SUCCESSFUL RESTAURANT DESIGN

SECOND EDITION

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MANAGER

The manager of the restaurant can add important operational insight to the design process. Managers are frequently brought on board during the construction process and may be called on to act as the owner's representative and to interface with the project team leader on an ongoing basis. It is important for them to understand the overall design scheme and to offer input into that scheme during the planning phase. Most managers carry with them a history of restaurant layout and design experiences that can provide invaluable information to the designers. Unlike the chef, the manager looks at the design primarily from a front-of-the-house perspective. He should be knowledgeable about design issues that can improve market share, internal controls, safety, and sanitation throughout the operation.

FOODSERVICE CONSULTANT

The foodservice consultant designs the back-of-the-house operation and provides space layouts, mechanical and electrical diagrams, and equipment specifications. Firms range from a single individual to large companies with offices around the world. The scope of services may include menu planning, equipment purchasing, engineering evaluations, and management advisory services such as feasibility studies. Large firms, whose staffs include in-house architectural designers and who maintain a network of outside consultants, often provide team leadership. As leader, the foodservice consultant assists the owner in clarifying the concept for the restaurant, helps determine the feasibility of that concept within a given marketplace, and may even be involved in site selection.

Methods of charging include a flat fee based on hourly rates or a percentage of the total project cost. Some equipment supply houses have kitchen design experts on staff who provide design services, but these firms make money primarily by selling equipment.

INTERIOR DESIGNER

The interior designer is responsible for the layout and decor of the restaurant's public spaces. Like the foodservice consultant, design firms vary in size and scope of services. In general, designers develop floorplans, elevations, renderings, reflected ceiling plans, lighting plans, and furniture and accessory plans. They provide color schemes, material and decorative specifications, and all furnishing specifications. Some purchase as well as specify furnishings.

Today, increasing numbers of designers have become restaurant design specialists and take on the role of team leader. In this capacity, they may supervise a total design package from concept development to menu graphics to exterior signage to kitchen design. Other designers take on the role of team leader only for the front of the house. Most interior designers have special training or education in interior design or architecture and, in many cases, belong to the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) or other professional organizations (Table 2.1).

Interior design fees are based on a percentage of project cost, hourly con-
TABLE 2.1. Design, Architecture, and Restaurant Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>American Society of Interior Designers (ASID)</td>
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<td>American Institute of Architects (AIA)</td>
<td>aiaonline.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Restaurant Association (NRA)</td>
<td>restaurant.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA)</td>
<td>telepath.com/edra/home.html</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Interior Design Association (IIDA)</td>
<td>iida.com</td>
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<td>Interior Design Educators Council, Inc. (IDEC)</td>
<td>idec.org</td>
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<td>American Lighting Association (ALA)</td>
<td>americanlightingassoc.com</td>
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<td>Foodservice Consultants Society International (FCSI)</td>
<td>fcsi.org</td>
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<td>International Furnishings and Design Association (IFDA)</td>
<td>iflda.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color Association of the United States</td>
<td>colorassociation.com</td>
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<td>Interior Designers Association (IDA)</td>
<td>ida.org.sg</td>
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<td>American Institute of Graphic Artists (AIGA)</td>
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resulting rates, or square-foot cost. If purchasing services are provided, the design firm may charge a markup on furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) purchases.

ARCHITECT

Traditionally, the role of the architect was confined to the building structure and exterior design. Over the past few decades, however, most architectural firms have expanded their practice to include interior design as well. Construction plans must be certified by a licensed architect whenever a building permit for renovation or new construction is required. Restaurants designed from the ground up or facilities that require complex redesign of interior architecture, HVAC, or electrical systems may also require the services of an architectural firm.

Architectural input is particularly important when the interior design calls for uncommon structural elements. For example, a grand staircase that flares in two directions as it reaches a second floor is best designed by an architect. If the staircase is to be supported with wires that hang from the floor above, the plans must consider the load of the staircase on both the first and the second floor. While a designer can conceptualize such a staircase, the architect has the expertise to ensure it is safe to use.

