

Creation of a municipal institution "Veterans Center" in Shostka

INTRODUCTION.

The Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in 2014 and escalated into a full-scale invasion in 2022, has become one of the greatest challenges for Ukraine in recent decades. The military actions have affected all spheres of Ukrainian society, changing the political, social, economic, and psychological conditions of life, affecting every Ukrainian and leaving a mark on the consciousness of every citizen.

Today, Ukrainian society is undergoing complex transformation processes that involve broad segments of the population. The war in the country remains an important component of social transformations. This is especially noticeable among combatants, their families, and the communities where they work. Each of these soldiers bears the mark of combat experience, which significantly affects their psychophysiological state, social and professional adaptation, and interpersonal relationships with their families and loved ones.

The Russian-Ukrainian war has created a multi-level complex of factors that requires special attention and the creation of adaptive mechanisms for the resilience of the population and the state, which arise as a reaction to hybrid threats and new challenges.

Today, the state pays great attention to veteran policy. It is the veteran hub that, according to its functional purpose, will do its utmost to socialize veterans, provide advice and support in the implementation of initiatives, psychological, legal, medical assistance, etc. This is a supportive, friendly hub where qualified specialists will help solve veterans' problems.

PREREQUISITES. PROBLEMS.

One of the important aspects of the psychological consequences of war is the problem of adaptation of military personnel returning from the front to peaceful life. Combat veterans often encounter difficulties in returning to everyday social activity due to physical and psychological trauma.

War changes one's perception of the world and forms new patterns of behavior that are often difficult to integrate and can cause conflicts in peaceful life. Problems such as aggression, isolation, and the inability to cope with emotions and memories of combat make the reintegration of veterans into civil society a difficult process. These problems necessitate the creation of a space for the rehabilitation and social integration of veterans. Successful rehabilitation requires the creation of comprehensive services, including psychological assistance, job search support, and social adaptation through participation in community or educational programs.

GOAL. OBJECTIVES.

The adaptation of veterans is important and necessary for their successful return to civilian life, as war leads to psychological trauma and alienation from peaceful society.

The Veterans Center is a municipal facility created to provide service recipients, namely war veterans and their family members, with information and counseling support; legal assistance; psychological assistance; physical and sports rehabilitation; social adaptation; professional adaptation, including the development of digital literacy skills; and the organization of leisure and active recreation.

The project aims to achieve the following goals:

- ✓ raising awareness of opportunities and state guarantees for veterans;
- ✓ improving the level of support for veterans;
- ✓ physical and psychological resilience, socialization of veterans;
- ✓ reducing tension and social problems in the community;
- ✓ increasing trust in local government and authorities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION.

Today, every community is scaling up the state initiative to create Veteran Hubs for veterans and their families in their territories, which are currently effective communication platforms. These platforms facilitate information and advisory support for veterans and their family members, including practical assistance from specialists from relevant institutions in various fields.

Support for combatants and veterans is a very important issue for the Shostka community. Therefore, the focus of cooperation is on working on new opportunities and meeting the needs of veterans and their families, finding common ground in resolving the most important issues on the path to reintegration into the new Ukrainian society.

The Shostka city territorial community, with a population of 94,400, is the second largest in terms of population after the Sumy community. It is the center of the north of the Sumy region, where industry is developed and vocational and technical educational institutions are available, which contributes to education and employment.

At the same time, the large number of war veterans and fallen heroes, as well as their family members, in the Shostka community creates a high social demand for the creation of a veterans' space (center).

The target audience for services at the veterans' center:

persons who are registered and/or actually reside in the territory of the Shostka city territorial community, including internally displaced persons who are registered with the social policy department of the Shostka City Council, from among:

- ✓ war veterans, persons who have rendered special services to the Motherland, victims of the Revolution of Dignity, family members of such persons,
- ✓ family members of deceased war veterans, family members of deceased or missing defenders of Ukraine who disappeared under special circumstances;
- ✓ military personnel who took direct part in activities necessary to ensure the defense of Ukraine, protect the security of the population and the interests of the state, and were discharged from military service, in particular demobilized in accordance with the procedure established by law;
- ✓ military personnel who defend the independence, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of Ukraine, and members of their families. (Family members include spouses, minor children, including adopted children, adult children recognized as persons with disabilities of groups I and II, as well as parents).

