

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Introduction

The University of Connecticut is in a strong position to create a 21st Century library that reflects the mission and vision of the institution. In the spring of 2015, UConn embarked on the development of a Master Plan for the Homer Babbidge Library over the next ten years to reflect the vision of the Library as the Knowledge and Innovation Hub.

This report measures and compares library space at UConn from the prism of projected enrollment growth, and articulates a high-level framework for library space use. Recommendations and conclusions have been developed to support the Libraries' future state, in harmony with the Academic Vision, the 2015 UConn Master Plan and the operational excellence as defined by the Library Working Group.

Existing Conditions History and Background

Homer D. Babbidge Library, the main and largest library on the Storrs Campus, totaling 422,860 gsf opened its gates in 1978 and is located in the academic and geographical heart of UConn Storrs Campus.

Upon occupancy, serious structural flaws became apparent and the engineers reached the conclusion that the library may not be able to safely hold all its books. The concrete floors were sagging under their own weight, while the façade of the building was also showing signs of rapid deterioration: the bricks were starting to budge from the building.

A subsequent repair project completed in 1995 has addressed these issues. In spite of the original construction flaws and heavy use throughout the life of the building, Homer Babbidge is fairly well preserved.

The building interiors do not currently reflect a contemporary library. They need to be updated to promote collaboration, to leverage emerging technologies, and to create adaptable, inviting, sustainable, and ergonomically sound spaces tailored to meet diverse learning, teaching, and study needs.

The site presents a few challenges as well. The scale of the building along with the elevation changes around the building are not supporting the campus pedestrian paths very well. Although the terraces and sidewalks are in good condition, the lack of vegetation and protection against the elements are making the outdoor areas unfriendly to users during the warm weather months.

A Facility Condition Assessment is recommended to include assessments and recommendations for upgrades regarding the interior and exterior of the building, infrastructure and building systems as well as site and sustainability. This effort may be in conjunction with future design efforts and the implementation of the Library Master Plan or could be a separate Facility Condition Assessment conducted as an independent initiative.

Vision

"The UConn Libraries is a transformative partner in inspiring groundbreaking research and advancing learning, teaching, and entrepreneurial thinking. Our outstanding resources, expert staff, and collaborative environments empower our communities to explore new fields of inquiry and seek revolutionary solutions." *(UConn Libraries Vision, Mission, Purposeful Path Forward)*

Assumptions

To redefine the Library, we have to reconceptualize the 20th century traditional use of space and infrastructure.

Current and Future Space needs for the Library functions will be gained by strategically recapturing space in the library.

- Construction of an off-site preservation facility will remove a significant amount of stacks from the library. A detailed program can be found in Appendix 7.1
- The library is going through a process of reformatting and consolidating the print collection which has already freed up space on the Third Floor
- Strategic placement of stacks
- Rearrangement of existing services
- Co-location of complementary functions and partnerships
- Improvements to the arrangement and furnishing of study spaces
- Changes will occur as funding becomes available annually
- Each project will be 'self-contained' as a complete step in the process
- Upgrades will be made to exterior spaces (plazas, terraces and entrances)
- Wayfinding will improve and Library Floors will be renumbered for this purpose

Goals and Preferred strategy

Balancing Books and Study

Homer Babbidge library space utilization is reflecting a traditional 20th Century Library with extended stacks footprint. As our student enrollment is growing, we are looking to reduce the stacks and provide a diversity of environments needed to meet the teaching and learning needs of students and faculty in a changing technological and pedagogical environment.

The following strategies have been recommended to meet this challenge:

Determine a Collection Strategy

- Determine the economic viability of off-site preservation along with cost analysis of storing a book (a program for a State Preservation Facility is included in this report).
- Create space opportunities by relocating collections offsite as they become digitized.
- Consolidate the print collection and increase storage efficiency in the Library.
- Continue the accommodation of UConn's library collections model, which provides an evolving, integrated balance between online and tangible and offsite information resources
- Strategize placement of stacks in the Library – increase the capacity of Level A by adding Compact Shelving

The implementation of these strategies will reduce the stacks foot print by approximately 50%.



