

Pearl Avenue Branch Library



Pearl Avenue Branch Library is a 14,000 square foot public branch library that replaces an out-dated library previously located on the same site. The new building provides a storytelling area, children's collection, teen room, group study room, Internet Café, community living room and adult collection.

The building is sited to preserve many of the large perimeter trees opening up the library to a viewing garden. This creates a visual connection to nature that is reinforced by the interior finish patterns and colors. The desire to have a strong civic street presence and a central entry from the parking lot drove the simple yet beautiful 'butterfly' roof design. This roof form provides tall, dramatic spaces for the entry and community room while still providing a comfortably scaled room for the Family Place.

The building entry leads the customer directly into the marketplace where the new books and multi-media collections are displayed in a manner reminiscent of a favorite local book store. Floating canopies draw them into the Internet Café and out into the private reading garden. Bamboo trellises provide a gateway from the marketplace into the Family Place under a garden canopy of leaves, flowers, vines and playful bug-shaped lights. The soaring roof line leads the user through the adult collection, to the community reading room overlooking the garden.

The project's design also incorporates the green building principles as outlined by the U.S. Green Building Council's "LEED" rating system. First, the site was designed to reduce the amount of stormwater and pollutants that enter the Bay Area water system. This is accomplished through the use of infiltration basins in the parking lot, at the back of the building and at the entry along with a swale in the rear garden to treat the site water and roof run-off.

Low-E glazing, wall and roof insulation reduce the energy use of the building. The vertical fins shield the west facing windows from the heat and glare of the low afternoon sun.

Green building materials are used throughout including wood that is Forest Stewardship Council Certified (FSC) - meaning it was grown and harvested in a responsible manner, and materials containing recycled content - aluminum panels, the canopy and the carpeting. Materials were also selected to reduce the amount of volatile organic compounds or VOC's in the building. These include sealants, interior and exterior paints, carpeting, and cabinetry substrates. Finally, through an extensive recycling effort, little construction waste was sent to the landfill.

This new Pearl Avenue Branch Library will better serve the needs of this community, providing facilities for lifelong learning and gathering, while supporting a more sustainable environment and strengthening the identity of the community.



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Dedicated Team Members that have contributed to the successful completion of the project:

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Calhoun Brothers Grading & Paving,
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Floor Seal Technology, Frost Tile,
Gilroy Steel & Supply, Inc., Global Specialties Direct,
G.P. Fire Protection, Hopley Co., Inc.,
Sid Hughes Drywall, Kim's Flooring, Inc.,
Kodiak Roofing & Waterproofing, Inc.,
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Pacific Underground Construction, Inc.,
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