
Acknowledgments

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We would be remiss if we did not also thank ALL the department staff that spent many hours compiling staff and support needs data, during a budget preparation period. Your respective departments are privileged to have each of you and the public is served well by you. THANK YOU!

Introduction

Overview

In early 1999, the County Board of Supervisor's directed the assessment of the amount of space its staff occupied in the two geographic areas, north and south. The south county preceded the north county assessments. The County Architects Office developed this space utilization report documenting needs in North County. The report looks at future space requirements through the year 2005. The purpose of this study will be to establish standards for space allocation to be used by the Workplace Task Force, to help determine the most appropriate and efficient use of County properties.

The north county represents a wider geographic area than the south county and as a result the need for regional campuses is highlighted. For this reason, a new section has been added to the report, Regional Context, to address the unique issues related to disperseness of department services.

Background & Goals

Santa Barbara County currently has few written space planning policies and has not adopted procedures relative to the allocation and utilization of space within its facilities. Space allocation is typically based on perceived need, availability of funds, and existing space vacancies. The County will establish a Workplace Task Force to implement and monitor space management issues based on a policy framework to ensure that the following space management activities are adhered to:

1. Provide a logical and systematic framework for determining the County's facility and space needs.
2. Provide planning guidelines for management of growth, reduction, or reassignment of County space over time.
3. Identify and match space needs with capital improvement requests.
4. Develop, administer, and maintain an automated Facilities Management System.

Problem Statement

The County needs a review of their current space inventory countywide, in addition to a 5 year (short term) strategic plan that addresses specific choices about the use of buildings and lands owned or leased by County Government. The plan will quantify the number of employees and square footage of space required for each department based on data from completed departmental questionnaires. This plan deals only with the County's office and public service facilities and has approximated the overall growth in staff and space in the short term. Over the next five years, it will provide the County with strategic planning information to be used in making choices regarding how County facilities and

available land in the north county region are best utilized. It is expected that the Workplace Task Force will also develop implementation strategies based on the findings of this utilization report.

Departments Surveyed

The following is a list of the departments within the south coast region survey area that have been interviewed for the purpose of obtaining the necessary data. Geographic regions represented by Lompoc, Santa Maria and other areas are how the resulting data has been organized.

Policy & Executive

- Board of Supervisors
- Office of the County Administrator
- County Counsel

Law & Justice

- District Attorney
- Public Defender
- Superior Court

Public Safety

- Fire
- Probation
- Sheriff

Health & Public Assistance

- Public Health
- Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health
- Social Services
- Child Support Services
(pending new department)

Resources & Facilities

- Agriculture Commission
- Parks
- Planning and Development
- Public Works

Support Services

- Auditor-Controller
- County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor
- General Services
- Personnel
- Treasurer - Tax Collector

The objective for the project was to limit the scope of the report to the basic question: What additional space is needed by the County departments to meet the immediate and 5 year needs?

The major focus of the report was to evaluate the larger County buildings that contain the majority of staff and that provide the greatest amount of interface with the public. Storage buildings, parks maintenance buildings, and other utility buildings, while important to the County's overall operation, are not appropriate to use as office space and therefore are not included in the report.

The methodology proposed is to develop a means to help departments efficiently utilize real estate holdings while meeting public service missions. It is proposed that by identifying a count of staff or special functions, and multiplying that by an adopted standard area, a space need can be determined which can be compared to the current existing condition. This comparison can then be used in planning future space needs and space management.

Project Phases

The project has been divided into two phases. The initial phase of the work involved information gathering, which was followed by an analysis and documentation phase.

Phase 1 - Information Gathering

The Information Gathering process involves identifying the list of County owned and leased spaces in the north county region to be included in the study. From this list of properties floor plans were used to determine the amount of area that is currently occupied by each department.

It is necessary to establish area square footage guidelines to be applied to the assignable space for the calculation determining the amount of area needed by each department. Research was conducted which included various California counties, some cities and the Federal General Services Administration regarding space allocation standards used by those agencies. A chart can be found in Area Calculation Guidelines section that compares these standards to the proposed guidelines range.

The number of County employees by department forms the basis for determining the area calculation for that department. This information was obtained from staff counts as provided by the Personnel Department and verified within the questionnaire and interview process. Additionally, the questionnaire and interview process was used to ascertain any exceptions in the space needs unique to each department. The number of conference rooms, storage requirements, and other utility spaces were determined as a result of this process.

Further, the number used to calculate the area required for staff does not represent a pure statement of approved positions (FTE) for each department. But rather, an expressed space requirement, which is derived by adding all the positions together; including part-time, contract and outside vendors. In some cases departments have assigned staff to another department, the space required of these staff has been counted in their department numbers, not the host department assessments.

Phase 2 – Analysis and Documentation

The documentation and analysis phase involved the extraction and analysis of the data received from questionnaires, field research and interviews, and then computing the area requirements for each department based upon current and five year projected needs.

It should be noted that certain departments seem to have more than adequate space for their needs. However, because of the configuration of some of the existing buildings, some of the available space may not be able to be used as efficiently to yield additional usable space. Open workspace is ideal for setting up efficient workstations, but the availability of that type of situation is constrained by the design of the existing buildings. Other buildings have generous public circulation areas, which may or may not yield additional usable space. An example of this is the Historic County Court House in Santa Barbara.

To develop a consistent means of evaluating space needs, an industry standard net “usable” area was determined for each building along with a general gross building area for each facility.

The purpose of the report is not to suggest that space be taken away from any department that may appear to have more than adequate space. It is recommended that detailed space studies be implemented for those facilities that appear to have excess space in order to determine if additional usable space may be gained.

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