

Preparing for Change

2017: Space Study

The Carmel Clay Public Library opened the doors of the current facility on May 2, 1999. We are now in our 20th year of operation. Throughout this time, the library has been dependably and heavily used by the community. The library today consistently receives well over half a million visits a year and records circulation rates exceeding 2 million annually.

During the two decades of operation of the current facility, technology and patron usage patterns have changed significantly. To that point, our digital collection continues to grow and thrive, while areas such as print reference can be re-imagined. Our library has continued to respond to these changes. Light interior renovations were made in 2008. In 2010, the library converted to RFID technology and transitioned to a self-check environment. In recent years, the library took steps to better meet demand in other parts of the community by adding little free library locations, setting up a book return drop-off in the west side of town, and by creating a Mobile Library. All of these steps significantly helped the library keep pace with community needs, yet demand is still up and usage patterns continue to change.

In early 2017, we embarked on a process to re-imagine our library. We knew we had some specific facility problems, with an insufficiently small teen area and Program Room being two primary examples. We began by having discussions among the board and staff. We quickly reached consensus on some preliminary conclusions. Our preliminary findings from our space study were:

- Seating capacity: At any given day, there may well not be a place to sit in the library, particularly during the hours of 3:00 to 6:00. Currently the library offers 408 places to sit, not counting seats in the computer areas and other designated seating with a specific purpose. Increased seating capacity that is in keeping with the high standards and aesthetic of the library are needed.
- Study Room demand: The high demand of study rooms is evident. Additional rooms that have a seating capacity greater than six is needed.
- Flexible space. Our spaces need to have multi-functionality to them.
- Program Room capacity: currently our program room can handle a maximum of 200 people in attendance, but truly it feels crowded after 100. This limitation seriously inhibits the library's capacity to grow summer reading and other programs and community events.
- Additional program rooms/space is also needed, including meeting space for community organizations.
- Front Lobby: currently contains a large assortment of catalog stations, a map of the facility and a lot of empty space.
- Book Club Room: this room has been generally underutilized.

- Periodical Room: this is a fairly large space with seating for 30. The room is rarely at full capacity except for times when seating is scarce. Circulation is also declining for periodicals, as well as the collection size.
- Teen Space: while the library does have a dedicated teen department and area, the space is generally too small, both in collection size and for teen programming. YA publishing has exploded in popularity since the YA department was designed.
- Computer Lab, Training Lab and CYS Computer Room: usage is declining and technology needs are different. These spaces may be re-conceptualized to be utilized with greater efficiency.
- Café area: would be useful to have greater seating capacity, currently at 38 and frequently not enough during the after-school rush.
- Integrated technology: the library may be able to employ integrated technology to much greater effect, such as rooms with LED screens capable of easily connecting to devices, digital signage throughout the building, etc.
- Early Literacy area needs to be re-conceptualized.
- A permanent space for the Digital Media Lab is needed.
- Collections and collection space needs to be evaluated.
- More public art/gallery space is needed.
- Adequate space is needed to host traveling exhibits.
- Recycling options for patrons are needed.
- Provide additional keycard access for staff into secure zones to allow for increased security and mobility.

