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Building a dental legacy: Inside the creation of Maya Dental Clinic's third location

12/01/2025 by Darcie Galbraith, BA, Interior Design Coach; Peter Barry, C.M.C., Practice Success Coach



The why: Background story

For Dr. Donna B. Rivera and husband, Malvin Rivera, dentistry has been the heartbeat of their Canadian dream. Originally from the Philippines, the couple eventually settled in Edmonton, Alberta, with a shared vision to build a life rooted in dental care, [community, and purpose](#). In 2018, they opened their first dental practice, a small three-operator clinic in a building they purchased. The hands-on experience of being landlords and building patient relationships inspired their passion for creating meaningful healthcare spaces. This inspiration led to a second clinic in 2023 on Edmonton's west side, which quickly thrived due to patient trust and [word of mouth](#). With that location flourishing, they chose to continue expanding their entrepreneurial reach by opening a third location in South Edmonton Common, a mega-outlet mall and popular shopping destination. The name "[Maya](#)" Dental Clinic is inspired by the Maya bird of the Philippines, which symbolizes resilience, freedom, and community values that mirror their journey and philosophies of care.



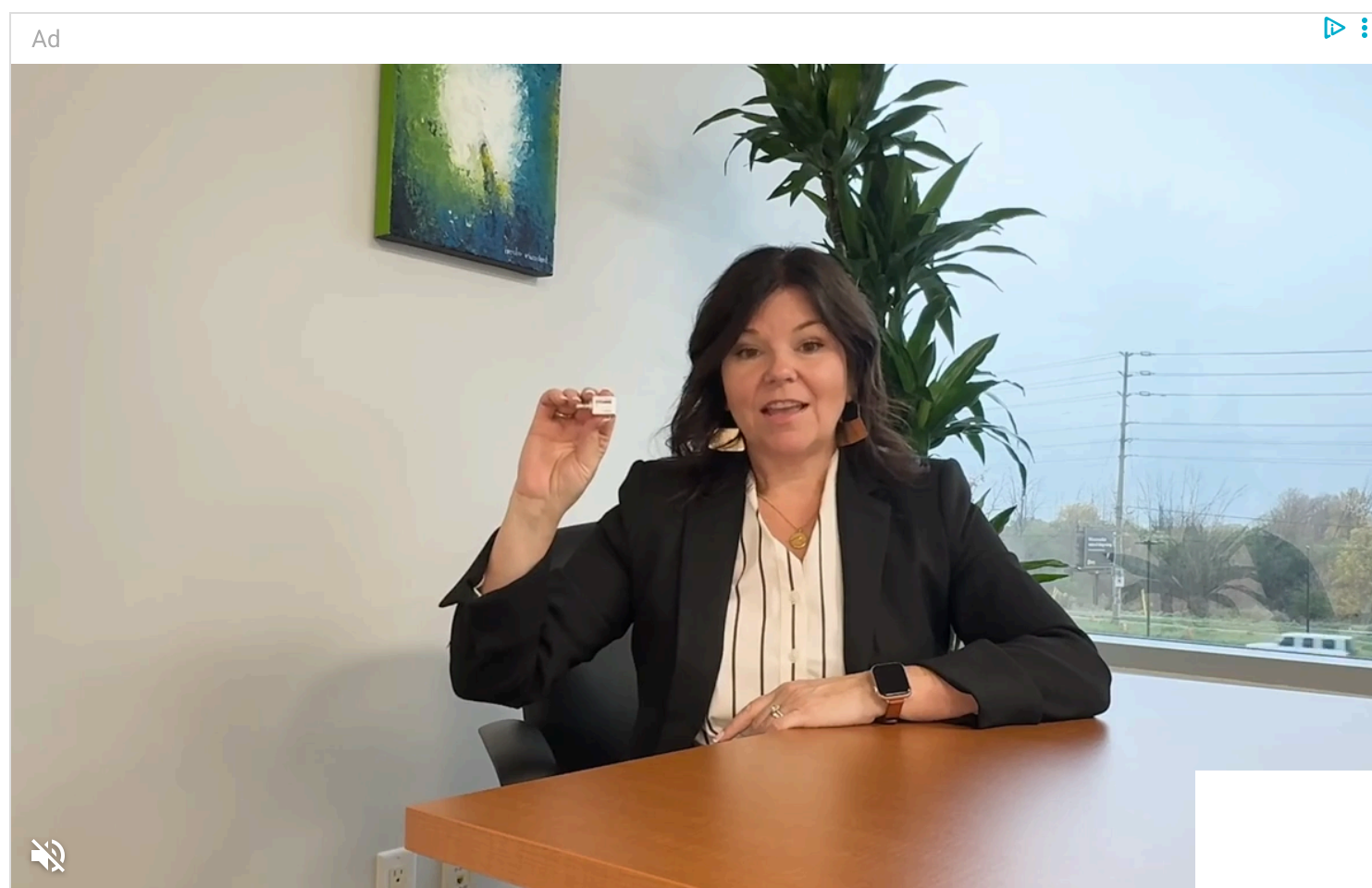
The how: Strategic project planning

The Riveras knew their next location needed to offer visibility, convenience, and comfort. When a space became available next to Ikea and surrounded by other major retailers, it felt like the perfect opportunity. The 2800 sq/ft ground-floor site offered ample parking, strong consumer traffic flow, and easy access for families. By August 2024, they had secured the unit and began designing a clinic that would expand their healthcare reach while elevating technology, workflow, and efficient delivery of patient care. This third location featured here has six operatories, a welcoming reception area, and flexible layout that supports future growth. Drawing on lessons from previous builds, they chose to custom fabricate cabinetry throughout the practice for maximum control of ergonomic design and functionality. Their meticulous planning and efficient collaboration with the design and trades teams ensured a smooth process. When the clinic opened in August 2025, it stood as a celebration of vision, teamwork, and community care.



