

APPENDIX II
INPUT SESSION ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY

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Focus Groups, Interviews and Public Input Forum Results

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The following material documents by individual source, the comments received from interviewees, focus group participants and the public forum session working tables. Also provided, is a consolidation of the primary themes around the core questions that were asked:

- Future service needs and perspectives
- Strengths of the current Central Library
- Weaknesses of the current Central Library
- Future considerations / space needs and priorities

This report represents only one dimension of the analysis and inputs to the Central Library Needs Assessment Study. Other considerations involve the review of the current physical plant, alternative space utilization assessments, population analysis, development and utilization criteria and priorities for Central Park and other considerations.

2.0 FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

2.1 Users

Eleven individuals participated in this focus group who were users of the Burlington Central Public Library. The following were the key comments and input:

Library Services in the Next Five to Ten Years

- Books will still have a strong presence in the Library and will serve key needs within the community for local / regional, specialized, fiction and related interests.
- Technology will be significantly advanced, potentially resulting in many individuals accessing reference and other specialized materials from their computers at home or at the Branches, potentially reducing some of the demand levels on space at Central.
- There have been significant changes in library services over the last five years and this will continue. Much of this will occur in the area of resource materials and specialized databases.
- Genealogy tends to be increasing as an area of interest, particularly as boomers become older.
- Increased use of CD ROMs, DVDs and other new technologies that haven't been introduced yet. The library may also have to provide the playing units for these devices.
- It is important that the library try not to compete with Chapters but rather have its own identifiable and value-added niche within the community as a public resource and service.
- Services for pre-schoolers are seen as increasingly important in order to introduce them to reading, the value of the library and as part of the early development initiatives for children.
- Increasingly, it will be important for libraries to be good family places, social centres for young families to help them with information, programs and other resources.
- Need to segment the market more effectively in terms of children, teens, young adults and so forth so that there is something for everybody at the library.
- Introduction of E-Books will likely occur in the next five years.
- Increasing emphasis could be on the entertainment component of the service model.

What currently works at the Central Library

- The genealogy collection is great.
- The overall layout is good with the main floor being books and the top floor for study, which allows for people to come and relax.
- The setting, view and overall connectivity with Central Park.
- The windows and airiness of the facility.

What doesn't work at the Central Library

- Long wait lines.
- Can be noisy at times, especially during story time.
- The location of the washrooms which are unsafe for children and distant from the main library.
- The elevator related to its location and the need to get keys to operate it.
- The upper turning circle in terms of the lack of control of the short-term parking.
- Overall access to the facility, being the stairs, congestion at the front entrance and related considerations which are difficult with mothers with young children using strollers, the elderly, disabled and so forth.
- Some areas of the library seem to be cut-off, and the overall library seems cluttered and crowded.
- From time to time, parking in the so-called library parking lot is difficult to find or you have to park at other lots in Central Park and tote large volumes of books some distance.
- There is only limited public transit to the library and this could be difficult for older people to access the facility.
- A separate area for teens is required that responds to their interests in listening to music, chatting, specialized magazines and so forth.
- A separate checkout for children would be beneficial, as many adults get frustrated with children in the lines. The desk is not made to allow children to explore or talk to the Librarian.

- There is a lack of comfort in the library related to the types of chairs, tables and furniture which discourages people from socializing and staying in the library to read.
- Controlling adult use of the children's computers needs to be enforced so that children have access to them. This may require the introduction of more computers in the adult areas.

Future Considerations

- What is the role of the Central Branch? Is it increasingly a South Burlington Branch as technology potentially reduces the need for centralized collections and services?
- Could more technology in the branches displace the need to expand Central Library?
- It is vital to sustain the library as a free service that encourages maximum use by residents across a broad range of interests and resources.

2.2 Board Members

Two focus groups were held involving a total of eight Board members. The following are the key considerations.

Library Services in the Next Five to Ten Years

- Increased presence of technology within the Central Library, including DVDs and many technologies that haven't been invented or introduced to the market yet. This will be a fast changing area and the library will need to be involved.
- Potential development of a business suite in the library where business' can come and access information from reference materials, possibility accessing these resources from their work or their home.
- Libraries will be more user friendly and have a more welcoming environment.
- People will have an increasingly diverse set of needs reflecting the collective perspective of the broader community.
- There could be more significant demands on public libraries from the educational sector as school libraries reduce the librarian staffing levels.