Figure 4. Existing book shelves Homer Babbidge Library



Figure 5. Hunt Library Preservation Facility

Determine the Optimal "Study" Seats.

As Libraries are going thru an unprecedented moment of evolving focus, three themes seem to emerge that help inform the new types of environments students are looking for:

- Learn: A Place for Making and Creating Things
- Discover: A Place for Inspiration and Research
- Share: A Place for Sharing Things

The preferred solution is proposing:

- To create more robust and varied environments for study and research within the Library in order to support increasing enrollment
- To increase the twenty four hours study spaces.
- To diversify the zones and choices that support the different phases of the learning and research process across UConn's disciplines, from contemplative study to dynamic, experiential teamwork.
- To develop library spaces that foster a sense of community through library venues for experiential learning, workshops, presentations, lectures, and events to share UConn's research.
- To encourage and reinforce engagement with the teaching and research activities of the surrounding Storrs campus and to reflect the stature of UConn as a Research I University.
- To foster a sense of community through library venues for experiential learning, workshops, presentations, lectures, and events to share UConn's research

Our goal is to increase the space dedicated to Twenty Four Hour Study areas, Project and Group study, technology enhanced Instruction and Social spaces.

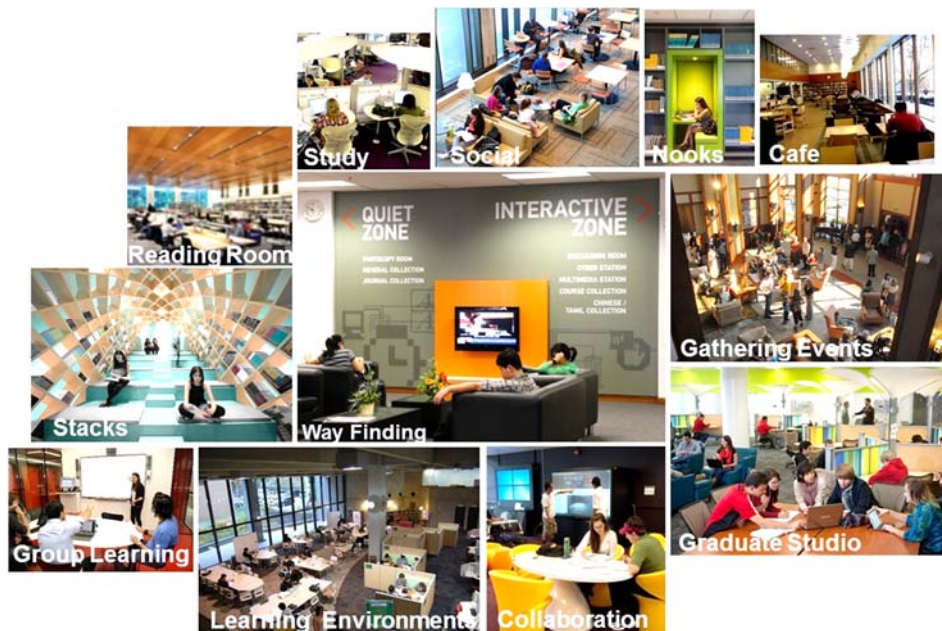


Figure 6. Study, Create, Collaborate, Socialize

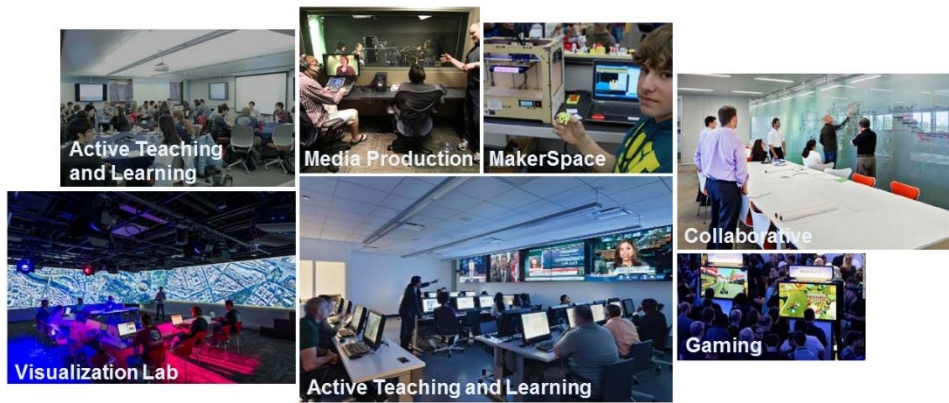


Figure 7. Experiment, Learn, Share

Make staff expertise readily accessible and recognizable and identify Library Partnerships

