

The Deloitte logo, consisting of the word "Deloitte" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with a small green dot at the end of the word.

Together makes progress

The power of place

The new golden age of the
corporate headquarters

PART 1

Abstract

After years of remote work and scattered teams, many organizations are now shifting their focus on how best to bring their multigenerational workforce together to innovate, connect, and collaborate. Investing in a premium, amenity-rich, leading-edge landmark headquarters or campus has become a key lever in cultivating brands, attracting and retaining talent, and driving enterprise performance. This series is developed in three parts:

- Part 1 explores the shifts driving investment in megastructures that transform city skylines or local economies and are once again becoming symbols of the workforce that drive the local economy.
- Part 2 proposes how Corporate Real Estate (CRE) leaders can begin to think about how they reposition their real estate footprint and respond to the key trends and drivers.
- Part 3 outlines the key design and operational considerations that organizations are leveraging to bring a landmark headquarters to life, while highlighting recent examples.

Make the office *magnetic*, not mandated

Investment in a centralized, elevated, and transformed landmark headquarters is not just about having an impressive address or a showpiece for the brand. It is a strategy that reflects how work itself has changed. The modern workforce is evolving. New generations (particularly, Generation Z) are entering the workforce with different expectations than older generations, many of whom spent most of their careers in traditional office settings. In response, CRE leaders are recognizing that people need more than a place to plug in their laptops; they need a space that connects them to company culture, purpose, and each other more intentionally.

What is a landmark headquarters, and why are organizations investing in them?

Defined as purpose-built, amenity-rich, and strategically located, landmark headquarters are emerging as the preferred model for organizations seeking to boost productivity, innovation, and collaboration. This shift is driven by market pressures, smarter space utilization, evolving employee expectations for the workplace experience, and the challenge of fostering cohesive communities in a hybrid, modern workforce.

Global consumer company



3 main buildings
Suburban Chicagoland HQ
530k sf¹



490k sf
Chicago HQ
Single urban building

Strong campus → "single urban HQ building" consolidation narrative

North American automotive manufacturer



Multi-site
Consolidated operations
across 3 US sites



~2.1M sf
Plano HQ
7 building campus

Clear "multiple HQ nodes" → "one consolidated hub" example

Global oil and gas company



Multiple offices
Houston, TX; Fairfax, VA;
Akron, OH²



~3M sf³
Spring HQ
20+ building campus

Good "mega-campus for integration" case⁴

Key driver 1: Market consolidation and space utilization

Market consolidation pressure is motivating the shift toward centralized headquarters, consolidating into a single building or campus. Organizations are responding to different yet related pressures to reduce costs, eliminate redundancies, and optimize their real estate portfolios.

- **With fewer employees in the office at any given time, organizations are rethinking their space needs** and investing in flexible, modular environments that can adapt to fluctuating occupancy while controlling costs. Employers are continuing to advance return-to-office policies to maximize the use of their space. In August 2025 in New York, office activity was up 1.3% from the same month in 2019.⁵ Employer sentiment now appears to favor either using the space available through return-to-office policies or consolidating it.
- **Consolidation also creates financial opportunities** to simplify lease management, negotiate more competitive outcomes with landlords, and support campus-wide adoption of energy-efficiency upgrades or integrated facility management systems, directly supporting cost reduction.





Key driver 2: Evolving employee expectations

While five generations are working side by side for the first time in history,⁶ it's anticipated that by 2030, Gen Z and millennials will make up nearly three quarters of the global workforce⁷—and they expect more from the workplace than just a desk.

