STATE AND CONDITION OF THE LIBRARY FACILITIES

The Borough of Totowa Public Library was constructed in the late 1960's. The original portion of the facility is approximately six thousand square feet in size in a two story building, and is attached to the Municipal Building Complex. In 2011, an addition and renovation project commenced. This project added twenty-seven hundred additional square footage to the original structure and was completed in 2012. The Library currently consists of two levels; the upper level features the Main Room which houses the adult fiction and non-fiction collection, DVD’s, CD’s and public access computer space. The Main Room also includes a staff room, administrative offices, a Young Adult room, and two restrooms. Rounding out the upper level is a lobby and a Children’s Room. The lower level includes the Eisenhower Community Room, Meeting Room, Multi-Purpose Room, lobby, an elevator, storage rooms and two restrooms that are compliant with The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
ACCESSIBILITY

There are four entrances to the building. The main entrance is located in front of the building on Cherba Place. There is also a side entrance that connects to the hallway that leads to the Municipal Building Complex. In the rear of the building there are two entrances; the primary door that enters into the lower lobby and a secondary entrance that enters the Multi-Purpose Room. There are also two Emergency Exit Doors; one on the main floor and one in the Eisenhower Community Room; both emergency exits are located on the western side of the building.

The front and the rear entrances provide ADA accessibility via ramps that lead directly to doors. The majority of parking is located in the rear of the building, however there is limited parking in front of the building on Cherba Place. As part of the 2011/2012 expansion, the main staircase was moved to the rear of the building and connects the lower and upper lobby. Additionally, an elevator was added in the expansion project and connects the two levels.
The building exterior is a masonry brick in good condition. The roof above the Main Room is flat, and is prone to leaking, thus the Board of Trustees approved a monthly roof inspection to try and stay ahead of potential problems. In 2020 leakage has increased significantly and will have to be addressed in 2021. The roof above the Children’s Room was installed as part of the 2011/2012 expansion and is starting to leak in several areas as well and will be addressed in 2021.

In the past, the library did have water infiltration issues at the front of the building after a very heavy rainfall. Leakage and ensuing damage occurred in the Meeting Room and kitchen. The potential cause of this leakage was addressed by the Department of Public Works in 2019 with the installation of new drainage system in front of the building. It appears that the repair may have remedied the problem but it is still too soon to tell.

A memorial garden with concrete pavers and two benches was constructed in 2005 and is located in the front of the building. It is dedicated to the late library trustee, John Krautheim Sr.

There are two outdoor book and media returns in front of the building.

With funding provided by a library supporter, the late John Soldoveri, an illuminated sign was purchased and placed on the front lawn of the facility in 2008. The sign is dedicated to his late sister, Ida Marotta a longtime library trustee. Possible replacement of this sign with a digital sign is under consideration.

Three masonry benches reside in the rear of the facility.

A garden area with a weeping cherry tree that was provided by the Shade Tree Commission was planted in the rear of the building in 2013.
HEATING VENTILATION & AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC)

There are two Carrier HVAC units located on the original roof that are approximately 19 years old, one unit is a twenty ton with two compressors and the other is ten ton with one compressor. To date the following repairs have been made to these units; new heat exchange units, a new compressor and new fan compressor. In 2021 the plan is to replace these units with funding provided by the New Jersey Construction Bond Act grant and the Mayor and Council.

A third Lennox HVAC unit was installed as part of the 2011/2012 expansion. This unit is located on the roof directly above the Children’s Room. Currently the unit is inefficient and unable to heat and cool both levels comfortably. The unit also generates a very loud noise while running. The noise problem was addressed in 2014, but only reduces the noise level slightly. Addressing the noise, and heating and cooling ineffectiveness at this time is cost prohibitive and will be deferred to a future date.

The Board of Trustees approved a quarterly preventative maintenance contract for the HVAC units in an effort to stay ahead of any potential problems. This inspection is performed four times a year and includes filter and belt changes, lubrication of fan and motors, compressor, condenser and thermostat checks, and refrigerant and pulley checks.
INTERIOR

CEILING, LIGHTING, AND ELECTRIC

With funding provided by a Statewide Livable Communities Grant in 2008, the lighting and ceiling tiles in the original sections of the Main Room were replaced. In some areas of the facility the lighting is poor and ineffective. In 2012, as part of the expansion and renovation project, new ceiling tiles and lighting were installed throughout the new sections of the facility. Due to water infiltration issues on the flat roof located above the Main Room ceiling tiles are constantly getting damaged. In 2017, approximately seventy ceiling tiles were replaced in the Main Room. In 2020 approximately twelve were damaged due to roof leakage and will need to be replaced.

