

# **BUILDINGENERGY BOSTON**

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## **Deconstruction and Reuse in Fitouts: A Case Study**

**Jan Abercrombie, CBT**


**Caroline Murray, Turner**

**Andrew Thompson, Boston Building Resources**

*Curated by Nicole Schuster and Tim Zumbo*

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**Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) | March 23, 2026**

The background of the slide is a dark blue-tinted photograph. It shows a person's hand holding a pen, poised to write on a set of architectural blueprints. The blueprints are spread out on a table, and various drafting tools like a compass and a ruler are visible. The overall scene is dimly lit, focusing on the act of design and construction.

# DECONSTRUCTION AND REUSE IN FITOUTS: A CASE STUDY

March 23, 2026

**cbt Turner**



**Jan Abercrombie**

Associate Principal  
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**Caroline Murray**

Regional Sustainability Manager  
Turner

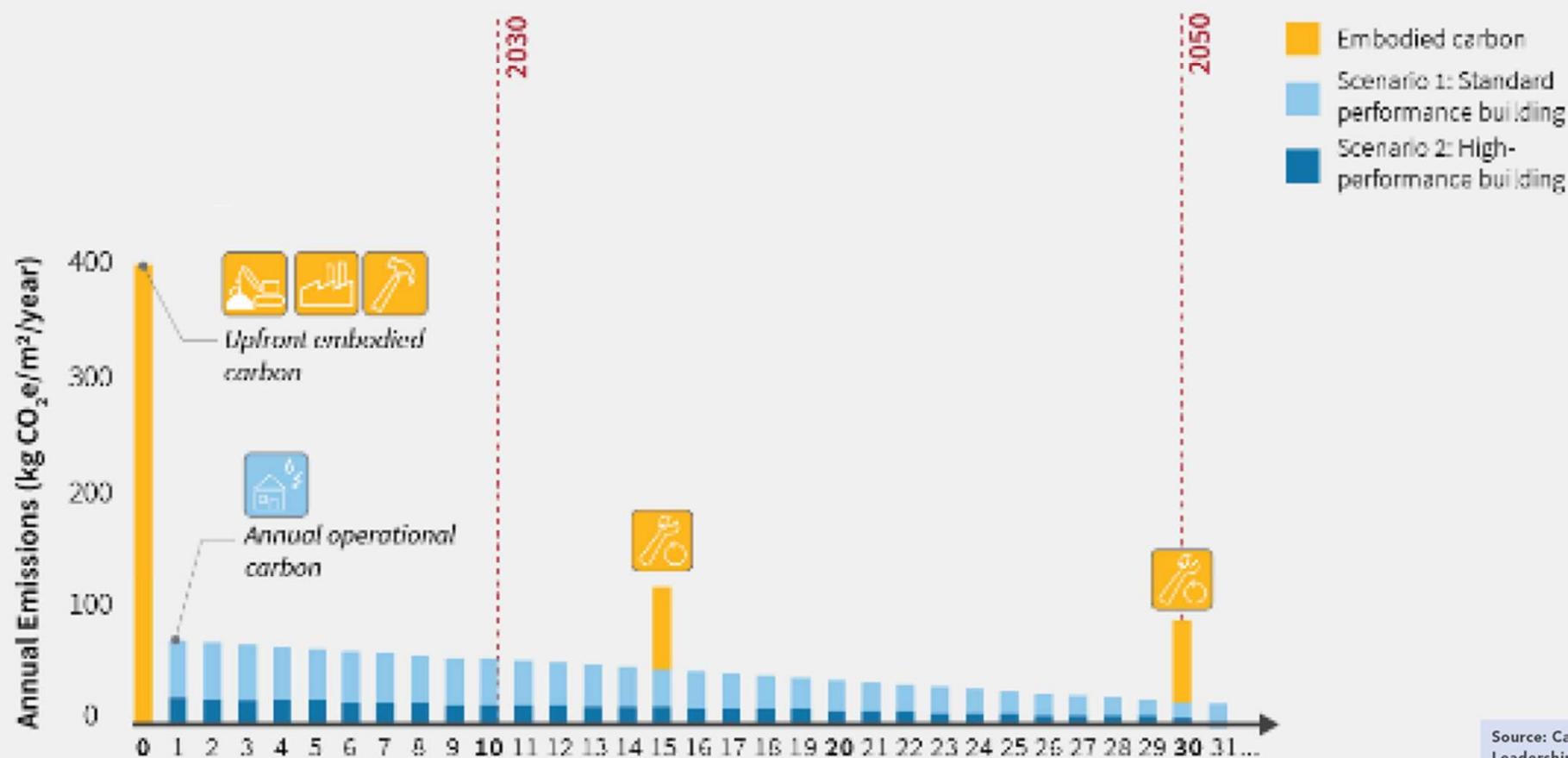
**MODERATOR**



**Andrew Thompson**

Executive Director  
Boston Building Resources

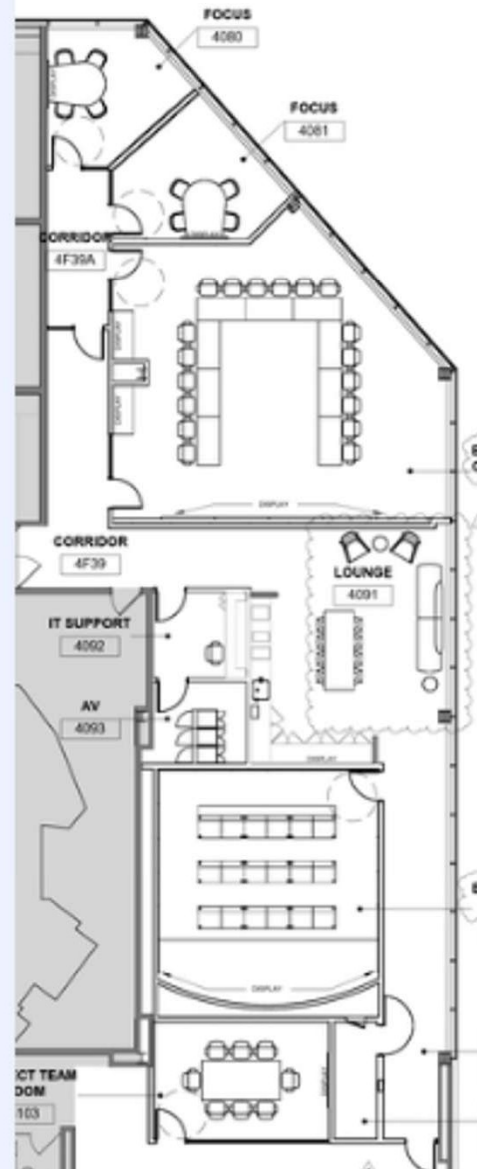
# Embodied Carbon



Source: Carbon Leadership Forum (CLF)

# Confidential Project Description: Background

- ~4,000 sq. ft.
- Located in Suburban Boston
- Tenant relocation from adjacent building
- Similar usage and headcount to former space
- Point-to-point move with no intermediate warehousing



# Pre-Demolition Assessment

- 360° capture for evaluation of materials/equipment
- Sharable file
- Saves time and resources
- Details audit (sizes, quantity, and quality)



# Meeting with Murray, Caroline H - (BOS)

2026-03-03 19:51 UTC

Recorded by

Murray, Caroline H -  
(BOS)

Organized by

Murray, Caroline H -  
(BOS)

**DECONSTRUCTED  
AND REUSED**

# Demountable Partitions

## ★ Win

- Material cost savings
- Zero lead time
- Plate glass is not recyclable in MA

## ✂ Why it Worked

- System manufactured for reconfiguration
- Designer buy-in for dimensional flexibility

