

# Private Office vs. Coworking Office in Montreal: Cost Comparison and Practical Implications

By 2727 Coworking Published May 28, 2025 45 min read

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## Private Office vs. Coworking Office in Montreal: Cost Comparison and Practical Implications

Renting your own private office and renting a private office within a coworking space are two very different approaches, each with its own cost structure and practical considerations. This in-depth report compares these options for Montreal-based small business owners, entrepreneurs, and freelancers. We will examine upfront setup costs, ongoing monthly expenses, typical Montreal pricing (including data from major coworking providers), included amenities, the local 2024–2025 real estate context, and the flexibility and exit terms of each option. Data and examples are provided to illustrate cost comparisons and potential break-even points.

## Initial Setup Costs

One of the biggest differences between a traditional private office lease and a coworking private office is the **upfront investment required**.

### Traditional Private Office Setup

Renting a standalone office space (outside of a serviced coworking center) typically involves **significant initial costs**:

- **Lease Deposits and Legal Fees:** Landlords usually require a security deposit (often equivalent to 1–3 months' rent) upon signing. For example, commercial leases commonly ask for **2–3 months of rent upfront as a security deposit** [thehubcoworks.com](http://thehubcoworks.com). If your monthly rent is \$1,000, that could mean \$2,000–\$3,000 tied up as deposit (refundable at end of lease if obligations are met). You may also incur legal or broker fees during lease negotiations.
- **Office Build-Out and Decorations:** If the space needs any modifications (paint, partitions, signage), you are often responsible for those improvements (unless the space is turnkey). While small businesses often choose already-built offices to avoid major construction, even minor customization has a cost. **Outfitting a small office can range from about \$1,000 up to \$10,000 or more** depending on the level of modifications and decor [officeinamerica.com](http://officeinamerica.com). This could include anything from installing locks or signage to adding a fresh coat of paint or minor renovations.
- **Furniture and Equipment:** Unlike a coworking office, a private leased space comes empty. You must furnish it with desks, chairs, storage, and equipment. Quality office furniture can be expensive – one Canadian office interiors company estimates **budgeting roughly \$1,800–\$5,000 per workstation** for furniture (depending on quality and storage needs) [officeinteriors.ca](http://officeinteriors.ca). A small 4-person office could easily require a few thousand dollars in furniture if buying new. Even cost-conscious options (e.g. basic desks and chairs from budget retailers or second-hand) will likely cost several hundred dollars per person. In addition, you may need to purchase phones, a printer, and other office equipment upfront.
- **Utilities and IT Setup:** Initially, you'll arrange for internet service (often signing a contract with an ISP and possibly paying an installation fee). In a traditional lease, you might also need to set up accounts for electricity, heating, or water if these are metered separately. For example,

installing a business-grade internet connection might involve a one-time setup fee, and you'll need to buy networking hardware (router, switches) if not provided. These initial setup costs are relatively minor compared to furniture or deposit, but still add to the upfront burden.

In short, **setting up a private office requires a notable investment before you can even start working in the space.** These upfront costs provide long-term benefits (you retain the furniture asset, and deposits may be returned), but they can strain a young business's cash flow. One 2024 analysis summarized it this way: for small offices in smaller cities, rent deposits and setup can be modest, but in larger cities it spikes – *"a small office [lease] can cost \$500–\$1,500 per month in a smaller city (or ~\$5,000 in a large city), plus utilities \$100–\$300, and initial office setup ranging from \$1,000 up to \$10,000"* [officeinamerica.com](https://www.officeinamerica.com) [officeinamerica.com](https://www.officeinamerica.com). Montreal's upfront costs will depend on the space and landlord, but you should be prepared for several thousand dollars in deposits and setup expenses when leasing a private office.

## Coworking Private Office Setup

Opting for a private office **inside a coworking space** (such as WeWork, Regus, Spaces, or a local coworking hub) dramatically lowers the initial setup costs:

- **Security Deposit and Fees:** Coworking providers typically require a deposit as well, but it's usually limited to one month's fee or less. There is no complex lease signing – often it's a simple membership agreement. For example, if your private office membership is \$1,000 per month, you might pay a \$1,000 deposit (refundable) and the first month upfront. There are generally **no legal fees or broker commissions** since it's not a traditional lease.
- **No Build-Out Needed:** The office comes **fully built-out and ready**. You won't need to paint walls or install fixtures; coworking offices are delivered in turnkey condition with a professional design. Any branding (e.g. your company logo on the door) is optional and often done with simple means (posters or decals) since you can't structurally alter the space.
- **Furniture Included:** One of the biggest upfront savings is that **furniture is provided by the coworking operator**. Your private office will come with desks, chairs, and often lockable filing cabinets or shelves, appropriately sized for the team. WeWork, for instance, notes that their offices in Montreal are *"fully furnished spaces"* [wework.com](https://www.wework.com). Regus likewise provides *"ergonomic furniture"* in every office [regus.com](https://www.regus.com). This means you **do not need to purchase desks or chairs**, aside from any specialty equipment you personally want (e.g. an extra monitor or an ergonomic chair upgrade).

- **IT Infrastructure Ready:** High-speed internet is ready on day one. You don't have to sign up for an ISP or set up a router – the coworking space's internet and Wi-Fi are available (usually included in the price). Many coworking offices also have phone booths or VOIP phones available if needed. In short, **tech setup is plug-and-play** – connect your laptop to Wi-Fi and you're good to go. For example, WeWork offices include “fast Wi-Fi” and even IT support as part of the amenities [wework.com](https://www.wework.com).
- **No Need to Hire Initial Services:** With a serviced office, you won't be arranging cleaning services or maintenance contracts upfront – those services are handled by the provider (as discussed later). This saves the time and potential upfront payments associated with sourcing cleaners or maintenance.

Overall, the initial expense to start using a coworking private office is minimal: typically just the first month's rent and a deposit. **There is no large capital expenditure for furniture or renovations.** This makes coworking very attractive for new startups or independent professionals who don't want to sink money into office infrastructure. As one coworking provider put it, “**coworking spaces provide all the office essentials without the financial burden**” up front [thehubcoworks.com](https://thehubcoworks.com). Essentially, coworking lets you **pay-as-you-go** for office space with negligible setup cost, whereas a private lease is a heavier upfront investment in exchange for more control over the space.