More frequently, however, the roles of architect and interior designer are interchangeable. In these cases, which represent the majority of projects today, one individual or firm functions as restaurant designer. Architectural firms often keep interior designers on staff, and interior design firms often keep architects on staff.

The scope of services and methods of charging for an architectural firm whose practice includes restaurant design are basically the same as those of an interior design firm. The differences between the two often lie in design orientation and, at times, technical expertise in specific areas. Architects, for example, tend to deal with space, form, and volume rather than with surface decoration. Interior designers may be more knowledgeable about color and accessories.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR

General contractors (GCs) are crucial members of the design team. All too often, however, they are not properly recognized for the important role they play. It is the GC who is ultimately charged with converting the architects' and designers' drawings into bricks and mortar.

If the GC is involved with the project during the design phase, difficult or impossible structural forms can be pointed out. For example, if a restaurant design includes curved walls and ceilings, the GC can identify spots where creating such curved elements will substantially increase the cost of construction. She might also point out important timing elements during the construction phase. For example, when building a second-floor kitchen space, she might recommend that the installation of one exterior window be delayed until all of the oversized pieces of kitchen equipment are brought in. While access through a window space is not ideal, the GC might opt for this solution, having experienced the impossibility of moving a large piece of equipment up a narrow staircase. In the long run, this knowledge improves the final execution of the project and may also lead to tighter control over the construction budget.

The GC is frequently chosen by a bid process, but the same care given to the selection of other design team members should be extended. Both the quality and the cost of the GC's work greatly affect the success of the project. As with other members of the team, it's important to take a close look at the scope and quality of the GC's potential contribution before making a final selection.

The general contractor heads a team of subcontractors who together build the restaurant. In some cases, investigating the work of the subcontractors could also be important. The team leader should find out if the contractor will use union or non-union workers. For example, consider a restaurateur who rents ground-floor space in a new high-rise where building construction is done by workers from a number of unions. If the chosen subcontractor does not use union workers, work-site difficulties could lead to construction delays.

ENGINEERS

Three types of engineers are generally involved in a restaurant design: structural, mechanical, and electrical. They may be on the staff of an architectural firm but, more often, they are called in from private engineering firms as needed. Structural engineers are retained both for renovations and new construction to deal with problems involving the structural integrity of the building. For example, a structural engineer would provide input about the suspended staircase mentioned earlier. Mechanical engineers handle mechanical systems such as HVAC and work on pumping, plumbing, and elevator systems. Electrical engineers determine the amount of electricity needed for an operation and how best to distribute it. They are often called on early on a job to determine the cost of new service or expanded service.

LIGHTING DESIGNERS

Lighting designers are often retained by the restaurant designer to highlight special features of the restaurant, deal with technical lighting problems, or program a computerized illumination system. Because lighting plays such an impor-
Space Planning: The Program

The first concrete planning for a restaurant design should begin only after the team members have thoroughly analyzed the market and have determined type of restaurant, style of service, concept, systems to be utilized, and the other factors outlined earlier. Then the data are organized into a design program that draws on the following considerations.

FLOW

An important goal of the design process is to optimize flow in terms of distance, volume, speed, and direction. Typically, flow patterns are charted for customers, employees, food, tableware, and service. Flow patterns must be considered carefully at the start of design programming.

DISTANCE

For customers, distance from a parking space to the front door of a restaurant can be critical. Where the parking lot of a large restaurant covers an acre or more of land, a drop-off area or facilities for valet parking should be considered.

Many spatial relationships are important, such as the distance from the dining tables to the rest rooms. If the rest rooms are located down a long corridor or on another floor, they will be inconvenient for customers and could lead to delays in service. In an entertainment restaurant, the distance from the tables to the animatronic elements should be considered because the greater the distance, the less desirable the seat.

From a service staff perspective, the distance from the kitchen to each of the tables is important. When the kitchen and dining spaces are on separate floors, distance becomes a particular concern. In such cases (and in large single-floor restaurants), service stations with a full backup of supplies are essential. Distance to an order-entry station is also important to consider. For optimum efficiency in a busy restaurant, a ratio of 22 seats to a service station—fully stocked with backup dinnerware, water, and ice—is ideal.