Project implementation process, design

The Veterans Center should become an accessible place for citizens, a place for ideas, development, volunteering, and an attractive space for bringing people together.

Why it is important:

- ✓ We are creating a space where the experience of military personnel is valued, where they are treated with dignity and respect.
- ✓ We take a comprehensive approach to the space, providing a wide range of services in one place, which simplifies the process of obtaining the necessary assistance.
- ✓ We are creating a place for the community where veterans can communicate with people who have had similar experiences, which helps reduce feelings of loneliness and find support.

A location in the city center with the appropriate infrastructure, transport accessibility, and a park area was chosen for the veterans' space.

During the implementation of the project and the design of **the Veterans Center**, part of the existing ZIRKA building at 38 Svobody Street in Shostka, Shostka District, Sumy Region, will be renovated to house the veterans' hub, which will become a magnet for residents of the Shostka community and Shostka District.

The design task is to preserve the character and structure of the building and its interior elements while updating them in line with modern trends.

The space is designed according to the open space principle. It provides for the placement of various functional areas with a minimum of partitions, which promotes communication and efficient use of space. It is important to divide the space into functional areas for work, rest, and meetings using furniture, small partitions, or color schemes, as well as to provide enough space for comfortable movement.

Barrier-free access and orientation aids for people with reduced mobility are provided.

The layout of the veterans' center is connected to the outdoor space. An open terrace, sports and children's playgrounds, parking space for private vehicles, and landscaping are planned.

The Veterans Center will be equipped with an alternative power source, namely a rooftop solar power plant. This can serve as a "point of resilience" for community residents.

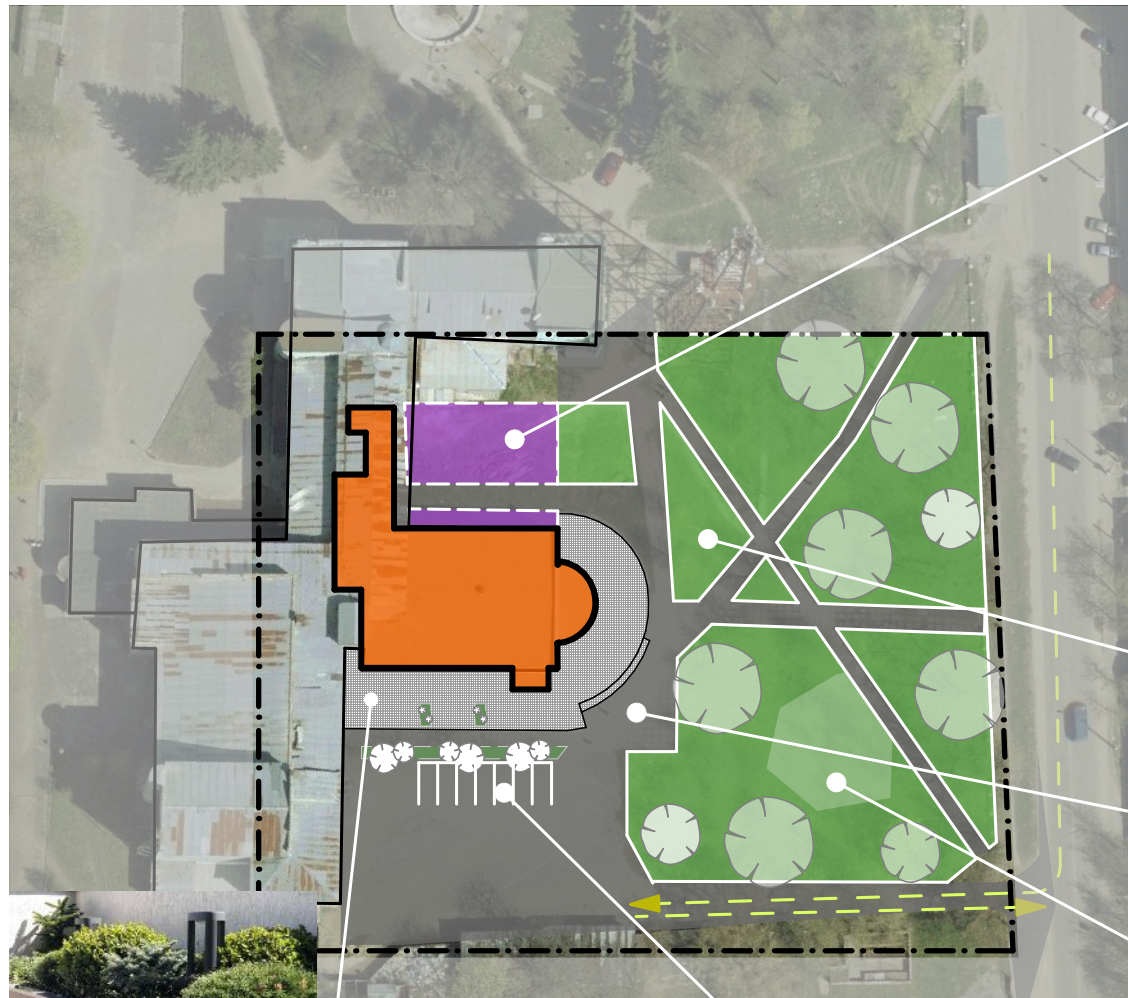
The Veterans Center can be used in the future as a space for meetings, conferences, events, concerts, exhibitions, etc.

