

# **Developing an Inactive Records Storage Facility**

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## ***Introduction***

A comprehensive records management program must not only ensure active records are accessible and retrievable; it must also make certain the same is true of records needed infrequently for a finite period of time inactive records. A records management program allows for identification of inactive records via the records inventory and their proper disposal through use of relevant retention schedules.

Since both active and inactive records are referenced, one might argue for their remaining together in office file cabinets. Doing so places local governments at a disadvantage. Separating active from inactive files and transferring the inactive to storage creates several benefits:

- frees expensive file cabinets, allowing additional space for active files
- lessens crowding of active files, permitting easier retrieval
- reduces staff time necessary for access and retrieval
- decreases the chances of misfiling
- improves inactive records reference services
- increases efficiency of records disposition
- avoids the purchase of costly new equipment
- allows for the possible sale of surplus equipment
- cuts storage costs dramatically.

Once a local government identifies inactive records through the records inventory and determines their legal retention periods according to relevant schedules, it can formulate policies and procedures for their transfer to proper storage. Because inactive records describe a local government's past activities and functions, their efficient maintenance and accessibility are essential to the government's operation and are a significant component of a records management program. A forthcoming publication in the Local Government Records Technical Information Series, *Administration of Inactive Records*, will fully explore policies and procedures regarding inactive records transfer, storage, access and retrieval, and disposal and ways to develop and implement these directives.

This publication deals with the task of setting up inactive records storage facilities, which local governments must tackle along with identifying their inactive records and developing administrative policies and procedures.

## ***Initial Considerations***

Frequently, a local government has few options when settling two questions: "Will the inactive records storage area be in house or off site?" and "Where will the site be located?" The answers are usually dictated by budget, local needs, and availability. The State Archives and Records Administration (SARA) provides grant monies through the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) to help local governments develop or improve

records storage facilities. Purchase or construction of a records storage facility, however, is not eligible for funding.

Generally speaking, there are four possibilities for sites:

- Rooms within the local government facility
- An extant building, rented or leased
- New construction
- Commercial storage.

Under favorable circumstances, the location might be a large, secure, environmentally sound area on the ground floor of the local government's office building, adjacent to a loading dock and with access to a freight elevator. If the site must be outside the local government building, it should be near enough to permit 24 hour turnaround time for reference requests. The location should have telephone service (ideally fax machine access as well), parking and adequate security and access via decent roads. Regardless of where records are stored, the same concerns must be addressed:

- Costs
- Physical Structure
- Security
- Space Requirements
- Environmental Conditions
- Safety
- Operation.

## **COSTS:**

Within an office, the normal ratio of stored files to floor space is 1:1 (cubic foot/square foot). In a records storage area, the ratio may range from 2:1 to 5:1, depending on the type of shelving, ceiling height, and live floor load (the weight capacity the floor can support). In addition, records center equipment costs almost a third less than traditional office cabinets and shelves, and records center floor space costs two thirds less than office floor space.

To gather hard data for illustrating storage facility cost avoidance, an important factor in justifying budgets and grants and in writing annual reports, the following methods can be employed. (Monetary figures are based on current estimates.)

### **To determine office storage costs:**

- Take the average cost of a four drawer, letter size file cabinet....\$300.00
- Divide by the number of cubic feet of records it will hold.....6 cubic feet
- Get the cost of filing cabinet equipment per cubic foot .....\$50.00

- Take the square footage of a four drawer, letter size file cabinet..... 3 square feet
- Add the square footage needed to retrieve files, 3, and get..... 6 square feet
- Multiply by the average cost of office floor space..... \$12/square foot
- Get the cost of office space per four drawer file cabinet..... \$72.00

If the government moved records from 20 cabinets to a storage facility, it would represent \$6,000.00 of cabinet space now available for active files:

- 20 x 6 cubic feet..... 120 cubic feet
- 120 cubic feet x \$50.00 (cost/cubic foot).....\$6,000.00
- and represent \$1,440.00 of office floor space now available for active files:
- 20 x \$72.00 (office space cost/cabinet).....\$1,440.00

TOTAL OFFICE COSTS represented: \$6,000.00 + \$1,440.00..... \$7,440.00

**To determine facility storage costs:**

- Take the cost of the standard steel shelving purchased..... \$600.00  
(four six shelf units, 18 gauge, 30"x42"x68")
- Plus freight, shipping and assembly, if applicable.....\$150.00
- Add them together..... \$750.00
- Divide by cubic feet of shelving:  
6 cu.ft./shelf x 6 shelves/unit x 4 units:..... 144 cubic feet
- Get the cost per cubic foot of storing..... \$5.20
- Multiply this by the cubic feet of records, 120, to get..... \$624.00
- Take the cost of floor space, once determined, at the facility.... \$3.00/sq.ft.
- Multiply by the storage space needed, 35 sq.ft.(4 units) x \$3.... \$105.00
- Add to the \$624.00 to get the cost of storing the 120 cu.ft.  
of records at the facility..... \$729.00
- Add the cost of records storage cartons: \$1.30/box,  
\$5.30/archives box (10cu.ft.): \$143 + \$53.....\$196.00