The results: Technical design features

Maya Dental Clinic's aesthetic draws inspiration from Japanese minimalism, a design philosophy grounded in calm, simplicity, and purposeful harmony. The space embraces organic textures, soft neutral tones, and clean architectural lines that invite a sense of serenity from the moment one enters. The reception area unfolds with gentle curves, opening into an airy, multifunctional space that is also designed to host CE events and team gatherings. The operatory hallway features double entry open doorways leading into each op, with each dental chair oriented to face the entrance rather than the traditional "chairback-towards-the-door" orientation. Each operatory is designed for comfort, accessibility, and warmth. This intentional design creates an intuitive flow that balances privacy with openness and connection. Thoughtful details such as blossom wall coverings and curated décor bring a sense of calm sophistication, while the expanded work areas allow for efficient collaborative workflow throughout the office.





The outcome: Practice success & community impact

This third location represents the fulfillment of an expanding entrepreneurial dream. For Dr. Donna and Malvin as head of operations, their journey is a testament to perseverance and faith, reminding them that with good planning, adaptability and vision, big dreams can transform into reality. Maya Dental Clinic is a place where they can serve healthcare to their community, create employment opportunities for others, and continue doing what they love each day. Their story inspires other dental professionals with startup aspirations, to believe in their potential by staying committed to their purpose. From their first three-operatory clinic to this thriving modern location, the Riveras have proven that passion and resilience can transform humble beginnings into lasting legacies. Maya Dental Clinic stands as a symbol of what can happen when vision courage and purpose meet heart centered dental care.



