

No. 4 midsize company: MetroNational

Sky's the limit when a company has a place called The Treehouse

By [Andrea Rumbaugh](#) Updated 6:00 pm, Thursday, November 6, 2014



MetroNational has long cultivated collaboration in the workplace, and a new building — called The Treehouse — is like a nest for employees to develop their ideas.

The Treehouse, completed this summer, is adjacent to MetroNational's corporate office. It's accessed by an outdoor walkway that gently bounces, making it reminiscent of a swinging bridge. On the roof is a garden and a grill for cookouts. Among the nifty features inside, there's a variety of seating and spaces for employees to work and brainstorm.

"The whole reasoning behind The Treehouse was to create an environment where collaboration and creativity are really nurtured and fostered," said Loc McNew, president of MetroNational.

The company's workplace environment and collaboration helped rank MetroNational No. 4 among midsize companies on the 2014 Top Workplaces list, compiled by WorkplaceDynamics.

MetroNational is a real estate development, investment and management company founded in 1954. It employs about 165 people in Houston and is best known for developing Memorial City, which opened in 1962 as a small shopping center. Memorial City is now a mixed-use development with 7.6 million square feet of developed real estate. Plans for growth include developing land, such as a vacant tract north of Interstate 10.

As for being a top workplace, McNew emphasized work-life balance and wellness. Employees can join sports teams, and they can earn cash rewards by participating in wellness programs.

"We want our employees to be happy and healthy," he said. "In addition to them being happier, it also enhances productivity."

Billy Reed, vice president and director of tax, started working at MetroNational in 1982. He likes the opportunities and challenges, and he feels appreciated.

"You feel like they do value what you do and you as a person," he said.