

Kicker: DESIGN & BUILD TO SAVE TIME & MONEY



RESTORE OAKLAND – from the ground up!

By early spring of 2016, rents for East Bay office space were starting to get seriously high. Fortunately, for community organizations in the area, the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation had a sense for the problem and potential solution in its sights. Working closely with the Northern California Community Load Fund, farsighted staff spotted properties that could be purchased and converted into an anchor institution with community-oriented functions.

From the start, Restore Oakland generated a lot of excitement. Clearly, its location on International Boulevard in the heart of the Fruitvale district had potential benefits for the surrounding community. Not surprisingly, the project attracted an interesting and strong group of collaborators.

This joint initiative between the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights and the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC United) provides an employment training center as well as meeting spaces for community advocacy. Each organization had something important to offer the neighborhood. Together with EBALDC, the tenant-partners contracted with Designing Justice + Designing Spaces, a social justice-oriented architectural startup based in Oakland.

With these pieces in place, the project had promise. But the timeline was very tight, the renovation complex. The development team decided to work closely with Alternative Technologies on a design/build basis.

With experience in nonprofit partnerships, sensitivity to budgets, renovations of older buildings, and skills in creating community-facing public spaces, Alternative was able to draft a detailed set of drawings for WiFi networks, security cameras, conference rooms, server closets, and computer and telephone cabling infrastructure. The drawings met the needs of other contractors, project timeframes, and strict budgets.

We're looking forward to fulfilling the promise of this visionary project as the work continues! For more information, visit Restore Oakland's website at <http://restoreoakland.org/>. And watch for the grand opening in 2019!