

NEW HANOVER COUNTY MAIN BRANCH LIBRARY  
AND  
CAPE FEAR MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND SCIENCE  
**ROUGH ORDER OF MAGNITUDE  
SPACE NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

APRIL 24, 2018

**VINES ARCHITECTURE**

## PROJECT GRACE

In August 2017, New Hanover County completed a study known as 'Project Grace', which provides an assessment of market demand and site conditions associated with the potential redevelopment of a county-owned block in downtown Wilmington. The block is defined to the North by Grace Street, to the East by 3rd Street, to the South by Chestnut Street, and the West by 2nd Street. The study identified four development scenarios and the county decided to move forward with the scenario that relocates the New Hanover County Cape Fear Museum of History and Science to the site along with a New Main Branch Public Library to leverage similar missions, shared common/multi-purpose areas, common infrastructure, and create a downtown community destination.



*Location of Project Grace Block Development in downtown Wilmington*

## LOCATION

Currently the 40,985 SF Cape Fear Museum of History and Science is located at 814 Market Street in the old National Guard Armory Building since 1970. The current 76,258 SF Main Public Library is located at 201 Chestnut Street in the old Belk Beery Building since 1981 and is on the southern portion of the Project Grace block along with the library's outdoor Story Park on the corner of 3rd Street. In the redevelopment of Project Grace, the site will be redesigned to provide space for the new library and museum along with potential residential, retail, office and hospitality spaces. The existing county-owned seven floor parking deck will remain and is a critical component of the redevelopment.



*Existing Cape Fear Museum of History & Science*



*Existing Main Public Library & Story Park*

**SPACE NEEDS PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

New Hanover County hired the Raleigh-based design architectural firm Vines Architecture in January of 2018 to complete a Rough Order of Magnitude [R.O.M.] Program Space Needs Assessment for both the New Hanover County Cape Fear Museum of History & Science and the New Hanover County New Main Branch Public Library. The assessment study determined the new space needs to meet and address the future programs of the new museum and library. The Space Needs Assessment was completed to support and inform the overall Project Grace Development Project relative to only the New Main Branch Library and New Cape Fear Museum components of the project.

Vines Architecture worked collaboratively with an executive committee, including representatives from both the library and the museum, to evaluate and determine the space needs for each the library and for the museum and identify what spaces could commonly be shared between the two county services. The executive committee was led by key members of the New Hanover County Manager’s Office as well as the director and staff of both the Main Library and the Cape Fear Museum. Over a period of three months Vines Architecture met with the Executive Committee to study and review multiple iterations of the programs space needs in which the final space needs program was derived.

There were several key assumptions guiding the space need analysis and assessment. One assumption was there are efficiencies gained by designing buildings for their intended use. For example, designing a museum intended to be a museum will have more efficiency than retrofitting a building built for a completely different use like the existing Armory building. Another key assumption was the downtown site will primarily focus on the customer’s experience and patron, not internal business processes for both the museum and the library. The other main assumption very clearly articulated by the executive committee was that the service level in the new museum and library would not be reduced or diminished from the services currently provided to the community and county. With these assumptions, the assessment revealed by co-locating the library and museum together in a new facility there are incredible opportunities for this component of Project Grace to become a downtown destination for the City of Wilmington. With a modern cutting edge new facility, the library and museum will have the ability to enhance services and draw visitors and patrons beyond what each facility is capable of currently.

Additionally, the assessment revealed there are considerable programmatic advantages to co-locating the museum and library. There are a number of shared spaces identified between the library and the museum; for example; lobby spaces [information + ticketing, coat/checkrooms], multi-purpose rooms [events and programs], study/meeting rooms, staff spaces, outdoor environments, and building support [restrooms, stairs, mechanical/electrical, loading dock]. By co-locating these two major public county facilities there is approximately 8000 square feet of savings. However, the largest advantage to the spatial overlap between the library and museum in a new facility is the ability to draw patrons into both the museum and library simultaneously and provide related contents/programs.

**PROGRAM: 81,788** GROSS SQUARE FEET [GSF]

**35,241 GSF**

**7,931 GSF**

**38,616 GSF**



## PROGRAM SUMMARY

Below is a summary of the programmatic spaces included in the proposed Space Needs Assessment, expressed in Gross Square Feet [GSF].

### MUSEUM:

#### ZONE A: PUBLIC NON-COLLECTION SPACE

VISITOR SERVICES	1,400 GSF
PLANETARIUM [50 SEATS]	1,400 GSF
EDUCATION	2,128 GSF

#### ZONE B: PUBLIC COLLECTION SPACE

CORE EXHIBITS - SCIENCE & HISTORY	14,000 GSF
TEMPORARY EXHIBITION GALLERIES	12,600 GSF

#### ZONE C: NON-PUBLIC COLLECTION SPACE

COLLECTION SUPPORT	1,400 GSF
--------------------	-----------

#### ZONE D: NON-PUBLIC NON-COLLECTION SPACE

OFFICES/WORKSTATIONS	2,254 GSF
OFFICE SERVICES	59 GSF

#### MUSEUM BASE PROGRAM

**SUBTOTAL 35,241 GSF**

### LIBRARY:

LIBRARY LOBBY	739 GSF
ADULT	9,765 GSF
CHILDREN'S	7,363 GSF
TEEN	1,386 GSF
LAW LIBRARY	973 GSF
LOCAL HISTORY	9,197 GSF
MULTI-PURPOSE	6,549 GSF
LIBRARY STAFF	1,579 GSF
LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION SUITE	997 GSF
BUILDING SUPPORT	68 GSF

#### LIBRARY BASE PROGRAM

**SUBTOTAL 38,616 GSF**

### SHARED SPACES BETWEEN MUSEUM & LIBRARY:

ENTRY LOBBY	1,905 GSF
MULTI-PURPOSE	4,302 GSF
MUSEUM/LIBRARY STAFF	722 GSF
BUILDING SUPPORT	1,002 GSF
OUTDOOR SPACES [5800 SF NOT INCLUDED IN GSF]	
URBAN PLAZA, READING/TEACHING GARDEN	
PLAY AREA, ROOF TERRACE + EVENT	
DROP-OFF + BUS STAGING	

#### SHARED BASE PROGRAM

**SUBTOTAL 7,931 GSF**

### MUSEUM, LIBRARY, & SHARED PROGRAM:

**TOTAL 81,788 GSF**

Note: With the reduction of the square footage from the existing main library, the museum collection storage not moving to the new facility, and some additional non-essential day to day library/museum program components there will be a need for some off-site square footage.