Slater Public Library

Space Needs Assessment

February 2019

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Table of Contents

Overview

Slater Public Library's collections, services and operations are greatly limited by the 3,680 square foot existing building. The meeting space is very inadequate for the attendance at the numerous programs, seating space is very limited, and collection shelving is at capacity. The fact that the building neither feels crowded or unusable is due to the constant efforts of the staff who work very hard to keep the collection to a size that fits in the existing areas and who work tirelessly to move furniture to accommodate the variety of programs held in the building.

The Slater Public Library requested a Space Needs Assessment which is based on the library's own service trends, peer comparisons, and a description of national library trends. Visits were made to the Slater Public Library on November 18, 2018, February 22, 2019, and on January 28, 2019, interviews were conducted with the Library Director, the staff, and the Board of Trustees. The data from their input is incorporated throughout the report. This report provides recommendations regarding the technical space needs which are based on the Wisconsin Division of Library Services.

The service trends and service population suggest that Slater PL occupies an important role in community life not only for Slater but for the other towns in the school district. It is important to note that Slater PL serves the community not only with resources, but the as the FY18 number of visits attest (29,278), Slater PL serves as a community space or even as a "third" place. The concept of "third place" (developed in 1989 by Ray Oldenburg) is distinguished from the home ("first place"), and the workplace or school ("second place") as an environment that allows for the creation of a sense of community. Research has shown that when people frequented a third place, they often experienced strong feelings of attachment to that place as well as to the community at large. Public libraries are perfectly situated to fill the need of a "third place" for every demographic in a community.

The Slater Public Library could plan for as much as 8,559 square feet as a moderate calculation or 10,951 square feet as an optimal calculation to provide for the services and needs of the community expected through the year 2040.

Library Profile

The Slater Public Library provides service to the residents of its community, to rural Story County, to three contracting cities – Alleman, Kelley, and Sheldahl, and to 15 other communities in the vicinity. The Library Director is Jennifer Gogerty, and she has five part-time staff for a total of 2.70 FTE. Library governance is provided by a seven member Board of Trustees:

Julie Astarita   Linette Connell   Liz Gifford   Scott Huisinga   Gregg Jeffryes   Joel Newman   Kathy Reece

The Slater Public Library was established in 1970, and the current building was constructed in 1991. The library at 105 N. Tama St. is a single-story building of 3,680 square feet. The library is open for service Monday through Saturday for a total of 43 hours each week.

Slater Public Library (SPL) Mission Statement:

Serve the community by providing free and open access to a wide variety of materials and programs and technology. **P**rovide an inviting environment for all people to pursue their enjoyment of reading.   **L**earn today, tomorrow and for a lifetime.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2018 the library's physical collections included 13,428 books, 2,849 media items, and 32 periodical titles. In addition, the library's digital collections include 46,074 e-books, and 19,446 downloadable audio books that are available through the State Library system. In FY 2018, the total circulation grew to 35,718, an increase of 3.13% over FY 17. The library currently has 3 public Internet computers. Other digital services include on-line catalog access, Wi-Fi Internet access, and general application software such as a word processing.

The Slater Public Library provides a number of services directed to special populations and interests including adults, seniors, and children. Their strength lies in the areas of children's programming. Children's programs are often so large that they have to turn away special groups who are interested in attending. In FY 2018, library programs attracted 8,346 participants of all ages. In FY 2017, that number was 7,720, while the statewide average for Class C libraries was 2,472 attendees.

National Library Service Trends

Library buildings have been considered important resources in communities for over the past century. Library buildings provide the means for the provision of the wide range of free services: access to books for a full range of ages, access to the latest formats for movies and music, access to the latest technological trends, and an interesting variety of programming for education and entertainment. Due to evolving technologies, library resources and services have changed over the years and they will continue to change to adapt to the needs of their communities. Library buildings will need to be able to adapt to these changing needs as well.

In the future, the Slater Library could remain the community's essential location for providing community connections. It could serve as an important location for educational opportunities for both individuals and groups. It could serve as the space for people to come together to share or explore common interests. It could continue to provide the necessary space for attracting young children to hear and understand good stories. The library could continue to serve as the conduit of the host of services that are provided through the State Library as well. The library will need to be an adaptable space which allows for growth and the ability to reconfigure to meet the changing needs of the community.

