

Boost: Forward Thinking Building Changes

A Report from the 2020 Library Journal Design Institute

Exhibit 14

See also the WVLS [Building Resources](#) webpage.

The pandemic inspired conference and workshop sponsors to think differently about their traditional in-person offerings in 2020.

The [2020 Library Journal Design Institute](#) moved to a free online experience with recordings also available at no cost. The entire event is [available on-demand until February 28, 2021](#).

Expectations of public space has been forever changed by the pandemic and the resulting additional public health safety precautions. There were reoccurring themes during the sessions that libraries of all sizes should consider for improving the safety and functionality of their spaces immediately during the pandemic and for future building projects.

Advocate for your library, show how your library continues to rise to each new challenge to provide essential services and functions for your community.

Advocate for scalable solutions to provide a better, safer user and staff experience.

The United States and your library are ten months into the current pandemic. What are the pain points in your library? What changes can you make right now for a better, safer user and staff experience? Explore solutions to improve pain points in both service and staff areas below.

Lower Cost Facility Solutions

Change your space or workflows with quick solutions to reduce the need for staff and library user touch.

- Free standing hand-sanitizer and mask station.
- Leave bathroom lighting on. Consider installing a switch protector over light switch to ensure light is left on.
- Install a motion sensing paper towel dispenser.

Architectural Firms Present

- [Anderson Brulé Architects](#)
- [HBM Architects](#)
- [Johnston Architects](#)
- [Arch Nexus](#)
- [Group 4 Architecture](#)
- [Tappé Architects](#)
- [VMDO Architects](#)

“Libraries have an incredible opportunity to be considered first responders.”

Pamela Anderson-Brulé, President & Co-Founder of Anderson Brulé Architects

- Purchase a motion sensing soap dispenser. Permanent and temporary solutions are available with an internet search.
- Install a motion sensing faucet.
- Install a motion sensing [touchless toilet flush kit](#).
- Install [step and pull](#) hands free door openers.
- Use or install doorstops, kickstands, spring arm door props for appropriate, high traffic areas.
- Offer a guided, self-checkout experience. Position a desk or standup option outfitted with a library computer/laptop and scanner where library staff can assist library users in checking out items without library staff touching books or materials.
- Remove ceiling fans.¹
- Assess and service heating and air conditioning systems for efficiency in filtration and purification.
- Purchase and place semi-permanent signage for “curbside pickup” or “wifi access parking space” in parking lot. Think of the signage for [Target curbside pickup](#), or grocery store curbside pickup services.
- Repurpose or add outdoor seating for wifi or library service users.² See the [Centuria Public Library](#) picnic table for outdoor wifi use.
- Remove clutter and unnecessary soft surfaces. The appearance of cleanliness matters.³
- Purchase affordable, virtual programming and video creation technology for staff and public spaces.⁴ Think of lighting or inexpensive microphone equipment.

Social Distancing Tools and Practices

- Reconfigure entry and exits from building to decrease traffic congestion. Transition a traditional entryway for entry only and repurpose a second building access point (possibly staff entry) as an exit only doorway.
- Install [locking caster wheels](#) on existing or new furniture to allow for flexible furniture configurations.
- Add or place plants between areas or necessary furniture to create social distanced spaces.
- Use purchased or home-made [space dividers](#) for staff and public areas.
- Reimagine study rooms as public and staff work areas depending on daily need.

¹ Pamela Anderson-Brulé. “Architect Panel: Building Community Beyond COVID.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Anderson Brulé Architects.

² Jeffrey Hoover. “Architect Panel: Future Forward.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Tappé Architects.

³ Peter Bolek. “Architect Panel: Building Community Beyond COVID.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. HBM Architects.

⁴ Jeffrey Hoover. “Moving from Crisis to Innovation.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Tappé Architects.