Distance from the back to the front of the house and vice versa is a crucial component of the floorplan. For example, a display kitchen can shorten the flow of food from the range to the guest (Figure 2.2), but if the service staff is forced to return to the back of the house to pick up salads, the efficiency of the open kitchen is lost.
In many restaurants with display kitchens, the preparation for the hot foods is done in the back of the house. The food is then brought to the display kitchen, where cooking is performed within view of the customers. Artfully arranged salads and desserts are also visible to patrons and located within easy reach of the service staff. Servers need not enter the back-of-the-house kitchen at all during service time. Interestingly, this setup is similar to the flow patterns in most fast-food burger operations and diners with counter service, where these functions are performed as close to the customer as possible in order to speed the flow of food. In fancier restaurants with display kitchens, cooking is kept close to the customers so they can watch the drama of food preparation.

A well-designed kitchen not only facilitates the transfer of food from the storage areas to the customer but also the return flow of dirty dishes from dining room to kitchen. Intuitively, positioning the dish return area just inside the return door to the kitchen minimizes the distance that dirty dishes must be carried. However, in some cases, the dish area is pushed deeper inside the kitchen to minimize the sound that carries from this area to the dining spaces.

**Volume of Business**

Initially, volume projections indicate the appropriate size of a given dining area. However, looking only at the overall volume of business over the course of a day can be misleading. A corporate cafeteria, for example, must be designed to handle a large volume of traffic during a short lunch period, so seating and serving areas have to be larger than if the service were extended over three hours. Another instance of misleading volume projections is a fast-food operation on an interstate highway. Here, volume projections far exceed seating requirements because many customers take food back to their cars rather than use the restaurant's seating area. However, volume of business does dictate extra rest room space for travelers who take out food or use rest rooms without buying food.

The volume of business must also be considered when planning the parking areas of a restaurant. Local building codes frequently define the required number of spaces based on the number of seats in the restaurant. The codes may also affect the design of ingress and egress from the parking lot and mandate the installation of expensive traffic lights.

**Speed of Service**

The faster the service, the more the restaurant depends on a well-designed floorplan. Fast-food operations and cafeterias should be laid out so that each area of the restaurant, all food and supplies, and every piece of equipment helps maximize speed. These fast-paced operations should have clearly defined, short lines of flow that do not cross.

Fast-food drive-through operations are similarly dependent on the speed of service. It may make sense for the design to incorporate separate ordering, cashiering, and order pickup stations. In one scenario, a guest places an order, moves forward to a second station to pay, then proceeds to a third station to pick
it up. These stop-and-go steps keep customers engaged rather than thinking about how long they have to wait.

Conversely, the mannered service in a fine restaurant is an expected part of the leisurely dining experience, and placement of support equipment is not as important as in high-speed operations. For aesthetic reasons, management might even decide to eliminate service stations from the dining room. Although this lengthens the distance servers travel when resetting tables, the decision could be acceptable in establishments where diners expect a lengthy, slow-paced meal.

**DIRECTION**

The ideal layout creates a straight-line flow that is unidirectional, with no crossing flow patterns. Such a design may prove impossible but should be aimed for in the planning process.

Directional flow issues begin in the parking lot when guests look for a parking space. A herringbone parking space design helps define flow patterns in a way that straight-in parking does not. Once inside the restaurant, elements should flow logically so that guests need not retrace their steps (Figure 2.3). For example, the reception stand should allow people to check in and then move on to either the bar or the dining room without retracing their steps.

In the back of the house, the flow should move—as much as possible—in a straight line all the way from the receiving dock to the server pickup station. The waitstaff should be able to take the food directly to the guests and eventually bring dirty dishes and soiled table linen directly back to a cleanup area.

**THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was passed to provide access for people with physical challenges to many environments. One such environment is the restaurant, which falls under Title III: Public Accommodations. The most visible result of the ADA has been the inclusion of handicapped-accessible rest room facilities. However, many other ADA design elements must be incorporated in
new or modified restaurants. In 1991, the National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) funded ten Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC) throughout the United States to offer information on ADA compliance. In addition, ADA consulting specialists can be retained to ensure that any design scheme complies with ADA requirements. As a guide, the following information was adapted from the Great Plains DBTAC, on the Web at ada-project.org/universal.htm.

**TITLE III: PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

Title III covers businesses and nonprofit service providers that are public accommodations. Public accommodations are private entities who own, lease, lease to, or operate facilities such as restaurants.

Public accommodations must comply with basic nondiscrimination requirements that prohibit exclusion, segregation, and unequal treatment. They also must comply with specific requirements related to architectural standards for new and altered buildings; reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures; effective communication with people with hearing, vision, or speech disabilities; and other access requirements. Additionally, public accommodations must remove barriers in existing buildings where it is easy to do so without much difficulty or expense, given the public accommodation’s resources.

To view the full text of the Title III Technical Assistance Manual, go to www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/taman3.html. To view the 1994 Supplement to Title III, go to www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/taman3up.html.

Failure to consider the needs of all physically challenged persons can lead to litigation by the Justice Department. In several instances, restaurateurs were forced to close their establishments because it was cost-prohibitive to make the facilities accessible. It is important to note that ADA regulations are frequently updated, so the design team should stay up to date on current and pending changes to the basic requirements.

Another ADA factor is the need to make changes to accommodate physically challenged employees. Fast-food restaurants that hire table cleaners who use a wheelchair will need increased space between the tables. Sight-impaired employees working in the dish area may need specially designed dish racks or audible temperature readouts. In both of these cases, minimal design modifications will enable the facility to comply with ADA.

**Moving Through the Spaces**

With an understanding of the importance that flow plays in a restaurant design, it is time to start the space planning process. Space planning begins with looking at the parts that make up the whole of a restaurant. These parts are not the chairs or the artwork or any of the other decor items. Rather, they consist of the spatial areas that together comprise the total front and back of the house. Each restaurant type requires its own specific design elements in these areas. The following discussion looks at spatial requirements for five major service systems.
the order, assembles it, and handles money transactions. An additional advantage of the single-line queue is that it limits the number of registers and amount of front counterspace needed.

**Tableservice Entry Areas** On average, table-service restaurants have small entry areas that function as pass-through spaces to the dining room. In some establishments, a coatroom is tucked into a corner of the entry area. In informal restaurants, the entry space often includes a dual-purpose host and cashier station. Upscale restaurants have a maître d’ station where guests check in before being led to their table, but the station does not include cash-handling functions. The check-in station must be close enough to the front door so that it can be easily seen, but far enough away so that waiting guests will not block the flow of other traffic in and out of the restaurant. In some international destinations, the maître d’ station is located in the center of the dining area, so guests actually pass dining tables on their way to check in. This layout can confuse diners who expect to encounter the host stand in the entryway.

The entry area in chain restaurants may include everything from the waiting lines in steakhouses to newspaper vending machines in coffee shops. It is usually an unembellished area where guests wait for a table.

In an upscale tableservice restaurant, however, the entry area can set the stage for the dining experience to come. The entry is the transition zone between the outside world and the restaurant and, even in small spaces, good design can facilitate the transition with devices such as vestibules or angled entry doors (Figure 2.6). Lighting plays a crucial role in creating a smooth transition between outside and inside. Smell is also important; in the entry, customers begin to get olfactory clues about the meal to come.

In many restaurants, the entry area melds with the bar (Figure 2.7). Barriers are minimized in an effort to draw people into the space and to let them preview the experience to come. Coatrooms are set aside and, in some operations, are placed in remote locations so as not to interfere with the traffic flow or entry aesthetic.