- The service market will become increasingly segmented related to seniors, youth, teens, pre-schoolers, young adults and other age groupings which will see less generic and more specialized services evolve.
- There will always be a print collection, and books will be sustained as a primary component of the library's offerings.
- The Internet will be improved relative to indexing, quality control and other considerations that will put more need on the library to facilitate the training and support systems necessary for individuals to be able to access and utilize the Internet and other technologies.
- There will be higher levels of security conscienceness in the library, especially around the Internet and the quality / credibility of the materials.
- Genealogy will likely increase its growth for both seniors and students. The library is an unique opportunity to service this need.
- There will be some distribution of technology to the Branches, which will position them to allow individuals, on a more convenient basis, to access databases and related resources.
- Libraries will be increasingly a safe haven / safe place for children and others, as well as being a place for socialization. This perspective will augment libraries as being a place where individuals can explore, can be independent, expand their mental capacity and so forth.
- Libraries will become increasingly a part of the community building dimension of a municipality, and will increasingly offer information services related to employment, social services and other considerations as an information resource centre.
- As life long learning becomes an increasingly important part of each individual's life and their development, the library will be a key support resource to this phenomena. It will be a place that will continue to grow in its role of supporting the love for learning.
- The collections will change considerably in the future relative to more large print, audio books and similar services for an ageing population, as well as special need members of the community. Therefore, the library will need to become more inclusive.

What Is Good About The Current Library?

- The rose garden, the tremendous park setting and the ability to see the Park due to the windows.
- The children's area which is bright.
- The reading room at the back.
- The strong presence that the library building gives in terms of its architecture.
- It is bright and airy.
- The potential connectivity and close proximity of the library to the Seniors Centre and other key community resources.

What is not good about the Central Library?

- Appears to be over crowded and stuffed, along with being compartmentalized.
- Poor overall furniture and operations from an ergonomic point of view, which is principally a 70s profile.
- The overall ingress / egress from the library in terms of the stairs, the path through the flower beds, the front entrance, the service desk and other areas which are not user friendly, create complications for strollers and wheelchairs and are often crowded.
- Centennial Hall appears to be underutilized.
- The front driveway and parking are not sufficient for the volumes of use.
- The limited public transit to the site.
- Need for improved lighting in the parking lots and outside areas.
- Not handicapped accessible.
- May be too distant from New Street, thus reducing its visibility and impact.
- The location of the washrooms, the elevator and other key ancillary components which are distant and controlled.

- Shortage of space when using the computers in terms of not only the hardware but also the supporting desk and workspaces.
- Children's area appears stuffed and too spread out.

Space Priorities

- First and second floor enlargement with wider aisles, more shelves and more open and bright areas.
- Improved entrances and accesses, along with centralized and accessible washrooms and elevator.
- Work areas for PCs and other technology.
- Barrier-free capabilities.
- Introduction of a café / coffee shop.
- Development of information kiosks.

A general view that the current location represents the best opportunity for the dollars available in terms of the future Central Library. Improvements to support expanded technology, increase market / service segmentation and other considerations need to be introduced in the library to support a more user friendly, inviting, better functioning and highly valued public library resource within the community.

2.3 School Librarians

Seven representatives of school library operations from both the Halton District School Board and the Halton District Catholic School Board participated in this focus group. The following are the key comments provided.

Future Perspectives

- Library services will be without walls and more focused on the Internet.
- Teacher Librarians and the overall loss of professional library services in schools will cause more students to have to go to public libraries to access these types of services.
- The schools are increasingly connected via wide area networks and have access to the public libraries now in terms of identifying books and materials.

- Currently, the Internet is not useful for the Kindergarten to Grade 3 population as the Internet is not user-friendly enough for these age groups.
- School libraries will become less and less "public" and more specialized, as the schools are increasingly focusing on curriculum needs, while the public libraries have a much broader perspective.
- The public and the school libraries should be complementary to one another and work more in partnership.
- A strong belief that there will always be a print collection in public libraries.
- The Internet will need to move towards stronger indexing, credibility and quality control in order to improve its usefulness within the academic community.
- Identified a strong perspective that there will be more computers and technology based resources in libraries in the future.
- The schools close in the summertime. Therefore, public libraries are an important resource for students continuing to study. They are also important in terms of literacy programs.

Libraries Profile

- They are safe havens and special places.
- They have an unique ability to be independent.
- They are a place to explore and expand ones mental capacity.
- The library is an independent step in assisting students to learn
- Libraries offer preschoolers a wonderful place to learn and to evolve into reading, to use computers and so forth.
- Libraries are a social place where groups can work together and meet, a gathering place.
- Some students think much better in a library setting and this helps their self-esteem. They often do not gain self-esteem or importance on the sports fields or in other forums.

- Libraries are a place where the environment can be relatively controlled and people can stay out of trouble.
- Libraries are seen as community information providers, providing employment services information, movies, supports to life long learners, places for freedom of speech and learning and support the love of learning.