TOTAL STORAGE COSTS represented: \$729.00 + \$196.00.....\$925.00

- Subtract this from the \$7,440.00 of savings from moving the records from the office:

TOTAL NET COST AVOIDANCE.....\$5,635.00

Local governments should not only examine short term cost avoidances of inactive records storage but also the long term picture. For example, a basement room with empty shelving in the local government facility may suffice for the next couple of years and greatly reduce storage costs as well as provide quick access and retrieval. Inherent, however, in such facilities are leaking pipes, high humidity, rodent infestation, and the onset of mold, each of which will negatively affect the stored records. In addition, the finite space will eventually run out as

transferred records outstrip those destroyed. Another factor to take into account is the life expectancy of equipment and supplies when allocating purchase monies. Commercial storage may provide a solution to these problems for local governments but they must then consider the costs of transporting records to and from the site, charges for retrieving and replacing boxes, staff time taken up with telephoning reference requests to the storage facility, and the time necessary to receive requested material.

There are pros and cons to each of the four site categories. When examining the options available, have a checklist on hand delineating all aspects to consider, not only costs. (See **Appendix** for a sample list).

## **PHYSICAL STRUCTURE:**

Involving the building maintenance supervisor and a contractor or engineer early on in the site selection process will prove quite beneficial. They can help determine the floor strength of the site, which will reveal the amount of records and shelving that can be placed in the facility. They can tell whether the area's walls are fire walls, preferably four hour, and what the live load requirements for the roof are if it is a one story structure. These specialists can also comment on the soundness of the structure, the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system, and electrical and plumbing conditions. They can address the feasibility of installing telephone lines and assist with configuration of light fixtures and switches. Having this information ahead of time will eliminate costly surprises down the road and aid in site selection, when there is a choice. (For a detailed listing of Federal standards, see National Fire Protection Association in *(Suggested Readings)* or contact the National Archives, Washington D.C.)

## **SECURITY:**

In order to protect records, the facility should have restricted access. Doors should have locks, and the number of keys should be limited. Only authorized personnel should have access, preventing the need for a security guard. Ideally, there should be no windows, particularly on ground floor facilities. If funds are available, alarm systems should be installed, particularly if the facility is off site and staff are not often present.

## **SPACE REQUIREMENTS:**

The records inventory is the key to determining space requirements for the records storage facility. The inventory worksheets document the volume of inactive records as well as their formats: paper, microfilm, computer disks/tapes, maps, blueprints, and so forth. If the storage facility will include archival records, the inventory will also indicate the volume and format of these. Keep in mind that archival records, which need to be kept permanently, have different storage requirements from the remaining inactive records and must be shelved separately in the facility. When determining the volume of records for storage, plan for a cumulative growth allowance of approximately 30 percent. When tracking of facility activities is well underway, the

average annual growth can be better defined. Local governments with active microfilm projects may not have to plan for quite as much expansion.

As mentioned earlier, a four drawer letter size cabinet can hold 6 cubic feet of records. A legal size four drawer cabinet holds 8 cubic feet, a four drawer letter size lateral file cabinet holds 10 cubic feet, and a four drawer legal size lateral file cabinet holds 12 cubic feet. Standard records center cartons are ideal for inactive records storage with their one cubic foot capacity, easy assembly, side openings for handles, and shallow yet snug lids. Standard shelving is 18 gauge steel, 30" deep x 42" wide, accommodating three boxes across and two boxes deep per shelf, or single depth 15" x 42", accommodating three boxes per shelf. Also available are 32" and 16" deep shelves which eliminate overhang but can be more costly. It is therefore important to gather information from several vendors regarding available dimensions and costs. Height between shelves should be just enough to clear boxes and allow easy retrieval and replacement. Cartons should not be stacked atop one another for obvious reasons of safety, ease of retrieval, and preservation. Shelving units can be placed back to back for maximum storage capacity. Shelving units should be assembled with nuts and bolts, and lateral sway braces should reinforce shelves.

Lighting fixtures should be at least one foot above the cartons on the top shelf, and sprinkler heads one and a half feet above the cartons. Regarding aisle space, allow for at least 30 inches between bays and preferably 48 inches for the main corridors. If shelving height requires the use of platform ladders, aisle width may need to be increased in order to accommodate such equipment. Bays should be a maximum of 50 feet and at least one and a half feet away from any walls to meet Federal standards.