- **Younger employees want what they cannot replicate at home,** which shifts the workplace from a cost center to a talent attraction and retention tool that signals brand, culture, and experience: curated amenities, wellness features, and hospitality-level design, aligned with individual culture, lifestyle fit, and ambitions.⁸
- **Although Gen Z tends to prefer working remotely, many don't want to do so indefinitely.** They prefer hybrid work that is intentional, and that allows them to structure their time flexibly and with autonomy.⁹ This means the office must “earn” the commute by delivering clear value on the days employees choose to come in, such as prioritizing collaboration, social connection, and purpose-built experiences. This means flexible team spaces, event programming, and high-energy environments that make in-office time more meaningful.
- **To meet the higher technology expectations of these generations, workplaces should be fully tech-enabled, frictionless environments that integrate physical and digital experiences.** In response, organizations are concentrating investment into fewer, smarter HQs equipped with advanced audiovisual (AV) tech, hybrid collaboration tools, smart building systems, and integrated workplace apps, ensuring a consistent and scalable employee experience.

As expectations drive these differentiators in attracting talent, CRE leaders noted that employees are more likely to stay with an organization if they see a path to growth in skills, impact, and quality of life.

Key driver 3: Embodying the corporate brand

Increasingly dispersed teams are a challenge to maintaining a cohesive culture and sense of belonging. To counter this, the workplace can serve as a platform for client experience, brand expression, and community connection.

- **Destination.** In response, many are investing in landmark headquarters to not only bring employees together with purpose but also serve as a destination for clients, enabling deeper relationship-building, collaboration, and trust.
- **Brand values.** Well-designed, high-profile HQs can help communicate valuable brand strengths such as credibility, stability, ambition, and innovation, instilling confidence in clients, investors, and partners by making the organization's values tangible.
- **Brand in action.** Each architectural and experiential element, from curated client areas and innovation labs to hospitality-driven amenities, is an opportunity for clients to not simply hear about an organization's vision but experience it firsthand.
- **Locality.** Particularly for legacy or large-scale organizations, the HQ can extend beyond the building itself to contribute to the identity of the surrounding community. These "company towns" create a symbiotic relationship, in which the organization's presence drives local economic growth and pride, while the community reinforces the brand's heritage and cultural relevance.

The landmark headquarters is more than a central hub; it is a statement of purpose. CRE leaders are encouraged to design a space that supports mentorship, collaboration, and community, making the office "magnetic" rather than mandatory.¹⁰





Key driver 4: Tech-enabled workplaces driving smarter, more efficient real estate operations

A landmark headquarters is not only a strategic asset for employees and clients, but also enables more efficient and data-driven real estate and facilities management (FM).

- **Drives smarter real estate decision-making by providing real-time data** on occupancy, utilization, and building performance, allowing organizations to optimize portfolios, reduce excess space, and make faster, more informed decisions.
- **Modern building technologies streamline FM** through automation, predictive maintenance, and integrated systems, reducing operational complexity, improving efficiency, and enhancing overall building performance. Monitoring critical assets through real estate technology can reduce operating costs by 30% to 40%.¹¹
- **Even without new builds, targeted technology investments such as energy management systems deliver measurable returns** by lowering energy costs, ultimately creating more cost-effective real estate—and can reduce consumption by 7% to 15%.

Together, these capabilities shift the workplace from a static asset to a dynamic platform, where data and technology enable continuous optimization and long-term value creation across the real estate portfolio.

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Endnotes

1. The three main buildings in suburban Chicagoland totaled more than 530,000 square feet, with the past HQ comprising 400,000 square feet and the global training center comprising over 130,000 square feet.
2. Prior building count/square footage not stated in sources.
3. Some sources also cite ~7.1 million square feet developed including garages.
4. "Before" state square footage usually requires supplemental real estate documentation.
5. Andria Cheng, "[New York's office foot traffic tops pre-pandemic level](#)," CoStar, August 12, 2025.
6. CoreNet Global's The Pulse Blog, "[Ready or not, Gen Z has arrived: How corporate real estate can embrace the next-generation workforce](#)," December 12, 2025.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Benefit estimates based on Deloitte analysis and previous experience with clients.
12. CoreNet Global's The Pulse Blog, "[Ready or not, Gen Z has arrived: How corporate real estate can embrace the next-generation workforce](#),"



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