

THE EXISTING FACILITY

During the four days on-site the consultant had the opportunity to experience use of the Snow Library throughout the morning, afternoon, and evening. He could see some of the coming and going of the customers, observe the use of the computers, persons in the bookstacks, staff at their desks discharging their tasks, programs in the Craine Meeting Room, etc. The consultant received a good, albeit brief, exposure to the plusses and minuses of the facility.

The building was constructed in 1954. Between then and 2001 there have been two additions. It is difficult to determine if there was any significant renovation of already existing space when new space was added. It does appear that the mechanical system of the facility has not received a great deal of attention – at least lasting attention.

The building is showing its age, now being 55-56 years old. It is a middle-aged facility.

Certainly there are ample examples of quality library buildings much older than the Snow Library. In Massachusetts, the most notable is the McKim Library, the research center of the Boston Central Library. That historic building dates to the late 1800s.

The consultant knows that building very well, having been involved in the last two renovations of the structure, the last just last year (planning completed last year, funding has not yet been secured for implementing the planning).

This study is a space needs planning study. It is not an architectural or engineering study of the facility. Therefore, this chapter of the report will focus on the space needs of the Snow Library.

SPACE NEEDS

As indicated in chapter 2, the consultant conducted a thorough inventory of all of the spaces and the various furniture and equipment elements within the building. He included in the inventory the staff roster and collection count afforded him by the Library Director. The collection count is, of course, only valid for the moment it was taken off the CLAMS network as the Library is continuously adding and subtracting materials.

With the number of staff, collections, tables, chairs, etc. in hand, the consultant next entered all of the data into a Library Space Planning Spreadsheet that computes the amount of net square footage needed for each element based upon a set of Library Space Standards the consultant has developed based upon his considerable amount of work with public libraries of all sizes throughout the United States.

The consultant firmly believes that the Library Space Standards, when applied, render a library facility in total compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and results in a user-friendly

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- 2015 – shortfall of space declines to 9,359 as a result of consultant recommendations for downsizing, or weeding, the collections
- 2020 – shortfall grows to 18,062 as new elements are provided such as group study rooms
- 2025 – shortfall now at 21,515 as more new elements are provided and the collection increases to keep pace with population growth
- 2030 – shortfall reaches 22,204 total square feet to keep pace with population growth.

Therefore, the amount of space that the Snow Library should have based upon the consultant's recommendations for staff size, collection size, seating, number of computers, gathering spaces, and support spaces such as public service desk stations, Friends of the Library space, and the like is 33,926.

The number of parking spaces, computed at one space for every 300 square feet of building, would be 129 (public, staff, and handicap combined).¹

What are some of the new elements the consultant recommends for a bigger and better public library to serve Orleans? What would assist in making the Snow Library an even better destination place for all of Orleans?

¹ The consultant has found that if a local community has parking standards or guidelines for library facilities the local standards/guidelines most often understate the parking needs by a considerable factor.

building (no crowded shelves, no tall shelves, ample aisle spacing, etc.). Please refer to the appendices for the Standards and the Spreadsheet.

The results of taking the Inventory and applying the space standards produced the following space needs for the Snow Library.

THE CURRENT SPACE NEEDS OF THE SNOW LIBRARY

Today, the Snow Library facility has a space deficit 10,581 total square feet when the consultant's space standards are applied to all of the elements within the building.

In terms of parking, there should be 83 parking spaces based on a formula of one space for every 200 total square feet of building. The Library now has 37 parking spaces.

LOOKING FORWARD TWENTY YEARS TO 2030

For over 50 years library planners and programmers have used 20 years as the ideal planning horizon. That is, good planning should project 20 years into the future. To plan only for today, tomorrow, or even for the next five or 10 years will usually result in a new, or expanded facility, being almost as crowded as it was prior to the initiation of the planning cycle because it can take anywhere from one or two years to three or four for the recommendations of a planning study to be fully implemented.