The following are two methods for figuring **space requirements** for the facility (Maedke, 2nd ed.; Leahy, see *Suggested Readings*):

1. a)  $\frac{\text{Volume of Records}}{\text{Height} \times .365} = \text{Floor Area Required}$   
b)  $\frac{\text{Volume of Records}}{\text{Floor Area} \times .365} = \text{Ceiling Height Required}$   
c)  $\text{Floor Area} \times \text{Height} \times .365 = \text{Volume Capacity}$

This first method accounts for aisle space but **not for work space**.

2. a) Calculate the cubic feet of inactive records, increase by 30 percent for cumulative growth, and then divide the total by the relevant factor listed below:

<b>Cartons Shelved</b>	<b>Factor</b>
8 high	3.00
10 high	3.75
12 high	4.50
4 high	5.25

- b) Add a minimum of 1,000 square feet for work space

Later in the text, a case study will illustrate the use of these methods.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:**

Temperature and humidity should fluctuate as little as possible within the storage facility and fall between 65 72 degrees Fahrenheit and 40 55 percent relative humidity. This is especially crucial if records of permanent value are stored in the facility. The area, including shelving, should be cleaned thoroughly before transfer of records. *Magnetic media, such as computer disks and tapes, should be stored away from any source of magnetism.*

When talking with maintenance staff regarding the HVAC system, make sure there is adequate air circulation, particularly if mobile shelving is considered. Mold infestation can become a major problem if air flow is minimal. Local governments should consult with conservators regarding the best methods and products for reducing dust, preventing mold, and avoiding insect and rodent infestation. SARA's Regional Advisory Officers can help identify conservators.

If the site has windows, make sure they have blinds or shades to protect records from natural light. Ultraviolet ray filter sheets for window glass are another inexpensive alternative. If fluorescent light fixtures are near archival material, purchase ultraviolet filter shields and slip these over the tubes.

## **SAFETY:**

It goes without saying that records storage areas must be protected. Local governments should be aware of local fire regulations and keep these in mind when examining sites. Walls should be constructed with permanent materials to lessen fire damage. Ideally, the facility should include a smoke detector/sprinkler system along with fire extinguishers located at strategic points. (Keep in mind that Halon is no longer a viable option because of its potential health hazard.)

Fire is not the only danger to records. Local governments must also protect their records from water damage. When examining sites, the maintenance person or contractor should check for possibilities of leaks through the roof or overhead pipes, and of potential flooding. They may recommend installation of floor water alarms. The damage caused by water, however, can be greatly reduced if disaster planning is in place within the local government's overall records management program. There are several publications on this topic and there are commercial companies throughout the country which deal specifically with disaster recovery. Again, SARA's Regional Advisory Officers can help local officials with this matter.

Once live floor load is examined and the shelving ready for installation another safety concern needs addressing stability of shelving. One of the most common problems associated with

records storage is overloading. As a result shelves tip and often one tipping causes several others to do so. Adequate bracing of the shelving can prevent such occurrences. Tipping may also be caused by an uneven floor. To solve this problem, inspect shelving after assembly but before anchoring and shim any gaps beneath posts. After shimming, view rows from both ends and from above. If all looks well, shelves should be anchored to the floor, particularly if the top shelf is eight feet or above.