The electric breaker panels for the facility are located in the Main room, the Meeting Room storage closet and the Children’s Program Room storage room. The panel located in the Main room was updated in 2019 with newly installed exterior switches by two entrances.

FLOORING

Floor tiles in the older sections of the facility were replaced in 2007 with funds from The Statewide Livable Communities Grant and are in fair condition. The floor tile in the Eisenhower Community Room, Meeting Room, lobbies, and reading area were installed as part of the expansion in 2011/2012 and are in good condition. Carpeting in the remaining portion of the Library was replaced in 2002 and presently is in poor condition due to wear and tear. 2020 plans include the replacement of flooring with funds provided by the New Jersey Construction Bond Act Grant and the Board of Trustees. The carpeting in the Children’s Room was installed as part of the expansion in 2011/2012 and is in good condition.

INTERIOR PAINTED WALLS

All of the rooms included in the expansion project were painted in 2012 including the lobbies, workroom, hallway, administrative offices and Young Adult room. The remaining portion of the interior was repainted in 2016.
RESTROOMS
Two ADA compliant restrooms were installed on the lower level in the Meeting Room as part of the expansion in 2012. There are two additional restrooms on the lower level that are outdated and in need of updating. The two public restrooms located on the upper level in the Main Room were completely renovated by the Department of Public Works in 2020.

KITCHEN
With funding provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library, a renovation of the 40-year-old kitchen was performed in August 2013. This project included the removal of a handicap accessible restroom in the old section of the lower level in order to gain more space. The renovations included new cabinets, Formica countertop, a deep sink, a double oven range, a microwave and a freezer. A four-burner Bunn coffee maker was purchased in 2016 to accommodate the needs of the ever-growing groups that meet on a regular basis. Previous water infiltration issues appear to have subsided however the relocation of the previously damaged lower cabinets is still under consideration.
FURNITURE, FIXTURES & ART

- The shelving for reading materials in the Main Room is original (over 40 years old) and needs to be replaced, eventually. In 2020, as a result of a major weeding project, four stacks were removed in the nonfiction section to make way for the planned Reading Room. The Department of Public Works dismantled the units and re-purposed most of the shelves in other areas of the stacks that were in need of replacement.

- Shelving for reading materials in the Children’s room include two new shelving units, purchased in 2009, and two donated bookshelves. A picture book shelving unit was purchased in 2016 with funding provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation and a dedicated gift. Many of the shelves were replaced in 2020 with shelving from the discarded non-fiction units. In addition a carrel was also purchased to display the cake pan collection. The Children’s Room also contains an additional DVD Carrel; this is used to store the media collection.

- The Director’s and administrative assistant’s furniture was purchased in 2002.

- Public seating in the Main Room includes; three tables, two computer tables, and four computer chairs that were purchased in 2005, the remaining furniture is original and is need of replacement. Four chairs were purchased for the reading area with funds provided by dedicated gifts.

- Public area seating on lower level includes; eighty chairs purchased in 2005 with funds from a State grant. The remaining chairs are original (over 40 years old) and were repainted in 2012. Five portable stackable chairs were purchased in 2020 and are available for loan.

- A circulation desk was purchased for the Main room in 2005 and for the Children’s Room in 2009. 2019 plans include replacing the desk in the Main Room with a smaller more efficient desk, in order to gain more floor space.

- A Children’s librarian desk was purchased in 2009.

- Public seating in the Children’s room includes: four tables and eighteen chairs purchased in 2009. Additionally, soft benches with two chairs that resemble books were purchased in 2014 through a dedicated gift donation. An additional loveseat was purchased with funding provided by a dedicated gift.

- Three staff room desks were purchased in 2012.

- Public seating in the Young Adult room includes: a counter height table, three stools, an octagon computer table and three chairs that were purchased in 2012, with funding provided by a dedicated gift.

- There are two previously owned computer tables in the Meeting Room that were purchased in 2012 with funds provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation.

- The Library Foundation purchased ten lightweight folding tables and a cart in 2012. Eight additional lightweight folding tables were purchased in 2018 to replace the extremely heavy 20 year old tables. In 2020, two 6 foot folding tables were purchased for the Library
of Things and are available for loan by the public.

