

Left: CBA's new home at 1290 Broadway.

Top: Building reception area.

A Moving Story

BY PATRICK FLAHERTY



CBA President John Vaught hands off this month's President's Message to CBA Executive Director Patrick Flaherty, who highlights the CBA's recent move to a new home after 27 years at 19th and Grant.

By the time you read this, the Colorado Bar Association will be relatively settled into our new home at 1290 Broadway, Suite 1700, and open for business as of January 2, 2019. It is a moving story of how we ended up in this great facility.

Of Parking Lots

During a recession more than 27 years ago, the CBA moved to 1900 Grant Street in Denver on

the outskirts of downtown and surrounded by a sea of inexpensive surface parking lots. Over time, the CBA, and the Denver Bar Association, with whom the CBA is jointly managed, grew with the state and city, as did our affiliate, CBA-CLE. As we grew, surrounding surface parking lots disappeared. By about 1994, we ended up with about 26,000 square feet spread over 2½ floors. We renegotiated an excellent lease and settled in for another 24 years.

Though inexpensive, our meeting space was inflexible and divided. With multiple floors, we had double pantries, kitchens, copy/print centers, and mail rooms. Our floors were built with all private offices, which we had outgrown, and many with poor ventilation and no natural light. We even had spots for four receptionists. Despite these inefficiencies, it still made eco-

nomic sense to stay. Exercising our last lease option has saved the CBA, DBA, and CBA-CLE roughly \$1 million. It's one reason we have the second-lowest dues among our peers in the country.

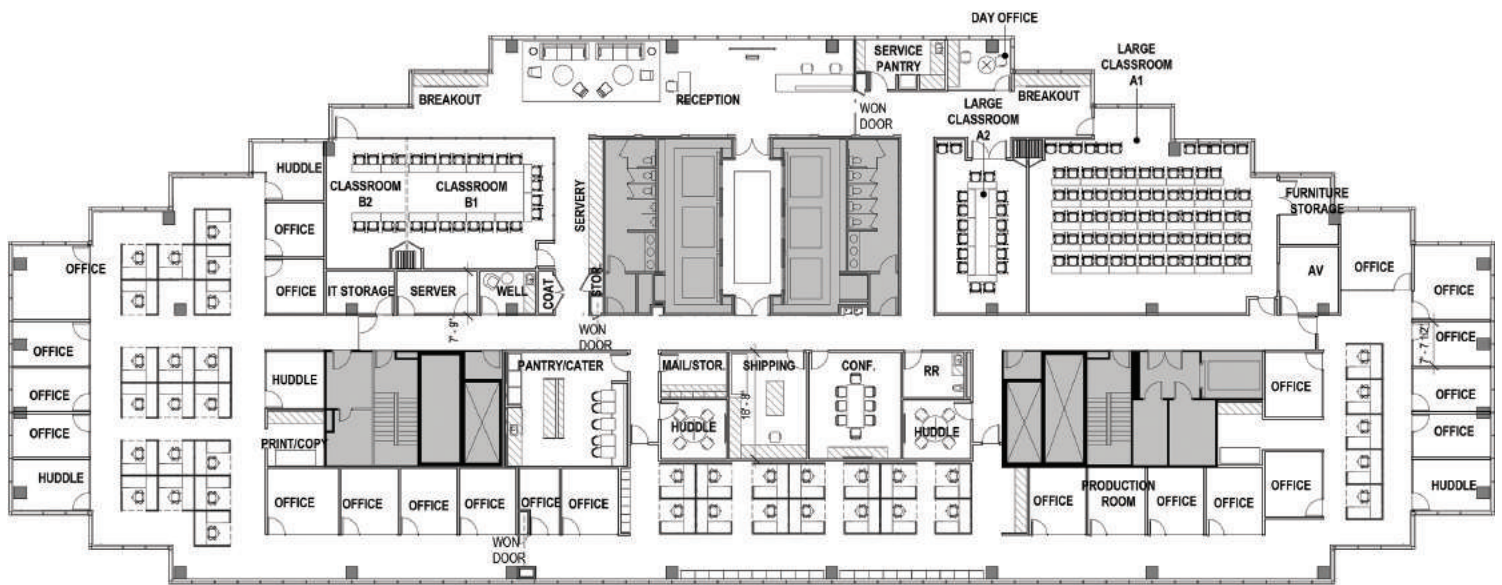
We knew we would be out of options by February 2019—literally, there were no options left on the lease. And the Denver real estate market has changed. If we did not shrink our footprint, we would see a 45% increase in rent by staying at Grant Street.

