



REVITALIZATION OF HISTORIC RICHMOND MAIN LIBRARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Richmond Main Library was constructed in 1948. While the building maintains much of its original mid-century modern character, it has not received the maintenance and upgrades necessary to meet modern needs due to the fiscal challenges of the community. The building has its original, outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and the finishes are in poor condition. The following items represent the scope of work recommended divided into the categories of Life Safety, Critical Maintenance and Critical Accessibility Improvements.

1. LIFE SAFETY



1.1 COURTYARD

Challenge: The local unhoused population congregates in the Courtyard outside the sole entry to the Community Room and the primary entry to the Children’s Room making patrons feel unsafe. Prior to opening each day, staff must clear the area and the refuse left behind. There are no security cameras and minimal lighting to discourage this use of space. In addition, the existing ramp to the entries is not code compliant limiting accessible public access.

Solution: Create a safe outdoor entry by adding metal security fencing on top of the existing low brick wall and full height security gates at the courtyard entry. Provide an accessible ramp, new seating, new lighting, and a shade structure to utilize this area as an extension of both the Community Room and Children’s Room.

1.2 SESIMIC UPGRADE

Challenge: The Main Library was originally constructed in compliance with the Building Code in effect in 1948 and has not been structurally upgraded in the intervening years. A preliminary analysis indicates the potential for a partial collapse in a major seismic event that represents a significant life safety issue.

Solution: Further engineering analysis is required to define the required upgrade scope, but an allowance is included in the grant request for some basic strengthening of the building’s lateral capacity, connections, collectors, and other seismic upgrade work.

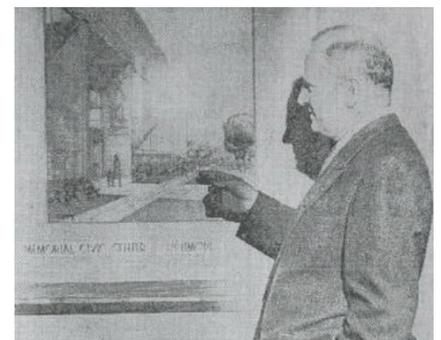


Fig.7: RCC
Image of Timothy L. Pflueger presenting project
(from Richmond Independent, October 9, 1945)

1.3 FIRE ALARM & AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS

Challenge: The Main Library does not have a fire alarm system or an automatic fire sprinkler system.

Solution: Install a modern fire alarm and automatic fire sprinkler system.



1.4 BUILDING ENTRANCE

Challenge: The circulation desk staff cannot see the main entry to the building due to structure. This creates the need for a separate security guard station.

Solution: Modify the Main Library entrance to replace the existing solid wall with glass to improve visibility for staff to monitor who is entering the building.

1.5 NEW SEISMICALLY BRACED SHELVING

Challenge: Existing shelving is very old and is not laterally braced creating a life safety hazard in a seismic event.

Solution: Replace old shelving with modern seismically braced shelving.



2 CRITICAL MAINTENANCE



2.1 LIGHTING & CONTROLS

Challenge: Low levels of lighting are inadequate for library needs and existing fixtures are not energy efficient. There are no centralized switches. Library staff must turn off lighting at an electric breaker panel.

Solution: Replace existing fixtures with modern lighting systems appropriate to the Main Library's historic nature and add a code compliant lighting control system for functionality and energy-efficiency.

2.2 ELECTRICAL POWER UPGRADES

Challenge: The electrical needs of staff and patrons have changed significantly since the Main Library was designed in the 1940s. There are not enough outlets available for staff or patron use in many needed locations. The existing available outlets are not grounded.

Solution: Add a new electrical distribution system in selected parts of the building to provide more power for staff and patron use and to correct unsafe conditions.

2.3 MECHANICAL SYSTEMS UPGRADES

Challenge: The building mechanical system is original and has only had minor upgrades in the last 70 years. Staff report significant black soot coming out of supply registers and landing on work surfaces. The existing system does not provide cooling or effective air filtration which are necessary for the Main Library to serve as a resiliency shelter during times of high heat or smoke. This function is an imperative service in this economically disadvantaged community.

Solution: Replace the existing equipment to provide modern, efficient mechanical systems with high air filtration and air conditioning.

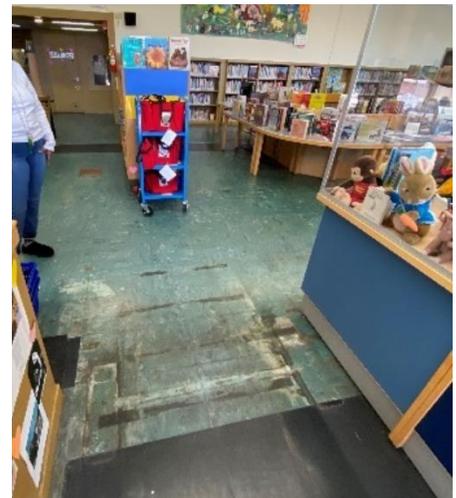




2.4 WINDOW REPLACEMENT

Challenge: Existing window systems are the original single glazed panes and are in disrepair. Additionally, many of the operable windows no longer fully close constituting a security issue.

Solution: Replace the entire window system with modern, high performance glazing complying with modern safety standards.



2.5 FLOOR FINISHES REPLACEMENT

Challenge: Existing VCT flooring is peeling and missing entirely in some areas. It was applied with asbestos adhesive which constitutes a safety hazard. The existing carpet is a tripping hazard with a recent staff workers compensation claim.

Solution: Remediate asbestos during replacement of existing flooring including leveling the subfloor. Provide all new flooring.



2.6 ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS REPLACEMENT

Challenge: Existing acoustic ceilings have been painted over multiple times and lost their absorptive properties. Extensive Water damage has also occurred throughout the building.

Solution: Replace with new ceilings appropriate to building's historic nature.



3 CRITICAL ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

3.1 RESTROOM UPGRADES

Challenge: Existing restrooms have poor lighting and ventilation and are old and decrepit. The incremental accessibility fixes in the main public restrooms have created an inadequate fixture count.

Solution: Fully renovate all restrooms.

3.2 ELEVATOR REPLACEMENT

Challenge: Existing elevator is original to the building. It is not accessible and not possible to retrofit.

Solution: Replace existing elevator with a modern, code-compliant elevator.