- Respond to innovations in information access, teaching, learning and research in support of the Academic Vision.
- Update spaces to reflect current trends in library design and fully support library functions.
- Redesign Circulation desk to provide “One Stop Service”.
- Co-locate staff and provide collaborative environments on the Ground floor
- Rethink the support services in the Library
- Identify Library Partnerships



Figure 8. Existing Library Circulation Desk



Figure 9. “One Stop Services”

Moving Around Library at Crossroads

We are looking to leverage the key adjacencies to UConn’s Academic Hub, departments, labs and centers and invite the community in by improving the circulation around the Library and reopen the Entry at Academic Way, facing Oak Hall. This will animate the Campus North/South Axis which has been a long time Vision at UConn. In addition, we are proposing to address the elevation changes at the main entry and improve the connectivity on the East side by creating a passage between the Information Technology Building and the Library. The southern terrace needs to be rethought to encourage outdoor seating by providing protection from the elements. The ultimate goal is to improve the wayfinding within the Library and pedestrian access around the Library.



Figure 10. Reopen Academic Way Entry



Figure 11. View Along Academic Way to energize as Campus North/South Axis



Figure 12. Main Entry – Site elevation changes can be mitigated to allow for circulation on the west side of the Library



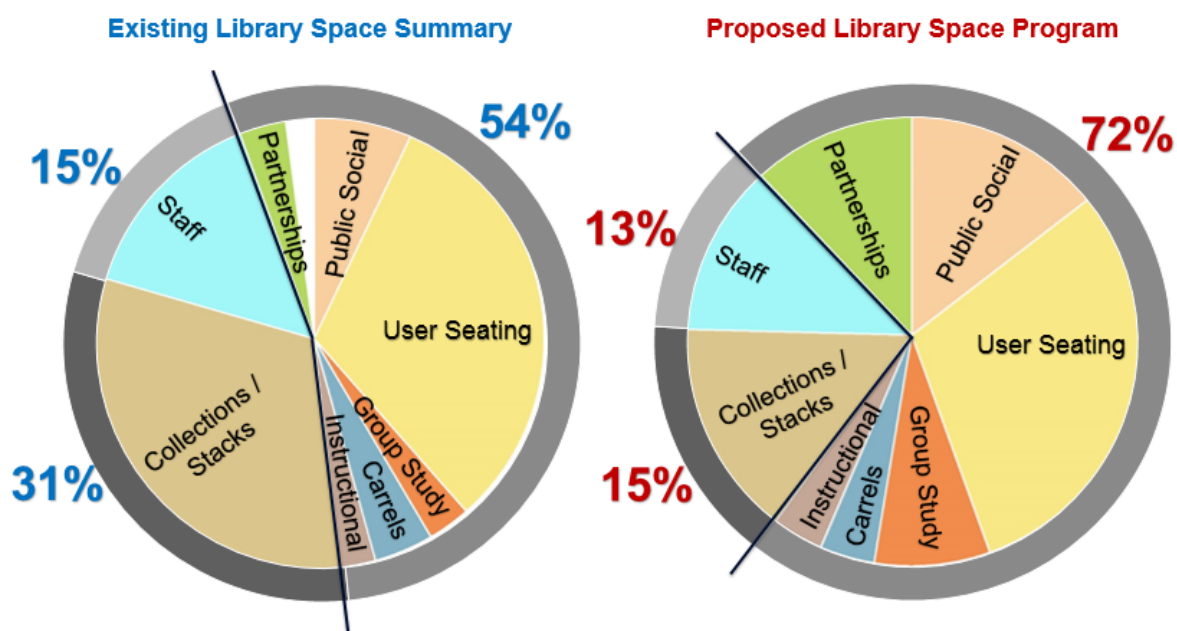
Figure 13. Southern Terrace

Recommendations Summary

- Update spaces to reflect current trends in library design and fully support library functions
- Creation of more robust and varied environments for study and research within the Library to support increasing enrollment
