

City of Battle Creek Police Department Planning and Renovation study



Situation

- There are almost 19,000 state and local police agencies in the United States. Each has, or will in the future need to plan, design and build a new headquarters, precinct or substation. Since the useful life of a police facility can range from 20 to over 50 years, a new facility project is typically a "first time" experience for most law enforcement executives. They have little or no expertise in the subject area. Effective planning for a new or renovated law enforcement facility is the most cost-effective step a jurisdiction can take to ensure a successful project outcome.

Mission

“To design and build a facility that reflect the departments four operating principles and priorities; enhances the opportunity for community engagement, support services collaboration and partnerships.”

- The image of a police facility must be seen as synonymous with the image of the government and community it represents.
- Fortress-like designs, while ensuring Officer safety and departmental safety, are antithetical to community policing initiatives. A balance between secure internal and welcoming public spaces must be achieved.

The Problem

- Most police facilities continue to operate well past the planned life span. They often become seriously overcrowded, suffer from a lack of sufficient infrastructure (HVAC, electrical, data, telecommunication) and make due with outdated security and safety systems. These conditions often impair staff efficiency and morale, occupant safety, policing effectiveness, retention and recruitment and public perception of the department.

Questions we asked ourselves

- What current facility deficiencies prevent Officers from doing a good job?
- Is the facility driving operations?
- What delivery of services is needed for the public that the current facility cannot offer?
- How does the proposed project align with the jurisdictions overall strategic business plan and service goals?
- What does the department need to make Community Oriented Policing efforts work better for themselves and the community? COPS efforts are strengthened when a police department and its employees have the correct tools. A police facility is one of those tools.
- Are operational standards or best practices of the department compromised through the current facility?
- Is the building itself a hazard? Does this building meet, or can it be made to conform in a cost-effective way, to state and federal standards.
- Is there space for archival storage
- Is there a place for community meetings, educate community, solicit feedback.

Focus on Public Needs

- Public parking that is clearly marked
- Ability to easily identify and access the entrance
- Readily accessible and identifiable ticket sign-off area, Outside sales, eg. Craigslist transactions, area
- Visitor friendly design that incorporates safety as a priority
- Waiting area that welcomes, productive and still provides informational privacy when necessary
- One-stop shopping concept for police services
- Easy pick up of reports copies and property
- Community Center/Meeting room
- Social Services partnerships that enhance a complete response capability

Renovate or New Facility

- \$700,000 was set aside for the purpose to renovate and/or conduct a total facility review
- Solicited architectural proposals and Hired Design Team
 - Architecture+design Inc.
 - Redstone Architects
 - Schweitzer Construction as CM
- Met and established goals
 - Programming & space needs assessment (simultaneous)
 - Analyze existing conditions (simultaneous)
 - Police Station Division St.
 - Elm St, Facility/Range

Architectural and Engineer Team noted the existing Headquarters Building is both physically and functionally obsolete.

- Inefficient work flows due to limited space in an obsolete building coupled with the expense and difficulty of reconfiguring brick walls in order to meet new standards
- Location of Interview rooms creates a security issue, currently resolved by added personnel
- Lack of Secure Police parking area
- NO ADA windows to serve the public at the front desk or Records windows and no elevator
- Public lobby not open or inviting to guest/visitors. Too small, space hard to reconfigure
- No community meeting place to promote the community based image
- Existing facility is ½ the size of what the department needs
- Renovating and expanding the current facility will likely be as costly as building a new facility and with less useful life and less efficient work flow
- The current lab is poorly ventilated, proposed cost to address this issue and other current HVAC facility needs alone is as high as \$90,300

- Findings:
 - Needs > square footage available-driving operations 25,000 -47,000
 - existing configuration difficult and expensive to renovate
 - disruption of operations during renovation 18-24, months and two moves
 - Elm St. facility
 - Lack of security
 - poor quality of construction available
 - Not affective to use available funds for Division ST.
 - Show Design Concepts

Next Step

- Consent to begin reviewing financing options, if approved.
Proposed Design (18M-20M)
- Stakeholders will be added to the Design Team
- Request the following members
 - Police Project Manager
 - Police Staff Representatives
 - **Adhoc members-commission**
 - Architects/Consultants/Construction Management Team
 - City Planners/Finance/IT
 - Public Works
 - **Community Members-commission**
 - Others

The Design Team Objectives:

Provides the avenue through which all planning, design, and construction decisions are made. The membership requires diversity and it influences the community buy-in and overall success of the project.

- Design a facility that addresses the agency's philosophy and supports current and future space, equipment and technology
- Represents department and community interest equally
- Examines all design documents in detail to decrease change orders and reduce errors and omissions
- Enhance communication to facilitate a mutual understanding of all issues and point of view
- Confirm the budget is sufficient to achieve the objective
- Work closely with and coordinate with other departments

Establishing Community Support for the Project

- Present at community-oriented policing meetings
- Offer tours of existing facility
- Share potential joint-use benefits with collaborating agencies and departments