The total estimated cost of the reconstruction of the facility is 1,9 million euros.

Existing condition. Photofixation



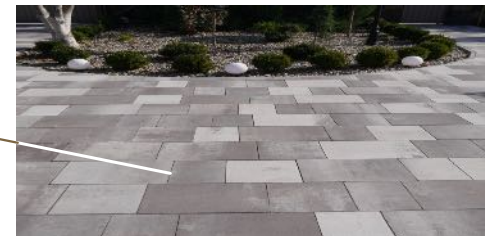
Master plan scheme



Sports ground area
with exercise
equipment



Places to relax



playgrounds



Terrace for summer
relaxation

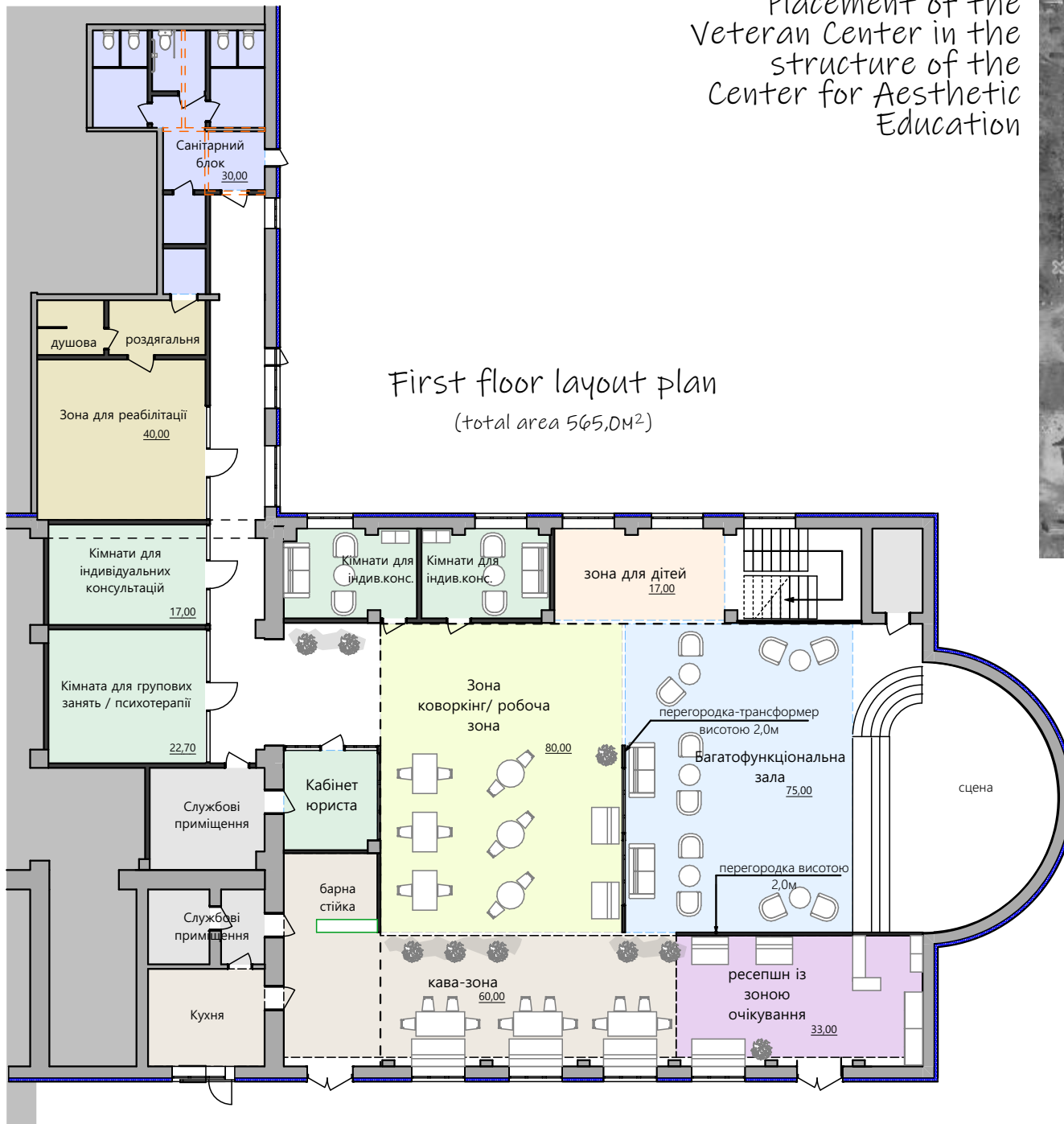
Parking spaces



Placement of the Veteran Center in the structure of the Center for Aesthetic Education



First floor layout plan
(total area 565,0M²)

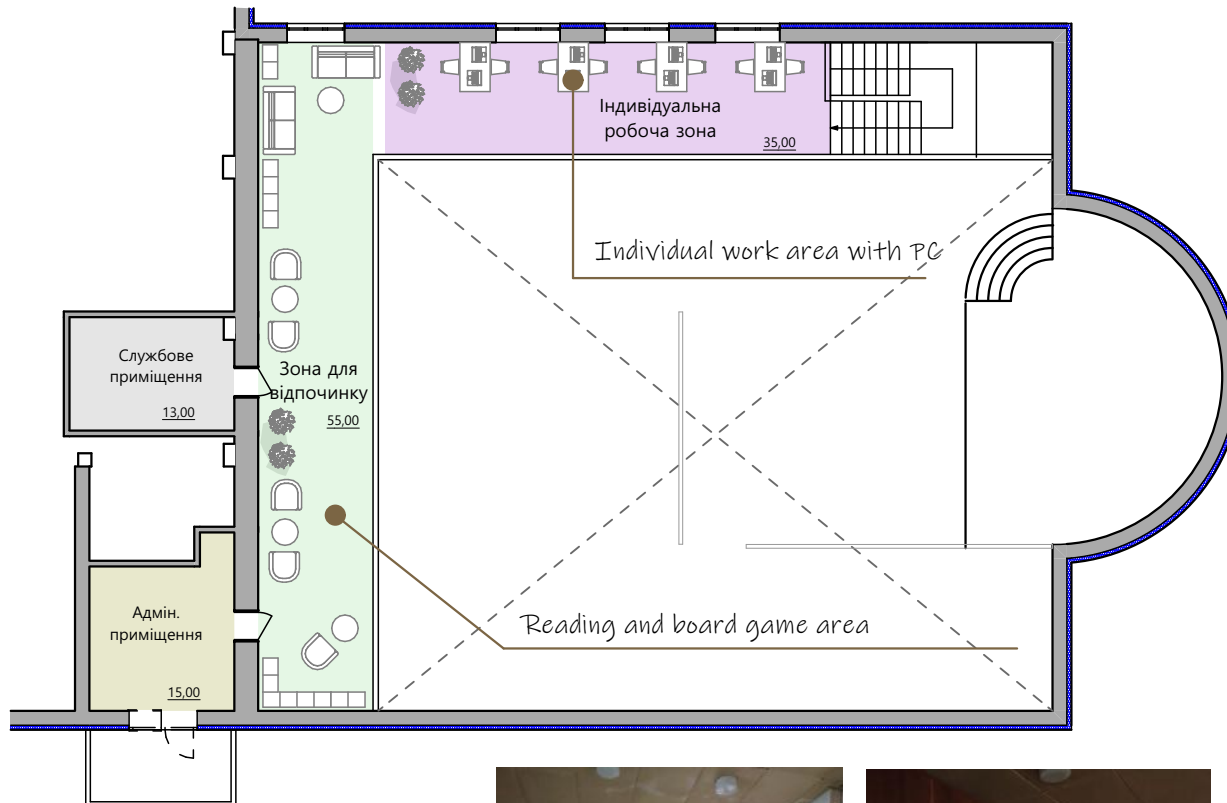


Zoning:

