



Date: June 29, 2012

To: Chair Steve Albers and members of the Board of Trustees

From: Sally Porter Smith, Customer Experience Director

Subject: South Hill Project

The South Hill project addressed several customer experience issues and improved staffing efficiencies; specifically:

1. Noise issues impacting customers' satisfaction in using the library;
2. Reducing theft of DVDs and DVDs on hold resulting in poor customer service and loss of library materials;
3. Improved access to self-checkout;
4. Improved access to the children's area and more space for children's collections while providing parents' easier supervision of their small children; and
5. More efficient use of staff by reducing the number of service desks while providing a team of well-trained staff to meet the needs of customers.

The acoustical work has yielded dramatic improvements in the level of noise in the library. Complaints have been rare and are associated with specific events, such as the boisterous and joyful sign up for summer reading. Reports from South Hill customers and staff concur; the acoustical work has conquered the noise issue at South Hill. I have not received one complaint regarding noise at South Hill since the reopening of the library; a significant reduction in the frequent requests from customers "to do something about the noise in that library."

The Movie and Music produced an immediate reduction in the theft of DVDs and DVD holds while providing easy access to a large browsing collection of DVDs. With ample space, the Reading and Materials Department is working to expand the breadth and depth of the DVD collection. Self-checkout in the area provides customers a self-service option while addressing the security of materials. Customer and staff response to the area is positive. A customer survey will be conducted in mid-September.

A self-checkout station was added in the children's area to provide our youngest customers the ability to checkout their own items. It also provides parents a family friendly environment to checkout large stacks of picture books while allowing them to have their children in a more secure part of the library. The addition of self-checkout stations has benefitted customers at the central self-checkout area through the reduction in lines and faster checkout.

A slight reworking of the book stacks yielded more space for children's fiction and talking books while facilitating the space for Friends purchased learning center for children and a castle for

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children to read in. Parents are pleased with the reworking of the children's area that features a new entrance that encloses the picture book area from the main throughway of the library.

The new centrally located service desk provides customers a team of staff members ready to respond to all their library needs. Not desk bound, staff is able to move comfortably between the floor and the desk. When needed, staff members are dispatched from the backroom to assist customers. Catalogs have been placed in convenient locations on the floor to facilitate this service. As the team builds, so will the capacity of all staff working the desk to respond to the varied needs of our customers.

The central desk replaces three desks and eliminates the need to staff three different service points. Conveniently located, the desk provides fast and easy access to the children's area, the teen area, the Job & Business Center as well as to the computers and the main stacks. Learning from feedback from customers and staff at Lakewood, University Place and Milton libraries, the desk features an ADA work station that is also used as a station where staff can get customers started in using library resources while providing convenient coaching assistance as needed. The adjustable height work stations allow library staff to adjust the level of the desk to meet the needs of the customer while providing staff the ability to raise and lower the desk to meet their own ergonomic work needs. The spacing of desk units allows customers' confidentiality in discussing reference and library account issues while allowing staff to confer with one another in responding to customers' inquiries. A public survey will be conducted to determine if our customers' expectations for service are being met. From a survey of library staff, the impact of the one desk model is being demonstrated as librarians working in locations with a central desk have been able to provide more outreach in the community, teach more classes, and contribute to the development of services and content for our customers.