

Allen County Public Library

In response to growth and space needs, the Allen County Library, based in Fort Wayne, Indiana, renovated and expanded its main library and upgraded its branch libraries from 2002 to 2007. Umbaugh assisted with the \$84 million bond issue to fund those projects.

When asked how often a project of this magnitude comes along, library director Jeffery R. Krull replied, "Once in my lifetime that's for sure. You plan renovations of this scale with the idea of planning for the next 25 to 30 years."

"Umbaugh worked with us on the whole financial analysis and provided good material to discuss with the community. They made a great presentation when we made our report to the library board. Todd Samuelson of Umbaugh reported on how the project could be financed, the cost and how much it would affect taxpayers -- really bringing it to that personal level. He also worked with the library board throughout the planning to get our numbers together."

Renovations to the main library were so extensive that operations moved out of the building from 2004 to 2007. The project included remodeling five branch libraries and building six new branches.

"We had great acceptance from the community right from the beginning. As each branch was opened, the community really welcomed them," said Krull.

"The critical thing was that we had a really good, solid, well thought out financial plan," Krull added. "The budget numbers we discussed were reliable. The financial plan provided a really great roadmap, so we didn't have to backtrack and say 'oops, we missed that number.'"

Since completion of the library renovations, the Allen County Public Library has continued to work with Umbaugh. They joined with Allen County, the City of Fort Wayne and Fort Wayne Community Schools to commission a detailed study of the property tax cap issue and how it would affect income for each entity.

"The state had made projections about circuit breaker losses, but those projections were at a gross level," said Krull. "The combined group hired Umbaugh to perform a parcel-by-parcel analysis of real estate assessed values and property tax cap losses. Now we all have very reliable target numbers about what revenue we will have to work with."