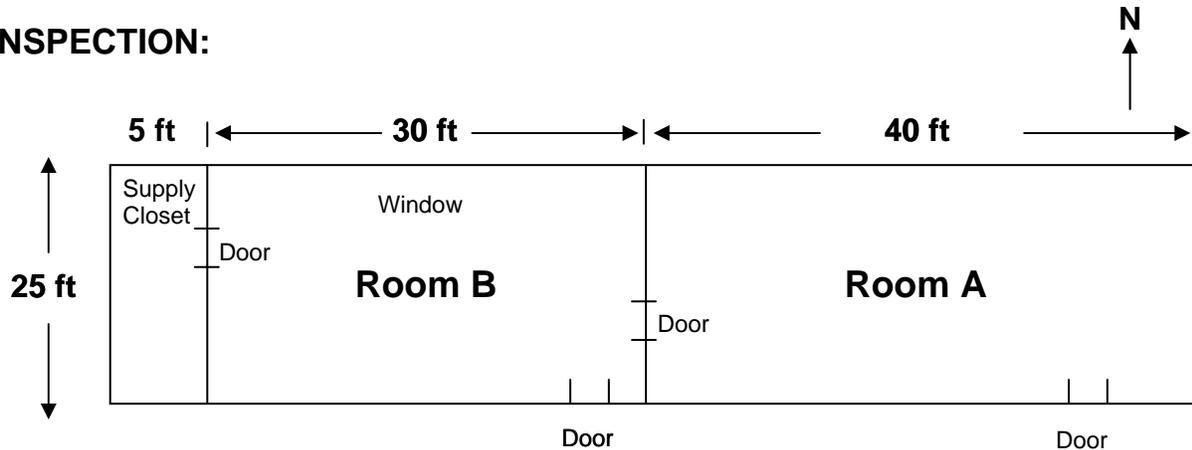
## **OPERATION:**

Even after addressing all the above considerations, a local government's records storage facility will fail unless a plan for overseeing inactive records is in place. There must be staff available to transfer and process records, arrange them on shelves, develop retrieval systems, answer reference questions, and follow disposal policies. Someone must be responsible for managing these activities. Within local governments, this responsibility logically, and often legally, falls to the Records Management Officer (RMO). Inactive records management is one of the RMO's primary duties. By delineating these responsibilities and activities within records management legislation, local governments will ensure staff compliance with operational policies and procedures.

### **Setting up the Facility - A Case Study**

The Records Management Officer of the Town of Rockford received telephone calls from various departments for a number of weeks complaining that they had no room left for their active files. In addition, the numerous closets, supply rooms, and basement areas where they had placed some inactive records were no longer adequate. Locating files was a horror story all on its own. Top officials realizing a crisis was at hand, called in the Records Management Officer. From analyzing the records inventory data, the RMO was well aware of the difficulties and after alerting the administrators had been working with them for a long time to solve such situations. The officer had already researched the geographical area for possible alternatives and knew there were no warehouses available or commercial storage facilities within a radius of 25 miles. New construction was ruled out as too expensive. Two rooms and a large supply closet on the ground floor recently became available for storage since the department formerly there was moving to another floor. The officials and RMO carefully inspected the three areas.

## INSPECTION:



The two rooms were adjacent to one another with the large supply closet off one of the rooms. No pipes were exposed, no equipment or furniture was left, and the one window was in the smaller of the two rooms. Previous readings from a hygrothermograph borrowed from the local museum revealed steady temperature and humidity readings in all areas. The relative humidity, however, was often below 30 percent during winter months, particularly in the larger room.

## RENOVATION:

These rooms and the closet would have to suffice, and the next step was to consult with the town's building inspector, a general contractor, and the maintenance supervisor to determine what changes were necessary to renovate the space into proper records storage. The consultation resulted in the following list of remodeling needs:

- 1) Installation of three humidifiers with a dampness control thermostat.
- 2) Replacement of wood panel walls with 5/8" UL Standard Fire Code sheetrock, tape, and compound.
- 3) Removal of false ceilings in both rooms.
- 4) Installation of fluorescent lighting.
- 5) Replacement of two entrance doors from the hall by metal doors.
- 6) Conversion of the supply closet into a "vault" with four hour fire resistive walls and ceiling.
- 7) Replacement of the closet door with a fire door.
- 8) Installation of a separate sprinkler system and floor drain in the vault.
- 9) Placement of additional smoke detectors.
- 10) Installation of deadbolt locks on hall doors.
- 11) Remodeling of Room A's entranceway to accommodate pallets, ladders, etc.
- 12) Placement of a fire/burglar alarm panel near the entrance door to Room A, and connection into the existing alarm system.
- 13) Painting of walls with a product resistant to dust, vermin, and pollutants.

## PHYSICAL LAYOUT:

While the Town of Rockford Director of Codes Enforcement and its Engineering Department developed bid specifications for the remodeling, the RMO began planning the physical layout. Because the wall separating the two rooms was load bearing, it had to remain in place. Measurements were taken of each room and the supply closet. The RMO analyzed the inventory data along with the staff assistant who had carried out much of the work. The following information came to light:

1. Total cubic feet of inactive records from the eight departments..... = 750
  - a. archival/permanent records..... = 75 cu.ft.
  - b. inactive records with 10 year retention..... = 200 cu.ft.
  - c. inactive records with 6 year retention..... = 270 cu.ft.
  - d. inactive records with retention below 6 years..... = 205 cu.ft.
  - e. microfilm reels..... = 320  
(285 archival)
  - f. blueprints..... = 57 items
2. Dimensions of room A = 40 ft. x 25 ft. x 10 ft.
3. Dimensions of room B = 30 ft. x 25 ft. x 10 ft.
4. Dimensions of closet = 5 ft. x 25 ft. x 10 ft.

After discussion with the Regional Advisory Officer, the RMO outlined the activities to be conducted in the storage area, and particular equipment and furniture needs:

- **Activities:** Receiving, processing, disposition, reference
- **Equipment and Furniture:** desk, chair, telephone, tables, dolly, pallet, microfilm reader/printer, computer, monitor, printer, record cartons, labels, archival cartons, boxes, and folders.