## Recurring Monthly Costs

Once you're up and running, you'll face ongoing costs to use and maintain the office. Here we compare the **monthly expenses** of a traditional private office vs. a coworking private office in Montreal.

### Rent and Space Costs

**How rent is calculated differs** between the two models:

- **Private Office Lease Rent:** In Montreal, conventional office rent is usually quoted per square foot per year. You pay a monthly rent based on the size of your space. For example, if you lease a **500 square foot** small office and the gross rent is **\$40 per sq ft per year**, the annual rent is \$20,000, or about **\$1,667 per month**. (Gross rent means including common area fees and property taxes; more on that below.) Montreal's office rents vary by location and building class. As of early 2024, the *average gross asking rent* in the Greater Montreal office market is around



**\$40.65 per sq ft** annually (this includes a typical \$18.71/sf of operating costs in that figure) [avisonyoung.ca](http://avisonyoung.ca). Higher-end downtown towers (Class AAA) can command premium rents – sometimes exceeding **\$70 per sq ft** for trophy space [cresa.com](http://cresa.com) – while older Class B buildings might ask around **\$32–\$33 gross per sq ft** [cresa.com](http://cresa.com). For a small business, this means if you opt for a modest Class B office, you might pay on the order of \$30–\$35/sf (e.g. ~\$1,250/month for 500 sf). In a prime downtown building, that same 500 sf could cost \$2,500+/month. It's important to note that landlords may charge **additional rent (operating costs)** on top of base rent in a net lease structure – but here we're considering gross for apples-to-apples comparison. Overall, your **monthly rent will scale with the size and location** of your private office. You pay for **every square foot**, including areas like your private hallway or unused corners, since you exclusively lease that space.

- **Coworking Private Office Fee:** Coworking providers charge a flat monthly membership fee for your private office, typically **priced per workspace or per person** rather than per square foot. The fee depends on the number of people the office can accommodate and the prestige of the location. In Montreal, private offices in coworking centers generally start around a few hundred dollars per month for a single-person micro office, up to a few thousand for larger team suites. According to one market survey, **private offices in Montreal coworking spaces usually start at about CAD \$500 per month** for the smallest offices [coworkingcafe.com](http://coworkingcafe.com). For instance, some local coworking locations list private offices from **~\$600–\$800 per month** [coworkingcafe.com](http://coworkingcafe.com). Regus (a major serviced office provider) advertises Montreal private office memberships “from \$259 to \$385 per person per month” on a 24-month contract [regus.com](http://regus.com) – meaning a team of 2 might pay roughly \$518–\$770/month on a long-term plan for a small office. In practice, shorter-term or month-to-month plans are a bit higher. WeWork, another big player, doesn't publicly post Montreal prices without inquiry, but its pricing is similar in structure (e.g. typically on the order of a few hundred dollars per desk for a private office, varying by location). To illustrate the range: one high-end coworking site in Montreal (Crew Collective & Café) quotes *private offices starting at \$6,000/month* for larger premium spaces [crewcollectivecafe.com](http://crewcollectivecafe.com), whereas smaller independent coworking hubs might offer a 1-2 person office for ~\$500–\$700. In general, **expect to pay on the order of \$500–\$1,000 per person per month** for a private office in a coworking center in Montreal, with the lower end representing basic small offices or less central locations, and the upper end for downtown or spacious offices. This fee **already includes** many services (space, furniture, utilities, etc.), which we detail below. Notably, you **only pay for the capacity you need** – unlike a leased space, you're not directly paying for square footage that might be underutilized (hallways, reception area, etc., are shared among all members).

It's worth comparing the **effective cost per square foot**: coworking offices often yield a higher effective rent per sq ft (because providers charge a premium for flexibility and services). However, a small business in a coworking space might rent a 100 sq ft private office for \$600/month, which equates to \$72/sf/year – seemingly high, but that 100 sq ft is just the immediate office; you also benefit from common areas (lounges, kitchens, meeting rooms) that your team uses as needed but doesn't pay for exclusively. In a private lease, you might need a larger space (e.g. 500 sq ft) to have an equivalent setup with a dedicated meeting area and break room, so you pay for more square footage. Thus, **coworking makes your usage more efficient**: you rent a smaller dedicated area and share amenities.

To summarize, **monthly rent for a small private lease in Montreal might range from under \$1,000 (if in a small, low-cost space) to \$2,000+ (for downtown locations)**. Coworking private offices for an equivalent team might cost on the order of **\$500 per month (entry level) up to \$1,500+ per month** for each office (or per 1-3 person office unit) depending on size and provider [coworkingcafe.com](http://coworkingcafe.com) [coworker.com](http://coworker.com). It's important to compare what's included in those fees, which we address next.

## Utilities, Internet, and Services

**Operating costs and services are a key part of monthly overhead.** Here the two options differ significantly in what's included:

- **In a Traditional Lease:** You are responsible for utilities and office services on top of the base rent. If your lease is *gross* or *semi-gross*, some utilities (like heating, common electricity, water, property taxes, cleaning of common areas) are built into the rent or covered by additional rent payments (as indicated in the \$18.71/sf average additional rent figure for Montreal [avisonyoung.ca](http://avisonyoung.ca)). However, typically **you pay for your unit's electricity usage** (lighting, equipment) either via your own meter or as part of a proportionate share. You also need to subscribe to **internet service** for your office – for instance, a business cable or fiber internet plan in Montreal might cost on the order of \$100–\$200 per month for a small office (varies by speed). You'll handle **phone service** if needed (many businesses now rely on cell phones or VOIP). Additionally, if the building doesn't provide daily cleaning inside your unit, you must arrange **cleaning/janitorial services** for your office. A small office might hire a cleaner once a week, which could cost a few hundred dollars per month, or you handle cleaning internally. **Maintenance** of the office interior (replacing light bulbs, minor repairs) is typically on you as the tenant (the landlord covers structural and common area maintenance). You should also budget for **office supplies and beverages** – e.g. stocking the kitchenette with coffee, tea,

water, and buying your own toilet paper, etc., if not provided by the building. All told, these various items add to the monthly cost. A rough estimate for a small office: utilities (electricity) might be \$100–\$200/month, internet \$100/month, cleaning service \$150/month, miscellaneous supplies \$50+ – easily **a few hundred dollars extra per month** beyond rent [thehubcoworks.com](http://thehubcoworks.com) [thehubcoworks.com](http://thehubcoworks.com). One coworking industry comparison estimated utilities for a small office at **\$200–\$500 monthly** and cleaning at **\$150–\$500** (depending on office size and frequency) [thehubcoworks.com](http://thehubcoworks.com) [thehubcoworks.com](http://thehubcoworks.com) – costs that would be borne by the tenant in a standalone lease.

