







The Burlington Room at Chicago Union Station

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Inside Amtrak's historic Chicago Union Station, the Burlington Room is a 3,900-square-foot space located just off the station's monumental Great Hall. Originally built as the Women's Lounge, the space offered a decorous refuge. Over subsequent years, the space fell into disrepair and was closed to the public, then split into smaller rooms for offices and storage. For years, the historic details were forgotten but largely—and inadvertently—preserved behind new walls and dropped ceilings.

In 2015, Amtrak identified the space for improvement. Restoration of the room included meticulous analysis of existing painted and glazed finishes in order to uncover the original color scheme. The four murals adorning the upper walls had sustained significant water and dirt damage over time. Artists worked to clean the murals and inpaint any damage for three of the murals; the fourth mural, which suffered extensive damage, was digitally scanned and reprinted.

Seven historic bronze light fixtures were returned to the space, with five fixtures found in pieces in storage and two others found and relocated from another room. All seven were polished, cleaned, recast and rewired. These fixtures, along with two new complementary ceiling pendants and period-appropriate floor torchiers, have been outfitted with remotely controlled LED lamps, allowing for color variations that facilitate a variety of unique atmospheres for events.

The reclaimed and restored room now brings back the original glamor, serving as a flexible special-events space—and one of the largest non-hotel meeting rooms in the city, holding up to 295 guests.

Project Data