

i. 4.5.1 State Funding Priorities

State Priority 1: Construction to further access to library services with an emphasis of equal access for all people to easily use library resources and services.

The expansion will provide for the overdue replacement of the current inadequate meeting room space, an adult reading/display area, a quiet study area, and expansions of the Children's Room and of the Young Adult Area. The proposed additions and reallocation of use will allow two rooms for events, lectures and activities of interest to all ages. The provision of two meeting rooms will allow for simultaneous scheduling of events and activities which is precluded now because only one room exists. The two new meeting rooms can also be combined to allow for high attendance programs. The meeting room is currently woefully deficient for the level of programming that is done. This forces the Library to hold many programs away from the Library or to drastically limit attendance to programs. The issue of the meeting room size was brought even more into focus in light of the pandemic and the need for social distancing. Roughly 12 individuals can be in the room 6 feet apart. Modern rest room facilities will be provided near event space and the event space will adjoin an outdoor patio allowing for indoor and outdoor utilization. A separate entrance will be constructed for the event space/meeting rooms in close proximity to the new parking lot proposed on the north side of the building. Seating for patrons will be expanded. Currently meeting room seating is limited to 35 and with the addition this will expand to 100 seats. Public area seating will change from fixed, traditional furniture to flexible, comfortable seating and allow for more distance between patrons.

State Priority 2: Enhancement of public libraries to serve as public spaces and community centers in which people engage and interact for civic, educational, informational and recreational purposes.

The north addition consists of 2,770 sf and will expand meeting room space to accommodate dual

simultaneous event scheduling. The provision of two rooms will allow the Denville Public Library to improve the quantity and frequency of events to serve the community. The new space has been designed for flexibility as one room for high attendance events with the capability of dividing the space into two smaller rooms for smaller attendance at events. The combined meeting room will also allow for social distancing at times when it is required. A patio will adjoin the addition on the west side, creating an outdoor gathering space for events in the new event/meeting room wing. The western addition will contain 1,070 sf and expand the Children's Room.

State Priority 3: Optimization of technological infrastructure to promote access to the internet, electronic resources and instruction in their use(s) helping all people to bridge the digital divide.

The new meeting space will accommodate up to date technology with large wall mounted screens and presentation capabilities. The new quiet study area will provide the opportunity for patrons to work on their personal laptops away from the activity in the main library circulation area. Laptops may also be borrowed from the circulation desk for use within the quiet study and throughout the Library. The entire building will have access to the Library's wireless connection. The meeting rooms will have enough outlets to connect computers to run computer classes.

State Priority 4: Growth in the critical library services available to the citizens of New Jersey (including those that support education, employment, welfare, job training, career assistance, college preparation, securing government assistance and civic services.)

The adult reading room and quiet study area can accommodate patrons using the internet for job search, creating resumes and looking up available job openings. They can also research and study for placement exams and college preparatory exams. The library provides free exam proctoring. The

additional meeting room space allows the library to offer increased informational programming relating to these critical service needs.

ii. 4.5.2 Project Alignment with Evaluative Criteria

Barrier Free Improvements

Bathrooms are not currently ADA compliant, with limited ability to make the current facilities complaint without significant renovations. While correcting for ADA compliancy the renovation will afford the opportunity of fixing the existing plumbing issues that have plagued the library. The proposed additions will meet all ADA requirements. After the renovation, the new and existing building will be fully ADA compliant.

Current Needs

The existing Denville Library is at capacity regarding seating, shelves and meeting space. The Library frequently needs to hold events off premises due to space restrictions and the lack of seating.

Increasing meeting rooms and seating capacity will allow the expansion of programs of interest to the community as well as enhance event frequency. A total of 62% of all library sponsored programs in 2019 were children's programs. The Library operated 504 Children's programs in 2019. The expanded Children's Room and meeting room space will enhance this programming. In 2020, the children's department still accounted for 66% of the programming and held 434 programs with everything virtual from March through August. In September of 2020, outdoor programming began using various township properties and staff coming in on Sundays to hold events in the parking lot. From January to April of 2021 the children's department has held 119 programs with 5,512 people in attendance. Adult programming attendance especially for the concerts and lectures is restricted based on available chairs.

In 2019, children's circulation accounted for 42% of the total Denville Library circulation. In 2020,

children's circulation was 50% of the total physical collection. The Children's area is very small and has insufficient seating/gathering space due to limited shelving space and irregular shape. Providing an expanded Children's Room in the west addition will provide gathering/reading space. The current space lacks an area for adults to comfortably sit with children. The expansion will expand the children's room capacity by 1,980 books.

A flexible space for quiet/group study will be good for quiet study in the day and night and group study available for limited times after school. The current library lacks group study spaces. Group seating at tables will be provided in the new quiet study room for this purpose. The adult reading area chairs and displays will be mobile and can be rearranged based on social distancing. The Young Adult area collection capacity will be expanded by 1,800 books and will be open for comfortable seating for the teens.

