

Why were the restrooms renovated?

More patrons are using the Main Library each year. The public restrooms receive greater use than they were originally designed for and no longer meet the functional needs of most users. For example, many patrons are accompanied by guardians or caregivers of a different gender, and some require Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accommodations that current restrooms do not provide.

What are the benefits of the renovation?

Patrons have a choice to use the restroom that best suits their needs with both gender-specific and all-gender options available after the renovation. All restrooms have improved accessibility, functionality and are now ADA compliant. Plumbing, heating and ventilation deficiencies were addressed to meet current building code. Upgraded finishes, fixtures and an optimized floorplan allow for more efficient maintenance and cleaning, improved durability, and reduced on-going maintenance and repair costs.

What do the new restrooms look like?

Colorful murals welcome patrons into the spacious restrooms. The finishes, fixtures and lighting were selected to create an open, clean and welcoming atmosphere.

To ensure privacy and comfort of all users, the restrooms for all feature individual, room-like, stalls with floor-to-ceiling walls. The door to each has a four-inch gap between the bottom of the door and the floor for security purposes. Each stall has its own ventilation and sound mitigation. The sinks, hand-dryers, towel dispensers and trash are in a common area. A diaper-changing area with a sink is available to the side of the common area. The gender-specific restrooms have all the same features but with traditional, stall partitions.

How was the project funded?

The restrooms were updated more than 20 years ago and were not included in the 2014 Main Library renovation due to project scope and budget constraints at that time. Renovation of the Main Library restrooms was identified as an unmet facility need by the Library Commission for the past four years.

While the library is looking for options to increase its ongoing operating funding to meet community needs, the funding for this project came from library fund reserves and the fund for facilities repair and replacement which are limited to one-time, capital expenditures and cannot be used for on-going operating expenses. These funds have been accumulated over several years and are typically used for building improvements that benefit library users.

Updating the infrastructure and upgrading the finishes and fixtures to increase energy-efficiency, durability and functionality is expected to reduce on-going maintenance and repair costs.

Why were the new restrooms designed to be inclusive?

The new restrooms provide patrons with the option to choose the restroom that best suits their needs. The design of both the gender-specific and all-gender restrooms respond to requests from community members to provide restroom facilities that are safe and welcoming for any person, so no one feels excluded, discriminated-against, or unsafe using the public restrooms at the library.

How do the all-gender restrooms comply with Colorado state law?

[Colorado Senate Bill 08-200](#) and [C.R.S. 24-34-601](#) etseq., Discrimination in Places of Public Accommodation allows any person of any gender, gender identification or sexuality to access to any restroom in a public facility. All businesses or places subject to discriminatory laws are required to follow this act of non-discrimination. The Main Library restrooms are designed to facilitate compliance with C.R.S. 24-34-601 etseq.

Why were single-user restrooms not considered?

Single-user restrooms are not a practical consideration to address the diverse needs of our community in a high-traffic library. The new restroom design was limited to the pre-existing restroom footprint due to the location of plumbing and drainage, and other structural constraints of the building. Further, single-user restrooms could not be added to the existing footprint and still meet building code regulations that require a specific number of restrooms for a building of this size.

Additionally, single-user restrooms present security challenges because they are designed for privacy which limits the ability for library security personnel to monitor occupant activity or know if occupants may be in distress.

How do patrons know which restroom to use?

There are two options: gender-specific and restrooms for all. Clear and visible signs denoting the intended user group(s) are installed at the entrance to each restroom.

To support a smooth transition to this new model, volunteer project advocates will be available as ambassadors for a few weeks after opening to inform users about the new design and encourage them to try the restrooms for all. The ambassadors will answer user questions and collect concerns and other feedback about their experience. This information will be shared with library leadership and the Library Commission during and shortly after implementation.

Why are the all-gender, inclusive restrooms larger than the gender-specific restrooms?

The all-gender restrooms are designed to serve all persons and therefore must be larger to accommodate more users. The City and Library recognize that this is a new model for public buildings and have provided gender-specific options to serve people who prefer them. Library patrons will have the option to choose the restroom they are most comfortable using.

There are only two gender-specific restrooms. How will users who prefer those options be accommodated during busy times at the library?

The restrooms for all are designed to serve more users and it is anticipated that most users will opt to use those facilities reducing the demand for gender-specific restrooms. The restrooms for all equalize possible wait-times for all users during busy times. There are also gender specific public restrooms in the Main Library north building open at all times.

Do other public buildings have all-gender, inclusive restrooms?

According to the [Advisory Board](#), a best practices firm, more than 150 U.S. colleges and universities have created all-gender restrooms on their campuses. This trend is not limited to higher education. In 2015, the White House added an all-gender restroom, and many convention and conference centers around the country have transitioned to inclusive, multi-user, restroom facilities like those opened at the Main Library. Several Colorado public libraries are considering all-gender restrooms for future renovations and new building projects.

What measures will be taken to ensure the restrooms are clean and sanitary?

All finishes and materials were selected for durability and ease of maintenance. Day porters clean and restock the restrooms several times per day.

What measures will be taken to ensure that the new restrooms are safe places?

Like the activation that occurred in the other common areas in the library after the 2014 renovation, increased use and visibility of others in the common areas will deter unwanted and inappropriate behavior. Users are asked to report any inappropriate behavior that they witness to library staff and security personnel so that it can be addressed.

Security personnel conducts regular patrols of the building including frequent restroom checks. All security personnel have convenient access to the inclusive restrooms and their ability to observe patron safety and behavior will be facilitated by the 4-inch gap at the front of the individual toilet rooms. Users are asked to report any maintenance issues or inappropriate use that they observe.

Are all-gender, inclusive restrooms planned for all library locations?

The north Boulder branch library plans include all-gender inclusive restroom facilities. The George Reynolds Branch Library has a single-user restroom in the basement near the public meeting room. As renovation of other facilities is planned, inclusive restrooms will be considered if they are structurally and economically feasible. There are no current plans for renovation of the library's other facilities or capital funds for such projects.

Why did construction last so long?

Construction on the Main Library restrooms took longer than anticipated and was complicated by unforeseen infrastructural and mechanical challenges, by vendor delays and product procurement difficulties.