- Create space opportunities by relocating collections offsite as they become digitized
- Continued accommodation of UConn's library collections model, which provides an evolving, integrated balance between online and tangible and offsite information resources
- Development of library spaces that encourage and reinforce engagement with the teaching and research activities of the surrounding Storrs campus and reflect the stature of UConn as a Research I University.
- Identify Library Partnerships
- Create a destination that will attract students and faculty
- Respond to innovations in information access, teaching, learning and research in support of Academic Vision.
- Improve the wayfinding within the Library and pedestrian access around the Library
- A Facility Condition assessment is recommended, to include recommendations for upgrades regarding the interior and exterior of the building, infrastructure and building systems as well as site and sustainability.

Preferred Strategy

Implementing the recommendations included in the Master Plan will have dramatic effects on the Library Space utilization. The Charts below show a comparison between the existing space summary and proposed space programs.



The proposed plan is assessing the needs for the various functions in the Library and benchmarking against efforts recently undertaken by other premier institutions as information was available and relevant. Various current and future functions in the library have been grouped around floor themes with the goal of co-locating complementary functions and partnerships. The graphic below is an attempt to show the major functions on each floor.

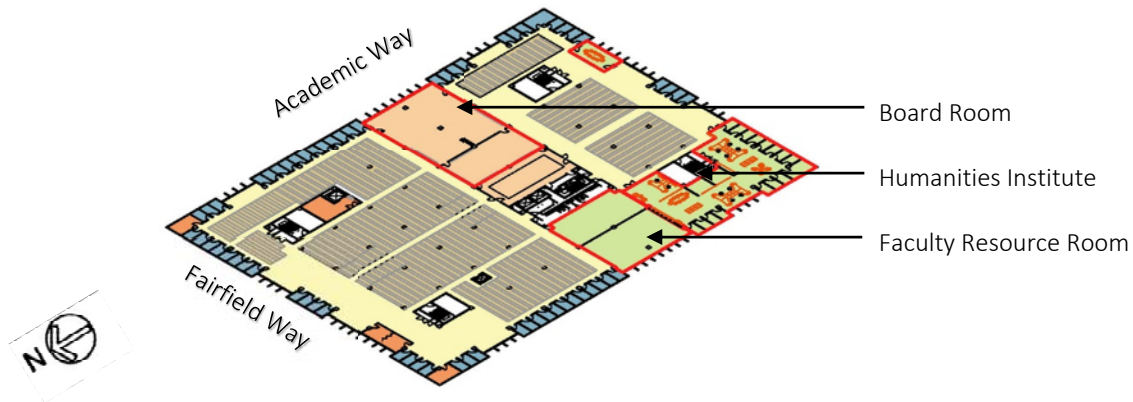
Existing Space Distribution

Stacks	Design Studio	Stacks
Stacks	Others	Stacks
Stacks	Study Areas	
Staff	Study Areas	Q/W/L Centers
Staff		Book Worm
Staff	Art Gallery	Stacks
Stacks / Compact Shelving		Others