- **In a Coworking Office:** The monthly membership **includes virtually all utilities and basic services**. You generally do **not pay separate bills** for electricity, heating, water, or internet – these are bundled in your fee. The office comes with **high-speed Wi-Fi (and/or wired internet)** ready to use [wework.com](http://wework.com) [regus.com](http://regus.com). **Cleaning services are included** – coworking spaces have cleaning staff that vacuum, empty trash, and sanitize offices and common areas regularly [wework.com](http://wework.com) [regus.com](http://regus.com). **Maintenance** is handled by the provider – if a light burns out or the HVAC needs repair, it's not your problem (you notify the community manager and they fix it). Basic **office amenities are provided**, often including free coffee/tea and kitchen facilities, as well as **business equipment like printers** and copiers available for member use [wework.com](http://wework.com) (sometimes unlimited or sometimes metered by a fair-use policy or small extra fee per page). **Reception and mail handling** are typically part of the service: for example, WeWork Montreal offices come with “*mail and package handling*” by the on-site staff [wework.com](http://wework.com), meaning the community team will sign for your deliveries and notify you. **24/7 access and security** are also included – you get keycard access to use the space anytime, without having to separately pay for alarm monitoring or security services. In short, **coworking's monthly fee is all-inclusive**, covering things like utilities, internet, cleaning, building security, and maintenance. You generally only pay extra if you opt for add-on services (for example, renting an extra meeting room beyond what's included, or premium printing usage, etc.). This bundled approach is a major convenience and cost saver; as Regus notes, “*we'll take care of everything – including the utilities and cleaning – so you can focus on your business*” [regus.com](http://regus.com).

**Insurance** is one consideration in both cases: a private lease often requires the tenant to carry commercial general liability insurance and possibly property insurance for their contents. This might add a small monthly premium (perhaps \$20–\$50/month for a small office policy). Coworking spaces often have their own insurance covering the facility; they may or may not require individual members to have liability insurance. Many small coworking tenants forego separate insurance (aside from any business insurance they carry generally). This can be another minor saving on the coworking side, or at least less hassle in arranging coverage.

To summarize, **recurring expenses beyond base rent tend to be higher and more fragmented in a traditional office**, whereas **a coworking private office has a single consolidated bill that includes most services**. For example, one comparison found a typical small business might spend an additional \$500–\$1,000+ per month on utilities, cleaning, internet, and maintenance in a traditional lease, **whereas all of those are included in coworking fees** [thehubcoworks.com](http://thehubcoworks.com). This makes **budgeting simpler** in a coworking scenario – you know your fixed office cost each month – while a private office requires managing multiple vendors and bills.

## Amenities and Shared Resources

Another key difference in ongoing value is the **amenities and facilities** you get:

- **Amenities in a Traditional Office:** With your own leased office, any extra amenities are something you must arrange (and pay for) yourself. Need a conference room for meetings? You must lease a space that has one, or rent meeting rooms by the hour at external venues when required. Want a break room or lounge? That's extra square footage you are renting (and furnishing). Fancy a coffee machine and snacks for the team? You buy and stock them. There is **no shared reception, no common lounge, no included event space** – unless your building offers some to all tenants (a few modern office buildings do have shared conference centers or gyms, but this is not common in older Montreal buildings without premium rent). Essentially, in a private lease you have **full privacy and control**, but also **full responsibility to provide any amenity** your team needs. This can limit what a small business can afford – you might go without a large boardroom or nice lounge due to space and cost constraints.
- **Amenities in Coworking:** Coworking environments shine in this aspect. Even though you have a private office, you share broader facilities with the coworking community. **Meeting rooms** of various sizes are available on-demand – typically you get a certain number of meeting room hours/credits included per month with your office membership, and can book additional hours as needed (sometimes at an extra cost if you exceed the included credits). For example, WeWork grants meeting room credits to private office members (one sample listing showed a 2-person office including *"14 credits to book meeting rooms"* per month [wework.com](http://wework.com)). **Common areas and lounges** are open to you and your team – these are creatively designed spaces with couches, tables, and a café vibe where you can work or host informal chats. **Kitchens** or pantry areas with coffee, tea, water (often free) are part of the package [wework.com](http://wework.com). **Phone booths** for private calls, **print stations**, and sometimes extras like **nap/meditation rooms or shower facilities** may be present in the coworking center [wework.com](http://wework.com). The value of these shared amenities is significant – you have access to facilities that a small company could rarely justify

on its own. Coworking spaces also frequently host **community events, networking sessions, or workshops** which are included for members [wework.com](https://www.wework.com), adding intangible value (networking, learning opportunities) at no extra cost. In essence, you get a **fully serviced office environment with many of the perks of a large corporate campus**, bundled into your rent. This is why coworking providers emphasize offerings like high-end coffee, stylish common spaces, and event programming – these amenities are *built into the price* and enhance the work experience.

**Summary of included amenities/services:** In a coworking private office, you can expect **furniture, high-speed internet, utilities, cleaning, reception/mail service, security, and access to shared lounges and meeting rooms all included** [wework.com](https://www.wework.com) [regus.com](https://www.regus.com). You essentially only need to bring your computer and work materials. In a traditional lease, **rent covers the space only** (and perhaps basic building services), so **all those amenities must be arranged and paid separately** by you. The practical implication is that coworking spares you the time and overhead of managing an office – the provider acts as your facilities manager. As Regus describes their Montreal offices: *“each office includes ergonomic furniture, high-speed WiFi, and access to break-out areas... we take care of utilities and cleaning... plus access to bookable meeting rooms and coworking spaces”* [regus.com](https://www.regus.com). The trade-off is that coworking amenities are **shared** (you may need to reserve a conference room in advance, or the lounge might sometimes be busier/noisier than if it were your private break room). But for many small businesses, the cost savings and convenience of having these facilities available outweigh the lack of exclusivity.

To visualize the difference, consider **coffee and snacks**: in a coworking space, your membership likely entitles you to unlimited coffee/tea and a communal kitchen – no extra cost, no one from your team has to refill the coffee pot or buy milk. In your own office, you’d buy a coffee machine, buy beans or pods regularly, assign someone to keep the kitchen tidy, etc., all on your own dime and time. Multiply that example across cleaning, internet troubleshooting, printer maintenance – coworking **offloads these chores and expenses** from you.