**Cafeteria Entry Areas and Serveries** The cafeteria entry area is minimal in size and limited to the space where customers pick up a tray and are introduced to menu offerings. Entry areas in the traditional straight-line cafeteria, commonly used until the late 1970s, were larger and longer because they served as holding areas where guests queued up. Today’s scramble designs, where patrons do not enter a line but travel to individual food stations, eliminate the need for an entry queue.
Most contemporary fast-food interiors are divided into many small seating areas, with acoustic ceiling tiles or wall coverings to mute noise levels. Fixed seating made of molded plastic has given way to smart-looking café chairs with padded seats and counter seating for single diners.

Nevertheless, the design goals of easy maintenance, fast turnover, and upbeat energy remain. Today’s fast-food dining areas may look more up-to-date, with lighting levels soft enough that patrons don’t need to wear sunglasses, but if the interiors are too comfortable or can’t withstand the spills and stains of constant turnover, the design has failed.

**TABLESERVICE DINING AREAS** Tableservice dining spaces continue to show great variety of size, shape, and decor. Large rooms are often broken into dining nooks with levels or barriers that create a feeling of privacy. Mirrors are used creatively to give tantalizing glimpses into other parts of the room. Comfort is paramount in upscale tableservice restaurants; the uncomfortable but high-styled seating popular in the 1980s has been replaced by padded chairs, booths, and banquettes (Figure 2.9).

The spatial plan of the dining room should always take into account the traffic flow of the waitstaff and the amount of space needed between tables. In today’s restaurants, POS order-entry systems placed throughout dining spaces and remote printers located in kitchens and bars have diminished much of the waitstaff flow.
Hand-held computerized order-entry pads, which will become increasingly common, also cut back on the service flow.

In many tableservice restaurants, particularly fine dining establishments, food is the major attraction, so it is important to ensure that the dining experience, which often takes several hours, is not interrupted by distractions. Chairs should be positioned so that customers or staff don’t bump into them as they move about. Temperature levels should be even throughout the meal period. Sound levels should allow for easy conversation, and lighting should enhance the overall experience.

In casual tableservice chains and independent restaurants, design is often used as a marketing tool to draw a targeted clientele. Today’s theme restaurants are more about creating an experience—one that is bigger and better than the competition—than recreating a look. However, the nostalgia craze continues to draw on design elements from the 1940s and 1950s for such operations as diners and cafés.

In theatrical restaurants, barriers between dining and drinking are often lowered to create the feeling of one large space and to allow visibility between bar patrons and restaurant patrons, enabling customers to “see the show” from every seat in the house.

If the show runs on a stage, the dining space is typically one large room, perhaps tiered. Part of the entertainment might be the open kitchen, an element that became increasingly popular in the 1990s. If the show plays on video screens or incorporates animatronics, displays must be numerous enough to ensure that all seats in the house have a view. Videos and animatronic entertainment make it possible to have several dining spaces of varying size.

In theatrical or entertainment restaurants, illumination levels can be intense, and specialty theatrical lighting is frequently used to highlight the action. High noise levels create action, excitement, and energy, and help develop the feeling of the room. However, the ear-splitting reverberation that makes conversation painful has become less common than it was in the 1990s.

**Cafeteria Dining Areas** No longer is cafeteria design typified by institutional-green masonry block walls. Today, cafeterias are often indistinguishable from full-service restaurants. Elements such as greenery, carpeting, and artwork help stylize the setting. Vaulted ceilings, exposed brick walls with soft incandescent lighting, lounge seating, indoor gardens, and water elements are more the rule than the exception.

In markets where cafeteria-style operations compete with full-service restaurants, the decor package in the servery and dining areas is upbeat and the service is often interactive (Figure 2.10). As always, acoustic control is an important design consideration, along with easy maintenance surfaces and durable furnishings.

