

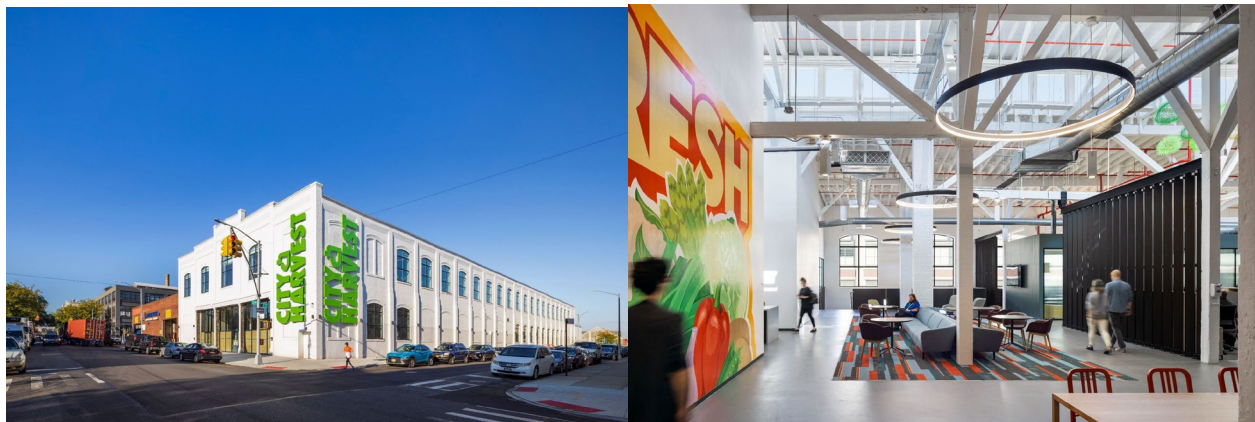
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## Ennead Architects and Rockwell Group Collaborate on City Harvest's New Food Rescue Center in Brooklyn

*The transformation of the historic building doubles City Harvest's capacity to rescue and distribute fresh food across NYC and offers a light-filled workplace with a professional-grade demonstration kitchen and event space built from recycled materials*



**November 14, 2022** – Internationally renowned architects [Ennead Architects](#) and [Rockwell Group](#) celebrate the opening of a new food rescue center and headquarters for [City Harvest](#), New York City's first and largest food rescue organization, in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. The 150,000 square-foot [Cohen Community Food Rescue Center](#) is dedicated to rescuing and delivering tens of millions of pounds of food every year to help feed New Yorkers in need and brings together City Harvest's administrative, food rescue, and delivery departments and an unparalleled event space and demonstration kitchen under one roof. As monthly visits to New York City food pantries and soup kitchens remain nearly 70% higher than they were pre-pandemic, the Cohen Community Food Rescue Center empowers the organization to rescue,

store, and distribute twice as much food across the five boroughs. The new food rescue center was developed with generous support from the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation.

[See here for photography of The Cohen Community Food Rescue Center.](#)

### ***Ennead's building redesign***

Originally a repair shop for the Brooklyn Rapid Transit trains from 1890 to 1916, City Harvest's new headquarters underwent a dramatic transformation led by Ennead Architects (Design Architect, Exterior and Interior), transitioning the historic building into an energy-efficient, bright, inspiring and healthy workplace for City Harvest, where previously separate entities of the organization — its office and distribution center — are brought together and truly connected. Ware Malcomb (Architect of Record) was responsible for logistics spaces including loading docks, warehouse, food packing space and food storage space.

Ennead transformed the building's interior into a light filled, flexible and efficient workplace, adding accessible entries and exterior canopies and restoring and enhancing the original daylighting system — especially the clerestories, which had long since been covered over. Honoring the structural and masonry elements and expansive ceiling height of the building, the design juxtaposes contemporary architecture with the original industrial interior, using bold color and graphics systems throughout the space.