The American Library Association and the Center for the Future of Libraries (www.ala.org/tools/future/trends) have identified a variety of Trends that could be important considerations for the long-term planning for libraries. Many of these trends could impact the kinds of spaces needed to provide desired services. Other factors which will impact libraries will be the continued changes brought through technological advances.

The Library as Community Center

One of the most valuable aspects of libraries can be the provision of meeting spaces which provide opportunities for a wide variety of library and community-sponsored events that educate and entertain. Most of these spaces allow for digital projection, audio systems, smart boards, video-conferencing and controlled lighting. They can also include limited kitchen facilities for educational or entertainment purposes.

Several of the ALA identified Future Trends which would require community space include *Creative Placemaking* (brings together a wide range of potential partners to impact and enhance a community), *Fandom* (brings together community members who share a common interest, and may engage those who haven't previously utilized the library), *Gamification* (libraries can provide the setting for games which can help build community and encourage social skills), *Maker Movement* (libraries can provide the space and some of the resources for those wanting to expand their skills), and *Resilience* (the incorporation of preparations for and rapid recovery from physical, social and economic disasters which requires community involvement).

The Library as Collaborative Space

Collaborative spaces support a wide range of activities such as committees for community service organizations, tutoring, or school projects. These spaces provide semi-private areas for 1-6 people.

ALA Future Trends that could be impacted by collaborative space include: *Co-Working/Co-Living* (brings individuals and teams together in a shared space to collaborate or share ideas) and *Sharing Economy* (allows users to share resources, goods, services and skills) which may be important to forge connections in changing communities.

The Library as Informal Gathering Place

An important community need that is also filled by libraries is that of a free relaxed space for conversation and discussion, ie., a place to get away from home. This need can be met by a variety of informal and comfortable seating areas.

The staff noted that the library has been serving as a destination spot for families in its service area. It is serving as a third place in the community.

ALA Future Trends that encompass this need include: *Income Inequality* (neutral space that brings people together and helps ameliorate disadvantages of poverty are important), and *Unplugged* (quiet spaces in libraries can be valued as places to unplug, concentrate, and focus).

The Library as a Resource for Emergent Literacy

The importance of early childhood learning is underscored by programs like Book Babies, 1000 Books before Kindergarten, and Summer Reading Programs. Libraries provide important venues that encourage children to learn through play and discovery.

An ALA Future Trend that could be counter-balanced by libraries would be: *Connected Toys* (libraries could provide places for unstructured play with a variety of children).

The Library for Tweens and Teens and Emerging Adults

Teens and tweens are in need of places that provide programs, technologies, and materials that help them negotiate their transition to adulthood. Having a safe space to hang out, a "third place," could be of particular importance for Slater since the high school is in Huxley, and teens may want a place to be after school.

The ALA Future Trend that aligns with tween and teen concerns include: *Connected Learning* (through equal access to new and emerging technologies, older students are better able to integrate into connected learning environments), and *Emerging Adulthood* (the recognition that the period from late teens through the twenties is a time of distinct psychological and behavioral characteristics with separate needs).

Slater Public Library Service Trend Data with Peer Comparisons

The data is taken from the library's annual report to the State Library of Iowa and from the State Library's website. Slater is a Class C library, meaning it serves a city with a population between 1000-2499. The average Class C library serves a population of 1550 as compared to Slater's 2016 population of 1,497. There are 133 Class C libraries in Iowa.

Cambridge is a size B library (500-999); Huxley is a size D library (2,500-4,999).
Please Note – While the FY 2018 Slater data is available now, the 2018 Class C average date is not available at this time.