Spatially, cafeteria dining rooms are often divided by barriers, levels, or other devices to allow customers a choice of open or intimate dining. Large cafeteria-style restaurants may have dining areas broken into several sections, some of which can be reserved for groups. Semiprivate cafeteria dining areas enable informal meetings to be conducted over a meal or a break period. Private dining rooms should also be incorporated in designs for hospitals, universities, or corporate cafeterias as optional dining/meeting space. Cafeteria dining areas are often used for special evening functions, so design flexibility should also be part of the spatial plan. Storage areas are needed for chairs and tables when the dining space is converted into a reception area or set up theater-style for a meeting.
Banquet Dining Areas Banquet dining areas must be planned with flexibility in mind. A given space may be used to serve 350 people a sit-down breakfast; 300 a lavish luncheon buffet; as a plenary meeting room for 450 with full audio-visual support, and as a dinner-dance space for 275.

Take-Out Dining Areas By definition, take-out operations do not include dining spaces.

Beverage Area

The beverage area, typically serving alcoholic beverages, is found in restaurants that offer beverages outside of the dining area. It generally consists of a front bar and back bar, bar seating, and, sometimes, cocktail seating. Music and video systems are often featured. The size of the beverage area depends on the importance of beverage sales to total revenue. In some restaurants, a single beverage area services dining room customers as well as bar customers, but other restaurants include separate service bars for the dining room. Nonalcoholic beverage areas are incorporated in other types of restaurants.

Wine storage and display is an increasingly important design element in many types of restaurants. In tableservice restaurants, wine displays near the entry area can entice people to purchase wine. In theatrical restaurants, the action in the wine cellar can be part of the show when the cellar is in view of the guests. In other establishments, wine displays are used as a decorative motif in the dining room (Figure 2.11).

Fast-Food Beverage Areas Fast feeders don’t serve alcoholic beverages, but some do install beverage bars where customers fill their own cups with whatever cold or hot beverage they desire. Such beverage bars shift the cost of labor associated with filling drinks to the customers. They tend to speed service because the cashier does not have to pour and assemble drinks along with food items.

Tableservice Beverage Areas Many tableservice restaurants incorporate bars that are visually separated from the dining areas. The bar often serves multiple purposes: as a drinking spot for customers who may or may not be eating, as a service bar for the dining room, and as a waiting area for diners. It is often accompanied by a cocktail lounge, especially when food is served. Today, some restaurants serve complete meals at the bar and, increasingly, bars serve scaled-down portions for guests looking for an alternative to a full meal.
Bars can range in size from tiny to gargantuan, depending on their role in the restaurant. They play a minor role in elegant restaurants that emphasize a fine dining experience but, in many other types of restaurants, the bar has become an open, inviting area for drinking or casual dining.

It's important to integrate wine displays and wine cellars with the restaurant design. Space and equipment is needed to store white wines under refrigeration for service. Both red and backup white wines should be stored in a climate-controlled space that keeps the bottles at roughly 68 degrees Fahrenheit. If wines are to be sold by the glass, storage space for the open bottles must be provided—ideally under temperature-controlled conditions.

In many tableservice restaurants, the bar can attract its own crowd as well as diners waiting for tables. In such instances, the bar should be designed and positioned to attract a customer base that will not conflict with diners.

**Cafeteria Beverage Areas** As mentioned in the servery entry discussion and shown in Figure 2.8, the dispensed beverages areas of a cafeteria are typically positioned near the cashiers. However, in some retail cafeterias, the bar—which has spirited and nonspirited beverages—serves all diners along with customers who choose to sit on bar stools.

**Banquet Beverage Areas** Most banquet operations use portable bar equipment. The number of bars and bartenders must be sufficient to meet the demands of the group. Generally, one bar setup should be sufficient to service 75 guests. However, if the cocktail period is short, additional bars will be needed to ensure that all guests are served in a timely fashion, even though they will take away from the waiting and circulation space available to guests.

**Take-Out Beverage Areas** In many take-out operations, a beverage area set up for self-service is the best option. From a design perspective, this means packaged-beverage display cases that are easy to load and access are needed. For dispensed beverages, the holding capacity and type of cup dispenser is important to consider. The dispenser must be easy for staff to reload and for customers to use.

**Rest Rooms**

Both front- and back-of-the-house rest rooms are often included in a given restaurant. However, in some facilities, a single rest room located in the front of
to maintain foods at temperature. In the case of cold foods, refrigerated space sufficient to house carts capable of holding each of the plated courses is optimal. For hot foods, heated banquet carts used to hold and transport plated meals must be planned for. Space is also needed for plating meals in an assembly-line format.

