

ROLE of FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

To accommodate the anticipated increase in check volume from the EROC/Philadelphia consolidation, the Bank's Facilities Management staff had to complete two major projects within a short time frame: reconfigure the loading dock and renovate the check operations space.

Loading Dock

According to Chris Ivanoski, manager, design and construction, the loading dock had not been upgraded since its construction in the 1970s. Federal Reserve security guidelines have changed considerably since then, and the Bank had been planning for some time to reconfigure the loading dock area in order to meet current standards.

The EROC consolidation added a sense of urgency to the project and necessitated significant acceleration of both the design and the construction schedules. The need to accommodate the combined Philadelphia and EROC check volume while still satisfying physical security requirements made the project particularly challenging.

One key element of the work was to raise the level of the Cherry Street driveway and two of the receiving bays by three feet while still allowing the Bank's daily work to go on. To accommodate that need, the Facilities staff constructed a temporary receiving area for



Chris Ivanoski, Manager; Nasrollah Tahmasebi, Supervisor; and Claudia Le, Space Planner, Facilities Management

checks by cutting a new opening in the side of the building in the west courtyard and creating a temporary ramp and a special conveyor-fed x-ray system.

The design work that led to the new loading dock configuration involved extensive collaboration

between Bank staff and outside design firms. The Bank successfully incorporated material-handling techniques that have proved successful at other Reserve Banks, including automated conveyors, a sorting area for incoming checks, and specially designed “transfer rooms” for outbound check shipments, similar to those that have long been used in Cash Services operations.

tions. Essentially, the design team started from scratch, and the result was a radically different configuration.

By August 2005, renovations were underway. To create room to work, the Facilities crew had to move the Settlement area to temporary quarters on the seventh floor. Ivanoski notes that this move was “the only way we could create space to work and not dis-

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Construction work started in November 2005 and was substantially completed by May 2006. The new facilities have met or exceeded all expectations.

Check Operations Area

The fifth-floor check operations area also underwent major renovations. Mike Penhollow, check operations coordinator, and Charlie McCormack, manager, check operations, collaborated extensively with Chris Ivanoski and the Facilities Management staff to come up with a plan for the floor that would allow Retail Payments to work more efficiently. As Ivanoski points out, the checks area was still laid out “the same as it was 30 years ago,” yet the department had grown over the years. In fact, the old layout actually impeded the workflow in check processing. For example, over the course of a shift, checks traveled over three-quarters of the floor, from the time they came off the elevator until the time they left the floor for shipment back to banks.

So the design team asked themselves how they could maximize the efficiency of each area of check opera-

rupt operations.” The construction team gutted the entire floor and renovated it one unit at a time. By the time the dust settled, all of the major areas in Retail Payments had been moved to a different spot on the floor: shipping, receiving, medium-speed processing, high-speed processing, and settlement.

Extensive work on the electrical and data communications infrastructure was also necessary. Facilities staff had to change all of the electrical and data feeds for every piece of equipment in the Retail Payments area while also constructing about 5000 square feet of raised flooring and relocating five air conditioners.

Renovations were completed in mid-January 2006. Although Ivanoski is proud of the work of the Facilities team, he shares the credit for a job well done with the Retail Payments staff: “Even though Check employees had to carry out all of their regular duties while the renovations were going on, they nonetheless took the time to help us and tell us their ideas. Communications and coordination were excellent — nothing was done in a vacuum.”