



PHOTO CREDIT: PURE VISUALS AND JARED LIGHTNING HENN

OREGON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Oregon, Wisconsin

When Oregon Public Library moved into its new home, it reimagined what a library could be for the community it serves. Funded in part through community fundraising, the all-new facility replaces the library's previous building with a light-filled space overlooking a Village conservancy park with an expansive prairie. Seating throughout the building, from the entrance benches to the staff lounge, is outfitted with Integra Seating solutions, the result of a close collaboration between Library Director Jennifer Endres Way and Deb Haeffner, Building and Design Consultant for the South Central Library System.

Haeffner and Endres Way have worked together on library furniture selections for at least 14 years, dating back to a previous library project that opened in 2012. For the new building, they brought in test chairs from multiple manufacturers so staff and community members could weigh in directly. "We worked hard to try and get test chairs in there for them to sample, and to make sure everyone had a say in their options," Haeffner said. "A majority of what was selected is Integra, as we expected it would be. That just seems to be the standard for a lot of my libraries once those involved in planning sit in an Integra chair."



Integra products specified:

- Reef | Wood
- Reef Upholstered Arm | Wood
- Reef Rocker
- Rendezvous Lounge
- Summit Lounge
- Coastal Bench | Wood

The finished library integrates Integra products throughout its public and staff areas:

- Entrance and community room: Integra Coastal benches for guests
- New books and holds area: Integra Reef seating
- Teen area: Integra Summit lounge chairs, paired with a playful green palette and disco-ball accents
- Adult reading area: a mix of open-arm, wood-capped-arm, and fully upholstered Reef seating along a wall of windows overlooking prairie land
- Children's area: a fully upholstered Reef settee with wood-capped arms
- Mother's room: a Reef rocker upholstered in hot pink vinyl, chosen as a durable, easy-to-clean option for the private space
- Staff lounge: two Integra Rendezvous lounge chairs



"They seemingly will never have to be replaced. They're sturdy; you test them out and 20 years later there's no jiggle, no wiggle. You just reupholster them, get new arm caps, and they look good as new for another 20 years."

Deb Haeffner, Building and Design Consultant for the South Central Library System

Color and pattern throughout the library echo its natural surroundings. “It was a fairly neutral palette — gray, cream, a darker blue-gray wall — and that’s where we could punch it up and bring in some color, fun, and pattern,” Haeffner said, describing how blues and greens were chosen to tie into the park and prairie views beyond the windows. Because both staff and patrons regularly rearrange the library’s seating, Haeffner also designed the palette with flexibility in mind. “Knowing people are going to move things around, I try to make sure that even if patterns aren’t supposed to sit next to each other, they’ll still look ok if they do,” she noted.



Comfort and durability were top priorities throughout the selection process. Haeffner, who has specified Integra for more than 30 years across the library system, points to the brand’s longevity as a key reason it keeps winning out over other options. “They seemingly will never have to be replaced,” she said. “They’re sturdy; you test them out and 20 years later there’s no jiggle, no wiggle. You just reupholster them, get new arm caps, and they look good as new for another 20 years.”



That durability matters in a building designed for heavy daily use and long sightlines. “Everyone wants to sit in those windows,” she added. “We didn’t want the, ‘Fast Food effect’ where the seating isn’t really comfortable, and you’re in and out. People are going to want to sit there and read and enjoy the view, so the goal was to make it comfortable.”

The library’s Mother’s Room, outfitted with the pink Reef rocker, has become one of its most valued spaces. “It’s actually going to be used a lot more than I personally expected,” said Endres Way, the library director. “It’s a place for mothers or other caregivers to feed or breastfeed or pump while they’re at the library, but it also gets used as a place to calm your child down if they’re feeling overwhelmed, or just to get away from other activity that may be going on. I think it might be my favorite chair in the whole building.”

That spirit of empathy and community shaped the entire project. “Our whole project was based on community support,” Endres Way said. “We raised almost \$3 million, which is incredible for a town of this size. There was a lot of community engagement on the library design, but also the furniture selection.”

Over 1,200 people turned out for the library’s evening ribbon-cutting celebration in January, filling the parking lot to capacity. Since opening, circulation, visits, and programming at Oregon Public Library have all grown.