**Take-Out Kitchens** Take-out kitchens can range from a nonkitchen operation supplied with foods prepared elsewhere to a limited kitchen with high-speed cooking equipment. One of the keys to a successful take-out concept is a menu that can be prepared in advance and then cooked or served quickly when ordered. Asian menus are ideal for take-out because the bite-size ingredients cook quickly in a wok. Rotisserie chicken and batch-prepared side dishes can also be suited to take-out because meals can be plated from a ready supply of cooked foods.

**Restaurant Support Areas**

Restaurant support areas include receiving and storage areas (dry, refrigerated, and frozen), plus employee rest rooms, locker rooms, employee lounge/cafeteria, and management offices. All of these areas are located in the back of the house and are discussed in full in chapter 5.

Not every foodservice operation incorporates all these areas, and the significance of each functional area varies from restaurant to restaurant. In fact, every restaurant space has unique requirements and characteristics and should be analyzed individually in order to arrive at a successful program.

**Fast-Food Restaurant Support Areas** The storage areas of fast-food restaurants are similar to those in other kitchens. Historically, limited menus placed limited demands on storage areas. As menus expanded, however, and more fresh ingredients were added, storage needs increased. For example, fast-food operators who make and bake their own biscuits must store large bags of flour, whereas they formerly received ready-to-eat rolls. A great deal of space is required to store disposables.

The offices in fast-food restaurants are usually small. Because of the sophisticated POS systems in most fast feeders, much of the paperwork ordinarily completed in a standard restaurant office is done at the registers. Frequently, these data are fed to a central data-collection office (not the on-site office), which sends reports back to the restaurant. Employee locker room spaces are limited and employees use the dining space to eat and take breaks.

**Tableservice Restaurant Support Areas** Because tableservice menus are usually more complex than fast-food operations, they require more storage for the varied types of food items. Less space is needed for dry storage, however, because most tableservice restaurants do not use paper goods.

In the tableservice restaurant, the mix of dry to refrigerated to frozen changes as a function of management policy. In some independent operations, fresh foods are used wherever possible. Others, including many chain operations, depend heavily on frozen and canned goods. The type of storage facilities needed, therefore, depends on the particular operation.

Storage areas for theatrical restaurants typically follow those of tableservice
restaurants. The more varied the menu, the more storage space is needed. Fresh ingredients require more preparation space and specialty processing equipment than frozen or canned foods.

**Cafeteria Support Areas** Storage and receiving areas for cafeteria operations are frequently separated from the production areas because most cafeterias are located within a multistory building shell. One receiving dock often serves the entire building, and the storage of foodservice goods may be overseen by the storeroom manager for all departments within the building.

Offices and employee spaces are similar in size and nature to those in a commercial restaurant, although employees typically eat in the dining space (as in fast-food restaurants). Increased office space is required in complex foodservice operations such as hospitals, where multiple styles of service are supported by a single kitchen and support facility.

**Banquet Support Areas** Banquet support areas are often ignored, but they are critical to success. Space is needed to store banquet tables and chairs when they are not in use. Space is also needed to store the myriad pieces of banquet tableware that may be used only periodically. Access space to banquet areas is also important. In the case of dividable ballrooms, double-walled corridors can eliminate noise carryover while providing easy access from the kitchen area to all parts of the dining space.

**Take-Out Support Areas** Storage areas for packaging materials are essential. Order-taking areas and equipment must also be incorporated into the design to ensure quick and accurate communication of orders between the customer, the order taker, the food preparers, and those who assemble the orders.

**Summary**

Space planning for any type of foodservice enterprise incorporates common design principles. A well-designed restaurant, however, is one where the design team has carefully attended to the character of the operation and designed spaces so that they work most effectively for the customers, the staff, and management. Time must be spent developing the floorplan and considering, rejecting, and refining spatial options until arriving at the best possible solution.