The existing placement of the circulation desk created a bottleneck in the entryway and had no lines of sight. The new placement will create more area for patrons to stand while still allowing entry and exit. Staff members will now also be able to see to the back of the library and in through the children's doorway.

The bathrooms have continuous issues with backups due to old rusty pipes that are not at the proper pitch and have a sharp angle to them that leads to a pump that is not adequate for the building. The current bathrooms are also not ADA compliant which leaves them difficult for some of our visitors to use.

Resiliency

The Denville Public Library plans to incorporate an emergency generator to provide electrical outlets for the public during an emergency power outage. This backup power will allow the library to serve as a warming station as well during power outages. The Library will continue to provide outlets,

charging stations, computers and hotspots if local power is disrupted for any reason.

The proposed renovations allows for flexible spaces. The furniture that is being added in the adult reading area is mobile. All seating and display units can be moved and rearranged as needed both for library requirements and/or in the case of emergencies like a pandemic where social distancing is required. The children's tables are also mobile and able to be folded in half and moved or stored away easily. The large circulation desk is being broken into two mobile desks so that it can be put together or separated as the library's needs dictate. Also, we will be adding a self-checkout station to further allow for flexibility for our patrons.

Functionality of the Public Library Building

The Denville Library was constructed 36 years ago and was last renovated 12 years ago. The library's mission is "to inspire, enlighten and engage the community." According to the Library's Strategic Plan, the vision of the library building is to provide a facility with attractive and accessible seating, allowing "diverse audiences to pursue their interests, expand their imaginations, learn new skills and interact with other members of the community." A space audit was performed by David Vinjamuri of Third Way Brand Trainers for the Library in February of 2021. He felt the "library devotes a great deal of space for storing collection items." He suggested for the adult area that "increasing the room available for public seating and the use of high-turnover displays" would greatly benefit the Library. These ideas are incorporated in the adult reading and display areas in the renovation. For the children's room he wrote "The collection pushes out any possibility for children spending significant or meaningful time in the library, leaving the space as more of a lending space." The addition to the children's collection will open up space for children and families to stay in the Library. The building is appropriate for the planned additions. The planned meeting rooms will be accessible and connected to the patio and building interior. The separate entrance to the meeting room wing will enable events to

occur without disturbance to the remainder of the library and its patrons.

How the Investment Furthers Existing Functions

Expanded meeting space will create more community center events at the facility and will allow for more programming for all types of interests and ages. The ability to provide increased programming means that the Library will be able to partner with even more local businesses and organizations.

The dual space will enhance the library's ability to coordinate simultaneous events. The Library already has daily visits from people coming to study and/or read and they will be able to focus better in the quiet study area and reading areas that this plan provides. The expanded space in the Children's and Young Adult areas means that the collections can be expanded and not as aggressively weeded. The expanded Children's Room will create a bigger gathering spot for children and their caregivers and will also allow more natural lighting with the back wall being windows.

iii. Discussion of whether alternate and or more efficient approaches to addressing the library's needs have been considered.

The library has determined through its Strategic Plan (2017-2019) that a need exists for meeting room space to serve community groups and diverse programming. This need cannot be accommodated without an addition to the existing building. After the 2009 renovation, the Library continued to recognize the importance of diverse programming, based on focus group and survey responses. Some of the programs determined to be needed for the population included author readings or talks about published work, movies, concerts and theater productions. A major barrier to expanding this needed programming was the lack of sufficient meeting room space on premise. The Library has used off site meeting spaces in town to try to accommodate larger crowds and has brought pop-up libraries to those programs. Although this has helped, patrons really would like to be able to go to the program and then peruse the entire collection and choose their materials. The

proposed meeting rooms will allow for this. Parking has also been cited as problematic by patrons and will impede the ability to conduct programming for high attendance events or back-to-back events. Therefore, a parking lot expansion is necessary.

The lack of quiet study is a problem in the existing building. No separate quiet study area can be configured within the existing building since no separate room exists that can be devoted to this purpose. Consequently, carrels are currently situated in an open area adjoining the photocopy area and reference desk which generates distraction from noise generated by patrons needing assistance.

The Library has weeded aggressively in the children's and young adult sections in order to have space for new materials but there is still a need for additional shelving. There is no room in the current configuration to add shelving so the renovation is needed.

iv. Efforts made to address the ongoing physical maintenance of and any improvements to the current library building over the past five years.

During the period 2016-2020 the Township has expended over \$19,000 in repairs and upgrades to HVAC, plumbing and roofing systems from outside vendors and additional time and monies by employees of the town. In addition to these essential repairs, the Library and Township have implemented ongoing interior and exterior projects relating to fire alarms, lighting and door and window repairs.

v. Explanation of shared space

The only shared space is the parking lot. During the gardening months of May through August, the lot may be used by the township's community gardens. The library's existing parking lot has been used for this purpose currently and at most has had three cars for gardeners at any time. The gardeners will most likely use the new lot instead of the current lot because it will be closer to their plots. There is no expectation for increased use of the library's parking lot areas by gardeners.