Central Library Ten Years Out

- Many more computers and new technologies, some not available today.
- Changes in staffing towards an increased number of staff with technology capacities in order to support technology and to keep it running.
- Collections will change with more emphasis on large print and audiocassettes for older people and special populations. There will be more inclusiveness.
- Likely more courses in terms of how to research, use computer technology and so forth.
- More workspace in order to support the full utilization of computers.
- Increased after school usage by students.
- More attempts to reach out to non-readers through the development of literacy skills and appealing to resistant / readers with new services.
- Spacious place with a 'hum' that will act as a community centre and be visually linked throughout.
- Improved chairs and tables, along with community bulletin boards.
- Libraries will continue to operate on the principles of equity and being open to all.
- Libraries will be more user friendly in terms of finding materials, how to use technology and so forth. User labs could be introduced.
- More development of future libraries in multi-use environments, such as with recreation centres.
- The market will be more stratified in the future related to seniors, preschoolers, special populations, youth, teens and so forth. Services and resources will need to be provided by market segment.

- More expectations by users of information on demand.
- May need to consider hiring teachers on staff to support curriculum connections for after school activities.
- Potential for increased programming related to author visits, book talks and other dynamic programs, including art exhibits, parenting supports and so forth.

Strengths of the Current Building

- Windows and light.
- Landscaping and setting, including the rose garden and the central location.
- Multi-floor with different activities and separations.
- Good meeting / gathering area.
- The auditorium.
- Good ambience on the main floor.

Negative Features of the Building

- Poor visibility from the street
- Long hallways
- Poor ambience on lower level
- Front desk and overall crowding in the front service and access areas
- Parking lot and the entrances to the facility are cold and have poor directional signage.

What is needed?

- A children's area with alcoves with VCRs, children's tables and chairs.
- Electric sign on the New Street.
- Some quieter areas

- Improved view lines
- Enhanced checkout desk operations.

2.4 Teens

Nine teenagers from the community and Pages within the library participated in this focus group.

Types of Uses

- Some use for school projects, but little for books to read.
- All the participants use the computer for school projects.
- Most use is made of the branches with little at the Central Library.
- Libraries are seen as a place to do homework and to gather information.
- A general perspective that libraries are 'ancient', as they still have books.
- Less use is made of school libraries as they do not have time during the school day and there are more materials in the public library.

Perspective of the Current Building

- Big and old
- Not very colourful / dull and dark
- Not a lot of light on the main floor, a great place for hide and seek.
- Does not function well
- Little stands out of a positive nature.
- Some of the shelves are very shaky

How to Attract More Teen Use

- Music room and listening opportunities
- More movies / tapes

- Computer games on a network

Perspective on the Library

- A lot about books / boring
- Really don't know what the Central Library is
- Indicated that a few teachers have mentioned students should use the public library for research material, but little identification of the public libraries is made in the classroom.
- The location is generally seen as difficult to get to from across the City.

New Space Priorities

- A video section
- Café

Future Perspective

- More computers and technology
- Fewer books
- More futuristic, being less of a standard library and more of a new concept / resource centre.
- Easier means for finding things.

2.5 Historical Society / Heritage / Literacy

Five participants representing these three sectors participated in this focus group.

Current Perspectives

- For literacy, they have a partnership with the library and students are encouraged to use the library as a meeting space and as a resource.
- Literacy and libraries go hand in hand. Technology will not change the basic requirements of the literacy programs.

- For the Historical Society, the archives are held in the Galloway Room, however, they meet in other locations.
- The overall relationship works very well, however a three-fold expansion is necessary to accommodate both the Historical Society's Archives and those of the City.
- A positive perspective is having access to a Librarian. The Society wishes to sustain this relationship but requires more space.
- It is anticipated that the use of archival material will increase amongst the boomer population.
- Heritage Burlington LACAC has its archives at the library. They are used significantly for genealogical activities. Some 1,200 properties are inventoried.
- Identified a potential for greater use of these materials and anticipate this will occur with the continuing interest in geological activity.
- They identified that the City has a policy to look into an archival strategy, which needs to be fully developed.

Future Perspectives

- Technology will increase significantly. It will enhance the activities of all three groups but will not replace the core needs for a library or printed material.
- The Literacy Program will continue to be based on one-on-one relationships and will continue to use the library as a basis for these sessions.
- Increased display area is seen as important in order to give the groups more profile and to allow greater access to the archival material.
- A strong belief that there will always be a need for the hands on review of original documents, particularly for scholars and those involved in serious research.

Needs

- A display area that is secure. It could be cycled on two-week increments for community groups. It needs to be more than a cabinet.