The RMO and officials decided that only the RMO and RMO's staff assistant should have access to the storage area and carry out receiving, processing, and reviewing of records. The reference requests would be handled by the two as time allowed so that no other staff space was required. Since all microfilming was handled by outside vendors, a table with the reader/printer to review incoming reels and carry out reference requests was all that was needed. The policies and procedures manual, already in progress by the Records Management Officer, would outline the relevant activities and staff authorized to carry them out. Because the larger room, A, was closest to the loading dock, it would contain the area for receiving, processing, and referring to records. The door would be remodeled to accommodate the necessary equipment. One of the tables in Room B, would be used to hold records identified for disposition. This would avoid confusion with the transfer and receiving activities in Room A.

The two rooms and storage closet were represented on graph paper, employing a scale of *1 inch = 5 ft.* Cardboard templates represented shelving and furniture and were rearranged until the optimum storage space emerged. The RMO prepared documentation for requesting shelving bids, pending quantity of units determined from the final layout plan. The shelving out for bid was

standard 18 gauge steel, 30"x 42"x 88." The RMO realized that a 10 foot ceiling would allow eight shelves per unit with a 4" allowance from the floor and 20" for light fixtures and sprinkler heads.

Before using the **first method** for estimating space requirements (see previously in text under Initial Considerations Space Requirements), the RMO added in 30 percent cumulative record growth, 225 cu.ft., to the 750 cu. ft. to get 975 cu.ft. The RMO then factored in a work space estimate of 500 sq.ft. (100/person, plus equipment, furniture):

$$\frac{975 \text{ cu.ft.}}{10 \text{ ft.} \times .365} = 267 \text{ sq.ft.} + 500 \text{ sq.ft.} = 767 \text{ sq.ft.}$$

(work space)

Using the **second method**, the RMO took the 975 cu.ft. of records including growth allowance, divided by the factor of three (eight cartons high), and added 1,000 sq.ft. for work space:

$$\frac{975 \text{ cu.ft.}}{3} = 325 \text{ sq.ft.} + 1,000 \text{ sq.ft.} = 1325 \text{ sq.ft.}$$

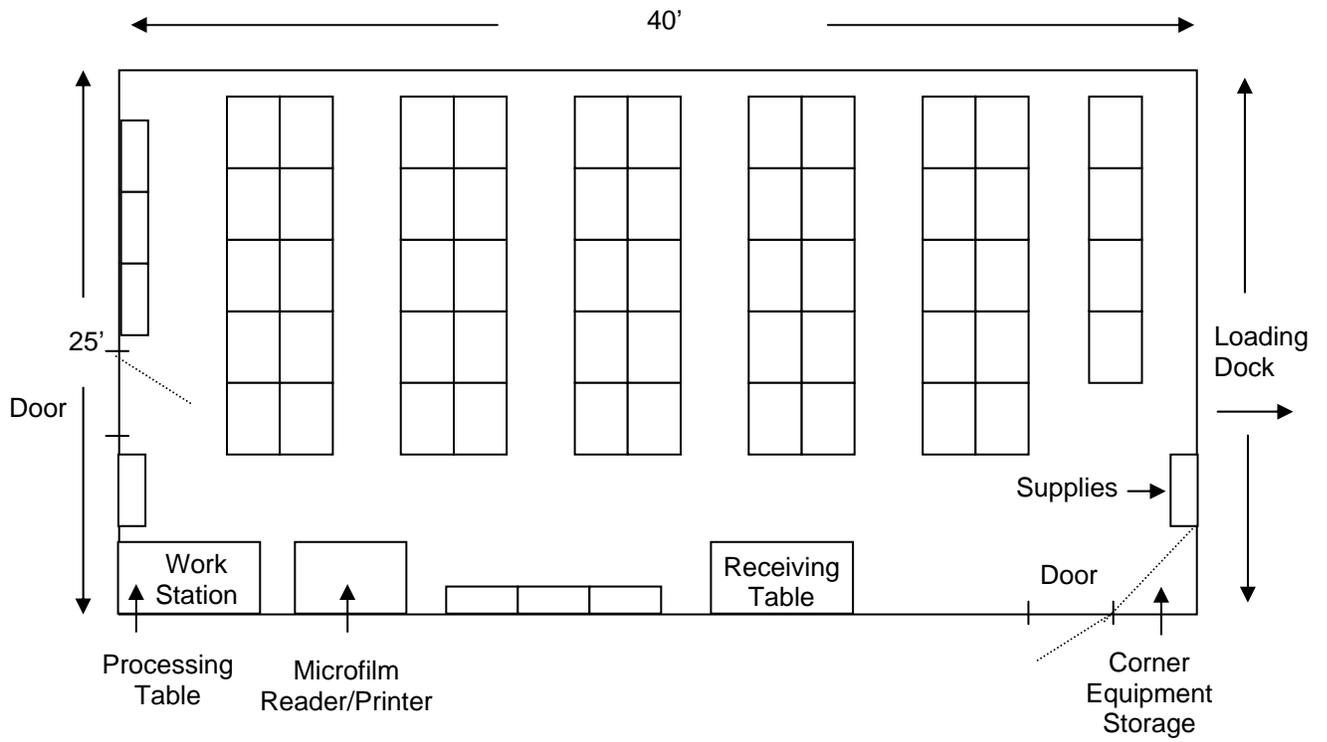
(work space)