## ⚠ The Catch

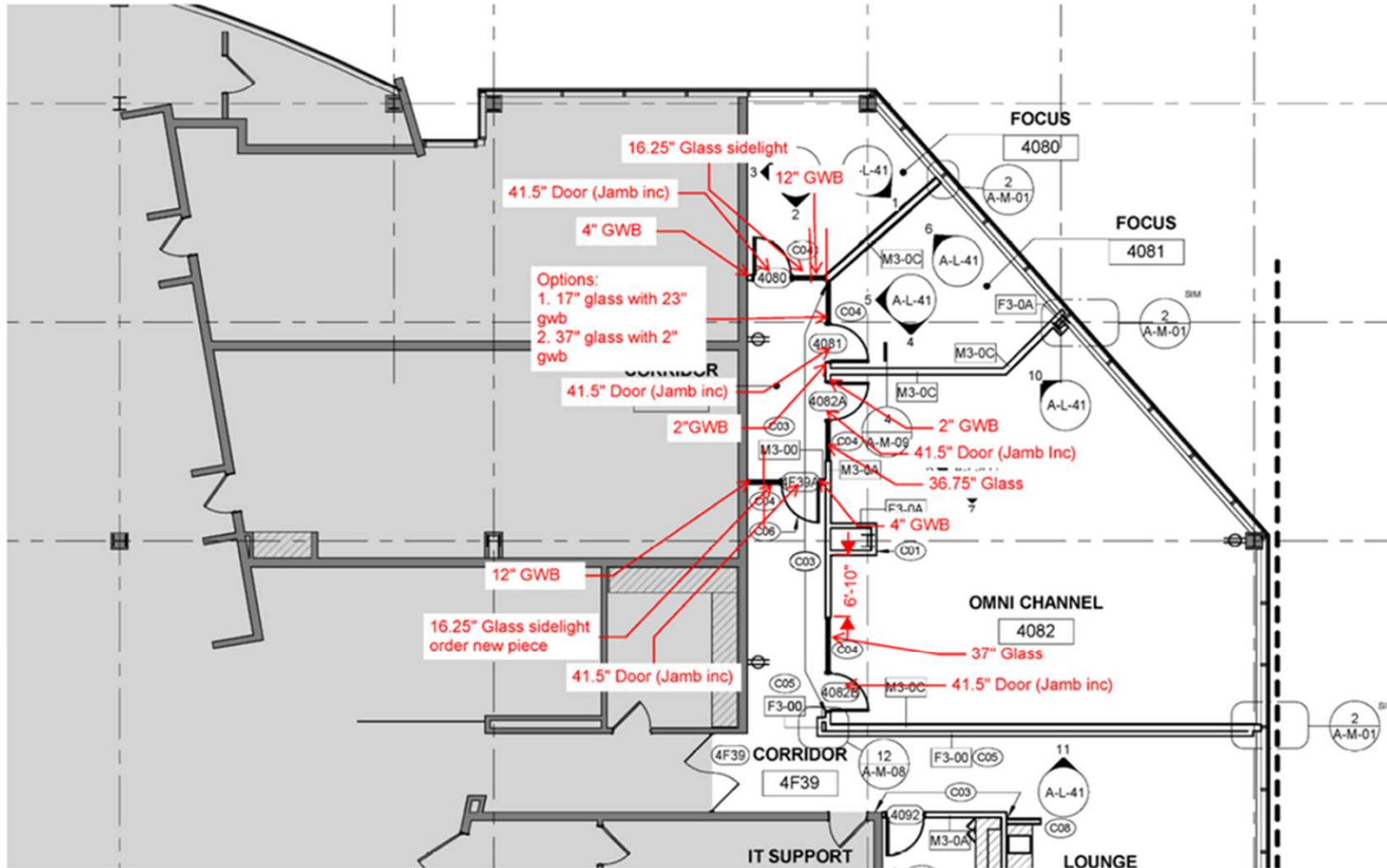
- Confirm components align with design intent

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Accurate audit of available components vs. final design
- On-site material storage, protection, and labeling



# Audit Available Materials



# Light Fixtures

## ★ Win

- Material cost savings
- Zero lead time
- Reuse of hard-to-recycle components

## ✂ Why it Worked

- Salvaged fixtures met design intent
- Trims compatible with existing ceilings

## ⚠ The Catch

- Driver and controls incompatibility

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Cost for repairs, adjustment, and reconfiguration
- Cost for replacement fixtures at prior location



# HVAC: Rooftop Unit

## ★ Win

- Material cost savings
- Zero lead time; new HVAC units would not have met schedule

## ✂ Why it Worked

- Saved money for more impactful areas

## ⚠ The Catch

- Equipment warranty forfeited
- Obsolete refrigerants

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Hygienic cleaning of reused equipment



# Back of House

## ★ Win

- Material cost savings
- Zero lead time
- Freed design, engineering, and fabrication effort for higher-impact work

## ✂ Why it Worked

- Client and designer buy-in on finishes for non-client facing areas

## ⚠ The Catch

- Minimal damage needs to be understood by client and design team

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Coordination of dimensions and blocking



# Furniture and AV Equipment

## ★ Win

- Material cost savings
- Zero lead time
- Reuse of hard-to-recycle AV equipment

## 🔧 Why it Worked

- Designer sized layout to accommodate
- Design team and client agreed to aesthetic of existing furniture

## ⚠️ The Catch

- None!

