

Citizen's Capital Budget Advisory Committee ("CCBAC") Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Proposed Capital Standards

Approach

The CCBAC met with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library ("CML") and obtained a summary of its current capital budget approach. We then examined existing CCBAC standards for CML, the findings of the CML task force, and developed high-level standards that we believe are achievable and inline with CML's mandate. Finally, we shared our proposed standards with CML and incorporated its feedback.

Considerations

The CCBAC recognizes that CML's current overriding goal is to expand operational hours at all of its locations before opening any new ones. Therefore, CML anticipates no significant capital requests for the upcoming fiscal year.

Standards

Safety

Projects, which are required to ensure a safe environment, as well as those that alleviate a condition which noticeably diminishes usability, should be given funding priority.

New Construction

CML capital projects should take into consideration future library usage patterns and trends, as well as the recommendations made in CML's Facilities Master Plan and its successors.

1. *Square Foot to Population Ratio:* The CCBAC recommends a goal of 0.7 square feet of library space per capita. The CCBAC believes this to be an adequate amount of library space per capita for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. The square feet of CML's portion of *ImaginOn* should be included in the numerator of this metric.
2. *Lease Target:* The CCBAC would set a limit of utilizing leased space for no more than 25% of the library's square footage. The intent of this standard is to ensure leased space is used for experimental, temporary and growth locations as well as when it is economically optimal. CCBAC understands that CML typically expands into leased "trial" spaces prior to requesting new construction.

Renovations

Repair vs. replace analysis for existing facilities that are nearing the end of their useful life is desired to ensure limited capital dollars are allocated appropriately. The CCBAC believes that it and other government entities should have insight into CML's rationale behind its repair/replace decisions.

To estimate the utility of repairing vs. replacing existing facilities and facilitate the capital allocation decision process, the CCBAC recommends that CML prepare and present to the County, along with its capital allocation requests, a high level comparative repair vs. replace cost analysis. This analysis should take into considerations not only capital costs, but anticipated ongoing operational costs and intrinsic public value. The analysis should be in the relative style of the North Carolina State Construction Office Life Cycle Cost Analysis model. However, CML should apply Rough Order of Magnitude estimates rather than selecting and designing specific build systems. Additionally, CML should consider public opinion, historical value, and any other pertinent parameters in its analysis.

Library Selected Bibliography

“Future of the Library Task Force”, March 21, 2011.

<http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/CountyManagersOffice/OMB/CapitalProjects/Pages/Default.aspx>

“Library Capital Standards FY13 for CCBAC”, October 2012.

<http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/CountyManagersOffice/OMB/CapitalProjects/Documents/Library%20capital%20standards%20FY13%20for%20CCBAC%20FINAL.pptx>