- Reception with waiting area
- Coworking and consulting area
- Service area
- Lounge area
- Multifunctional hall
- Children's area
- Rehabilitation / sports area
- Sanitary and hygienic premises
- Administrative Facilities

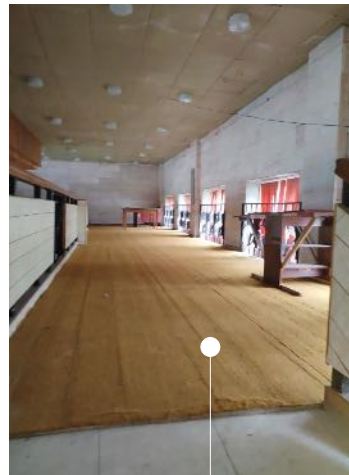
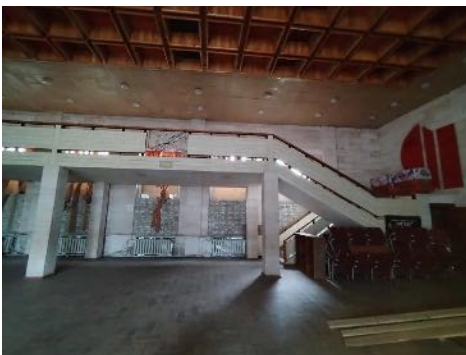
Balcony layout

(total area 125,0m²)



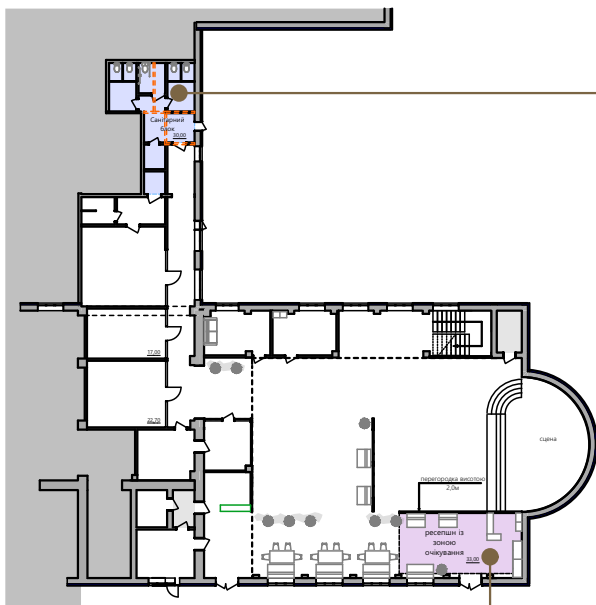
The reading area on the balcony is the perfect place for peace, reflection and leisure. It allows veterans to retreat with a book, work or simply relax, observing the activity below, but remaining in silence.

Interior proposals



before reconstruction

after reconstruction



Sanitary and hygienic premises

The Placement of the Reception and Waiting Area within the Planning Structure of the Veteran Center



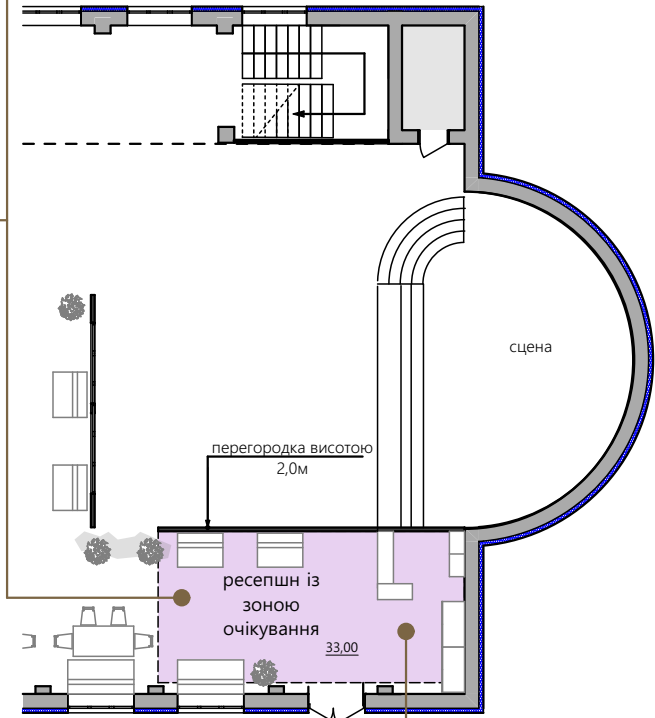
Interior proposals

Reception

Meeting

Coordination

Initial Information



Interior proposals

Placement of the multifunctional hall area in the planning structure of the Veterans Center



after reconstruction

to create a cozy, warm space for the comfortable stay of veterans and their families

