



Case Study

TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS: DESIGNING A NEW POLICE FACILITY

Oswego, Illinois

A New Facility for a Modern Approach

The thirty-year-old police facility in Oswego, Illinois, was originally designed to accommodate 50 employees. As the community grew and changed, so did the department's staff and policing style. When the time came to design a new facility, the planning team agreed that the building should reflect those changes. They wanted the new police building to serve as a resource for the community and the region, foster a sense of camaraderie among the staff and the public, and provide room to grow.

Most of all, the officers and the community wanted the building to be more transparent and open. "As a village, we wanted a facility that would be inviting and welcoming," said Chief Jeff Burgner. "We wanted the public and the staff to want to come here."

This design approach is a significant departure from the "fortress" concept that was popular for public safety buildings in the past, and it arises from a new commitment to community policing, said Dean Roberts, one of the architects on the project. "Our more recent projects look very different from a generation ago," he said. "We're trying to build a bridge between police staff and the residents of a community. Our job is to help them design a building that gets them where they want to go."

"The large amount of glass around the structure demonstrates our desire to be transparent with our community."

— Chief Jeff Burgner

"We're trying to build a bridge between police staff and the residents."

— Architect Dean Roberts, Principal at McClaren, Wilson & Lawrie

A Beacon to the Community

Wanting to build a facility that would endure for decades, the village chose a building site near the fire department's headquarters to create a public safety campus that will be at the center of the city as it grows. The building truly is a beacon to the community, featuring an iconic tower, glass walls, a regional training center, and a community room. Compact storage for records and evidence provide room to grow and free up valuable space for other uses.

Staff Hub

The staff entrance is bright and airy, opening onto a “Staff Hub” that features casual seating, a commons area, and video monitors that display computer-aided dispatch information and updates on local conditions. The main areas for patrol function, from the briefing room to the locker rooms, are all conveniently located off the Hub.

The Hub posed a unique design challenge but also an opportunity to subtly influence the department’s culture, Roberts said. “Officers are trained to be independent, to operate autonomously. But in the building, we’re trying to bring everyone together and form one team. The design of a building can encourage a culture that fosters teamwork.”



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— Architect Dean Roberts

High-Density Mobile Systems Save Space

Shelving that moves on rails eliminates wasted aisles and optimizes storage space.

Evidence Storage

The old building had overflowed the physical limits of its storage space. “We had outgrown evidence storage in the old building,” Burgner said. “We needed to build in room to grow.”

High-density Spacesaver systems optimize space in the new evidence room. Evidence is stored in large or small totes, and smaller evidence is stored in envelopes inside drawers that are sized to optimize space. Evidentiary weapons are stored in boxes in an aisle that locks down to provide an additional layer of security.



“We were able to maximize our storage but decrease the footprint.”

— Chief Jeff Burgner

Records Storage

Long-term records storage was also a problem in the old facility, with staff having to periodically box up files and take them downstairs to an overflow storage area in the basement. The new facility features a records room conveniently located adjacent to the administrative area. The room is fitted with a Spacesaver system to optimize square footage, and shelving for juvenile records is secured with locking tambour doors to eliminate the possibility of unauthorized access.



Community Room

A multi-purpose community room that can accommodate up to 80 people is located right off of the main lobby. Echoing the theme of transparency and openness, the room has floor-to-ceiling glass panes on three sides and is available for use by community groups. It also serves as a venue for educational seminars, regional training sessions, and press conferences.



An Award-Winning Facility

The new building is a hit with officers and the community. It has also won design awards, including the Project of the Year award from the American Public Works Association and the American Institute of Architects' Justice Facilities Review Award.

Even better than the official accolades, Roberts said, was simply attending the opening ceremony and seeing how pleased the staff and the community was with the new facility. "They had been doing the best they could with a building they had outgrown ten years before," Roberts said. "It was gratifying to see them have the space they want, in a facility that brings them together. It's honestly the most rewarding part of my career: helping people who serve their communities."



"Durability and quality is so important because a public safety facility is in constant use around the clock, every day of the year. It can have up to five times the use that a normal office building would have."

— Architect Dean Roberts



*“They’ve found a new sense of pride
in their work, and the building
helps that.”*

— Architect Dean Roberts

LEED® Silver anticipated

SIZE: 72,000 sq. ft. / 6,690 sq. m.

AWARDS:

- Engineering News-Record Midwest – Best Project
 - American Public Works Association – Project of the Year
 - American Institute of Architects Justice Facilities Review Award
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Quality to Match Your Vision

Spacesaver works alongside architects, designers, and law enforcement personnel to design and manufacture secure and efficient public safety solutions. From evidence storage that protects the chain of custody, to personal storage lockers, to secure weapons storage, our products have been proven to stand the test of time.

Best of all, we understand that space that's devoted to storage is space that could be used for other uses, like locker rooms or training. That's why your nearby Spacesaver consultant can assist with space planning and show you how we've helped other departments in your area.

Consultations are free, so contact us today.

800.492.3434 | [spacesaver.com](https://www.spacesaver.com)



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