	Open Hours Per Week	Staff Total FTE	Registered Borrowers	Total Income Per Capita	Visits	Visits Per Capita	Number of Programs	Program Attendance
FY 2014 Slater	43	2.30	1,041	$84.88	28,194	n/a	256	5,975
FY 2015 Slater	43	2.13	1,151	$79.57	28,777	19.33	275	7,502
FY 2016 Slater	43	2.18	991	$81.53	26,662	17.91	297	7,865
FY 2017 Slater	43	2.70	1,092	$89.56	27,498	18.47	328	7,720
C Class Libraries FY 2017 Average	38	1.74	1,715	$63.08	15,609	10.07	144	2,472
FY 2018 Slater	43	2.70	1,177	n/a	29,278	n/a	339	8,346
FY 2017 Cambridge	20	0.50	310	$32.89	1,756	2.12	130	1,196
FY 2017 Huxley	62	5.08	3,816	$57.16	47,412	14.29	308	3,162

	Total Circulation	Per Capita Circulation	Book Holdings	Audio/Video Items	Magazine Titles	Downloadable Resources	Public Internet PCs	Internet Uses
FY 2014 Slater	30,706	20.62	15,981	2,004	40	23,741	3	1,689
FY 2015 Slater	33,072	22.21	15,946	2,336	32	28,919	3	1,692
FY 2016 Slater	34,401	23.10	13,621	2,646	38	30,011	3	1,256
FY 2017 Slater	34,633	23.26	13,727	2,680	34	49,382	3	1,596
C Class Libraries FY 2017 Average	19,507	12.58	16,927	3,075	42	48,739	7	3,042
FY 2018 Slater	35,722	n/a	13,428	2,849	32	65,570	3	1,522
FY 2017 Cambridge	4,390	5.31	10,945	806	8	0	3	725
FY 2017 Huxley	54,447	16.41	26,943	2,514	24	49,382	6	2,373

Service Population

The historic and municipal populations the Slater Public Library can expect to serve in 2040 are critical elements in developing an accurate space needs assessment. The historic population demonstrates that there has been steady, continual growth since 2000. Moving further into the future, there are no specific population projections for the town of Slater. The only useful surrogate is the projected population for all of Story County which shows continued growth. Applying the Story County rates to Slater suggests a 2040 population projection for Slater of 1,840.

Historic Populations:

Year	Slater	Story County	Source
1980	1,312	72,326	Census Bureau
1990	1,268	74,252	Census Bureau
2000	1,306	79,981	Census Bureau
2010	1,489	89,542	Census Bureau
2016	1,497	97,090	*Woods & Poole Economics*

Projected Municipal Populations:

Year	Story County	Source:	Slater	Source:	Total projected Service population
2010	89,542	Census Bureau	1,489	Census Bureau	
2020	99,657	*Woods and Poole Economics*	1,653	Extrapolation of *W & P* county projection	1,987*
2030	106,118	*Woods and Poole Economics*	1,752	Extrapolation of *W & P* county projection	2,106
2040	111,141	*Woods and Poole Economics*	1,840	Extrapolation of *W & P* county projection	2,211

*2019 data

The service population of the Slater Public Library is more extensive than the municipal population. In FY19, there are 1,127 active accounts for Slater. The Library also provides service to three contracting cities – Alleman, Kelley, and Sheldahl, as well as rural Story County, and 15 open access communities for a total of 1987 patrons. From FY17 to FY18, the circulation from the populations of those three cities as well as rural Story residents increased by 42.22%. Based on these numbers, the planning number should be at 2,211 for population projection.

Woods and Poole Economics is the data set that is utilized by the State of Iowa.

2040 Space Needs for Library Services and Operations

Space Needs Methodology

The Space needs process identifies a community's library space requirements for a planning horizon, which traditionally has been 20 years out. This study will identify the potential needs of the Slater Public Library space needs through the year 2040.

Space requirements are developed using population projections, tested service standards, and nationally accepted space calculation formulas. The methodology is based on a space needs assessment process developed, revised and published by the Wisconsin Division for Library Services. It is slightly modified as applied by the consultant.

This methodology focuses on seven types of space utilization commonly found in public libraries:

- Collection Space
- User Seating
- Program Space
- Public Computing Space
- Work Space
- Special Use Space
- Structure/Support Space

Collection Space

The Slater Public Library has a hard copy collection of 13,428 print items and 2,849 audio/visual items with 32 periodical subscriptions for a total of 16,309 items in FY18. In addition, the library's digital collections include 46,074 e-books, and 19,446 downloadable audio books that are available through the State Library system.