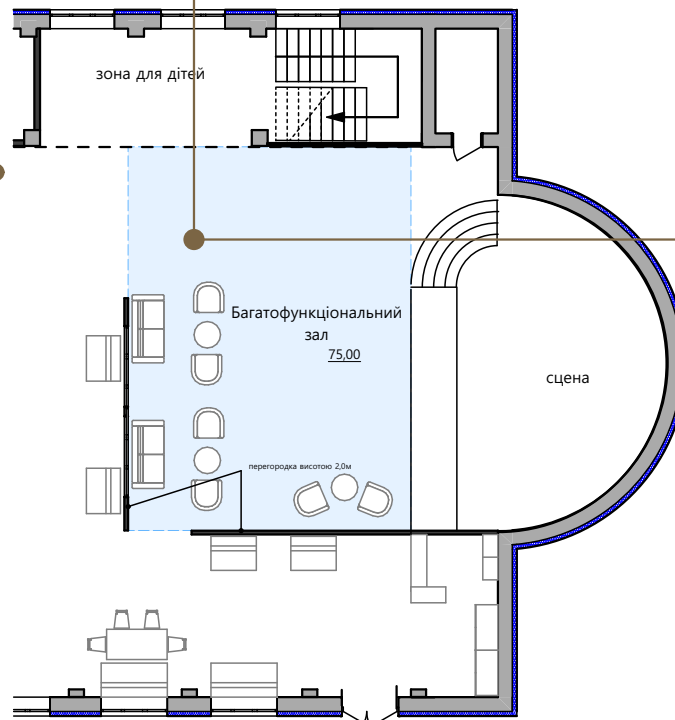
preservation (restoration) of elements of the existing interior and their improvement

Multifunctional hall (75,0M²)

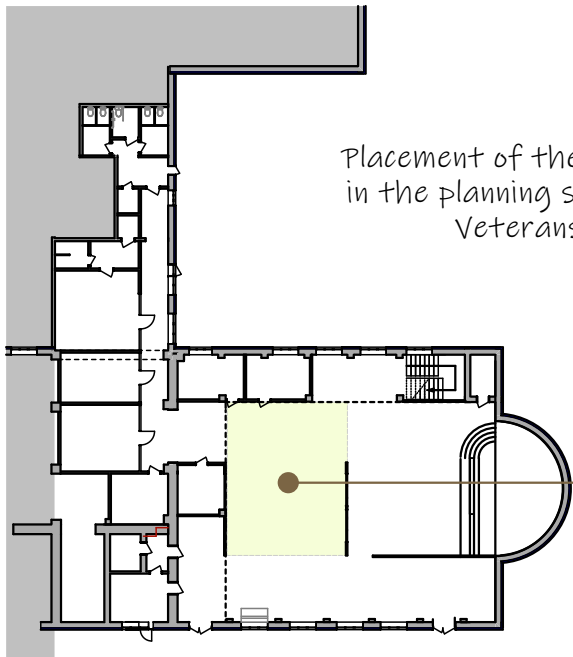
- trainings
- presentations
- public meetings
- exhibitions
- film screenings
- celebrations

mobile furniture for various formats (chair+table+modular armchairs, transforming partition, etc.)

