



Contact Information

Institution Name: Santa Monica Public Library
Institution Address: 601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401
Institution Telephone Number: 310.458.8600
Project Name: Santa Monica Public Library, Main Library
Project start date: Master Plan 1996
Project end date: January 2006
Name of person completing form: Rachel Foyt

www.ebsco.com



A. Green Mission

What was the purpose of the project? The Santa Monica Public Library is a vibrant community resource that provides access to information, collections, services and resources, including public access computers, wireless Internet access, free programs for children, teens and adults, and community meeting space. The Main Library and three neighborhood branches serve the 86,000 residents of Santa Monica.

In 1998, the voters of Santa Monica overwhelmingly approved authorizing the sale of bonds for the construction, renovation and expansion of the Main and Branch Libraries. The library master plan was developed with substantial public input as to the design and features of the Main Library.

The Santa Monica Public Library Main Library building, which opened in January 2006, achieved a Gold LEED rating. As a green building, high priority is placed on the health of the occupants, the environment and resource efficiency over the life of the building.

Features of the facility include underground parking, solar electric panels and a storm water management system used to irrigate the drought resistant landscape. More than 50 percent of the building materials contain significant recycled content. The building also includes low-flow restroom faucets and toilets, and the state's first approved no water urinals.

B. Challenges

What challenges did you encounter with the project and how did you overcome them? Higher construction costs associated with green building and a lack of expertise were two of the challenges staff faced on the Main Library project.

Initially during construction, costs for green building are higher. In the long term, sustainable features will save money but the higher building costs need to be programmed for in the early planning stages of the project.

When we began our project there was relatively little expertise among city staff on green building and LEED ratings. Staff was contracted out for green building services. We found it invaluable to have that expertise on green building beginning with the planning stage of the project.



C. Benefits

What benefits has your institution received as a result of this project? How has it positively impacted the mission of your institution?

As a green building, the Main Library offers many benefits, including environmental protection, economic advantages and health and safety benefits, while providing an inviting, friendly and comfortable place for library users of all ages. Environmentally-friendly highlights of the Main Library are:

- sustainable site planning
- water management and conservation
- energy efficiency and building atmosphere
- conservation of materials and resources
- enhanced indoor environmental quality
- sustainable landscaping
- public education and information.

Capitalizing on the interest in the Gold LEED rated Main Library has allowed staff to bring some exciting new programs to the Santa Monica community.

In 2007, the Library launched the [Green Prize](#) for Sustainable Literature. The Green Prize was created to encourage and commend authors, illustrators and publishers who produce quality books for adults and young people that make significant contributions to, support the ideas of, and broaden public awareness of sustainability.

The Library has also developed community partnerships focused on sustainability. Our partnership with the Santa Monica Environmental Programs Division allows us to provide a wide array of programs and materials on sustainability and green building to the Santa Monica community.

D. Your advice to other institutions/libraries ...

What advice would you give other institutions in becoming greener?

On the Main Library project we learned the importance of planning early to include green building in the project and budgeting for the higher costs associated with green building.

However, everyone can make changes to become a greener library or institution.

Here are some tips from the Santa Monica Environmental Programs Division:

- create a company-wide environmental policy
- reduce, reuse, recycle
- purchase recycled-content office supplies and buy from local merchants, manufacturers and farmers
- donate unwanted office equipment or materials
- retrofit lighting and water fixtures for efficiency
- learn about "No Water Waste" laws
- reduce or eliminate toxic chemical use
- encourage transportation alternatives for employees
- follow green building guidelines for any remodeling or new construction.