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McKinney Architects heads to East Austin

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Eyeing the commercial transformation happening in East Austin, **McKinney Architects Inc.** is trading in its downtown digs for a new office on East Seventh Street.

The 25-year-old architecture firm recently bought the roughly 4,100-square-foot building at 1301 E. Seventh St. McKinney is renovating the building with move-in sometime in September.

The purchase price of the building was not disclosed; the property is valued at $430,000, according to the Travis Central Appraisal District. Chris Skyles of **SkylesBayne Co.** represented McKinney and Jeff Coddington, and Brendan Bell with **Oxford Commercial** represented the seller, Koneco General Partnership.

McKinney Architects has a staff of 16 people with a focus on residential and institutional projects. The firm, which has doubled in size during the last five years, has handled a series of projects for the **University of Texas**, including the renovation of the College of Communication building's lobby and the UT Tower Garden.

"We've always officed downtown, and we think that's a real value-add for our employees," firm founder Heather McKinney says. "But when we started looking around for new office space, we knew that with our employees coming from all different directions and public transportation not quite where it needs to be yet, we needed to cast our net a bit wider."

McKinney says the new building is less than a quarter-mile from the commuter rail line's Saltillo Plaza station, enabling some employees to take the train to work.

"We just got very excited about East Austin and what's happening there," says McKinney. "With the rail station, that whole area is going to explode with activity in coming years."

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