2017/2018: MSR and Developing a Vision

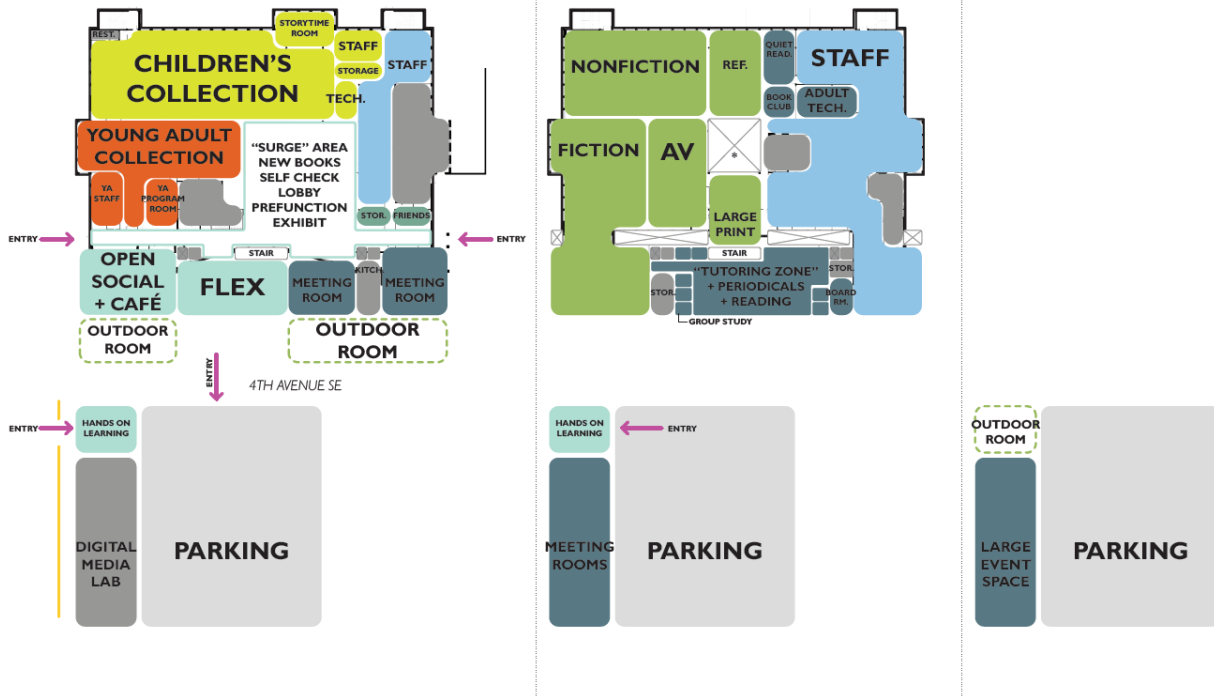
By July 2017, we had selected MSR to lead us through a visioning process. We worked towards developing a new vision by holding additional board and staff meetings, and through a series of meetings with the public and various stakeholders. Workshops with staff, board, stakeholders, and the community were held on the following dates in 2017-2018: August 22, September 21, October 23, November 13, December 15, January 15, February 1, and February 15. The master vision process culminated in April 2018, where the vision was presented to the public.



The vision presented involved a renovated and expanded library facility, with a parking deck to support the expansion. This version of the parking deck was anticipated to be in our west lot with a sky bridge to the main facility:

RENOVATION & ADDITION

MSR 58



2018/2019: West Branch

The other major component that emerged from the visioning process was the need for a west side branch location. Directly prior to the visioning process, we had conducted a community survey in 2017, and that had indicated a desire by patrons for a branch location. The very first action we took in pursuit of our new vision was to purchase property at 12770 Horseferry Drive in May 2018, with the intention of renovating the property into our first branch location.