- Reimagine public spaces or rooms with one-way foot traffic marked with removable carpet tape.
- Use the LeanWI website service to offer a web form for library user-initiated service, curbside, or browsing appointment requests. Include reservations for tables and in-person programs/services.
 - [Augusta Public Library](#), IFLS
 - [Rhineland District Library](#), WVLS
 - [St. Croix Falls Public Library](#), IFLS

Self-Service and Low to No-Contact Solutions

- Reimagine public spaces or rooms as browsing lanes with one-way foot traffic, think [Barnes & Noble displays](#). Weed materials to create shelving space for facing more materials outward.
- Provide a guided self-checkout experience. Position a desk or standup option outfitted with a library computer/laptop and scanner where library staff can assist library users in checking out items without library staff touching books or materials.
- Create a walk-up window, position a desk or cart in a doorway with a staff laptop or desktop computer. You will be able to serve those walking up for material requests or other services. See the Owen Express Library.
- Offer Overhang/Curbside Pickup Service. Does your library have an overhang that allows vehicles to approach the building to drop off passengers? Purchase signage or cones to reserve parking spaces for drive up service.
- Install [After Hours Pickup Lockers](#). Place lockers in protected entryway for after hours pickup. Libraries are finding weatherproof lockers with locks that can be recoded for each user.
- Offer “On Your Honor” Pickup Lockers. Rhineland District Library repurposed a newspaper pickup option to offer self-service reserve pickup in the library’s entryway.
- Offer a digital library card web form on your website for digital resources. Mail library card and/or email library barcode to new library user. [See Loyal Public Library](#).
- Offer a web form or downloadable print form on your website for new library card registration. Mail library card and/or email library barcode to new library user. [See Bruce Area Library](#).
- Use the LeanWI website service to offer a webform for library user-initiated service, curbside, or browsing appointment requests.
 - [Augusta Public Library](#), IFLS
 - [Rhineland District Library](#), WVLS
 - [St. Croix Falls Public Library](#), IFLS

“More Cost” Space Improvements

- Invest in shelving or display options for facing materials outward, think [Barnes & Noble displays](#). Weed materials to create shelving space for facing more materials outward. Reimagine public spaces or rooms as browsing lanes with one-way foot traffic.
- Install anti-microbial and easy cleaning carpeting and furnishing surfaces.⁵
- Install handwashing stations in all public rooms.⁶
- Install removable walls allowing access from building onto outdoor plaza or patio areas.⁷
- Invest in technology to support virtual programming, video creation, and life-size virtual meeting technology⁸ for staff and public spaces.⁹
- Install motion sensing lighting with timing systems for bathroom and public spaces.
- Install motion sensing hand dryers.
- Install automatic flushing toilets (no kits).
- [Build doorless indoor bathroom entries](#), think stadium bathroom entrances.
- Build access points to bathrooms from inside and outside the building. Think access from plaza or patio seating.¹⁰
- Install a drive-up window and book drop on the side of your building. Some buildings can add drive-up windows next to existing book drops.¹¹
- Install self-service kiosks for checkout and renewal process controlled by user.
- Install technology for after-hours material pickup using library cards as access keys. Think keycards for a 24-hour gym entry.¹²
- Install automatic or accessible powered door options.

Resources

Cummings, Bryan E. and Michael S. Waring. [Potted plants do not improve indoor air quality: A review and analysis of reported VOC removal efficacies](#). Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology. November 6, 2019.

⁵ Andrea Marie Gifford. “Architect Panel: Building Community Beyond COVID.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Group 4 Architects.

⁶ Andrea Marie Gifford. “Architect Panel: Building Community Beyond COVID.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Group 4 Architects.

⁷ Jeffrey Hoover. “Architect Panel: Future Forward.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Tappé Architects.

⁸ Jim Kovach. “Architect Panel: Future Forward.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. VMCO Architects.

⁹ Jeffrey Hoover. “Moving from Crisis to Innovation.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Tappé Architects.

¹⁰ Pamela Anderson-Brulé. “Architect Panel: Building Community Beyond COVID.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Anderson Brulé Architects.

¹¹ Peter Bolek. “Architect Panel: Building Community Beyond COVID.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. HBM Architects.

¹² Ray Johnston. “Architect Panel: Building Community Beyond COVID.” 2020 Library Journal Design Institute. Johnston Architects.

Elmore, Julie. [Library Lockers Provide After Hours Pick Up](#): Oakland City Columbia Public Library, Indiana. ARSL Fall 2020 Member Newsletter.

Gibbens, Sarah. [Which houseplants should you buy to purify air? None of Them](#). National Geographic, November 14, 2019.

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World Health Organization. [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Ventilation and air conditioning in public spaces and buildings](#). July 29, 2020.