

DAVENPORT, IOWA
ASK STUDIO

Completed in 2020 as conversation surged around transforming vacant office space into housing, this renovation brings new life to a three-story, Midcentury Modern structure originally designed as a bank in Davenport, Iowa. Dubbed The Brenton, after the local financial institution that built it in 1966, the 39,036-square-foot building now houses 38 residential units that include market-rate and affordable rental apartments.

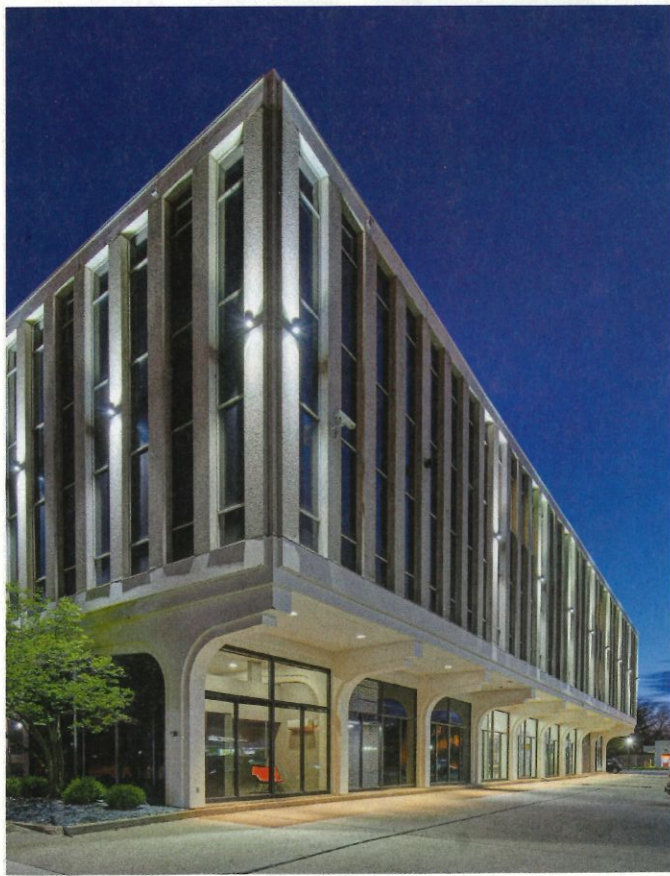
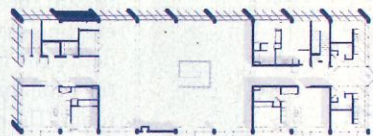
Despite the original building's unyielding gridded organization, Des Moines, Iowa-based Ask Studio managed to retain the structure's clarity of purpose while radically changing the functions for its continued life as a community asset. The architects kept the clear structural framework of the building, which they identified as an example of New Formalism. The original teller lobby on the ground level, for instance, has been preserved as the

building's lobby and the center of common spaces for the new residents. It introduces the historical fabric of the building with its open space, long-span concrete arch structure, and original materials such as terrazzo flooring, aluminum framing, and wood doors.

The team honored the building's history upstairs, too. There, where bankers' offices once reigned, the existing double-loaded corridors running the length of the building on the second and third floors now serve studio and one-bedroom apartments. New systems, especially plumbing, required a deft touch by the architects to avoid compromising the original building's minimalist approach. In the same spirit, the interior color palette remains subdued, allowing elements of the original structure—including the terrazzo, aluminum framing, and wood doors—to remain prominent. —E.K.

the BRENTON

“A catalyst for revitalization, The Brenton brought renewed life to this historic Midcentury renovation.”
—Melissa Daniels



CAMERON CAMPBELL