Then the actual square footage of the two rooms and closet was calculated:

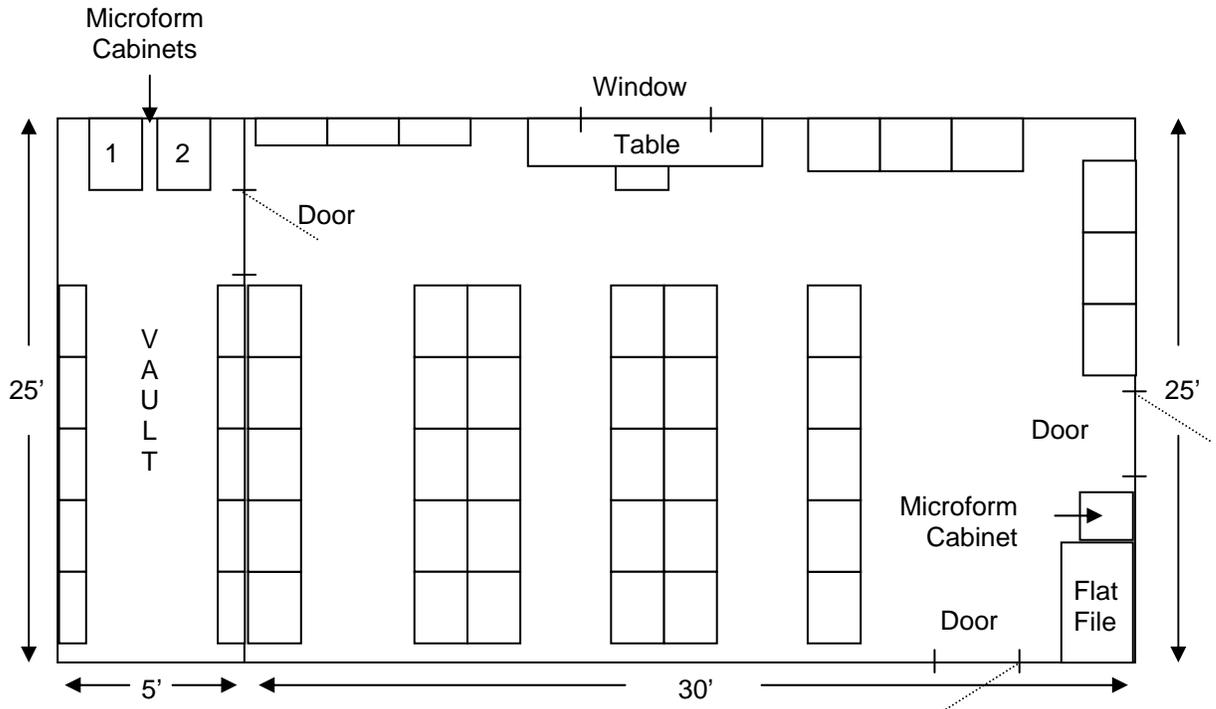
40ft. x 25ft.	=	1,000 sq.ft.
30ft. x 25ft.	=	750 sq.ft.
<u>5ft. x 25ft.</u>	=	<u>125 sq.ft.</u>
TOTAL	=	<b>1,825 sq.ft.</b>

Therefore, even using the second method which factors in a much more ample work area, a margin of 500 square feet still existed. In addition, with more efficient records disposition once the facility was operating and with continuation of the microfilm program, the storage space would be sufficient for several more years. The following diagrams took all measurements into account, including annual record growth and space requirements for specialized formats (microfilm, computer disks and tapes, and blueprints).