- **Interior Design:** Bold Interior Design Inc.
- **Contractor:** Seagate Contract Management
- **Equipment Supplier:** Henry Schein Dental

[VIEW ROOM CONFIGURATION](#)

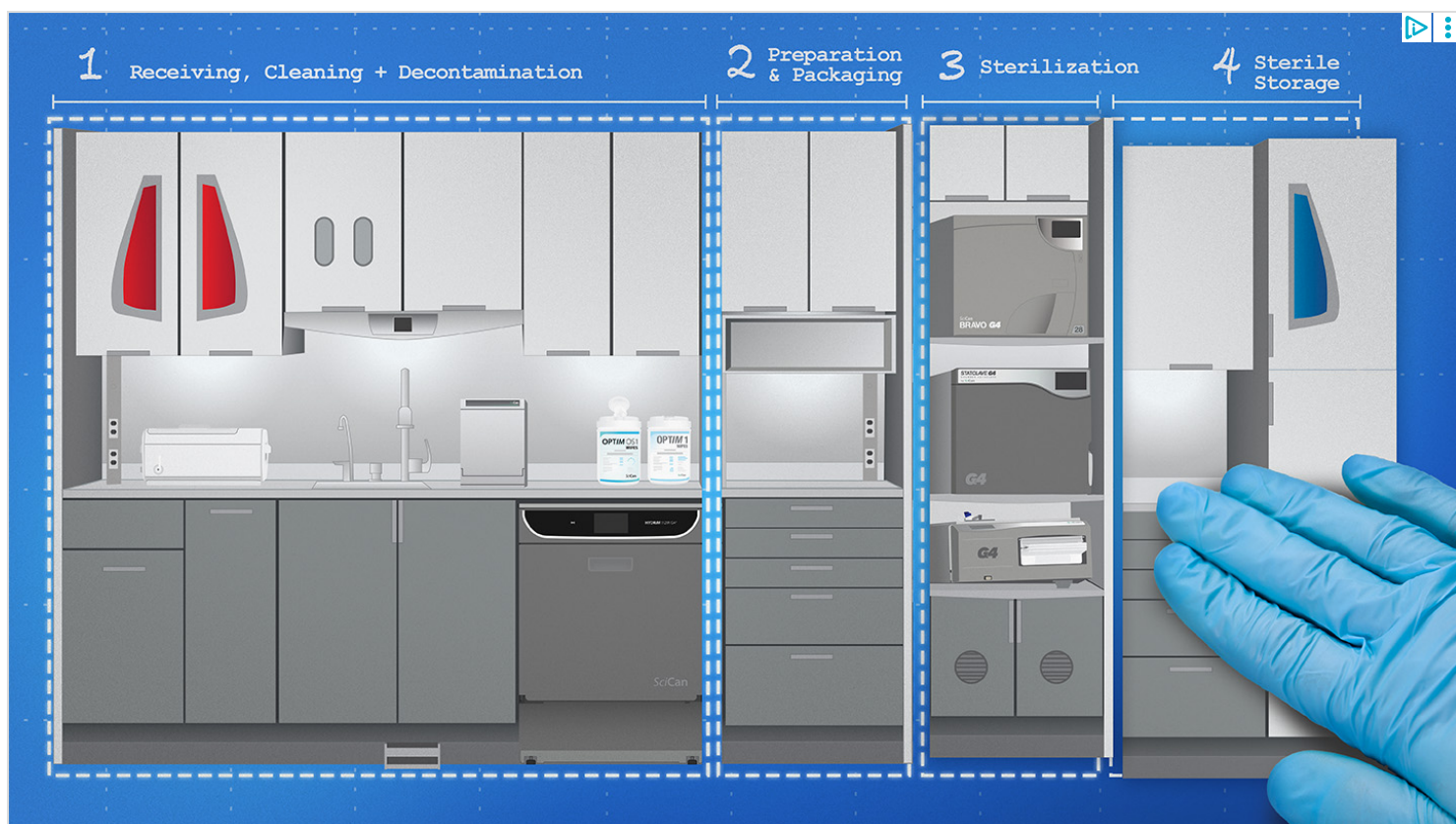
About the authors



Darcie is co-founder of Bella Vita Designs Inc, an interior design company specializing in creating beautiful, functional spaces for start-ups, remodelling, expanding, or relocating your dream practice. To discuss your office space needs or to have your proud story & unique design featured, she can be reached at darcie@bellavitadesigns.ca / IG [@bellavitadesignsinc](#) / 905-716-8528.



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