Collection space is a concern to both the Director and the Board of Trustees, and the collection size has been a challenge for the library. The acquisition budget has been very generous, but the space limitations have curtailed the growth of the collection. The collection is housed on 1,280 linear feet of shelving at 13 volumes per square foot. (That means that in many cases, books are also being stored on the tops of the book shelves.) Very stringent weeding has had to be implemented to allow for the freshness of the collection. Weeding also has to occur to create space for the increasing demand for DVDs and audio books. In FY18, the size of the hard copy collection decreased by 300 books. The staff noted that they are having to weed materials that have not circulated within a two-year window because of the severe space restrictions. That sometimes means that materials are having to be borrowed from other libraries to meet patron requests. In FY17, Slater borrowed 175 items while the statewide average was 130 items. It was also noted by the staff that there just was not enough space to have adequate collections for the tween and teen populations. That is a section that has to be weeded very aggressively to make room for new materials. The limited space for the collection also prohibits extra space for any book display.

Planning for the space needed for the library's hard copy collections needs to reflect many patrons' continued preference for hard copy (particularly among the more economically disadvantaged). Even many among the "Digital Natives" generation (born after the 1980s) have a preference for hard copy. However, over time, there will certainly be a continued preference for digital formats.

Projected Collections Recommendation

Looking to 2040, the space needed for the library's physical collections must respond to trends in the relationship between hard copy and digital collections. Over the past five years, Slater Library has averaged an acquisition level of 1,865 items. However, due to the necessity of extensive weeding for space purposes, in FY17, Slater Library housed 16,407 physical items, which was under the state average of 19,019 items. That put Slater Public Library *under* the 50th percentile for C class libraries. The future collection size should ensure that Slater falls at least in the 50th to 75th percentiles of similarly sized libraries in the state.

In FY17, Iowa class C libraries had an average of 1,715 borrowers and an average of 19,019 items in their collections for an average of 11 items per borrower; at the 75th percentile, there were 24,171 items which averaged 14 items per borrower. Slater's projected service population for 2040 is 2,211; multiplying that by 14 items provides a projected physical collection size of 30,954 items for 2040.

General User Seating

Slater Public Library currently has 29 general use public seats. However, because most of the adult seating is located in the area that is used for programming space, there are many times when most of the adult seating is not available.

Children's Seating		Tween and Teen Seating	Adult Seating	
6 table seats		No specific area	12 table seats	
3 small seats			8 conversation group	
SubTotal	9	0		20
Total Seating	**29**			

Projected General Seating Requirement

General seating recommendations have been established by the State of Wisconsin Standards. General seating includes table seats and casual seating but excludes seats at computers, other technology stations, study rooms, and meeting room seats. Using the Wisconsin sliding scale and the Slater Public Library's projected 2040 population of 2,211, the data would suggest that about 18 seats be allocated for every 1,000 persons in the total service population, or 38 general use seats.

It has been acknowledged that the Wisconsin scale consistently under-estimates the seating requirement. As a result, it is recommended that an additional 4 seats should be added to the formula-based estimate of 38 seats.

This would suggest an absolute minimum of 40 seats to be essential. The space needs formula typically allows for 30 square feet per seat.

The mission statement for the Slater Public Library (p. 3) would suggest that there should be an emphasis on providing seating so as to "**P**rovide an inviting environment for all people to pursue their enjoyment of reading." It was acknowledged that it would be nice to have seating that was always available and didn't get moved to provide the space for programming.

Wisconsin Seating Standards

Population	Seats per 1,000 Population
1,000	22.50
2,500	14.25
5,000	10.00
10,000	7.00

Program Spaces

One of the primary assets of a public library building is the provision of space for the programming needs of children, adults, and the larger community. The library currently conducts nearly all of its programs in the back area of the library which requires frequent adjustments to the space. Furniture has to be moved and then moved back into place, access to the restrooms becomes limited, there are privacy concerns for the users of the internet stations, and any programming preempts most of the available adult seating.