Proposed Space Distribution

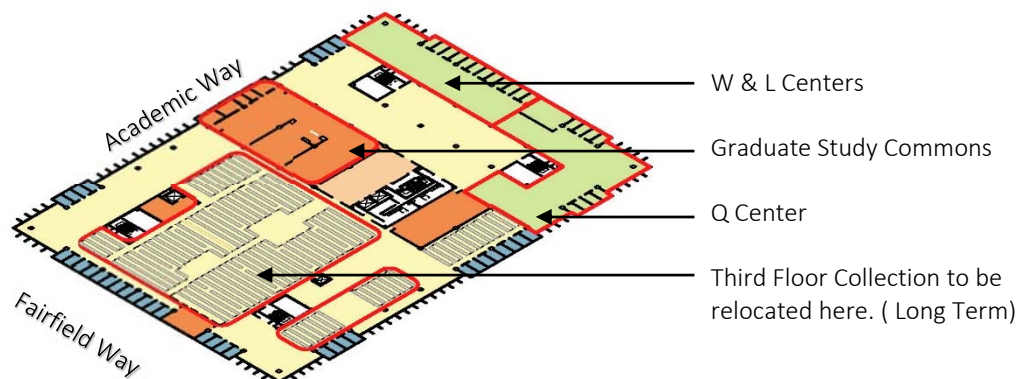
Level 5	Stacks	Board Room	HI	<i>Heritage Floor / Humanities</i>
Level 4	Stacks	Graduate Commons	Q/W/L Centers	<i>Academic Support / Sciences</i>
Level 3	Stacks	Study Areas		<i>Research Commons / Fine Arts</i>
Level 2	Partners	Teaching Learning	Group Study	<i>Interactive Teaching & Learning / Services and Support</i>
Level 1	Staff	One Stop	Design Studio	<i>Inspiration / Innovation / Initiatives</i>
Ground Floor	Staff	New Entry	Group Study	Book Worm
Basement Floor	Compact Shelving		Others	<i>24 Hours Study & Social Space / Staff Offices</i>
				<i>Compact Shelving</i>

Floor plans and major initiatives by floor are described below.



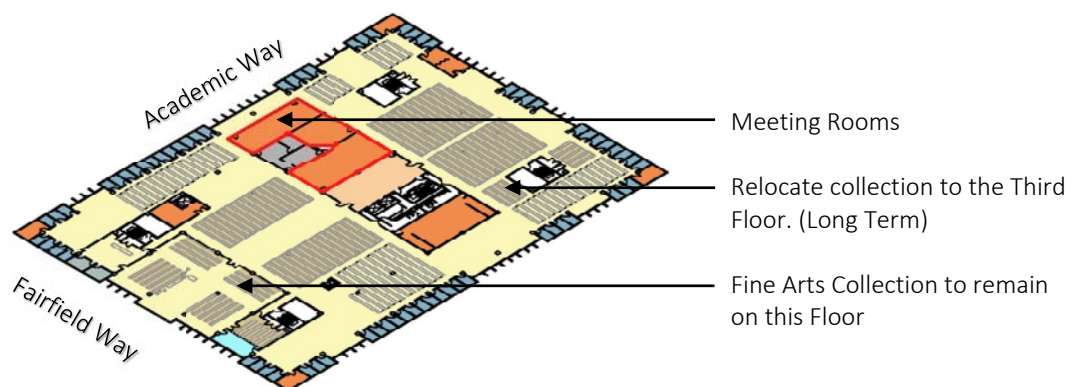
Level 5 - Heritage Floor / Humanities

The top floor in the Library is envisioned as the Heritage Floor. This floor will house the Humanities Collection, quiet study areas, the Humanities Institute and Faculty Resource Room. Space was reserved for the Board Room overlooking the west side of our campus. This facility will be a campus wide resource.



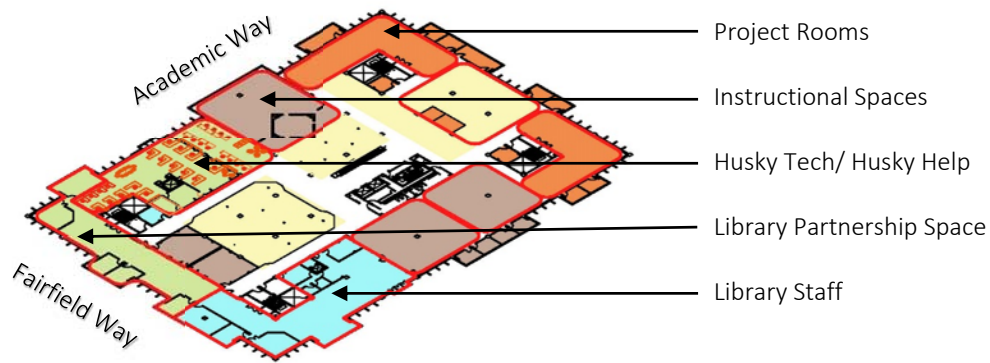
Level 4 - Academic Support / Sciences

This Floor will house the Sciences Collection, student seating and Q, W and L Centers. The former Roper Center will be converted to the Graduate Study Commons.



