

Chapter 4 [Facilities]

The physical library remains central to library service. While no one model could meet every unique local need, some requirements are common to most public libraries. These include adequate and accessible space to house and circulate the collections; comfortable and attractive public spaces for the public; comfortable work and lounge areas for staff; and space for board meetings, story times, and other library programs. As the mission of public libraries expands, space will be required for new uses that weren't previously seen as library offerings. Most of these uses rely on flexible space and a high degree of connectivity. Flexibility is the single most important design goal. To the greatest degree possible, opt for features that are plugged in, not built in.

APPLICABLE CORE STANDARDS – Please see Core Standards 2, 3, 4, 13, 18, 19, and 24 in Chapter 1.

FACILITIES STANDARDS

1. The library provides the right amount of space of the right kind to meet the provisions of its long-range/strategic plan.
2. At least once every five years, the board directs a review of the library's long-term space needs.
3. The library develops a facility plan and annual budget for maintenance of building and grounds and fixed asset replacements.
4. The library building supports the implementation of current and future telecommunications and electronic information technologies.
5. The library, including branches or other service points, is located at a site that is determined to be most convenient for the community.
6. The library provides adequate, safe, well-lighted, and convenient parking during all hours of service. The minimum number of required parking spaces is usually governed by local ordinance. In the absence of local standards, the parking space provision should be one space per 500 square feet of library area.
7. The library's entrance is easily identified, clearly visible, and well illuminated. The entrance faces the direction used by the majority of the patrons.
8. The library has an identifying sign clearly visible from the street. Additional signs guide users from arterial streets to the library.
9. The library has adequate internal signage. All signage is in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.
10. The library has telephones and associated communications devices sufficient to meet user and staff needs including:
 - Telephones in all offices and at all service desks.
 - Automatic equipment to inform callers of library hours.
11. The library has sturdy and comfortable furnishings in sufficient quantity to meet user needs. Space is allocated for child and family use with furniture and equipment designed for use by children. Where possible, furniture shall be equipped with integrated power and data connections to facilitate mobile computing. Furniture that is purposely built for library or other high-traffic public use should be specified whenever possible.
12. The library has enough shelving and other types of display and storage to provide patrons with easy access to all materials. All shelving should be designed for library purposes. Shelving in every area should be appropriately scaled to meet the needs of the user.
13. The library shall be adequately illuminated and provide a number of lighting environments that are suitable for different uses. Natural light will be employed whenever possible.
14. The library has fireproof facilities for the return of library materials when the library is closed.
15. The library has heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems capable of filtering outside air and of maintaining comfortable temperatures throughout the year.
16. The library meets the requirements of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA).

STANDARDS FOR CREATING NEW OR EXPANDED FACILITIES

1. Public library construction, expansion, and major renovation projects are planned by a team consisting of the board or members of the board of trustees, the library administrator and key staff, and a registered professional architect, preferably with experience in the design of libraries. A library building consultant may be utilized when there is a lack of library design experience on the design team.
2. The library, unless it is part of a home rule unit of government, must select an architect in compliance with the *Local Government Professional Services Selection Act* [50 ILCS 510/0.01 *et seq.*]
3. The library's attorney should review all contracts related to any construction project.
4. Space planning should be based on a twenty-year population projection (including probable annexation) and desired improvements in services.
5. The facilities provide the maximum possible flexibility for future changes in design, furnishings, and technology.
6. Data and power should be available throughout the facility.
7. All construction shall comply with federal, state, and local codes and regulations.
8. All areas of the library are designed to meet the floor-loading standard as defined by applicable codes. (Note that many existing buildings that were not designed as libraries cannot meet this requirement. Consult a building design professional whenever giving consideration to re-purposing any existing building for use as a library.)
9. Natural lighting should be used whenever possible. The availability and efficient use of natural light are an important consideration for both energy efficiency and human well-being. With proper planning, natural lighting can be incorporated into library design. All lighting, whether natural or artificial, should be designed to allow rearrangement of library furnishings.
10. Sustainable (Green) Design

Protecting our environment is only one of many compelling reasons to design and build sustainable buildings. Buildings designed in a sustainable manner can offer increased comfort for the occupants, healthier internal environments, lower energy costs, and can promote increased productivity. Libraries should take advantage of their unique educational role to be leaders in sustainable design.

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) provides a method to measure sustainability in the form of the "LEED" (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) program, aimed at both quantifying and promoting green design. Another measurement of sustainability is offered by the "Green Globes" program put forth by the Green Building Initiative. Each of these programs provides an objective system of measurement. Objective measurement plays a critical role in the process of designing and building sustainable buildings.

11. Technology and Library Design

The use of networked computers and multimedia equipment in the work environment adds a new element of complexity when designing a new or remodeling an existing facility. Architects need to carefully integrate technology use into all aspects of the infrastructure planning for space, lighting, electrical, and HVAC. Data and power should be available throughout the facility.

12. *Serving Our Public 3.0* and other library design standards can provide a starting point for determining library design goals. It is important to note that in terms of library design, the industry is changing so quickly that published standards should be seen as a point of departure rather than a destination. A design team that is versed in the changing library environment and abreast of current trends and technology is your best asset.

EXISTING FACILITIES CHECKLIST

- The library provides the right amount of space of the right kind to meet the provisions of its long-range/strategic plan.
- At least once every five years, the board directs a review of the library's long-term space needs.
- Library infrastructure is inspected by qualified professionals as follows:
 - Mechanical systems: annually
 - Alarm and control systems: annually
 - Sprinkler systems and fire extinguishers: annually
 - Roofs: annually
 - Building envelope (doors, windows, sealants, sheathing): every three years
- The library develops a plan and annual budget for maintenance of building and grounds and fixed asset replacements.
- The library building supports the implementation of current and future telecommunications and electronic information technologies.
- The library, including branches or other service points, is located at a site that is determined to be most convenient for the community.
- The library provides adequate, safe, well-lighted, and convenient parking during all hours of service.
- The library has the required number of parking spaces.
- The library's entrance is easily identified, clearly visible, and well lighted.
- The library has an identifying sign clearly visible from the street. Additional signs guide users from arterial streets to the library.
- The library has adequate internal signage.
- All signage is in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.
- The library has telephones and associated communications devices sufficient to meet user and staff needs.
- The library has sturdy and comfortable furnishings in sufficient quantity to meet user needs.
- Space is allocated for child and family use with furniture and equipment designed for use by children.
- The library has enough shelving and other types of display and storage to provide patrons with easy access to all materials.
- Shelving in the areas serving young children is scaled to their needs.
- The library's lighting levels comply with lighting standards.
- The library has fireproof facilities for the return of library materials when the library is closed.
- The library has heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems capable of filtering outside air, maintaining comfortable temperatures throughout the year, and meeting applicable energy code standards.

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- Rhoades, Marcela A. *Applying the ADA: Designing for the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design in Multiple Building Types*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2013.
- Sannwald, William W. *Checklist of Library Building Design Considerations*. 5th ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 2009.

WEBSITES

- U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)
www.usgbc.com