## Typical Coworking Private Office Prices in Montreal (2024–2025)

To provide a clearer picture of the **actual price points** for coworking private offices in Montreal, here are examples from major providers and local spaces:



- **Regus / Spaces (IWG plc):** Regus is a prominent serviced office provider with numerous locations in Montreal (addresses include downtown towers like Cathcart & McGill, 500 Place d'Armes, 1250 René-Lévesque, etc.). According to Regus's official site, **private office pricing in Montreal starts from about \$259 to \$385 per person per month on a 24-month contract** [regus.com](https://regus.com). Shorter terms are available at higher rates or upon request. For instance, Regus's Old Montreal center at 500 Place d'Armes lists private offices *"from \$385/month"* [regus.com](https://regus.com). These rates are per person; a single-person interior office might be at the lower end, while a window office or larger team room costs more per person. Regus often has promotions and offers flexibility in terms (month-to-month memberships or day offices), but the key takeaway is **a few hundred dollars per month per person** is their ballpark for Montreal. All Regus offices come fully furnished with included amenities as discussed.
- **WeWork:** WeWork operates multiple coworking locations in Montreal (including Place Ville Marie, Sainte-Catherine Ouest, and L'Avenue). While WeWork doesn't publish fixed prices (they usually "contact us for a quote"), their pricing is competitive with other premium providers. WeWork does advertise other plans like hot desks and All-Access memberships (for example, coworking memberships in Montreal starting around **C\$320/month on a 12-month plan** for unlimited hot desk access [wework.com](https://wework.com)). For private offices, anecdotal data and global WeWork trends indicate roughly **\$500–\$800 per desk per month** in Montreal for small offices, depending on location and term. WeWork often has deals for longer commitments (e.g. "25% off select private offices" as of 2025 promotions). In practical terms, a **2-person private office at a WeWork Montreal location might cost on the order of \$1,000–\$1,600 per month** total, all-inclusive. WeWork's value proposition highlights that it's *"one predictable monthly bill"* for your private office, cutting down on the complexities of traditional real estate [wework.com](https://wework.com).
- **Breather:** Breather, founded in Montreal, historically offers on-demand workspace by the hour or day, but it also lists monthly options for private offices. Breather's model is different – you can rent a fully furnished private office space on a very short-term basis. Prices are often given per day or hour. For example, Breather advertises *"Find a Private Office starting at \$150/day"* [breather.com](https://breather.com) in Montreal. This pay-as-you-go daily rate (\$150/day) would translate to roughly \$3,000 for 20 workdays – significantly higher than a monthly membership elsewhere. However, Breather spaces are **ultra-flexible (no commitment at all)**, so they are useful if you only occasionally need physical office space. If one wanted a Breather space full-time, they could likely negotiate a monthly rate, but it would still be relatively high (because you're paying for extreme flexibility). Breather is great for **short-term needs** (like a project war room for a week).

or a temporary office for a month) without any contracts. For longer-term continuous office use, most businesses would find a conventional coworking membership more cost-effective than paying by the day with Breather.

- **Local Coworking Providers:** Montreal has a variety of local coworking spaces and startup hubs, each with their own pricing. For instance, **Crew Collective & Café**, a well-known coworking café in a historic bank building, offers memberships from hot desks at \$300/month up to private offices that were quoted around \$5,600–\$6,000/month for larger offices in 2025 [crewcollectivecafe.com](https://crewcollectivecafe.com) [starterstory.com](https://starterstory.com). (Those high-end private offices likely accommodate larger teams in a prestigious setting.) Another example, **Notman House** (a startup hub) or **La Gare** in Mile-End, have smaller private offices targeting startups; their prices might be in the mid-range (perhaps \$600–\$1200, though specific 2024 prices would need confirming via their sites). A listing on CoworkingCafe for Montreal shows a space called “Metspace” offering **private offices from \$630/month** [coworkingcafe.com](https://coworkingcafe.com) – indicating you can find options under \$700 in some locations. Meanwhile, another listing shows private offices “from \$850/month” at a different site [coworkingcafe.com](https://coworkingcafe.com). The **average dedicated desk price** in Montreal coworking is about **\$350/month**, and the **average private office desk price around \$500+/month** according to market aggregators [coworkingcafe.com](https://coworkingcafe.com). So for a small team of 3–4, you’re looking at something like \$1,500–\$2,000/month for a private office in many coworking spaces as a typical scenario.

In summary, **coworking private office pricing in Montreal (2024–2025) generally spans from the high \$300s per month (per person, on longer terms) to about \$700 per person for flexible terms in standard locations** [regus.com](https://regus.com) [coworkingcafe.com](https://coworkingcafe.com). Premium offerings and large suites can go well above \$1,000 per person (as seen in high-end examples) [coworker.com](https://coworker.com). When evaluating these, remember they include all the services. On the traditional lease side, if we convert those coworking costs to per square foot: e.g. \$600/month for perhaps ~50–100 sq ft usage per person, it’s high. But as noted earlier, you may need 2–3 times that square footage per person in a private lease to have equivalent comfort and amenities, so the cost difference isn’t as large when normalized.

**Table: Example Monthly Cost Comparison** (Illustrative for a **3-person team**):

Cost Component

Traditional Private Office (approx. 300 sq ft lease)

Coworking Private Office (3-person room)

## Base Rent

~\$1,000/month (e.g. 300 sq ft @ \$40/sf/year) [avisonyoung.ca](http://avisonyoung.ca)

~\$1,500/month (3 x ~\$500 desk rate) [coworkingcafe.com](http://coworkingcafe.com)

## Utilities & HVAC

~\$150/month (electricity, heating/cooling) [officeinamerica.com](http://officeinamerica.com)

Included in fee (no extra cost)

## High-Speed Internet

~\$100/month (business internet plan)

Included (gigabit Wi-Fi & ethernet) [regus.com](http://regus.com)

## Cleaning Service

~\$120/month (weekly cleaning)

Included (daily cleaning) [regus.com](http://regus.com)

## Maintenance

~\$50/month (minor repairs, supplies)

Included (on-site staff handles it) [wework.com](http://wework.com)

## Coffee/Water & Kitchen supplies

~\$50/month (beans, filters, water, etc.)