### Room A



### Room B



Most of the microfilmed records were permanent and two of the three microfilm cabinets planned for the facility would be placed in the proposed vault (though referred to as a vault, the area did not meet all the NFPA standards for a fire resistive vault). Two cabinets were purchased previously with grant funds and the third one was ordered. These were 11 drawer cabinets, approximately 25" x 29" x 52", with capacity for 880 35mm reels, or 1,430 16mm reels. The two cabinets in the vault would be sufficient for several years and would hold microfilm of permanent records only. The vault was ideal as the location for archival records because of its low, steady temperature and humidity (65 degrees Fahrenheit, 45 percent relative humidity). The microfilm would already be segregated in the north wall cabinets, while computer tapes and formats other than paper would be relegated to the southern shelving units for easier access and maintenance.

Locator systems laid out in the policies and procedures manual would cover arrangement of oversize materials and records of various formats other than paper. The vault and Room B would share a platform ladder, which could be left within the vault opposite the door after the area closed at night. Room A would have a platform ladder, dolly, and pallets and they would be left at night in the designated southeastern corner.

Shelving in the rooms was arranged in a north/south direction because 1) the reconfiguration of fluorescent lighting along aisles was easiest this way and therefore less costly, and 2) the difference in cubic feet of storage space with an east/west arrangement was minimal. Aisles were a minimum of 30 inches, with main corridors approaching 48 inches. Shelving adjacent to the processing and receiving tables would be available for those activities, as would shelving next to the disposition table in Room B.

Any oversize material, such as blueprints and maps, would be kept in the flat file cabinet in Room B. Two five drawer units, one above the other, would provide sufficient space for the 57 blueprints listed in the inventory and for future acquisitions. The cabinet height would be approximately three feet, thus providing a convenient surface on which to place the map or blueprint. In addition, adequate space was planned between the cabinet and first shelving unit to allow retrieval of material from all drawers. Since some of the oversize materials were archival, cabinet locks were ordered. Any microfilm reels of nonpermanent records would be housed in the cabinet alongside the flat files in Room B. This fit with the overall plan drawn up by the RMO and RMO's staff assistant to keep records with 1-6 years retention in Room A, records with 6-20 years retention in Room B, and permanent records in the vault.

## **PLAN OF WORK:**

After the RMO completed the final layout, the local government officials went over the budget to determine the amount of shelving, equipment, and supplies the town could afford. The bids were sent out for shelving and purchase orders completed for the remaining materials. A plan of work was drawn up by the RMO and Records Advisory Board, then turned over to the local government officials for approval. Basically, it stated:

- Town Director of Codes Enforcement to develop bid specification for construction and installation of approved systems
- Town to advertise for, receive, and record bids
- General Contractor and Director of Codes Enforcement to review bids and make recommendations to Town Board
- Town Board to post insurance and performance bond with advice from legal counsel, award bid, and sign contract
- Remodeling project to be undertaken and completed in three months
- Record cartons, other supplies, and equipment to be ordered
- Transfer List forms to be sent to all departments along with instructions
- Departments to pack single records series into cartons, complete transfer forms, and employ standard labels
- RMO to prepare the vault for housing permanent records.

This plan of work represented several months of activity during which the RMO remained involved in all aspects of the project. When the renovation was completed, shelving was assembled and installed, and policies and procedures were documented, a ribbon cutting ceremony took place with local press attending. The RMO and Records Advisory Board planned the celebration knowing that publicizing the facility in this manner would benefit the local government, politically and financially, in the future. Coincidentally, the records management program would increase in visibility and significance.

### ***Final Considerations***

The Town of Rockford illustrates the process of one local government developing an inactive records facility. Conditions and options will vary greatly from one government to another, but the basic elements for developing a successful facility remain:

- Consult building inspectors, engineers, and architects.
- Research all options available with checklist in hand.
- Discuss findings with local government officials and Records Advisory Board.
- Consult legal counsel regarding bids, when applicable.
- Draw up a plan of work.
- Determine optimum storage by graphing the physical layout, when applicable.
- Designate the person responsible for facility operations.
- Document all policies and procedures in a manual.
- Publish copies of the manual and distribute to relevant departments and staff.
- Keep track of facility activities through periodic reports.

Periodic reports fulfill several purposes. They illustrate the increase in reference requests as access and retrieval dramatically improve and departments learn the results firsthand. The reports document both immediate and long term cost savings, thus justifying the facility's existence. They also serve as a rich source of statistical data for tracking inactive records management activities. Such calculations will help the facility meet future needs, and help indicate if and

when expansion or relocation is necessary. The sooner projects of this kind can be incorporated into long range budget plans, the greater the chance of their reaching fruition.

In conclusion, a successful inactive records storage facility will serve not only as a solution to current space and budget problems but also as a viable reinforcement of the significance of a comprehensive records management program.

