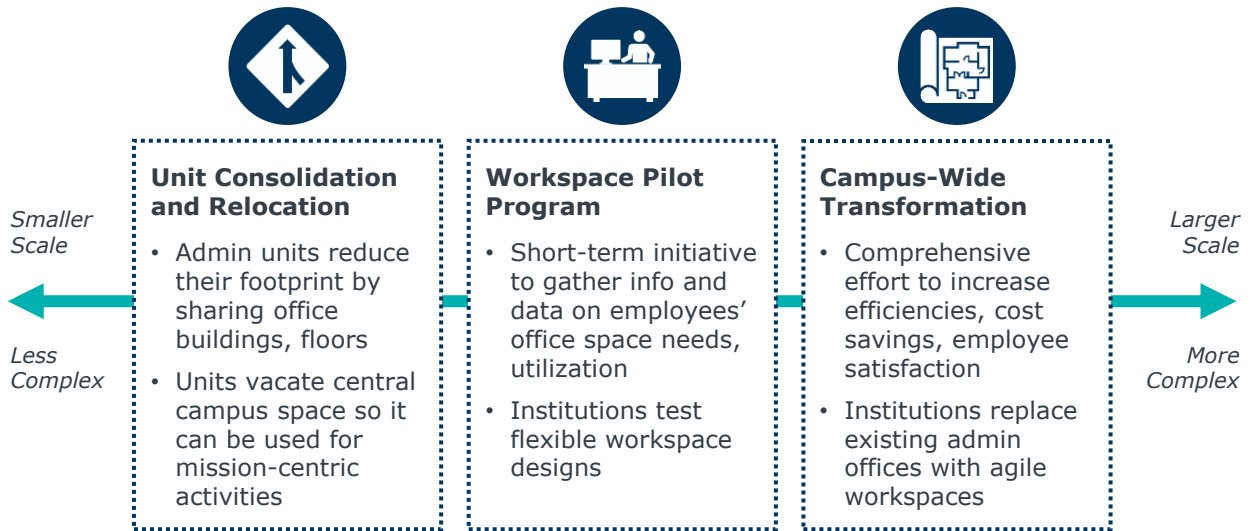> " We need to start making changes to our office space and technology today. There are some risks—and we should be strategic about the investments we make—but if we don't rethink our administrative spaces now, we're setting hybrid work and staff up to fail."
>
> — Chief Financial Officer
> *Public Research University in the Southeast*

Institutions Taking Range of Approaches to Adapt Office Footprint, Portfolio

Spectrum of Strategies to Align Offices with Hybrid Work

Smaller Scale

Less Complex

Larger Scale

More Complex

Unit Consolidation and Relocation

- Admin units reduce their footprint by sharing office buildings, floors
- Units vacate central campus space so it can be used for mission-centric activities

Workspace Pilot Program

- Short-term initiative to gather info and data on employees' office space needs, utilization
- Institutions test flexible workspace designs

Campus-Wide Transformation

- Comprehensive effort to increase efficiencies, cost savings, employee satisfaction
- Institutions replace existing admin offices with agile workspaces

Varying Approaches Support Different Institutional Needs, Priorities

Approach	Investment Required	Logistical Complexity	Anticipated Space Savings	Best-Fit Institutions
Unit Consolidation and Relocation	◔ (Low)	◑ (Moderate)	◑ (Moderate)	• Experiencing major campus space shortages (due to location or enrollment growth) • Some units are amenable to or already embracing permanent flexible work arrangements
Workspace Pilot Program	◔ (Low)	◑ (Moderate)	○ (Very Low)	• Trying to garner buy-in for hybrid work and corresponding space changes • Looking to gather data on hybrid employees' space, tech needs and preferences
Campus-Wide Transformation	◕ (High)	● (Very High)	● (Very High)	• Seeking maximum space and cost savings • Already committed to long-term, hybrid work strategy across the institution

Legend: ○ Very Low ◔ Low ◑ Moderate ◕ High ● Very High

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Revisiting an Evergreen Issue: Space Management

COVID Sparked Renewed Interest, Progress on Historic Problems

Space Management Challenges Leaders Cited During EAB's 2015 Research

"Shared governance requires that space decisions be made in a big space committee—central administration just **doesn't have much control**."

"Departments claim ownership over certain campus spaces and **fiercely resist any attempts to reclaim** space centrally."

"Faculty and staff **still expect private offices**, regardless of whether or how often they actually use them."

Space Management Victories Leaders Reported During EAB's 2021 Research

"We moved to **centralized space management** for classrooms and meeting rooms during COVID. It worked really well, so we're **not going to relinquish** that control post-pandemic."

"Given COVID budget constraints, unit leaders were **more open to giving up space**. Moving forward, we're going to an '**all space is institutional space'** philosophy."