In FY 2018, Slater Public Library offered 339 programs which were attended by 8,346 participants in a wide variety of ages. (Those numbers are well above the statewide average for C-sized libraries). The children's programs attract the highest numbers; there can be upwards of 75 attendees for story times, and during summer programs, if there is entertainment, the numbers can be as high as 150-175 attendees, which necessitates a change of venue to the fire station. Teen attendance can also grow during summer programming to 25-30 participants. Throughout the year, there are various adult programs which have high attendance numbers. The monthly Soup and Sound programs can attract as many as 35 attendees, the Book Club has as many as 15 participants, and the Yoga offering regularly has 10-15 participants.

The staff noted that they provide popular programs that are well advertised on social media. They take pride in the fact that the library space is inviting, organized and clean. They find that their successes have created a challenge as there is just not enough space to hold all the interested potential participants. Both the staff and the Board of Trustees noted that there are instances when groups (such as daycares from the neighboring towns) are turned away because of the space limitations. Limitations are also felt in the space of the Board room. Both staff and the Board noted that there are constituencies that are not being served because of the limitations for services and programming. These would include young singles, young marrieds, parents of young children and teenagers, and even some senior groups.

Recommendation

Since programming is important to the library, a venue with adequate space for children, teens and adults is necessary. Adequate space allows for a wider variety of programming options. The current space is about 441 square feet which is not adequate for programming needs.

Based on the community's needs, a more robust general program space is needed. A room that could be partitioned would be an important asset for the library and community. At a minimum it would appear that program space should be calculated to accommodate at least 100 individuals (at 12 square feet per person) with room for the presenter (a moderate space assignment for a presenter is 80 square feet). (The space assignment needs for craft activities would be allocated at 15 square feet per person.) An allotment of 500 sq ft would provide space for a presenter, a kitchen area, and some storage.

Public Computing

The Slater Library currently has 3 public desk top computers. The state average for Class C libraries is 7 public computer stations, so Slater provides a little less than half of that number. Many libraries also distinguish between computers that are available to children and those that are dedicated for adult usage.

At this particular time, although the number of residents who own their own devises (phones, tablets, and laptops) is increasing, there are still a number of other library patrons who are unable to afford their own mobile computer. Additionally, there will continue to be those who prefer desktops for their ergonomically larger keyboards and displays. Desktop computers will also continue to be appropriate for younger users because of the larger keyboard and display and the greater stability of design. A mix of devices is a reasoned approach.

Recommendation

The existing 3 public desktop computers seem adequate for the adult patrons as they always receive priority on usage. It should be noted that the number of Internet uses declined between FY17 and FY18. If there was a change in space, it would be feasible to add several computers dedicated for younger users. Another solution would be that in the future the library could consider loaning tablets and/or laptops at the main service desk for use by patrons within the building.

Power should be located adjacent to public seating to support patron's use of their own portable computing.

Staff Work Space

Staff work space is critical to an effective and efficient public library. Staff work space includes public service areas such as the checkout desk, which encompasses elements of a welcome desk and a reference desk. Workroom space where staff complete ongoing responsibilities such as preparing programs, cataloging materials, physically processing items for the shelves, and processing interlibrary loans are equally vital. The number of workstations is not in a one-to-one relationship to the number of staff. The number of workstations should ideally reflect the number of places where work takes place rather than the number of staff.

The staff noted that there is a real need for dedicated staff work space that would enable several of the staff to work on projects. It was also noted that the current situation with the sink in the work space is very problematic.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the library plan for at least 4 staff work stations. In addition to the circulation desk and the director's desk, this would allow 2 additional areas where staff can conduct the work of the library. The space allocation for most staff work stations will fall within a range of 125 to 150 square feet. The minimum space allocation would be at 125 square feet per station, and a moderate allocation would be 140 square feet per station.

Work Stations: Location/Type	Existing Stations	Proposed Stations
Public Floor		
Circulation Desk	1	1
Workroom		
Director's Desk	1	1
Project Area	1	2
Total	**3**	**4**

Special Use Space

Special use space is an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of public and staff spaces not included in the preceding broad categories. At an optimal amount, the special use space will likely occupy about 17% of the gross area of the library; a moderate allocation would be at 15% of the gross area of the building, while a minimum allocation would be at 12% of the gross area of the building. Examples of special space use that were identified by the Board of Trustees and the staff include:

Flexible Space and Collaborative Space: It was noted that there is not any kind of space in the library which allows for flexible usage. This includes space which could support a wide range of activities such as committees for community service organizations, proctoring, tutoring, a sole proprietor who works from home meeting with a client, or students working on a team assignment. Collaborative spaces can include traditional quiet study rooms, small conference rooms, or a larger space with re-configurable furnishings and dividers.