The Library Space Planning Spreadsheet forecasts the following:

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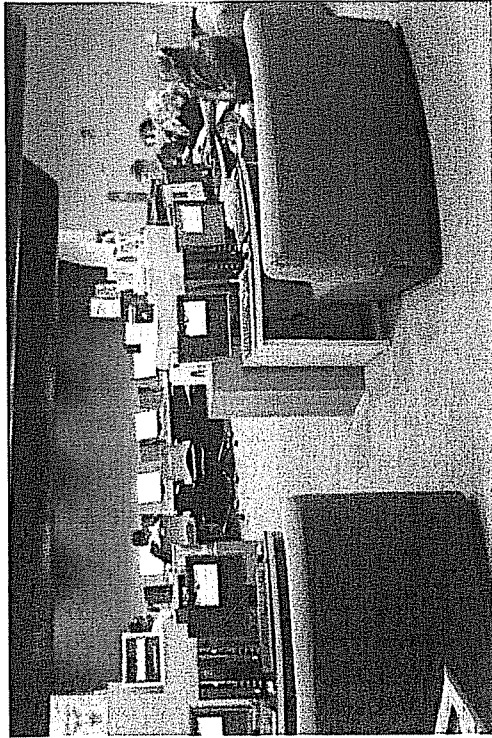
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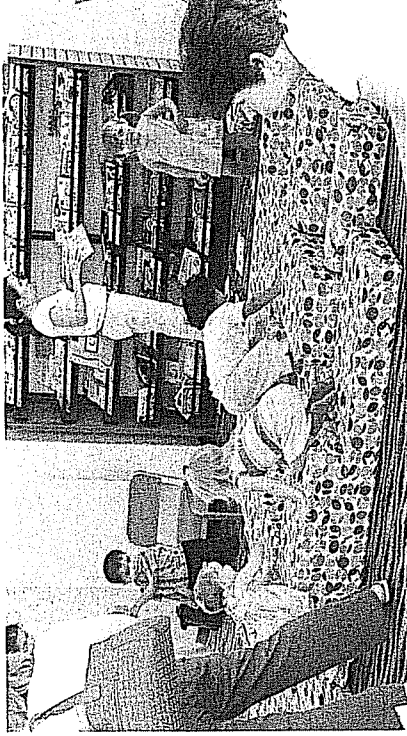
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Here are a few ideas.

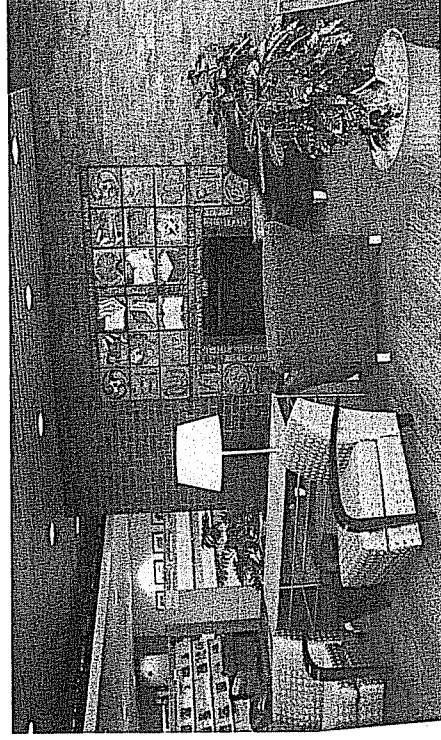
- More computers for adults
- Computers for teens and children



- A special room for children's programming
- Two or three group study rooms
- One more conference room
- Larger spaces for both teens and children



- More seating for all users



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- Expanded and enhanced staff work space



- A library coffee cart
- A Friends of the Library store and ample workspace.

With a projected service area population of 9,062 (Orleans residents plus a 30 percent factor for non-residents) the space per capita would be 3.74. Now, in 2010, the space per capita is 2.01. A very healthy increase, no doubt about it.

Can there be less space? Of course. How to reduce the projected size of the building? Here are some ways:

- Reducing the collection size is the most certain way because the space for collections accounts for 29 percent of the total net square feet

- Reducing the size of the Craine Meeting Room
- Providing only one Conference Room
- Eliminating a Children's Program Room and a Training Room, e.g. computer lab
- Reducing the number of customer seats from a projected 172 to 136
- Eliminating the space for the Friends of the Library
- Discarding the Library Coffee Cart and a Library Store
- Retaining an open air Loading Dock instead of a covered one
- Having less storage and supply space
- Having a smaller staff room
- Eliminating a Maintenance Room
- Reducing the size of the Entrance Lobby and Vestibule.

How much total space could be reduced if all of the above were implemented? Taking all, most all, of the above would result in a space reduction somewhere in the neighborhood of 8,000 to 10,000 square feet. Thus, the building size would be between 24,000 to 26,000 square feet.

In the next and final chapter a series of Options are presented and discussed.