



Gund Hall Curtainwall (Phase 1)

The Gund Hall project is a transformative, carbon-conscious, conservation of Harvard University's Graduate School of Design's iconic home, focusing on energy efficiency and occupant well-being and comfort. Designed by John Andrews, it is considered a heroic marvel of concrete-modernism. With phase one complete, it serves as a leading example of sustainable performance for significant modern buildings of this type and scale.

Since its opening, the building and its occupants suffered from water leaks, deterioration of glazing assemblies, and discomfort associated with both heat loss and heat gain. Previous attempts at restoration yielded limited success, and students became accustomed to covering their workspaces with tarps or setting out bins to collect leaking water in bad weather.

The 2024 project comprised the first phase of a comprehensive, carbon-conscious conservation effort focused on replacement of the vast studio's glazed enclosure. The design and engineering for replacement of multiple glazing assemblies respects the visual framework set by Andrews's original elevations—both externally and as viewed from within. The Cambridge Historic Commission was involved from the beginning of the project, visiting the site during early mock-up phases to help the design team compare new elements to their original counterparts, side-by-side.

The design team developed a comprehensive approach to maximize the retention of existing high-carbon materials and maintain Andrews' design intent, while replacing the failed glazing. The design utilizes the latest vacuum insulated glazing technologies and custom glazing specs that differ among solar exposures to maximize thermal performance while conserving Andrews's original design intent.

Gund Hall's restoration is a national breakthrough project that introduces new glazing technology with dimensions closely aligned to the historic curtain wall and windows. The envelope replacement is respectful of Andrews's design and respectful of the environment. The project expended approximately 160,000kgCO₂ to produce, but is modeled to save 18,000kgCO₂ per year. The renovation reflects the regional culture of innovation, sustainability, and conservation—and serves as a leading example of each throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.