

# Four Steps to Building a Facilities Road Map.

Washington County is one of seven that make up the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The County has a mix of suburban and rural residential living and has recently experienced extensive growth in municipalities closest to Minnesota’s capital city of Saint Paul. Due to the population growth, the County forecast that it would need to shift services and infrastructure to best-serve its residents.

**THE PROBLEM:** The County was having difficulty determining exactly where and how to adjust its facilities, service locations, and staff to meet these new needs. With 13 buildings and over 1 million square feet to evaluate and allocate, the County turned to RSP’s i\_SPACE team for guidance in these areas:

- Determining appropriate locations to best serve residents
- Accommodating growing office space needs
- Proactive capital improvement planning

**THE SOLUTION:** The i\_SPACE team’s goal was to provide actionable recommendations so that the County could position the right services in the right locations, with the right support facilities to best-serve residents.

i\_SPACE used a four-step approach to address the strategic facility planning challenges that Washington County faced.

- 1. Visioning:** Gather key stakeholders to understand the organization’s mission, vision, and business goals to ensure project alignment.
- 2. Discovery:** Conduct in-depth assessments to develop a holistic picture of the current state.
- 3. Analysis:** Leverage the Vision and Discovery findings to identify gaps, trends, hurdles and opportunities to inform strategies and tactical decisions.
- 4. Recommendations:** Present results and recommendations based on sound research.





Washington County Government Complex | Stillwater, MN

i\_SPACE and their consultants engaged the County Board and department leaders in a workshop and used those initial insights to guide deeper follow-up interviews. The results of the workshop informed a department survey aimed to match service delivery with client locations as well as expose beneficial team co-locations.

Site visits, audits, and building condition analysis came next, followed by a regional data analysis which evaluated socio-economic and demographic trends alongside County growth projections. Additional workplace analysis evaluated building occupancy, departmental adjacencies, growth forecasts, and current density – to get the truest “lay of the land” possible.

The primary outcome of the strategic facility planning effort was a set of recommendations that will guide Washington County with facilities decision-making and planning for the next decade. These recommendations provide an overall structure that will allow more detailed planning as the County continues its efforts.

**THE RECOMMENDATIONS:** The team’s primary recommendations were:

- **Reprioritize** the County’s 10-year capital facilities plan so critical projects were better aligned with goals and needs.
- **Restack** the primary office building to better utilize existing space and proactively accommodate projected growth.
- **Relocate** one service center on the County’s western edge to serve a shifting population and improve staff accommodations.

**THE RESULTS:** Washington County now has the tools it needs to appropriately fund changes that will bring more appropriate services closer to the residents who need them. Facilities managers have the data they need to successfully target funding efforts based on an optimized set of priorities for the next 10 years. The recommendations have provided a roadmap for Washington County to ensure success in managing their facilities into the foreseeable future.

**Delivered:** Strategic recommendations that will guide Washington County facilities planning for the next decade.