



# City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services



Vivo workstations with low, glass-topped frames and an assortment of Meridian storage accessories offered several departments from the City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services excellent function at a good price point. Private offices were furnished in a combination of Vivo and Meridian product. Mirra and Caper chairs are standards for task and guest seating.

**GOVERNMENT;  
PORTLAND, OREGON**

**Topic:**

*Environments  
Health  
Sustainability*

**Application:**

*Collaboration/Team  
Open Office  
Private Office*

**Project Scope:**

*48 workstations; 8,461 square feet*

**Herman Miller Product:**

*Vivo® Interiors (forerunner to  
Canvas Office Landscape™)  
Caper® Chairs  
Mirra® Chairs  
Avive® Table Collection  
Meridian® Bookcases  
Meridian Pedestals  
Meridian Stackable Lateral Files  
Meridian Storage Towers  
The Intersect® Portfolio*

**Year Completed:**

*2008*



Once city water is flushed down the drain, the City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) takes it from there. The bureau manages the city's storm and sanitary sewers and wastewater treatment plants; it oversees industrial runoff; and it protects Portland's many watersheds. It's a big job, and with over 400 employees in its main location, the bureau had run out of space. So, a new space was leased, and several departments were slated to move.

The new location, however, had a rectangular floorplate that would only awkwardly accommodate the bureau's standard 8-foot by 8-foot Ethospace workstations. "We wanted to decrease the footprint of the workstations and yet make them more functional," says Scott Turpen, facilities/administrative services manager, BES. "Our designer suggested that we consider Vivo (the forerunner to Canvas Office Landscape) product to meet our space requirements."

Vivo would allow the bureau to retain the aesthetic of a frame-and-tile system, yet it would offer employees, who not only had to move, but who were also moving into smaller workstations, a clean, new look and spacious feel. "Vivo looks more like furniture," says Linda Czopek, principal, Czopek & Erdenberger, Inc. "The feet make it float, and the frames are a good dimension—thinner yet still substantial."

Low frames topped with glass tiles enhance the airy look and allow light to circulate through the interior. Although smaller, the workstations are equipped with ample storage, including overhead shelves, a Meridian bookcase, cushion-top pedestal file, and tower. They also offer a secondary and a primary About Face™ work surface in a white Formcoat® finish with a waterfall edge for ergonomic comfort.

Indeed, health and safety as well as environmental stewardship are front-and-center concerns for the City of Portland, and the BES was able to address both in this location. Because the bureau has a high level of churn, adjusting workstation heights for each new occupant had been an ongoing budgetary drain, costing the department some \$25,000 per year. By placing all primary Vivo work surfaces on electric height-adjustable bases from Baker Manufacturing, a Herman Miller alliance partner, the bureau eliminated that line item.

"The payback for the height-adjustable work surfaces will be relatively quick," says Mr.

[left] An informal space for employees to gather is furnished with chairs with a tablet arm from the Brandrud Round Up series. Three-high Meridian lateral files create a cozy boundary.

[right] This private office features a "work wall" furnished with Vivo Interiors, a Meridian pedestal file, a Mirra task chair and Caper guest seating. The Vivo peninsula is mounted on a Baker height-adjustable table base for sit-to-stand ergonomic comfort.



Turpen. "Then, the incremental cost difference between a hand-crank and electric was a no-brainer." Baker height-adjustable bases can mount on virtually any Herman Miller table or work surface as standard product, not a special order. Plus, "there's minimal obstruction under the work surface," says Designer Heather Dawson, Workplace Resource, a Herman Miller dealer. "You can place a pedestal file there without clearance issues."

As with most Herman Miller product, Vivo is GREENGUARD® certified, and it is manufactured with 36 percent recycled content. Formcoat work surfaces reduce off-gassing, and the bureau's workstations also utilize fabric tiles covered in compostable, bio-based Kira material.

The Mirra chair was already the bureau's go-to choice for users with ergonomic issues, and it is the standard task chair in this location. Caper chairs provide guest, conference, and lunchroom seating. "Caper chairs are lightweight and comfortable," says Scott Fraunfelder, Workplace Resource Account Manager. "They hit a great price point, and they're indestructible."

A creative blend of products in private offices offers good function along with some variety and personal choice. One office typical, for example, has a "work wall" that may contain a Vivo work surface, sliding door overheads, a Meridian tower, lateral file, and a cushion-top pedestal file. A mobile, height-adjustable Avive Bean-Shaped table provides an additional work surface or meeting space. Another typical offers a Vivo work surface with a height-adjustable peninsula.

A multi-use space in the entry is furnished with a one-high Meridian Stackable Lateral file for bench seating and three-high files with a common top. An easel from the Intersect Portfolio and lounge seating from Brandrud, a Herman Miller company, create an attractive, informal space to gather, meet, or lay out drawings.

The overall effect in the new location is clean, crisp, and light. The bureau chose highly functional, well-equipped, and pleasant workstations that came in at a very good price. "Vivo has good function and good value," says Mr. Turpen. "My people are very happy, and they're living in less square footage than they were before."

[left] Vivo workstations with low frames and glass tiles enhance the facility's light, clean aesthetic. A Meridian tower provides ample storage.

[right] A configuration of Meridian Stackable Lateral files combine storage with guest seating in this informal gathering area. Brandrud chairs on casters add mobile comfort to the space.

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