- modern equipment



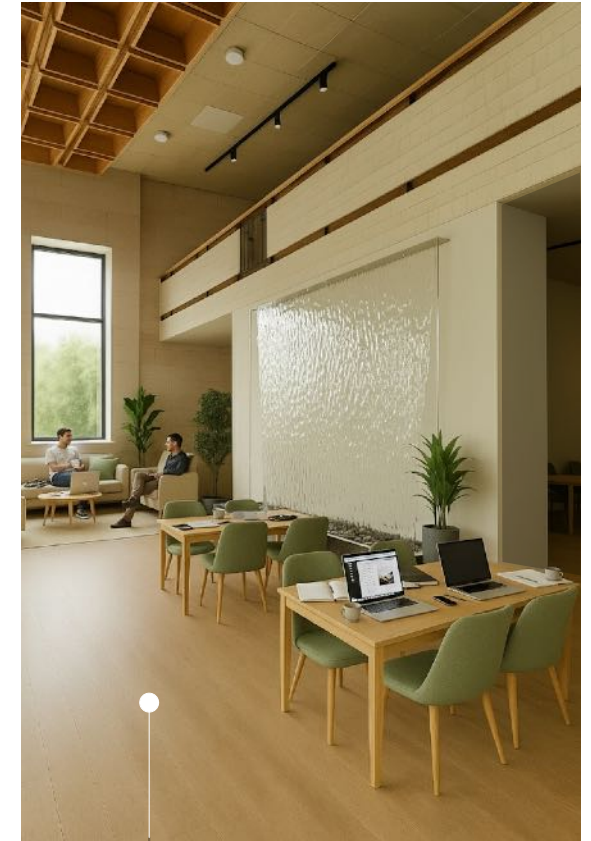
before reconstruction



Placement of the coworking area
in the planning structure of the
Veterans Center



Interior
proposals

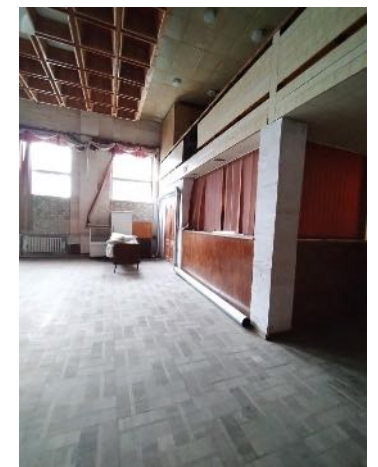
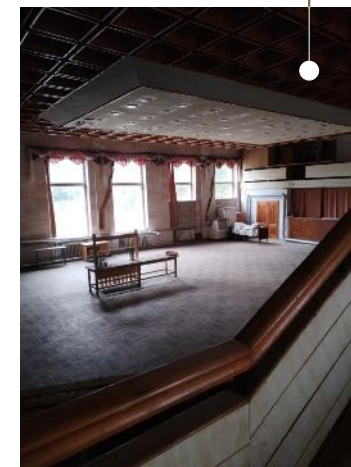
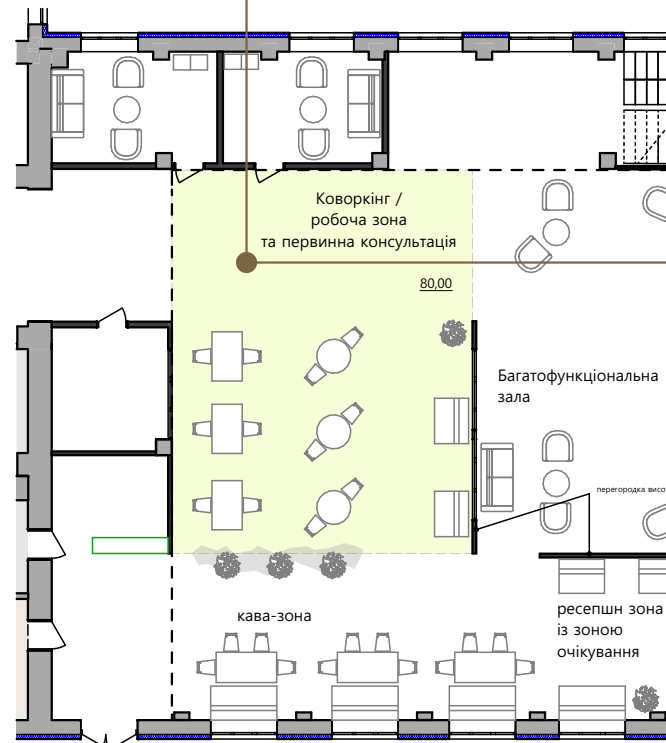


