



## DESIGNER FORUM

JPC Architects takes Zillow's refresh to a new level.

■ By Kerri Snook

*Shaw Contract's The Park series was used in the open collaboration spaces as well as in the open office areas.*

Zillow is an online real estate database and media company that is home to a multitude of real estate industry service providers. All operating under one roof in Seattle's Russell Investments Center, these various groups have distinctly different personalities and office cultures. Zillow occupies floors 29-42 of the 42-floor complex, with the 39th floor as the kickoff to the complete refresh of Zillow's existing floors. Zillow leadership had a significant design request: come up with a creative solution that would play up the energy and diversity of the groups, while ensuring a sense of overall cohesion and connectivity. In addition to the overall look and feel of each Zillow floor, the underlying and unseen aspects of the design were to consider wear and tear, acoustics per location and sustainability.

JPC Architects took each floor into consideration. Carrying the design thread throughout every space was important, considering that each floor has a team type that works in diverse and creative ways. The design team concluded that each floor needed to be unique to the team working on that floor, placing it within the context of Zillow's company design. The color palette is made up of cool tones—blues, greens, greys, and plums. Each floor used a variation of the color palette. For instance, engineering floors used jewel tones with saturated colors, including rich navy and greyed-out hues. The sales floors were refined and tonal, offering a more residential and cozy feel that is not over-stimulating.

### THE FOUNDATION IS FLOORING

JPC's design team used concrete and carpet tile to achieve the particular design aspects of the project. Both products worked as a common denominator throughout the space with a bold and consistent geometry. And they lend themselves to Zillow's environment, which hosts high-traffic volume and large group collaborations in various locations throughout the floors.

Shaw Contract's The Park series in Drift and Linger were used throughout each floor in the open office areas. The carpet tile helped create a sense of diversity through pattern, differing use of colorways and surface textures. A deep monochromatic tone-on-tone palette placed in a bold herringbone geometry echoing



*The herringbone installation of The Park flows from the collaboration area to the boardroom, which has retractable walls.*

the “Z” in the company’s logo is found throughout the open office areas and hallways connecting them. As this floor treatment flows to various functions, the tone-on-tone effect morphs into a kaleidoscope of color. The deep tones and textures of the carpets help to balance the design with long-term function and high use, creating acoustical support where collaborations in heads-down space occur. Collaboration zones combined various Shaw Contract accent carpets that coordinated well with The Park. In the open collaboration team space, The Park series’ Create tile in the color Coexist energizes the space in a colorful and imaginative way.

In areas of high maintenance, such as the café and micro-kitchens, polished concrete was used as a complementary surface to the carpet. Striking concrete applications can be experienced in such places as the elevator lobby, where, in some cases, bold color and geometry begins on a painted concrete floor and run up the walls, further defining arrival and wayfinding.

In an effort to add warmth, texture and pattern throughout the spaces, flooring materials were placed on wall surfaces. This design element gives importance and a language to spaces that draw people in and allow for cozy, warm and inviting collaborations. The flooring, being the grounding point with all the above aspects, proved to be a great foundation to build the Zillow Group brand.

### **LIGHTING PLAYS VARIOUS ROLES**

JPC Architects enforced Zillow’s foundational design through the use of acoustic ceiling features and lighting that starts in the elevator lobbies and moves through the elevator doors onto the open floors; this feature also repeats itself at other key locations on the floor.

Throughout Zillow’s refresh, LED fixtures were used solely and utilize color-changing RGB linear lighting in feature locations, such as the elevator lobbies and kitchens, as a source of wayfinding. Decorative pendant fixtures were used as accents that heighten the overall design of the flooring and vary per floor. Not only does this type of ceiling design add depth and intrigue to the spaces, but it also acts as a strong wayfinding feature. Lighting plays many different roles, depending on the design direction and how it interacts with the ceiling details. The ceiling features are more sculptural in nature, while the rest of the floor is complementary to those features; the ceiling takes on texture and shine and allows for playing with depth of space. Lighting in a hidden, prominent or decorative form on ceilings, walls and close to the floor allows the space to connect with the beauty of illumination. The engaging nature



*The custom-made Light Bright wall—constructed of MDF, acrylic, colored rods; and LEDs—offers a team building element on the engineering floor.*

of the ceiling forms along with the use of lighting design are a beautiful partner to the simplistic yet engaging flooring.

Teambuilding elements were featured on each floor. The sales floors offer a cozy collaboration area. The engineering floors offer a one-of-a-kind life-sized Light Bright Wall, custom built from acrylic colored rods and MDF and back-lit by LEDs. Not only does it achieve its teambuilding purpose, but it is a constant changing art form in the office landscape.

## COLLABORATION IS KEY

Before beginning the company refresh, the design team strongly considered the way in which every company team works, and the spaces they require to best suit their inspirational needs. The diverse finishes, textures, shapes and colors add a uniqueness to each floor and create the end users' desired sense of individuality. Modernity mixed with warmth and texture is the ubiquitous thread in the big picture. Open booths, open and enclosed collaboration areas and quiet zones—where tenants can stretch out in a singular booth seat and work for the day—spawn a creative environment



The carpet tile's herringbone "Z" pattern found throughout the open office areas and hallways mimics the company's logo.



In this open collaboration team space, acoustical ceiling features were used in addition to decorative fixtures to accent the design of the flooring.

perfect for this company's teams. The idea is to know what the company needs and use that knowledge to plan and develop a successful and varied space.

Following the completion of the refresh, JPC's design team learned that these newly created spaces were successful and are being used continually throughout the day. As this company grows and changes, closely considering space type and needs will be an important part of its continued growth. The most important aspect of creating an exceptional design for the client is working with great people and enjoying the process. ■



### THE AUTHOR

Kerri Snook, interior designer with JPC Architects, has over 20 years of experience in interior design and architecture. Snook began her career in Chicago, Illinois with a focus in healthcare design and textile design. She later expanded her work to encompass tech and corporate design, moving to the Bay Area in California to work on projects for Google, eBay and Adobe. Currently in the Seattle area, Snook continues to expand and cultivate her interior design skills with JPC.