

Library Renovations: A Planning Guide for Best Practices



Eustis Chair
CHAIRS THAT MEET THE TEST OF TIME
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America's Modern Libraries



Over the past few decades, libraries have made an incredible shift. The Internet revolutionized learning as we know it. Libraries have adapted well, but they know the work is never over. Libraries must keep planning ahead with the future of technology in mind. Libraries used to be places to conduct research and borrow books (and they still are), but now they must be so much more.

The Digital Age has impacted all areas of life as we know it. Libraries are no different. Academic and public libraries now have new roles within their communities. They must offer a safe place to learn. They must provide a comfortable spot to study. Libraries fill new roles as community hubs and meetinghouses.

Libraries often find they must change the physical space of the library to meet the needs of the modern patrons. Your library needs to be comforting and inviting, or patrons will not return.

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Exciting trainings, events, and the chance to meet authors bring in larger groups to the space. You cannot host these types of events with outdated facilities. Updates are necessary to meet the needs of the public. Renovation leads to revitalization.

Eustis Chair makes the best hardwood chairs on the market. We have been an industry leader for over three decades. In that time, Eustis Chair has manufactured stacking and non-stacking hardwood chairs for numerous library clients. Eustis Chair has a wealth of industry knowledge, and created this guide to assist in your library renovation project.

This guide covers big issues like how to allocate your budget when funding is tight. We also cover the little things you do not want to overlook. This includes our niche expertise on furniture tailored for modern library patrons. In this guide, you can learn from our decades of experience creating libraries that meet the test of time.



Renovation Goals: Planning Ahead



“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.”
-Benjamin Franklin

Before you begin a renovation, you need to have strategic goals for your project in mind. You can begin with asking some big picture questions.

What does your community value?

Some communities focus on preserving tradition, while others prioritize adapting to modern tastes and lifestyles. You will want to assess the most important values for your local community to best determine the direction for your remodel.

What does your community need? What part of the library is most in demand?

Identifying community needs and the most in-demand parts of your library will demonstrate where your renovations will have the most impact. The most popular parts of the library will also have the most wear and tear. These are the areas that require attention (and possible maintenance). Library clients from Eustis Chair often name study areas, reading rooms, group areas, and function rooms as some of their most used spaces.

Renovation Goals: Planning Ahead

What's the culture of your library like? Do you want to change it or maintain it? Renovations can bring a radical change to the “feel” of a library. You want to steer that “feeling” to what will delight your patrons. Design a library that works best for those that will be using it.

How much time will the renovation take? More importantly, will any of your services be impacted during renovations?

It is important to know the projected renovation time line. It is equally important to stay flexible. Renovations often take longer than expected. It is imperative you have a plan in place to address any services that are impacted while the renovation takes place.

“A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life.”

- Henry Ward Beecher



Library Features



Once you know what your library needs, it is time to translate those needs into physical changes. You need to take into account whether your library needs minor renovations or if it is in need of major overhaul. To begin, you should make a list of what, specifically, needs to be upgraded.

The Seating

Proper seating is a crucial element of a library. When your patrons are finished browsing the collection, they are going to sit down to complete their work or to read. If your chairs are uncomfortable, no one will want to sit there for very long. Libraries must purchase chairs that are comfortable, for their patrons. It is important the chairs match the space. Library seating must outlast the daily rigors of a busy space.

The Flooring

Traditionally, libraries had either tile or wood flooring. In the modern era, most libraries have made the switch to carpet flooring. Carpet absorbs sound, which makes for quieter acoustics and a more peaceful environment.