Maker Space: The space needed for this popular concept, which allows for the exploration of a variety of pursuits from technical to artistic to practical, should have a robust infrastructure with lots of power, venting, and controlled lighting and with adaptable and moveable furnishings.

Storage Space: Storage space is always an important need for libraries which offer any programming that includes craft activities. The staff noted that much of the storage for crafts are stored in various homes which means that it all has to be transported.

Kitchen Space: Both the Board and the staff noted the need for kitchen space for programming and for staff needs. Currently, much of the food prep also occurs off-site. There should be storage space for kitchen items, a full size refrigerator, a dishwasher, and there was an expressed interest in a washer and dryer as well.

Examples of other special use space include:

Beverage Station	Networking equipment closet	Staff break room
Marketing and display area	Book sale storage	Technology space – self-check, copiers, etc.
Community Information center		

Structure and Support Space

Structure and Support Space refers to the areas of the building that provide support to the operation of the building but are not utilized specifically for library purposes. Structure and Support Space is sometimes referred to as architectural or unassignable space. Examples of Structure and Support Space include the: entry foyer, restrooms, stairs, elevators, mechanical systems, storage closets, and general aisle space throughout the building.

The rates suggested by the State of Wisconsin Standards are as follows: At the optimal rate, the Structure and Support Space would be calculated at 30% of the gross building size. A moderate rate would be calculated at 27% of the gross building size, while a minimum rate would be calculated at 25% of the gross building size.

2040 Space Needs Calculations

This calculation of space needs is based on the library's 2040 projected service population, 2,211, and the service requirements determined by using the moderate projections from the Wisconsin Space Needs Assessment process. The existing building is currently at 3,680 gross square feet.

Space Use Category	Minimum	Moderate	Optimal
Collection Space 31,000 book and media 32 periodicals	15 volumes per sf 31,000 ÷ 15 = 2,067 nsf	13 volumes per sf 31,000 ÷ 13 = 2,385 nsf	10 volumes per sf 31,000 ÷ 10 = 3,100 nsf
General User Seating 40 seats	30 sf per seat 40 x 30 = 1,200 nsf	30 sf per seat 40 x 30 = 1,200 nsf	30 sf per seat 40 x 30 = 1,200 nsf
Public Computer Workstations computer workstations	35 sf per station 3 x 35 = 105 nsf	45 sf per station 3 x 45 = 135 nsf	50 sf per station 3 x 50 = 150 nsf
Staff Work Space staff workstations	125 sf per station 4 x 125 = 500 nsf	140 sf per station 4 x 140 = 560 nsf	150 sf per station 5 x 150 = 750 nsf
Program Space Space for 100 Space for presenter = 80 sf Space for presenter, kitchen, storage = 500sf	12 sf per person + presenter 100 x 12 = 1,200 1,200 + 80 = 1,280 nsf	15 sf per person + presenter 100 x 15 = 1,500 1,500 + 80 = 1,580 nsf	15 sf per person + presenter 100 x 15 = 1,500 1,500 + 500 = 2,000 nsf
Subtotal of above	5,152 nsf	5,860 nsf	7,200 nsf
Special Use Space	12% of gross space 5,152 x .12 = 618 nsf	15% of gross space 5,860 x .15 = 879 nsf	17% of gross space 7,200 x .17 = 1,224 nsf
Net Subtotal	5,770 nsf	6,739 nsf	8,424 nsf
Structure/Support Space	25% of gross space 5,770 x .25 = 1,443 nsf	27% of gross space 6,739 x .27 = 1,820 nsf	30 % of gross space 8,424 x .30 = 2,527 nsf
Total Gross Library Space Requirement	5,770 + 1,443 = 7,213 gsf	6,739 + 1,820 = 8,559 gsf	8,424 + 2,527 = 10,951 gsf

nsf: net square feet   gsf: gross square feet