Ennead calibrated the office modules and layout in accordance with the unusual original structural system of branching wooden columns that resemble trees, further drawing attention to the historical nature of the wood-framed warehouse, while introducing new interventions like the steel staircase and screens that define various zones of the building.

The building is upgraded to include several sustainable initiatives, including a future solar array, composting and recycling features throughout the facility, energy efficient lighting, radiant heating and cooling, and electric charging stations. Recycled materials, like concrete, brick, CMU, paving and decorative metals, are used throughout the site. The Cohen Community Food Rescue Center will meet LEED Gold certification.

“City Harvest's new home reflects the power and purpose of their mission. Ennead is proud to have transformed a beautiful historic warehouse into an environmentally responsible state-of-the-art workplace, community resource, and distribution center with expanded food rescue capabilities,” said designer **Richard Olcott FAIA, Partner at Ennead Architects**. “As we see it, the most sustainable building is the one that is already there, so our design approach was informed by the existing potential already within this building, which we revitalized and filled with daylight to create an open and welcoming environment for all.”

“Reclaiming a 19<sup>th</sup> century building and bringing it to LEED Gold in service of an organization that accomplishes so much good is a testament to how good design can contribute to society,” said **Don Weinreich FAIA, Partner at Ennead Architects**.”

### ***Rockwell Group's event space and demonstration kitchen design***

For the Cohen Community Food Rescue Center's state-of-the-art kitchen and event space, Rockwell Group (Interior Architectural Design for Event Space and Demonstration Kitchen) brought to bear its deep experience in the hospitality and dining spaces, pro-bono work for food access organizations in New York City, and nimble solutions for restaurants and dining communities hit hard during the pandemic. The venue is sleek and flexible for a variety of

activities including cooking demos from notable chefs and gatherings with corporate volunteers, agency partners, supporters, and community members.

Because of City Harvest's inextricable ties to the City and its mission of reclamation, as well as its desire to engage the local community, Rockwell Group quoted the industrial history of Sunset Park in its design. Humble materials such as reclaimed wood from barns in the Northeast U.S., terracotta, and metal details define the event space. With chefs and culinary experts in mind, Rockwell Group ensured that the space was beautifully appointed with a warm, residential, and inviting expo kitchen that is intuitive and contemporary for guests and chefs alike.

Guests are greeted in a wood-clad reception area with a view into the expo kitchen. The kitchen has been custom designed to respond to chefs' needs and places the chef on display with opportunities for guests and visitors to sit around an island and interact. The open expanse of the event space has a reclaimed oak wood floor and immersive wainscoting as well as industrial-inspired pendants. Reframed existing arched openings lead to an outdoor terrace with river views.

On the roof terrace, an outdoor kitchen and lounge areas, including furnishings made of recycled milk jugs, offer multiple spaces for activities and events. Rockwell Group and City Harvest commissioned New York-based artist Natasha May Platt to paint a wall mural that serves as a backdrop to the outdoor kitchen. Platt's mural features bright, bold wildflowers native to New York State and connects the terrace to its surrounding habitat as well as City Harvest's immersive art program featured through the new headquarters.

"Rockwell Group was thrilled to help City Harvest celebrate this incredible milestone in their growth and mission. Our warm, inviting event space and demonstration kitchen allow City Harvest to add an entirely new element to its services, engaging the community around food and dining, celebrating the theatricality of food, and providing a welcoming space that both chefs and guests want to discover," **said David Rockwell**, founder and President, Rockwell Group.

### ***Impact and scale of City Harvest's Cohen Community Food Rescue Center***

The center opens at a time when inflation continues at a 40-year high and NYC food pantries and soup kitchens are seeing 14% more monthly visitors than they did in January 2022. City Harvest will rescue and deliver 75 million pounds of food this year – sustaining food rescue and delivery operations nearly 20% above pre-pandemic levels. The Cohen Community Food Rescue Center has been designed to accommodate the growth of the organization's operational capacity to meet current and future increased levels of need.

