

11 RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

11.1 Recommendations

Records Storage

In consideration of prevailing operational preferences that were reinforced and endorsed by OPR, this report recommends medium density/height compact mobile shelving systems at 15 shelves high (approximately 16-feet of system height) for the facility's archival storage needs.

Depending on budget and site constraints, higher density systems may be explored during the design phases for the Records Center component of the project.

Functional Space Program

As noted in Chapter 5 of this report, 100,590 net square feet (NSF) of usable programmatic area is recommended. Circulation and grossing factors for archival facilities are much higher than for typical office or storage facilities and this net area extends to **135,665 gross square feet (GSF)** when these efficiency factors are applied.

Co-Location with DCPL Services

The study performed by this project team concludes that OPR is best served by a permanent, purpose-built and stand-alone facility that is designed and built to meet the functional requirements for archives and records center storage using best archival practices and that optimizes the spaces for the development of operational programs that preserve the records of the city, and that serve and involve the community.

The DC Archives and Library co-location options within the MLK Library building are not recommended, primarily due to space constraints, structural limitations, operational duplication and ineffectiveness, building system inefficiencies and increased costs. However, other synergies could be developed that benefit and enhance both institutions, including laboratories, digital programs, integrated access to the collections, and joint public programs. It is recommended that ideas for partnerships, shared resources, and collaborative programs be further explored.

Co-locating the DCPL Library Operations center with the new DC Archives building is recommended and has tangible benefits to both agencies. This option should be further explored.

Preliminary Site Evaluation

In response to the City's consideration of reusing an existing building to accommodate the DC Archives and Records Center, we recommend that only the non-storage functions of the program are suitable for accommodation in a renovated existing building. The archival storage spaces must be accommodated in purpose-built new construction.

Of the three potential DC Government owned properties identified in Chapter 9 of this report, only the Penn Center site appears deserving of further study. We recommend that the City continue to work to identify other potential sites that might be more suitable.

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Budget

The rough order of magnitude cost for the building and the storage shelving (rounded for ease of reference) is **\$62,350,000** as detailed in Chapter 10. Based upon guidance from DGS with respect to customary project administration costs and other project costs for recent capital projects in the City, **\$75,000,000** of funding commitment should be sought to cover the full cost of the project.

11.2 Next Steps

Records Survey and Appraisal Estimates

- Further survey work and appraisal is needed in order to finalize designs for storage spaces and shelving systems.
- In order to be of value for the design process, this survey work needs to be performed by a qualified archival appraising firm or by trained records management personnel.
- DC needs to allocate temporary resources to OPR to undertake this process. OPR does not have the space, staff, or other necessary resources to complete this work.

Move Planning

- Peer institutions report that the move planning process can take between 2 and 3 years, and that's from institutions that had a stronger baseline handle on their holdings and operations.
- We recommend that the City engage a move consultant as soon as possible.

Co-Location Determination

- As of the date of this report, the DCPL project team has undertaken the task of exploring the full incorporation of the DC Archives functions into the design program for the Modernization of the MLK Library.
- The City needs to reconcile that pursuit with the recommendations outlined in this report and decide whether the DC Archives functions will be housed at MLK Library or at the new OPR Facility.
- This decision needs to be made before the final program for the OPR facility can be completed.

Site Selection

- In order for the programming process to be completed and design to begin, the City needs to establish the site.
- We recommend engaging the AE team to assist with identification of other candidate sites and to determine the necessary scope for a detailed conditions assessment, feasibility study, and test fit for the existing building, or buildings, being considered.

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Budget Determination

- A firm “design-to” budget for the project needs to be established.
- The budget determination needs to clearly differentiate between the portion of the budget that is allocated to cover the cost of the construction contract, the “construction cost”, and the portion of the budget that is intended to cover other project costs.
- If the project is to be undertaken with a smaller budget that recommended in this report, the City needs to identify which of the cost reduction strategies they want to implement.

Programming & Design

- A follow-on programming phase will account for the information gathered from the records survey and appraisal, the co-location decision, the selected site, and the established “design-to” budget.
- A meeting with the DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) will be scheduled during the follow-on programming phase to determine the technology program of the building.