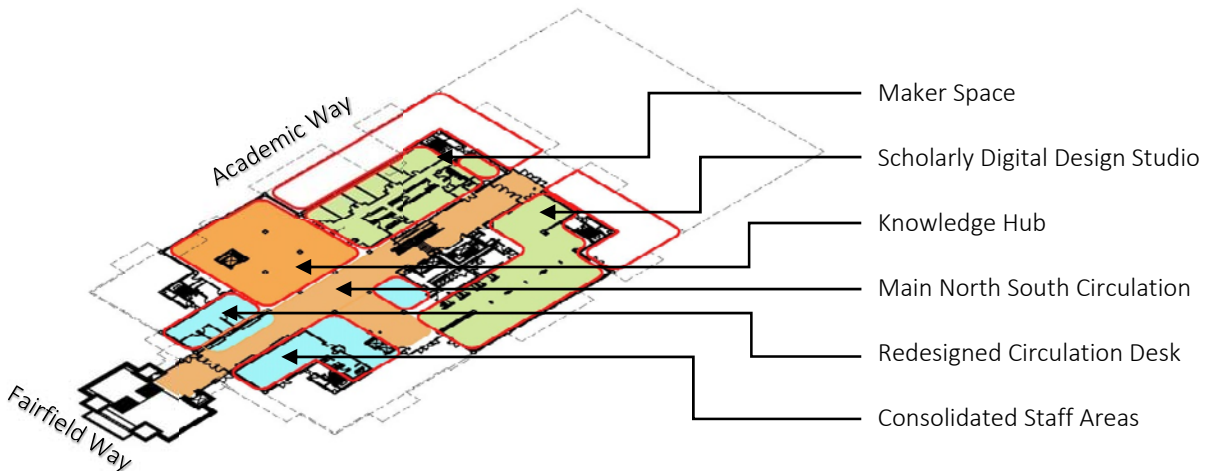
Level 3 - Research Commons /Fine Arts

The Fine Arts Collection will remain on this level while the Sciences Collection will be relocated to the fourth floor. The space gained by the removal of the shelving will be converted to student areas and multi-microlearning environments. Existing video viewing rooms will be converted to technology enhanced flexible meeting rooms.



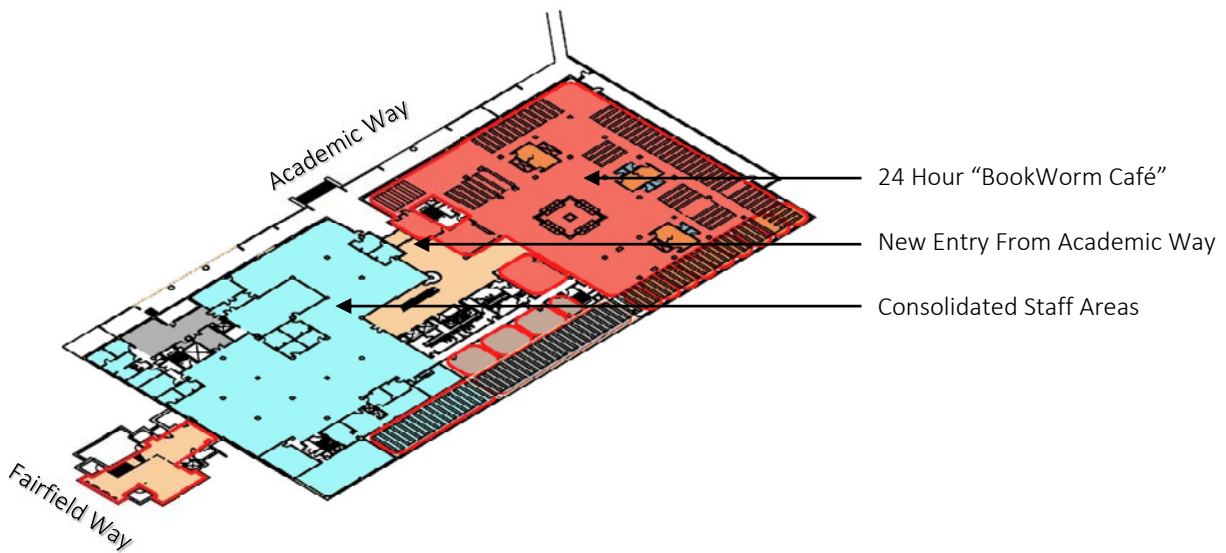
Level 2 - Interactive Teaching & Learning / Services and Support