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Be flexible—don't get caught up in what is "on trend" Shiny-object syndrome (ha!)



# Carpet

## ★ Win

- Material cost savings
- Zero lead time
- Reuse of hard-to-recycle AV equipment
- Use of attic stock frees up storage space

## ✂ Why it Worked

- Client attic stock met design standards
- Designer sized layout to accommodate

## ⚠ The Catch

- None!

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Attic stock is material you already own



Diverted / Manufacturer Takebacks

# Carpet and Clean Gypsum

## ★ Win

- Circulatory: materials are back to the supply chain
- Dumpster cost savings

## 🔧 Why it Worked

- Massachusetts ban on landfill disposal of clean drywall
- Established carpet manufacturer takeback program

## ⚠️ The Catch

- Labor cost for separation & palletizing
- Site separation can congest jobsite

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Staff coordination with manufacturers



Demolished

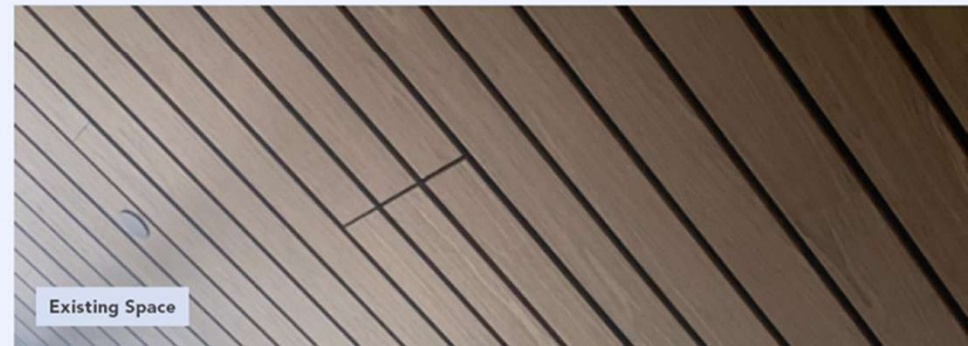
## Specialty Finishes

### ✂ Why it Didn't Work

- Limited secondary use or resale market for finishes with penetrations/cuts
- Not cost effective

### 🎯 Takeaway

- Assess quality and quantities early for potential reuse



Purchase New

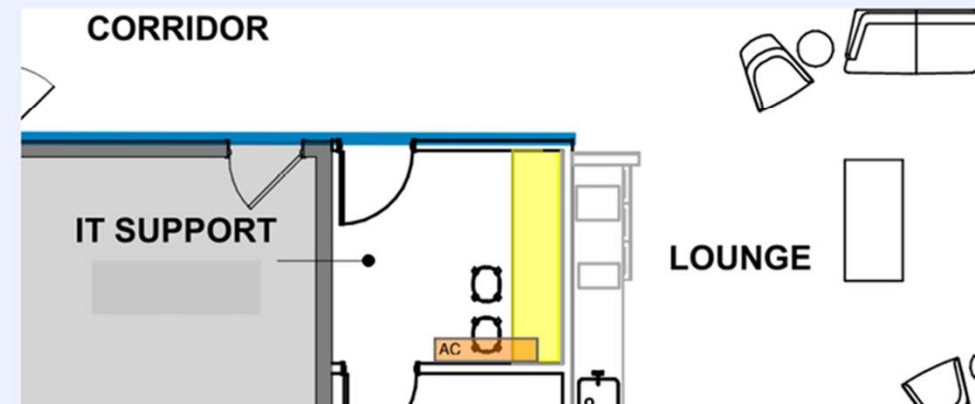
# Client Facing and Signature Spaces

## ✂ Why it Didn't Work

- Salvaged or recovered products did not meet design intent

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Understand client use & expectations