Finding the Right Space

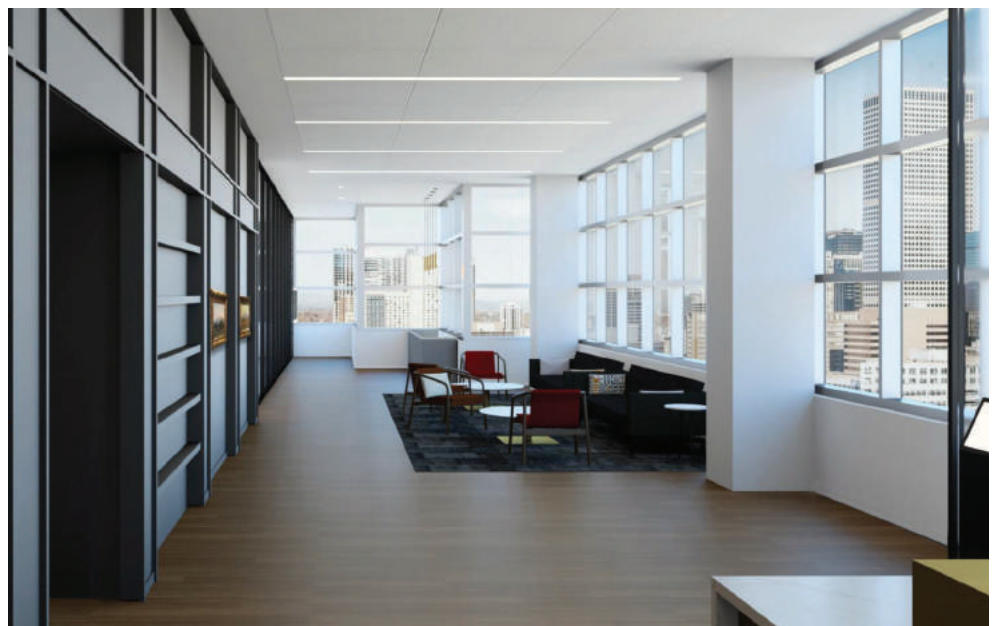
Eighteen months ago, the boards appointed a nimble five-person Building Task Force, and the work began. All I can say is that I'm glad these superstars were on our side: Jim Benjamin of Benjamin & Cohen, Rebecca Dow of Holland & Hart, Dick Gast of Gast Johnson & Muffly, Franz Hardy of Gordon & Rees, and Qusair Mohamedbhai of Rathod Mohamedbhai.

Our first task was to develop criteria for space size and features, location, parking, access, costs, and even restroom stalls. We then evaluated more than 42 properties against these criteria with the help of our brokers, Patrick Bollick and Eric Carlbom of JLL. Over time, we toured more than 15 spaces and narrowed the list to five, then three.

At this point, the question became: How could we shrink our footprint while preserving room to grow and accommodating the many meetings and seminars we host, and how could we create an environment that is conducive to learning, all while being responsible with



Top: New floor plan.
Right: CBA reception area.



your dues? The answer was great architects. We began working with Michelle Liebling and Lauren Hucek at Gensler, the world's largest architecture firm and a specialist in office design.

Through this whole process, a clear winner emerged. We wanted to be at 1290 Broadway, and the landlord wanted us. We accelerated our schedule by seven weeks to seize an opportunity.

We raced through the design process and started construction (legally) without a permit, all to move at the slowest time of the year and cause as little disruption as possible to our members. As I write this article, we are under budget and ahead of schedule thanks to Edifice Builders. Yes, you just read the name of a contractor in the same sentence as "under budget and ahead of schedule."

On Broadway

1290 Broadway is located immediately across the street from the Ralph Carr State Judicial Center and near the State Capitol, places where we often work on your behalf. It is no farther from downtown Denver than 1900 Grant Street, yet it sports easier access from Broadway, Lincoln, and 13th Avenue.

If you interact with the CBA or CBA-CLE in person, you will find plentiful parking if you

head to the 1,000-space Cultural Center Parking Garage at 65 West 12th, behind the Art Hotel. As you walk out of that garage to the north, you will be 100 feet from our building. On our floor, high ceilings will help with temperature control and ventilation, monitor and camera positions in seminar rooms, and reduce the sense of claustrophobia after an all-day CLE. You will find much more efficient reception and conference space with a reasonable variety of right-sized meeting rooms, most of which are flexible and divisible. We looked at every meeting held or

scheduled in our space at 1900 Grant in 2018 and concluded that with less space, but that which was right sized, flexible, and divisible, we needed to move just one regularly scheduled group from a Thursday to a Wednesday. That's it. We'll even have a dedicated member office and plentiful self-serve refreshments.

If you interact with the CBA virtually, you will find greatly enhanced technology. We will finally deliver on audioconferencing so good that you won't even see the microphones; they will be directional microphones hidden



Top: CBA-CLE large classroom.
Left: Office space.




resellers tell us there is no market for these desks beyond the kindling market. New furniture will be laminate, ergonomic, and actually designed for the computer era. It's coming from a small veteran-owned, SBA HUBZone-certified firm with excellent customer service: Contract Furnishings.

The Cost

So how much will this cost? We've known this day was coming for decades, and we've saved for it. Thanks to our great negotiators, a rent abatement largely offsets out-of-pocket costs. With a modern and flexible design, we can meet current needs and have room to grow, while shrinking our footprint by about 15%. Confidentiality provisions limit details, but the CBA will see only a 9.7% increase in rent when we start paying, and that is not for a while.

Check it Out

We hope you find the new CBA office space practical, functional, and welcoming. Come see *your* new home at 1290 Broadway! 

in the ceiling and tuned only to the frequency of the human voice. We will finally roll out videoconferencing (so no teleconferences in your jammies). Seminars will have improved broadcast and production values. Overall, we are expanding bandwidth and upgrading servers, network access, and Wi-Fi.

In the back offices, we are moving to a modern, open office design with flexible workstations, smaller private offices, and huddle rooms. We're leaving behind our collection of mismatched hand-me-down desks discarded by law firms decades ago and designed before personal computers were invented; furniture

WE'VE MOVED!

1290 Broadway, Ste. 1700
Denver, CO 80203

1

2

3

4

5

1

Location

Great location
near courts and
Capitol

2

Parking

Five times more
parking within
a half block

3

Flexibility

Shared, flexible
and divisible
classrooms
and conference
rooms

4

Modern Office Design

For improved
productivity
and efficiency

5

Technology

Improved
Internet access,
A/V conferencing
and broadcast
capabilities