Included (free coffee/tea, kitchen) [wework.com](http://wework.com)

## Total Monthly Cost

~\$1,470 (plus your time managing vendors)

~\$1,500 (all-in, one bill)

*This table illustrates that for a small team, the monthly costs can be in the same ballpark.* In this scenario, the traditional lease is estimated at \$1,470 vs. \$1,500 for coworking – nearly breakeven. If the private lease were in a pricier location (say \$50/sf), its cost would exceed coworking; if it were in a cheaper setup (smaller town or sublease), it could be lower. The exact numbers will vary, but it shows that once you factor in all the “extras” included in coworking, **the effective monthly cost difference narrows considerably.**

Of course, the **coworking option saved this team thousands in upfront setup costs** (no need to buy furniture or pay big deposits), whereas the traditional office would have required maybe \$5,000+ in furniture and deposits initially. That leads into the next important comparison: flexibility and commitment.

## Real Estate Market Context in Montreal (2024–2025)

Before comparing flexibility and exit terms, it’s helpful to understand Montreal’s office market conditions in 2024–2025, as they influence costs and options:

- **High Vacancy = Tenant’s Market:** Montreal’s office vacancy has risen in recent years (partly due to the pandemic and shift to hybrid work). By late 2024, the overall office vacancy rate in Greater Montreal was around **18.5–19%** [avisonyoung.ca](https://www.avisonyoung.ca) [cresa.com](https://www.cresa.com), one of the highest in decades. This means **landlords are competing to attract tenants**, especially for small and mid-size spaces. In practical terms, traditional landlords may be more willing to offer **incentives**: for example, a few months of free rent on a multi-year lease, or extra improvement allowances. The market is **tenant-favorable** [cresa.com](https://www.cresa.com), so small businesses might negotiate better terms than in a tight market. (However, some very prime buildings still have low vacancy and command high rents – there’s a “flight to quality” where Class A/AAA space is doing better than Class B [cresa.com](https://www.cresa.com).)
- **Stable Rental Rates:** Despite higher vacancy, average asking rents have remained relatively stable, with landlords preferring to use inducements (like free rent periods) rather than slash face rents [cresa.com](https://www.cresa.com). As noted, the average gross rent is around \$40–\$41/sf. For a small business, this means you likely won’t see dramatic rent drops, but you might get a nice **deal on lease terms** (e.g. flexibility or turn-key space provided).
- **Sublease Opportunities:** With many companies downsizing, there’s a lot of sublease space on the market (around 15–16% of available space is sublease [cresa.com](https://www.cresa.com)). Subleases can be an attractive middle-ground: you might take over a lease from a company that has extra space,

often at a discounted rent and with **furniture included**. In Montreal, sublease space from larger tenants could give a small firm a chance to occupy a private office without a long commitment (if the sublease term is short) and without setup costs (if it's pre-furnished). This is a competitor to coworking in some cases. However, subleases still typically require landlord approval and might not offer the fully serviced experience.

- **Rise of Flexible Space:** Montreal has seen growth in coworking and serviced offices as part of the global trend. Providers like WeWork, Spaces, Industrious, and local players have expanded. Flexible workspace still accounts for a single-digit percentage of the total market, but it's growing. Industry sources projected flexible offices (coworking) to continue rising as companies seek agility (globally, flexible space could reach 30% of the market by 2030) [drop-desk.com](https://drop-desk.com). In Montreal, there is strong demand from startups and even larger companies using coworking for satellite teams.
- **Economic Context:** Montreal's economy in 2024–2025 is growing moderately (around 2–3% GDP growth projected [regus.com](https://regus.com)). There's a robust tech and creative sector presence. Real estate analysts note that many companies are **re-evaluating their office needs** due to hybrid work – some are reducing footprint (boosting vacancies), but others are seeking higher-quality, smaller spaces to entice staff back in. This bodes well for coworking, which offers high-quality space on flexible terms. For traditional leases, it means more options available for small tenants since larger firms gave up space.
- **Lease Size and Landlord Preferences:** It's notable that in Montreal (like most cities), landlords of larger office buildings often prefer signing leases with medium-to-large companies for sizable spaces. Very small spaces (e.g. a 2–3 person office of 200–500 sq ft) can be hard to find on the market as standalone leases, because many landlords don't demise suites that small. This is where **business centers and coworking operators fill the gap** – they take a whole floor and subdivide into small offices. If you want a truly private lease for a tiny office, you might end up in older buildings or non-traditional spaces. The availability of small office leases might be limited, pushing many small businesses toward coworking by necessity. On the other hand, with high vacancies, some landlords might be more open to shorter term or smaller leases than before, to avoid space sitting empty. It's worth checking options with a tenant broker if you prefer a direct lease – but be prepared that you might be offered a 1,000 sq ft space as a “small” unit, which could be larger (and thus more expensive) than you need.

In essence, **Montreal's current market offers a lot of flexibility and potential deals** for office space. If you are leaning toward a traditional lease, you may find favorable rents or incentives in 2024–2025. If you prefer coworking, you're in luck as well: **there are many coworking locations to**



**choose from**, and competition among providers could mean discounts or promotions for new members. For example, WeWork has run promotions (like percentage off for the first few months), and Regus often negotiates rates especially if you sign for 12+ months. Given the market oversupply, **flexible workspace providers themselves have good deals** – they might waive initiation fees or offer a month free trial, etc., because they want to increase occupancy in their centers.

## Flexibility, Lease Terms, and Exit Costs

One of the most crucial differences between renting your own office and using a coworking office is the **level of flexibility and the commitments involved**. This impacts your risk and your ability to scale up or down.

### Lease Length and Commitment

**Traditional Office Lease:** Most commercial office leases in Montreal require a **multi-year commitment**. It's common to see lease terms of **3 to 5 years** for small offices (larger companies often sign 5, 10 or even 15 year leases). Some landlords might agree to shorter terms (1-2 years) for very small spaces or in high vacancy scenarios, but typically a year is a minimum. Once you sign, you are legally obliged to pay rent for the entire term. Breaking a lease early can result in heavy penalties (often you remain on the hook for the rent until the landlord finds a new tenant, or you negotiate a buy-out). In the best case, you might assign or sublease your lease to someone else, but that involves effort and landlord approval. The long-term lease offers stability – your location and costs are fixed – but it **locks you in**. For a startup or a growing (or uncertain) business, this can be risky. You might outgrow the space, or need to downsize, or pivot to remote work, and then you'd be stuck with excess space. As one entrepreneur-focused article noted, *"often these leases are signed for 1–5 years; while offering stability, they are very long-term in nature and can be a problem for young companies"* [officeinamerica.com](http://officeinamerica.com). Additionally, leases usually include **rent escalation** clauses (e.g. 2-3% annual increases) and you must renegotiate or relocate when the term ends (market rents might be higher at that time). There is also the administrative burden of renewing or finding new space when the lease expires.