- A 90 gallon fresh water aquarium was installed in June of 2015, seed money for this aquarium was provided by Girl Scout Troop 70088. The aquarium is community themed and home to over 20 different species of fish. "SpongeBob Squarepants" themed décor was purchased in 2019 and added to the aquarium.
- Media shelving was replaced in 2016 with funds provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation.
- Two moveable portable folding walls were purchased in 2016.
- Three additional card tables were purchased in 2018 to accommodate the needs of the bridge, pinochle and mahjong groups.
- In early 2018, the Library purchased Oklahoma Sound Series 700 Podium/PA System with funds provided by a dedicated gift.
- A donated used upright piano resides in the Eisenhower Room and is in need of repair.
- A twenty foot canvas mural was donated to the Library in 2019 and is on display in the Multi-Purpose Room. The mural was created by Passaic Valley High School Art Honor Society students and features characters from children’s literature.
- A step and repeat banner with the Totowa Library logo was purchased in 2020 and is used for social media and events.
- In 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Personal Protective Equipment and other health and safety related fixtures and equipment were purchased with the majority of the funding provided by the CARES Act and the Borough of Totowa. The following were installed; Thermal temperature camera systems, touch-less water faucets, sensor enhanced toilets and hands free hand dryers and water fountains. Additionally the Library purchased plexi glass screens for both circulation desks and free standing table top plexi glass shields for study groups.
SECURITY SYSTEM
Presently, there is no alarm system in the building. However, security monitoring cameras were installed in 2013 in eight areas of the Library: the front and rear entrance, the upper and lower lobby, the main desk, the meeting room, the children’s room and the hallway connecting into the municipal complex. A new Pentium processor, display monitor, and a DVR were purchased in 2015 to enhance the system. Panic buttons were installed in 2015 and are strategically positioned for the safety of staff and patrons.

TECHNOLOGY
- The main server that provides Internet access for the Library is housed in the Young Adult Room in a secure locked cabinet. A NETGEAR battery backup was purchased in December 2017 and is housed in the cabinet.
- Internet access is through a T-1 line provided by Verizon and is managed by PALS Plus - the library consortium for Passaic and Essex county libraries. Bandwidth is 10 mbps.
- Password protected free Wi-Fi access is provided by Optimum/Cablevision.
- A standalone Dell management console to support Envisionware was purchased in 2019 and is housed in the circulation desk in the Main Room.
- Computer inventory includes 13 public access and 14 staff use Dell Optiplex machines. Funding for 12 of these computers was provided by the Friends of the Library and Library Foundation in 2018.
- Two laptop computers are available for staff use. The second laptop was purchased in December 2017 with speakers and is used for movie presentations. Plans for 2020 include...
the purchase of additional laptops to be used for computer classes with funding provided by the Library Foundation.

- Multifunctional Sharp copy machines were upgraded in 2018. Both machines offer black & white and color copying, have faxing and scanning capabilities and have the ability to scan files to an external hard drive. Additionally, in 2018, through a dollar buyout agreement, one of the older Sharp copier machines (circa 2013) was retained and is presently in the Children’s Room providing public copying, printing and scanning.

- Additional electronic devices for staff and program use include a projector and inflatable movie screen.

- Wireless printing software was installed in 2014 and is made available via GO Print.

- A typewriter is available for public use.

- An Ellison machine and laminator were purchased in 2009 and are located on the lower level in the Multi-Purpose Room.

- Telephone service was upgraded to a Nextiva Cloud/Hosted system in 2018. Thirteen Polycom telephones were installed in February. This upgrade included the installation of three phone lines on the lower level. The new phone system offers a myriad of functionality including most notably an external paging system and web based phone message availability. Two traditional hard wire phone lines were retained in order to support the elevator and fax line.
IMPROVEMENTS

Prior exterior improvements included the replacement of several of the sidewalks in front of the building. The front entrance door was replaced in 2016. Interior improvements included the installation of nine acoustic panels in the Eisenhower Community Room (2015), a privacy wall (2014) in the Meeting Room, and a new storage closet (2014). 2019 improvements included the aforementioned electric panel upgrade and lighting replacement in the lower level hallway by the kitchen. Two Dayton 30 inch commercial wall mounted oscillating fans were purchased and installed in the Eisenhower Room. Additionally, the rear sidewalk that leads to the entrance ramp was repaired.

FUTURE PLANNING

The Totowa Library Grant Application was recently approved for funding from the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act. The plan is to renovate the Main Room including re-purposing an underutilized area into a room for reading and quiet study in 2021. Planned improvements include replacement of the ceiling, flooring and lighting, and replacement of the HVAC units. Matching funds to be provided by the Library Foundation, Board of Trustees and Mayor and Council.

Additionally, the Main Room and the Children’s Room roof leakage issues will have to be addressed and remedied in 2021.

Upgrading the front illuminated sign with a digital sign is also under consideration.

Lastly, transforming the Young Adult Room into a local history room is also planned for 2021. This project would include new furnishings and signage.

The Library has come a long way since its beginning in 1957 in a small building on Union Blvd. It continues to grow in the ever-changing world of technology and in meeting the needs of the community. With hard work, dedication and through the generosity of many it has become a treasured institution and serves as a gathering place for residents of all ages.
FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOROUGH OF TOTOWA – UNION BLVD. CIRCA 1958