



Hamden, Connecticut

Police Facility Study Study Overview February 14, 2003

In February of 2002, the Town of Hamden, CT retained the services Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc. Architects of New Britain; CT (KBA) to conduct a Needs Assessment Study to evaluate the facility needs for the Hamden Police Department. The goal of this study was to program a facility that will meet the needs for the Police Department for at least the next twenty-five (25) years, meet current operational standards and be in compliance with all State and Federal Codes and Regulations.

On March 11th, the Police Department returned an initial data-gathering questionnaire to KBA, and needs assessment interviews were conducted on March 11th and 15th with staff members of the Police Department to identify programmatic needs. The initial results of the interviews indicated a facility need/want of approximately 58,500 square feet. In subsequent discussions, with the Chief of Police and the Police Facility Staff, the program needs were pared down to a main facility of 57,500 square feet with an outbuilding of 1,400 square feet. Further detail on how this building area was calculated may be found in the "Study Philosophy", "Space Needs Assessment" and "Detailed Needs Assessment". The obvious question is how did we get from approximately 25,000 square feet currently to this projected need of 57,500 square feet?

The answer can be determined from an understanding of the three primary contributors to this difference. First, many of the operations and workspaces within the existing facility are extremely cramped by insufficient space and workstations are available in inadequate quantities to serve the staff needs. Records and evidence storage areas are inadequate for current storage volume. Locker facilities are dramatically too small to accommodate the patrol officer needs, and lockers are available in insufficient numbers to serve the entire staff. Detention and prisoner processing areas are insufficient and fail to meet applicable codes and standards. Storage space throughout the facility is inadequate including evidence, armory, quartermaster, records archives and found property. These are but a few examples among many more of how the building is currently undersized.

Second, facility spaces that are common across the country in appropriately designed police facilities are completely lacking in the existing facility. There are currently no facilities for classroom or fitness training, there is no facility for vehicle processing, there is no prisoner sally port, no report preparation facilities, no workspace for Community Affairs or Traffic, no evidence processing laboratory, no appropriate interview facilities, and no conference space. Most importantly, the detention facilities are inadequate to fulfill federal, state, and accreditation guidelines.

Third, the existing facility does not adequately accommodate your department's current space needs much less allow for future growth within the department. The needs assessment program has identified areas within the facility that will be subject to staff increases in the future. A series of projection tools were utilized to estimate the size of the department in twenty-five years. The results of these projections have indicated a projected sworn staff size of 145 officers. Provisions are made within locker rooms and staff workspaces for this estimated future growth. It may come as a surprise that although this growth is a contributor to the area difference between the current facility and the identified space needs it is the smallest of the three primary contributors. This future growth may have added a few more workstations in areas such as investigation or records, and in a few cases it may have added an office for a currently unfilled position, but primarily this growth is accommodated in the Patrol Division. This division is unique in that it contributes the smallest area per staff member as compared with other department roles.



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Additional patrol officers create a need for lockers (15 s.f. per officer) and seats in the roll call room (20 s.f. per each three new officers). While these contributions are quite modest, they are important to ensure that your department is able to grow without once again facing spatial shortcomings.

With an understanding of the space needs we may now begin to identify sites and explore building design options to satisfy the program. It should be noted, that it was decided during the programming to include animal control, in an outbuilding to take advantage of potential cost savings by utilizing a lesser construction type. Tab 5 of this report identifies the site space needs requirements for use in evaluating any considered site's capability of supporting the program. This evaluation is statistical in nature as different sites offer varying challenges and opportunities for development. Therefore the site needs program is utilized to prepare an initial concept site plan to further support or discount any sites selected for more detailed consideration.

Tab 6 of this report includes information on the sites considered, the evaluation matrix utilized, and diagrams indicating the short listed sites capability to support the program. The site at the intersection of Dixwell Avenue and Mather Street was ultimately selected for it's high scoring in the evaluative criteria matrix and for it's demonstrated ability to support the program and needs of the Police Department.