### ***For More Information and Assistance***

The State Archives and Records Administration provides records management services to local governments including technical advice and assistance, publications, training and presentations, and consultations with local governments concerning records and information management issues. SARA has regional offices throughout the State; each office has an experienced records specialist who can visit local governments and provide on the spot advice. These services are supported by the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund. For further information, contact your regional office or the following:

Local Government Records Services  
State Archives and Records Administration  
State Education Department  
10A63 Cultural Education Center  
Albany, New York 12230  
(518) 474 6926

## ***Suggested Readings***

Johnson, Jr., A. K., *A Guide for the Selection and Development of Local Government Records Storage Facilities*, Albany: NAGARA (Local Government Records Technical Publication Series No.1) 1991.

Johnson, Mina M., and Norman F. Kallaus, "Control of Records Systems" in *Records Management*, 3rd ed., Cincinnati: South Western Publishing Co., 1982, pp. 368 377.

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Nikolaison, Ray, "Retaining Records is Costly, But Needed," *The Office*, March 1993, pp. 14 16.

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Russell, Margaret Bethune, "From Catacombs to Record Center In Just Five Months," *Records Management Quarterly*, July 1984, pp. 58 61.

Thomas, Violet S., Dexter R. Schubert, and Jo Ann Lee, "The Records Inventory," and "Records Maintenance Control" in *Records Management Systems and Administration*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1983, pp. 75, 128 132.

## **State Archives and Records Administration**

### *Local Government Records Technical Information Series*

The following publications provide guidance that can be helpful in managing inactive records and are free upon request from SARA. They include:

- #1 "Fundamentals of Establishing a Records Management Program"
- #18 "Long Term Storage of Magnetic Tapes"
- #19 "Handling and Storage of Magnetic Disks"
- #24 "Conducting a Physical Inventory of Records"
- #25 "Preparing an Office Records Retention and Disposition Schedule"
- #34 "Preservation of Paper Records"
- #38 "Destruction of Records"
- #41 "Using Records Retention and Disposition Schedules"
- #42 "Guidelines for Off Site Storage of Inactive Local Government Records"
- #43 "Guidelines for Planning Local Government Records Programs"

## **Appendix**

### **INACTIVE RECORDS STORAGE SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST**

#### **I. GENERAL SITE INFORMATION**

Name of building: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age of building: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of floors: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current use: \_\_\_\_\_  
Original use: \_\_\_\_\_  
Distance from government offices: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dimensions of storage area: length: \_\_\_\_\_ ft; width: \_\_\_\_\_ ft; height \_\_\_\_\_ ft  
Capacity of storage area: \_\_\_\_\_ cubic ft

#### **II. GENERAL BUILDING FEATURES**

Is the record storage area on only one floor? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Does the building have a loading dock? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Does the building have a freight elevator? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Would the building be used solely for records storage? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is the building within toll free dialing area from government? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is there adequate parking space? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

#### **III. STORAGE AREA FEATURES**

Does the facility have suitable areas for office(s)? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Are there rest rooms and drinking water near the storage area? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is there space for records processing and disposal? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is there space for microfilm/film processing? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is there space for researchers, if applicable? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is there adequate lighting for records activities? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

#### **IV. SAFETY/SECURITY FEATURES**

Is there a security alarm connected to the local police station? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is there a fire alarm connected to the local fire department? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Does the building/storage area have a sprinkler system? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Is it a dry pipe sprinkler system? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Are there water pipes in area other than sprinkler pipes? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Do the doors to storage areas have deadbolt locks and/or alarms? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Are there smoke or heat detectors? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
Are there windows? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Is it secure from unauthorized entry? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

## V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Is the storage area heated? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Is the storage area air conditioned? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Is there air ventilation/circulation? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Does the area have a separate HVAC system? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Are there temperature/humidity controls? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Are the lights an adequate distance from the shelves? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Are the lights off when the area is not in use? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If there are windows, do they have shades/blinds? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Are there potential water leaks? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

## VI. EQUIPMENT

Is there shelving in the storage area? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If so, describe: (fixed, mobile, etc./dimensions)

Are there file cabinets (paper, microform?) YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If so, how many and what size:

Are there map cases or other storage furniture? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If so, describe:

Are there ladders (step/platform) pallets, dollies? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If so, describe:

## VII. STRUCTURAL SOUNDNESS (section for qualified professional)

What materials were used in constructing the walls/roof? \_\_\_\_\_

Can the floor support a minimum load of 300lbs/sq.ft.? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Is the roof of non-combustible construction? Leakproof? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Are combustible material present (furnaces, boilers, transformers, etc.,)? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If the storage area is below grade, is there evidence of, or favorable conditions for seepage? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Is the surrounding terrain/environment such that flooding of the building is possible? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If flooding is possible, is a sump pump connected to an ancillary power supply? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

If present, are sprinkler heads independently dischargeable? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

Revision of A.K. Johnson list (see *Suggested Readings*)