As the name describes it, this floor will be converted to high tech instructional Spaces like Model Classrooms, Data Visualization Laboratory, and Media Rooms. Support for students and faculty will be provided by Library Staff and Husky Tech and Husky Help also located on this floor. Collaborative Learning and Project Rooms are complimentary to the instructional spaces and are located on the south side of this level.



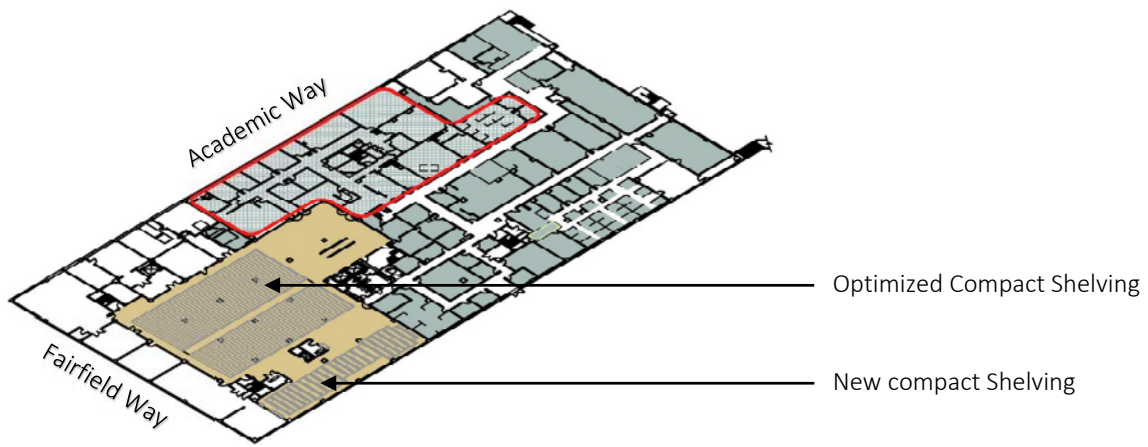
Level 1 - Inspiration / Innovation / Initiatives

Reconfigured Staff and Circulation Desk are making room for exciting functions on this floor. The proposed North South circulation anchored by the Knowledge Hub will simplify the wayfinding in the Library and allow for repurposing of the "BookWorm" Space for the Scholarly Digital Design Studio. The Staff areas are converted to a Maker Space Suite. The 24 Hour spaces are tripled and proposed for the Ground Level with a new entry from Academic Way.



Ground Level - 24 Hour Study & Social Space /Staff Offices

24 Hours BookWorm Cafe will find a new home on the Ground Level with a new entry from Academic Way. Staff areas are consolidated on this floor. A redesigned entry from Fairfield Way along with site improvements will facilitate the circulation around the library.



Basement Level - Compact Shelving

The structural strength of this floor allows for the optimization of the existing compact shelving and replacement of existing shelving with compact shelving thus increasing the number of volumes that can be stored on this level. More than half of this floor is occupied by other departments like: UITS, BECAT and Engineering. With the construction of the new Science and Engineering Buildings as tenants move out to their new homes some of this space may be regained by the library for additional compact shelving.

Photo credits:

- Figure 1. Photo by SOM, UConn Master Plan
- Figure 2. Photo by Al Ferreira
- Figure 3. <http://asacc.uconn.edu/organizations/faculty-staff-organizations/>
- Figure 5. <http://snohetta.com/project/10-james-b-hunt-jr-library>
- Figure 6. Photo collage by SOM, Library Meeting 15 May 2014
- Figure 7. Photo collage by SOM, Library Meeting 15 May 2014
- Figure 9. <http://snohetta.com/project/10-james-b-hunt-jr-library>
- Figure 12. Uriah Prichard / Google Maps Images

Figure 4, Figure 8, Figure 10, Figure 11, Figure 13 Photos by Antoaneta Fedeles