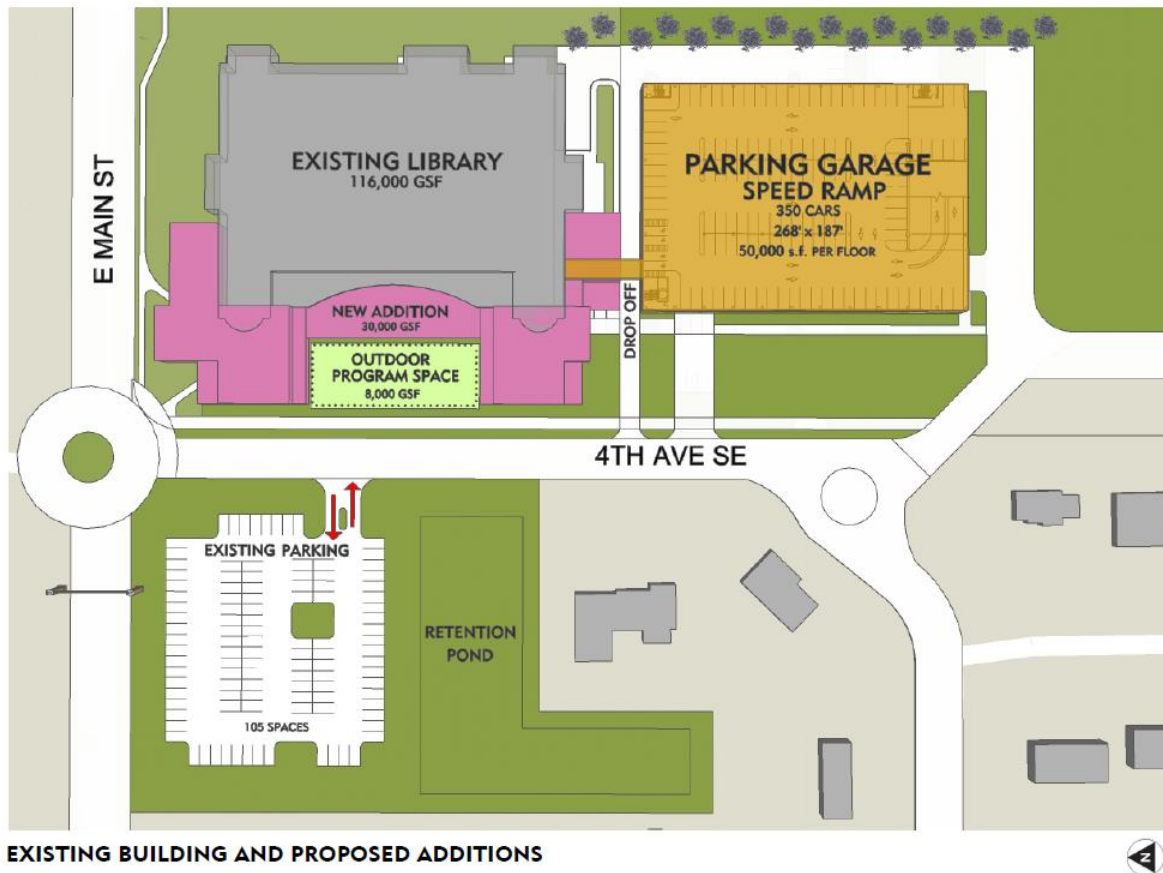


We partnered with Rowland Design to develop the space. While our original intention was to lightly renovate the space and quickly open it as a branch, we developed a grander vision to better serve the community. We held a community meeting on August 8, 2018 and gained a sharper focus of what our patrons wanted from a branch. The branch would go on to be planned incorporating an enclosed porch, a drive-up book return, and a second floor with study areas. We hired CTI Construction as Owner's Rep and in April 2019, the library board awarded the construction contract to Stenz Construction. Construction began in late April and continues through the summer. We are anticipating the completion of construction by mid-October to mid-November.



2018/2019: Advancing the Vision

In November 2018, the library began a new partnership with the architectural firm of RATIO. The goal: to develop our vision into schematic design and ultimately into a viable project that will propel us into 2020 and the future of the library. Kevin Huse and his team at RATIO began with some programmatic work, meeting with library staff and developing more precise estimates of needed space and anticipated costs. While the original vision called for the creation of a parking structure on the west lot, a careful analysis of anticipated costs as well as functionality led the library board to elect to go in another direction: a parking deck on the south lot. This clarity in direction has allowed RATIO to advance schematic design work. The west lot will continue to be an important component of the library's parking strategy, at a minimum through the duration of the project's construction. At the July board meeting, the board will review new layouts and concepts of our project.



We are currently in the process of hiring a Construction Manager and reviewing the timeline of required steps to begin our significant improvement project.

2019: Preparing for Change

As our project gets closer, we have much to do to prepare. The following are major goals for 2019 to better position the library for pending change:

- **Teen area:** the original impetus for the renovation project began with the teen area. It is evident to all that a much larger space dedicated to our teens is needed. We are now far enough along in our project that I believe it is appropriate to take some more immediate steps for improvement for the area. Specifically, we will be replacing much of the old furniture in the department with newer furniture that will immediately accomplish two goals: attract more teens and give the area greater seating capacity. How will it attract more teens? By virtue of providing a plethora of power options for all the devices we know teens carry on their person: phones, tablets, laptops, etc. Furniture will be replaced by the end of this summer.
- **Updated/new online experience:** we are actively preparing to transition our catalog discovery layer to BiblioCore, a better searching/catalog experience for patrons that is completely scalable to mobile. To correspond with the pending new catalog, we are actively looking at new solutions for our web site, calendar system, and in-house digital

signage. We want a seamless online experience that works equally well in desktop or mobile environments.

- Rebranding: since we anticipate an aggressive marketing campaign around our project, the branch, and other elements such as our increasingly popular and relevant digital collection, now is the time to refresh our brand. This effort will include developing a new logo for the library. The new design will in turn inform the look of a new web site for the library. We are preparing to select a marketing firm to help guide us through this process.
- Internal review: we plan to streamline our evaluation process and move towards a model with a common set of attributes and timeline. Additionally, we are partnering with *Emplify* to help us analyze staff satisfaction and engagement. I want us to get even better with our messaging to staff, to ensure that we are properly understanding staff concerns and ideas, and for all of us to be on the same page to the greatest degree possible.
- Strategic Planning: our current three year strategic plan comes to a close at the end of 2019. Christy Walker will provide more details about how we did in achieving our goals. We now need to look towards creating the next three year strategic plan. To that end, I am reviewing a proposal from Phil Anderson from *ReThink! Consulting* to facilitate the process for us. Mr. Anderson has facilitated a number of area strategic plans, including for the Carmel International Arts Festival and the Carmel Arts Council, to name a few. I have shared with Mr. Anderson the ALA Planning for Results model of planning, which I find to be effective. He has in turn developed a proposal for a planning process based on that model.

Thank you for being such an engaged and supportive library board. Special thanks to Jack Stafford, who is wrapping up his 16th year and final month of service in June as a trustee.

Thank
You!
-Bob