"A lot of faculty and staff realized **offices weren't as critical** for their work as they had thought. Now, many are willing to **exchange private offices for flexible work** arrangements."
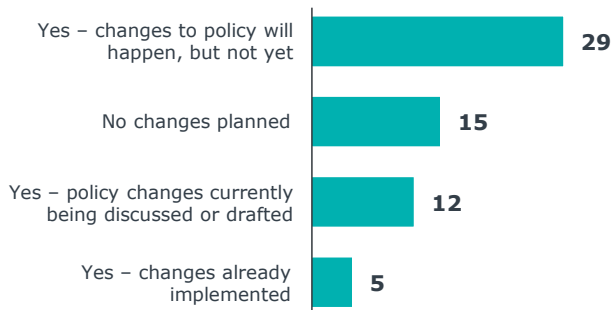
Leaders Rethinking Space Policies, Office Space Footprint Post-COVID

Most Institutions Plan to Update Space Policies, But Few Have Implemented

*Are you planning to make changes to your space allocation or utilization policies in the next year?*

n=61

Yes – changes to policy will happen, but not yet	**29**
No changes planned	**15**
Yes – policy changes currently being discussed or drafted	**12**
Yes – changes already implemented	**5**

Leaders Have Varying Predictions About Future Office Space Needs

Across the next decade, do you anticipate your institution needing:

n=61

Less office space	**25**
Not able to anticipate yet	**18**
The same amount of office space	**14**
More office space	**4**
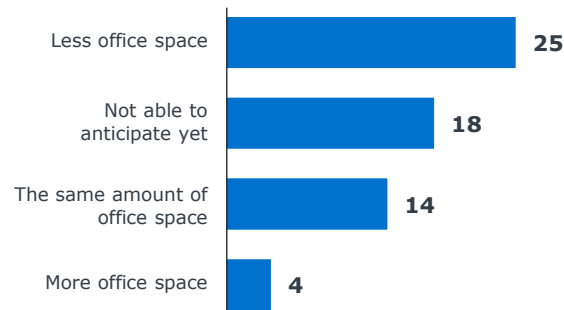
Download **EAB's full survey data report** on Designing Administrative Office Spaces for Hybrid Workplaces here.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Select Institutions Implementing Hoteling, Hot-Desking for Hybrid Staff

Growing Interest in Shared Workspaces in Higher Ed

- ✓ **Hoteling:** workspaces reserved in advance for temporary use
- ✓ **Hot-Desking:** workspaces used on a first-come, first-serve basis

78%

Facilities leaders who think staff on their campus would **willingly trade assigned seating** for increased working flexibility

51%

Business and facilities leaders **planning to incorporate hoteling or hot-desking** into renovated office spaces

Tools and Systems to Optimize Shared Workspace Planning and Utilization

UC DAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

UC Davis Creates "Calculator" to Estimate Shared Workspace Needs

- Excel spreadsheet auto-calculates needed number of desks based on headcount, hybrid work arrangements
- Tool pre-populates employee-to-seat ratios of **1:1** for staff in office >60% of time, **2:1** for staff in office 20-60% of time, and **10:1** for staff in office <20% of time

Duke UNIVERSITY

Duke Builds Homegrown Booking System for Pilot Hoteling Space

- Office of Information Technology collaborated with Duke Athletics to adapt online event management system to workstation reservation system
- System includes floor-by-floor map and live roster of staff working on-site, which encourages collaboration
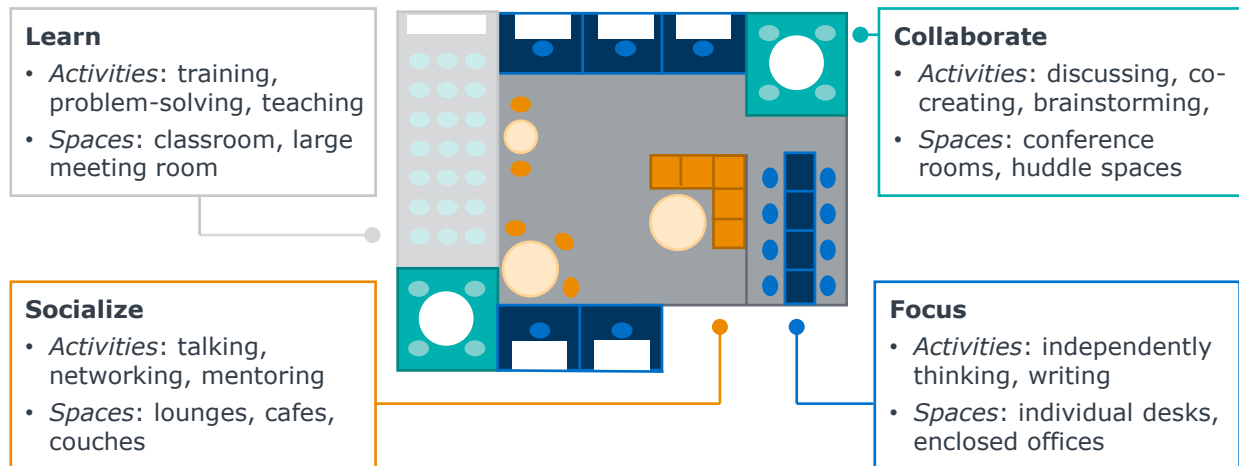
UCSD's Office "Neighborhoods" Let Staff Choose the Best Space for Their Work

Activity-Based Work Design: Incorporating a range of space types into designs so that employees can select the space that best supports the work (activity) they are performing

UC San Diego **UCSD Accommodates Range of Workplace Activities by Designing Office "Neighborhoods" With Four Types of Space[1]**

Learn
- *Activities*: training, problem-solving, teaching
- *Spaces*: classroom, large meeting room

Collaborate
- *Activities*: discussing, co-creating, brainstorming,
- *Spaces*: conference rooms, huddle spaces

Socialize
- *Activities*: talking, networking, mentoring
- *Spaces*: lounges, cafes, couches

Focus
- *Activities*: independently thinking, writing
- *Spaces*: individual desks, enclosed offices

Access UCSD's Administrative Space Use Guidelines here.

1) Floorplan for illustrative purposes only.

Source: University of California San Diego, "UC San Diego Administrative Space Use Guidelines"; EAB interviews and analysis.