**Coworking Membership Term:** In stark contrast, coworking spaces offer **extreme flexibility**. Most coworking providers operate on a **month-to-month membership** model or short-term agreements. You can often start with just a **1-month commitment**, and thereafter cancel with 1 or 2 months' notice if needed. Many spaces also offer discounts for agreeing to longer terms (e.g. commit to 6 or 12 months and get a lower rate), but it's rarely required. Regus explicitly states *"no minimum rental*

period... allowing you to rent an office from just a few weeks to many years” [regus.com](https://regus.com). WeWork and others similarly allow month-to-month for private offices (subject to availability). This means you can **scale up or down as your needs change**: add another office next month if you hire more people, or downgrade to a smaller office or even coworking desk if you reduce staff. You’re not stuck beyond the short notice period. This flexibility is one of the most touted advantages of coworking. It essentially **eliminates the risk of overcommitting**. If an office isn’t working out, you can exit with minimal hassle. Also, if you need to relocate (say you move from Montreal to another city), you can simply end the membership — or even transfer it if the coworking brand has a location in your next city. As a 2025 analysis states, “coworking spaces offer month-to-month memberships with no long-term commitment,” allowing businesses to avoid being locked into leases and to scale or move without financial risk [thehubcoworks.com](https://thehubcoworks.com).

The difference is stark: **years vs. months**. For a small business, the ability to **trial an office for a few months** without a multi-year obligation can be very valuable. If your team decides after 6 months that being in an office isn’t necessary, you can exit a coworking space easily; you cannot easily break a 5-year lease at month 6 without significant cost.

## Ability to Expand or Contract

With a long-term private lease, if you **outgrow** your space, you face a tough situation: you might need to negotiate taking additional space (if available in the same building), or find a subtenant for your current lease and move to a larger space elsewhere (incurring moving costs and possible lease overlap). Similarly, if you **downsize**, you continue paying for unused space unless you sublease it out. This lack of agility can hinder a fast-growing startup or a project-based firm whose headcount fluctuates.

Coworking shines here: need a bigger office next month? If one is available in the facility (or at another location of the same provider), you can often upgrade seamlessly. Need to reduce from a 4-person office to 2-person? Let the provider know and they can move you to a smaller unit or even convert you to two dedicated desks or hot desks, *usually without penalty*. Essentially, coworking spaces allow you to *“scale up or down based on needs without financial risk”* [thehubcoworks.com](https://thehubcoworks.com). Some coworking contracts are very flexible in this regard – you can alter your plan with 30 days’ notice.

## Exit Costs and End-of-Term

Exiting a traditional lease can involve **substantial costs**:

- If you terminate early, there could be a hefty fee or loss of your deposit and personal guarantees. For example, you might owe all remaining rent unless a break clause is in the contract (rare in short leases).
- Even at the natural end of the lease, you often have obligations like **restoring the space to its original condition** (remove any alterations, repair any damage, repaint to neutral colors). This is called “make-good” or dilapidations and can cost money and time.
- You have to coordinate **moving out** – hiring movers, perhaps storing or selling the furniture you bought. Selling used office furniture recoups only a fraction of cost (and takes effort), so any furniture investment might partly go to waste if you don’t need it later.
- Only after all that do you get your deposit back, assuming no issues.

In contrast, exiting a coworking office is easy: **give notice, pack your laptop, and leave**. Typically, your deposit (if any) is refunded promptly and you have no other obligations. There’s no space restoration (the coworking staff will clean and re-set the room for the next client). Because you never owned the furniture, you don’t worry about it. And because terms are short, there’s no concept of breaking a lease – you just stop renewing. There are **no hidden exit fees**. As one source emphasizes, coworking has **transparent pricing with no surprise fees**, whereas private offices can have unexpected costs like reinstatement fees at lease end or other charges [thehubcoworks.com](https://thehubcoworks.com).

The **opportunity cost** of being locked in is also notable – if market rents drop or if a better opportunity comes along, a traditional lease might prevent you from moving. Coworking allows you to **jump on new opportunities**, like switching to a different neighborhood or building if you find a better fit, with relative ease.

## Considerations of Stability

It should be mentioned that while flexibility is great, some businesses do value the **stability of a longer lease**. With a multi-year lease, you know that space is yours for that period, and the landlord cannot suddenly change terms (aside from pre-agreed escalations). In coworking, while you can leave at short notice, theoretically **the provider can also change things** on you – e.g. increase the price on renewal, shuffle you to a different office if needed, or (in rare cases) close down the location. These risks are relatively low (and reputable coworking brands strive to keep members happy to retain them), but it’s not the same as having a guaranteed exclusive space. However, in practice, coworking contracts for say 12 months give you similar stability for that year, and you could always negotiate an extension if you want to lock in a rate.

## Network and Community vs. Privacy and Branding

Beyond costs and contracts, a practical implication is the environment:

- In a coworking center, even in a private office, you're part of a **community of other companies**. This can lead to serendipitous networking, partnerships, or simply a social atmosphere. Many freelancers and startups appreciate not being isolated. The community managers often organize events, as noted, which can add value professionally or culturally. On the flip side, you have less **company identity** in the space – you might not be able to put up a big sign in the lobby (though you can usually display your logo on your office door and receive visitors at the front desk). If having a standalone presence is important (e.g. for a law firm that wants a private suite with its own reception area to impress clients), a coworking office might feel too communal or "branded" by the provider.
- In a traditional private office, **privacy is maximal**. You can control who enters your space. You can brand your office interior however you like, paint the walls, configure layout exactly to your needs (with landlord approval). Some companies prefer this control and exclusivity – especially if they deal with sensitive information or need quiet focus. Coworking spaces do have other people around: you might see other members in hallways or hear muffled conversations through the walls. Most private offices in good coworking spaces are reasonably quiet and confidential, but it's not the same as being the sole occupant of a leased suite with thick walls. So from a practical standpoint, consider whether the open-community vibe is a pro or con for your business operations.