In the spirit of being true civic partners, Ennead Architects and Rockwell Group wanted to convey a new, public-facing element for City Harvest beyond its notable distribution trucks, which is how they are usually identified by the public. Ennead opened up the building to the surrounding community, allowing the organization to rescue, store and distribute twice as much food across the five boroughs and embodying City Harvest's "neighbors helping neighbors" philosophy, bringing thoughtful, modern design to New York City's food systems. And Rockwell Group's event space and demonstration kitchen allows City Harvest to create a different kind of culture around food and dining—this one focused on ritual, education, and communal experiences. The building was also designed to showcase the artwork of locally-based artists representative of the communities across the city that City Harvest works in. In addition to artwork from Natasha May Platt, the Rescue Center features original artworks from seven New

York City artists including Cey Adams, Adrian Brandon, Sarah Brook, Jessica Dalrymple, Patti Grabel, Hektad, and Sui Park.

“City Harvest was born when a handful of New Yorkers stepped up to tackle food waste and hunger at the same time and help feed their neighbors in need,” **said City Harvest CEO Jilly Stephens.** “Forty years later, our food rescue operation has moved from the back of a station wagon to become a pillar of New York City, rescuing and delivering more than a billion pounds of food to our neighbors in need. City Harvest has always been about neighbors helping neighbors, and now the Cohen Community Food Rescue Center will allow us to serve even more of our fellow New Yorkers who are experiencing food insecurity by expanding our capabilities and scaling our operations even more efficiently. We are incredibly grateful to Steven and Alexandra Cohen, our partners, and countless supporters who made the Cohen Community Food Rescue Center possible. As the need for emergency food continues to stay far above pre-pandemic levels, our new, sustainable headquarters will help us meet the need in our city – one day, one meal, one New Yorker at a time.”

### **About Ennead Architects**

Renowned for its innovative cultural, educational, scientific, commercial, and civic building designs that authentically express the progressive missions of their institutions and enhance the vitality of the public realm, Ennead has been a leader in the design world for decades. The recipient of the prestigious Smithsonian Institution-Cooper Hewitt National Design Award, the AIANY Medal of Honor, and the National AIA Firm Award, as well as numerous design awards for individual buildings, Ennead has a body of work that is diverse in typology, scale, and location. The firm’s collaborative process is based in extensive research involving the analysis of context, program, public image, emerging technologies, and a commitment to sustainable solutions. [www.ennead.com](http://www.ennead.com).

### **About Rockwell Group**

Based in New York with offices in Los Angeles and Madrid, Rockwell Group is an interdisciplinary architecture and design firm that emphasizes innovation and thought leadership in every project. Founded in 1984, the 330-person firm merges performance and architecture to create award-winning experiences and built environments across the globe. Inspired by theater, technology and high-end craft, the firm creates a unique narrative for each project, ranging from restaurants, hotels and resorts to theaters, museum exhibitions and educational institutions, as well as transportation hubs, products, and Broadway sets. Honors include the AIANY President’s Award, the Cooper Hewitt National Design Award, the Presidential Design Award, a Tony Award, and two Emmy Awards. [www.rockwellgroup.com](http://www.rockwellgroup.com).

### **About City Harvest**

City Harvest is New York’s first and largest food rescue organization, helping to feed millions of New Yorkers who struggle to put meals on their tables. This year, we will rescue at least 75 million pounds of fresh, nutritious food and deliver it—free of charge—to more than 400 food pantries, soup kitchens, community partners and our own Mobile Markets across the five boroughs. We work alongside our community partners to boost community capacity, expand nutrition education, and strengthen local food systems. For 40 years, City Harvest has always been there to feed our city—one day, one meal, one New Yorker at a time. To learn more, please visit [cityharvest.org](http://cityharvest.org).

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