Library Features

The Lighting

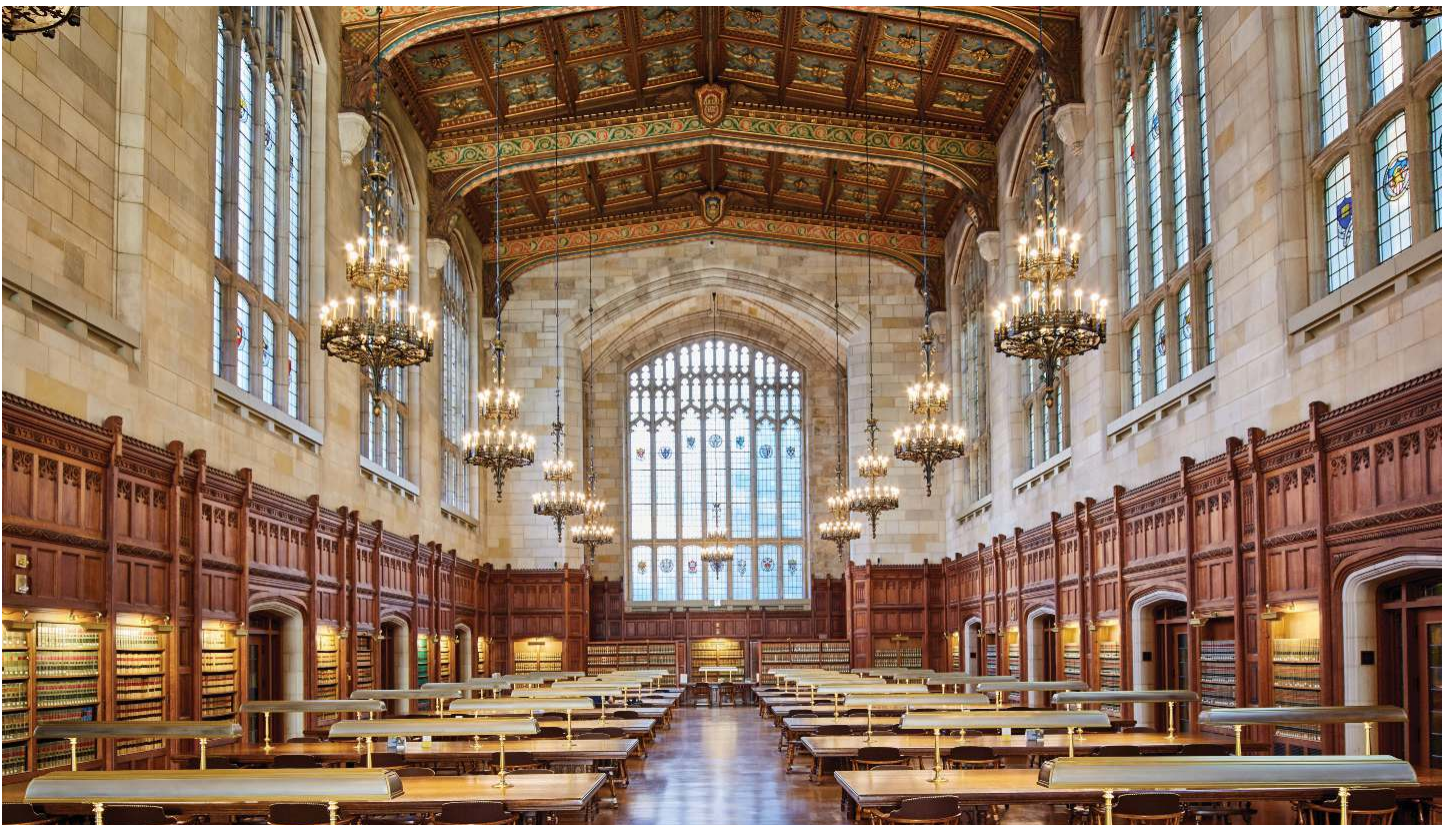
Natural lighting is the preferred way to light a modern library. A renovation is the perfect opportunity to flood your library with natural light. Some libraries add additional windows and others add brand-new skylights. Many modern libraries have also installed better overhead lights and lamps on study tables to supplement the natural light.

The Decor

When clients contact us to purchase chairs from Eustis Chair, they are looking for styles that match the architecture and interior design of the building. It may not be necessary to upgrade the stylistic elements of the building itself. However, if the construction is outdated, it is a good idea to consider changing it to something more welcoming.

PRO TIPS:

- Remain part of the planning and renovation process to ensure you are kept up-to-date on the progress of your project
- Think ahead to future renovations, and plan accordingly



Budgeting for your Renovation



Budgeting

It is often hard for libraries to get the funding needed for major renovations. Eustis Chair has been a member of the American Library Association (ALA) for a long time. The ALA advocates for members to gain federal funding. They assist libraries across the country. Renovation budgets must be cost efficient. It is important to ensure all aspects of the renovation retain their quality for years of daily use.

Think long term

When it comes time to decide which products to purchase, you will want to calculate the cost per use. Occasionally libraries will purchase chairs from one of our competitors that charge less per chair only to have them break in five years. In these cases, the library has to purchase new chairs twice. The second purchase could have been avoided with hardwood chairs that come with a 20 year warranty against joint failure, like Eustis Chair offers. This lesson extends to every feature of the renovation. You should choose the option least likely to give you a second surprise bill down the line.

A Streamlined Remodel

We suggest you make **library seating** the focal point of your renovation. Your patrons will spend the greatest amount of time at the library sitting. It is important for them to be comfortable.

Comfort, while a major concern, is not the only thing you should consider. You should also ensure the seating will withstand the daily demands of a modern library. Therefore, durable chairs are important. If you purchase durable chairs the first time, you will not need to buy new chairs for decades.

Style is another important consideration of any remodel. Given the amount of time your chairs will service your space, you should purchase chairs that match the space. Some chair companies can match hardwoods, stains, and style to your particular project.



Why Choose Wooden Chairs That Stack?

Eustis Chair offers a line of stacking hardwood chairs which ensure libraries do not have to sacrifice elegance for the ease of convenience.

Here are the top reasons why our clients choose hardwood stacking chairs:

Easy Rearrangement for New Seating Plans

For multi-use rooms and function spaces, stacking chairs allow for easy transitions between events.

Transporting and Moving Chairs

There are times when libraries need to move a lot of chairs from one room to another. Eustis Chair sells custom-made Transporters which cut down the time needed to prepare. Every stacking chair in the Eustis Chair line is made for easy handling.

Cleaning

Stacking wood chairs make cleaning the floors an easy task.

Storage

Stacked chairs make it possible to store chairs in tight spaces.

Efficient Use of Space

Stacking wood chairs allow for your space to be maximized to the full potential.

Library Patrons

Library patrons delight in the comfortable and beautiful seating.

Durability

Wooden chairs are highly favored over steel and plastic for their durability.

Sustainability

Hardwood chairs are the most environmentally sustainable choice, as wood is the only renewable construction material. For libraries ready to go green, there is no better choice than wood for your next renovation project.

Now you are ready to navigate the planning for your library renovation project. It is time to decide what measures will best serve your community. Remember to involve them in this exciting process.

Whether you are expanding your space or enhancing what you already have, a renovation breathes new life into your building. Our library clients are overjoyed when they share with us how many more people are taking advantage of their offerings.

Your library renovations should be thoughtfully done with the future in mind. They must satisfy the demands of today while preparing for the challenges of tomorrow. Eustis Chair is happy to walk you through the process.



EustisChair.com
sales@eustischair.com
Phone: 978-827-3103