## Flexibility to Work Elsewhere

Another perk of many coworking memberships is **access to other locations**. For instance, Regus offers memberships that let you drop into any Regus center worldwide. If you travel frequently or have teams in multiple cities, your Montreal coworking office membership might double as a passport to use lounges or book offices in Toronto, Vancouver, or even abroad at no extra cost. WeWork similarly has an All Access plan that allows use of any WeWork globally for coworking, and private office members often can arrange short-term use of offices in other cities. Traditional offices obviously do not offer this – they are fixed in one place.

## Cost-Benefit Summary and Break-Even Considerations

After examining all these factors, how do the two options stack up in total **cost over time**, and when might one make more financial sense than the other? It often comes down to the **time horizon and growth plans**:

- **Short Term (0–12 months):** Coworking almost always wins for short-term needs. If you only need an office for a few months up to a year, a traditional lease is usually impractical – few landlords will lease for under a year, and even a one-year lease carries the burden of setup costs that you won't amortize over a long period. Coworking lets you pay monthly without long commitment. For example, if you need space for a project team for 6 months, you can pay, say, \$1,500/month = \$9,000 total and walk away. With a lease, you might have had to sign 3 years or pay a premium for a short sublease, plus spend \$5,000 on furniture – clearly not worth it for 6 months. **Breakeven is not reached in the short term** for a private lease because the upfront costs dominate. **Winner: coworking** for short-term agility.
- **Medium Term (1–3 years):** This is a gray area and depends on cost specifics. Let's illustrate with a scenario: You have a small team and plan to stay about 2 years. Coworking will cost, say, \$1,500/month, so ~\$36,000 for 2 years (assuming rate holds steady). A traditional office might cost \$1,250/month after utilities, so \$30,000 for 2 years, but you spent \$5,000 upfront on setup. Total = \$35,000. In this scenario, by the end of year 2, the costs are nearly equal (coworking \$36k vs lease \$35k). The **"break-even" point came around the 2-year mark** – meaning if you stay longer than 2 years, the lease option starts to pull ahead in total cost savings (since the upfront investment gets spread over more time). If you leave earlier than 2 years, coworking would have been cheaper overall. Depending on the numbers, the break-even could be at 18 months, 24 months, etc. For many realistic cases in Montreal, somewhere around **2-3 years is where a private lease might become more cost-effective** in pure dollars – provided you can fully utilize the space and avoid unexpected costs. However, one must also consider the **time and hassle cost**: managing an office yourself has an implicit cost (your time, or an employee's time, spent on administrative tasks). Coworking offloads that, which is hard to quantify but certainly valuable for small teams who need to focus on their core business.
- **Long Term (3+ years):** If you are certain you will need an office for a long, continuous period and your size won't drastically change, a traditional lease can save money in the long run. After 3–5 years, the initial costs (furniture, etc.) are amortized, and monthly rent is usually cheaper per square foot than equivalent coworking fees. You might also benefit from building equity in your setup (though unlike owning property, leasing doesn't build equity – but you own your



furniture which has some residual value). For example, at 5 years, in the earlier scenario: coworking  $\$1,500 \times 60 = \$90,000$ ; lease  $\$1,250 \times 60 + \$5,000 = \$80,000$ . So about \$10k saved over 5 years by leasing (not huge, but not trivial either – roughly 11% saved). If your chosen space has much lower rent (say a sublease at \$800/month), then the lease would save much more over time. **Winner: traditional lease for a stable 5+ year outlook**, purely on cost.

However, even if cost favors leasing after a few years, consider **opportunity cost and risk**: locking in for 5 years could cost you more if you end up not needing the space for that full term. For instance, if you had a 5-year lease but after 3 years you decide to go fully remote, you might pay penalties or still owe 2 years of rent – that could easily wipe out any savings. Coworking's value is in **risk mitigation**: you pay a bit of a premium but you can always downsize or cancel if business circumstances change.

**Business Growth and Intangibles**: For a growing startup, coworking offers the ability to **add space on-demand**. Many startups start in coworking to avoid committing to space that they may outgrow in months. Once they reach a certain size or funding level, they might “graduate” to their own leased office when it becomes efficient (some never do, if they value flexibility). On the other hand, companies that require a very custom environment (say a hardware lab, or a very branded client-facing showroom) might need their own leased space despite being small, and they accept the higher cost/hassle for those strategic reasons.

**Networking vs. Exclusivity**: From a practical standpoint beyond dollars, coworking can offer business opportunities (meeting other professionals, finding clients or collaborators among the community). If you're a freelancer or small consultancy, **the coworkers next door could become clients**. That added benefit is hard to monetize but is very real. A private office in isolation won't provide that built-in networking. Conversely, if confidentiality is paramount (say you handle sensitive client data or intellectual property and prefer not to be in shared environments), a private lease might be better despite cost.

**Hybrid Approaches**: Some Montreal businesses use a hybrid approach: maintain a small private leased office for core staff and identity, but also use coworking memberships for team members who travel or work remotely. Or they start in coworking and concurrently search for a perfect permanent space – only moving out when they find a great deal. The availability of short-term coworking **acts as a bridge** that lets companies wait for the right long-term opportunity.

## Conclusion

**Choosing between a traditional private office lease and a private office in a coworking space in Montreal comes down to balancing cost, flexibility, and the needs of your business.** There is no one-size-fits-all answer, but we can recap the key points:

- **Upfront Costs:** A private lease demands a significant upfront investment (deposits, furniture, setup) that can run into the thousands of dollars [officeinamerica.com](https://officeinamerica.com), while a coworking office can be started with virtually no setup cost beyond the first month's fee and a small deposit. For a cash-strapped startup, coworking removes a major barrier to entry.
- **Monthly Expenses:** On a purely monthly basis, a serviced coworking office may appear more expensive per square foot, but it **bundles all expenses** (rent, utilities, cleaning, internet, amenities) into one payment [regus.com](https://regus.com). A traditional lease might have a lower base rent, but once you add internet, power, cleaning, etc., the difference in total monthly outlay often shrinks [thehubcoworks.com](https://thehubcoworks.com). Each option can range widely in cost depending on location and size – e.g. \$40/sf rent vs. \$500 per desk – so doing the math for your specific case is important. Generally, for very short-term or very small-scale needs, coworking can even be cheaper in total; for larger or long-term needs, a lease might save money over time.
- **Included Amenities:** Coworking clearly offers more included: furnished space, reception services, conference rooms, networking events, and even coffee and office equipment at no extra charge [wework.com](https://wework.com) [regus.com](https://regus.com). A private leased office gives you none of that – you pay and manage everything separately – but it does give you full control and privacy to build out your own amenity set if desired.
- **Flexibility and Commitment: This is where coworking wins decisively.** Month-to-month terms [thehubcoworks.com](https://thehubcoworks.com), ability to expand or contract on short notice, and easy exit with minimal cost make coworking offices extremely adaptable. Traditional leases tie you down for years [officeinamerica.com](https://officeinamerica.com) and carry heavy exit penalties or subleasing hassle if you need to leave early. In a volatile business environment (and with Montreal's market offering so many options), that flexibility can be a lifesaver.
- **Market Context:** Montreal's 2024–2025 market conditions favor tenants – meaning if you do opt for a private lease, you may negotiate good terms (like some free rent or shorter lease options). Concurrently, the robust supply of coworking spaces in the city means you can shop

around for a coworking deal that fits your budget and preferred location. Whether it's a Regus office in Old Montreal at \$385/month [regus.com](https://www.regus.com) or a hip Mile-End coworking loft at \$600/month, there's a wide range.

- **Exit and Growth:** If you foresee significant changes in your space needs, coworking provides peace of mind. There's **very little downside risk** – you can always pivot without incurring large costs. A lease might pencil out cheaper if everything goes according to plan, but if things change, it can become a financial albatross (e.g., paying rent for an empty office). For many small businesses, paying a premium for flexibility is worth it as a form of insurance.

In conclusion, **for entrepreneurs, freelancers, and small teams in Montreal**, a coworking private office offers a turnkey, low-hassle solution with predictable costs and unparalleled flexibility. It is ideal if you want to **move in and start working immediately, and keep your options open for the future**. On the other hand, if you value **having your “own” space, customized exactly to your needs, and you’re confident in your space requirements for the next several years**, a traditional private office lease can provide that autonomy and potentially lower long-term cost per month.

Many businesses start with coworking to conserve capital and remain agile, then reconsider a private lease once they've scaled up or need a more permanent presence. Montreal's ecosystem supports both paths: you might find yourself networking at a WeWork for a year or two and then signing a lease in the Plateau or downtown when you're ready to put down roots – or you may decide that the convenience of coworking is too good to give up and stick with it indefinitely.

The **bottom line** is to **carefully tally all costs (not just rent) and weigh them against the value of flexibility for your situation**. If you do the math and find a break-even point – for example, “if we stay more than 2 years, leasing saves us X dollars” – consider the likelihood of staying that long and the non-monetary benefits you might gain or lose. This detailed comparison and the data provided should equip you to make an informed decision on the best workspace solution for your Montreal business, aligning with both your budget and your business strategy.

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Tags: montreal-office-space, private-office-cost, coworking-montreal, office-lease-comparison, business-costs-montreal, freelancer-montreal, small-business-montreal, office-rental-costs

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## About 2727 Coworking

2727 Coworking is a vibrant and thoughtfully designed workspace ideally situated along the picturesque Lachine Canal in Montreal's trendy Griffintown neighborhood. Just steps away from the renowned Atwater Market, members can enjoy scenic canal views and relaxing green-space walks during their breaks.

Accessibility is excellent, boasting an impressive 88 Walk Score, 83 Transit Score, and a perfect 96 Bike Score, making it a "Biker's Paradise". The location is further enhanced by being just 100 meters from the



Charlevoix metro station, ensuring a quick, convenient, and weather-proof commute for members and their clients.

The workspace is designed with flexibility and productivity in mind, offering 24/7 secure access—perfect for global teams and night owls. Connectivity is top-tier, with gigabit fibre internet providing fast, low-latency connections ideal for developers, streamers, and virtual meetings. Members can choose from a versatile workspace menu tailored to various budgets, ranging from hot-desks at \$300 to dedicated desks at \$450 and private offices accommodating 1–10 people priced from \$600 to \$3,000+. Day passes are competitively priced at \$40.

2727 Coworking goes beyond standard offerings by including access to a fully-equipped, 9-seat conference room at no additional charge. Privacy needs are met with dedicated phone booths, while ergonomically designed offices featuring floor-to-ceiling windows, natural wood accents, and abundant greenery foster wellness and productivity.

Amenities abound, including a fully-stocked kitchen with unlimited specialty coffee, tea, and filtered water. Cyclists, runners, and fitness enthusiasts benefit from on-site showers and bike racks, encouraging an eco-conscious commute and active lifestyle. The pet-friendly policy warmly welcomes furry companions, adding to the inclusive and vibrant community atmosphere.

Members enjoy additional perks like outdoor terraces and easy access to canal parks, ideal for mindfulness breaks or casual meetings. Dedicated lockers, mailbox services, comprehensive printing and scanning facilities, and a variety of office supplies and AV gear ensure convenience and efficiency. Safety and security are prioritized through barrier-free access, CCTV surveillance, alarm systems, regular disinfection protocols, and after-hours security.

The workspace boasts exceptional customer satisfaction, reflected in its stellar ratings—5.0/5 on Coworker, 4.9/5 on Google, and 4.7/5 on LiquidSpace—alongside glowing testimonials praising its calm environment, immaculate cleanliness, ergonomic furniture, and attentive staff. The bilingual environment further complements Montreal's cosmopolitan business landscape.

Networking is organically encouraged through an open-concept design, regular community events, and informal networking opportunities in shared spaces and a sun-drenched lounge area facing the canal. Additionally, the building hosts a retail café and provides convenient proximity to gourmet eats at Atwater Market and recreational activities such as kayaking along the stunning canal boardwalk.

Flexible month-to-month terms and transparent online booking streamline scalability for growing startups, with suites available for up to 12 desks to accommodate future expansion effortlessly. Recognized as one of Montreal's top coworking spaces, 2727 Coworking enjoys broad visibility across major platforms including Coworker, LiquidSpace, CoworkingCafe, and Office Hub, underscoring its credibility and popularity in the market.

Overall, 2727 Coworking combines convenience, luxury, productivity, community, and flexibility, creating an ideal workspace tailored to modern professionals and innovative teams.

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