after reconstruction

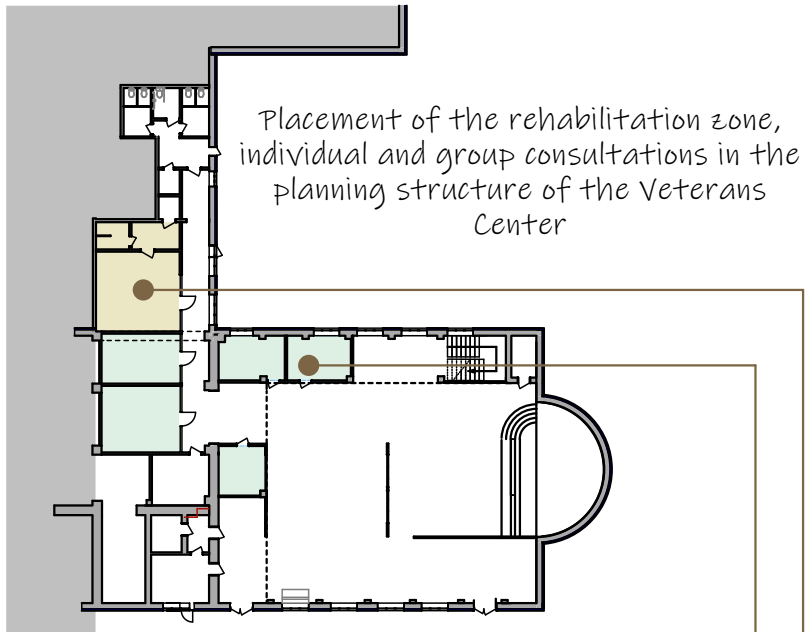
Coworking / work area

Coworking creates access to a
comfortable space with internet,
technology, and office amenities

The shared space promotes
networking between veterans, their
families, and local activists



before reconstruction



Rooms for individual consultations



Separate offices for psychologists, lawyers, social workers

Cozy, with good soundproofing

after reconstruction

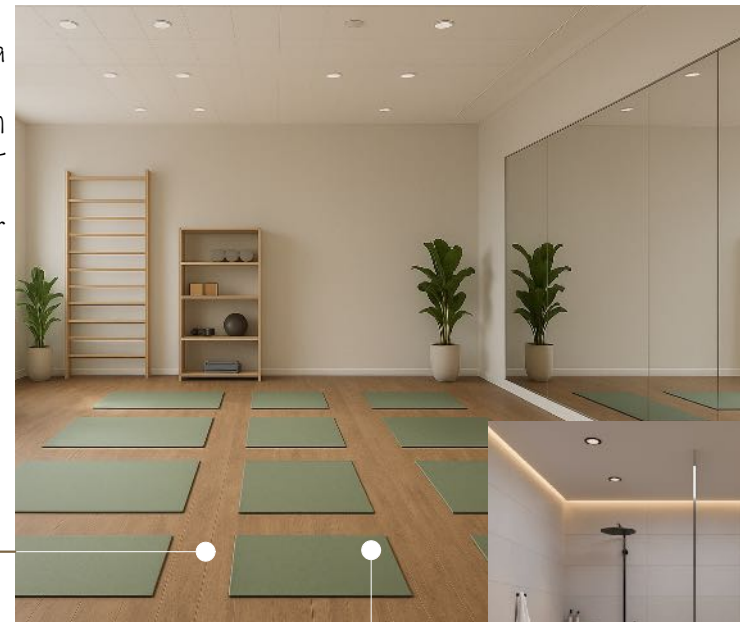
Interior proposals

Small gym or yoga

Can be equipped with rehabilitation equipment

Locker room with shower

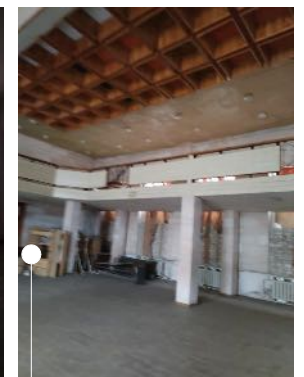
Rehabilitation/physical activity room (optional)



after reconstruction



before reconstruction



before reconstruction



VRRS system/ Система VRRS

VRRS Virtual Reality System for Intensive Clinical Use for motor, static and dynamic postural and cardiorespiratory rehabilitation

Equipment



Upper limb rehabilitation device/
Апарат для реабілітації верхніх кінцівок

The device is designed to test the range of motion of the upper extremities, active training of joint movements and cognitive training after injuries

The game approach makes the training process more attractive and interesting, which helps maintain a high level of motivation