# Client Facing Areas

## ★ Win

- Got to spend the money where it counts the most

## ✂ Why It Worked

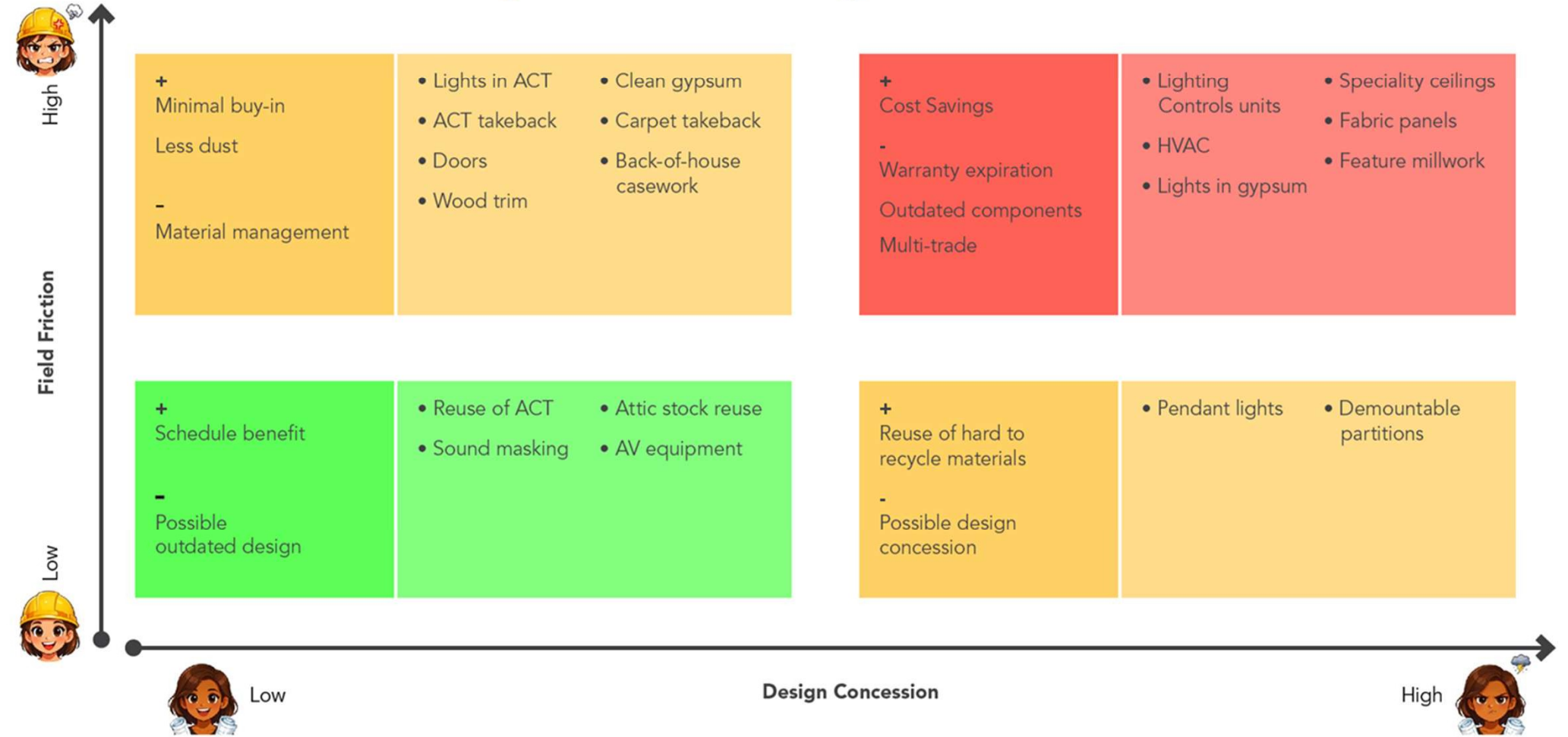
- Front of house/client location—some reuse here but got to spend the money on the most important items

## 🎯 Takeaway

- Able to give the client the space that they wanted without sacrificing aesthetics or budget



# Reuse Feasibility Matrix: Logistics and Schedule





**Q&A**

**cbt Turner**

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Please fill out an evaluation for this session



or: [nesea.org/eval](https://nesea.org/eval)

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