- Office space so that researchers can work on rare and important documents.
- Community area where tutors and students can share time, support multi-use activity.

Strengths of the Current Library

- Location and central to the City and within Central Park.
- Parking availability
- The rose garden and the overall setting.
- Many seniors can walk to the site

Weaknesses of the Current Building

- The stairs
- Air quality which causes headaches
- Crowded and cluttered nature of the spaces
- Very noisy when full, and librarians have to go around and ask people to be quiet
- For first time library users, the place can be very difficult to find your way around related to signage and access.
- Not a very welcoming facility.

Future Building Needs

- Technology will be a huge part of the future of the libraries.
- Likely more searches will occur on the Internet than via using books which could result in fewer people in the building as searches are undertaken externally, either at home or at branches.
- May not need as many computers as is being identified, as many people will have them at home. However, there will need to be substantially more computers in the library than currently exists.
- The range of technology supports will be important in terms of printers, scanners and associated workspace in order to make them better functioning tools.

2.6 Front Line Staff

Two focus groups involving twenty-three front line staff from Central and the branches were held with the following results:

Library services in the Next Five to Ten Years

- The technology will result in electronic books, the potential automation of materials handling and related applications which could affect staffing levels and tasking.
- The significant demographic shifts related to ageing and cultural diversity will create demand for different types of materials to respond to various cultural interests. Also, it will increase the emphasis on large print, audiocassettes and other resources for special populations.
- Potential for more outreach based services in order to better meet the needs of the broader community.
- Pressure will grow for longer hours of operation similar to what is occurring in the commercial / retail world.
- Increased pressures on libraries to meet the instant gratification needs of the consumers, particularly boomers.
- Increased use of computers by people to keep in touch with friends around the world through e-mail, such as when teens travel, they drop into the library to use the local computer to contact home or friends.
- More and more people are looking for faxes, email and business type services, which the library could engage in.
- A likely requirement for libraries would be for more teaching related to how to use the Internet, quality control issues and related considerations.
- Increased use of the library for reference activities by people who maybe working at home, students for research papers and for businesses.
- Potential need for computer labs and training centres.
- Increased use of the library as a social setting for older patrons / users.

- Books will still be a strong part of the library of the future, as the Internet is more entertainment and information oriented.
- The role of the branches and the Central Library could change due to the evolution of technology with large print circulations in each branch and the spreading out of materials.
- Consideration that the reference role of the library is moving away from the libraries as more people can access databases in many other areas. However, some residents will never have these opportunities and will be dependent on the library.
- Increased needs to service specific market segments in terms of preschool, youth, teens, adults and seniors, all who have different types of needs and expectations.
- Some of the future roles and services of the library will depend on what happens with school libraries.
- Increased interest in genealogy and self-directed research activities.
- Other increased uses of libraries could result from continuing education programs at colleges and universities outside of Burlington, as well as from home schooling parents.
- The competitive environment is changing with Chapters and other stores which tend to be more comfortable, inviting and have more ancillary services such as cafes, fireplaces, etc., though they have less book variety and the staff are not as knowledgeable.
- Future facilities will likely be more of a partnership orientation, such as at Tansley Woods and Brant Hills.
- There will likely always be a Central Branch, though its scope and role might change, as not all the references resources, books, videos and related material can be duplicated at every site due to costs and circulation demands.

Strengths of the Current Building

- The overall park-like setting, recreational area and potential linkages with other uses.
- A lot of parking within the whole area.
- The plants and openness.

- Generally seen as accessible with only two levels, though there are significant accessibility issues.

Weaknesses of the Current Building

- No washrooms in the children's department and washrooms overall are very difficult to access for both the able and disabled.
- Elevator access is atrocious.
- The lack of fresh air and the overall hum and noise of the library.
- The lack of program rooms.
- Strollers and handicapped users have significant difficulty getting into the building.
- The shortage of storage throughout the facility, including office space which is often ad hoc. The building is a nightmare in order to run cables.
- The building is seen as crowded, cut-up with a lot of ad hoc additions and lack of training facilities.
- Lack of parking close to the facility.
- The book drop-off area and the whole front end operation, including the control desk operations.
- The handicapped parking is on a slope and on a curve.
- The delivery system for books is poor through the backdoor, up several floors and then back down.
- The spatial disconnection between the location of the computers and the reference materials which requires people to travel up and down the stairs to source materials and then use the computers.
- Lack of proper workspaces for the public, especially when using technology.
- No quiet area.

Space Priorities

- Public space with study tables and stacks
- Larger area for large print books, including more seating for the elderly.

- Improved entrance to the facility and the whole front desk operations, potentially including escalators, elevators and so forth.
- Collections on one floor.
- Potential for the third level being a non-public area, with services on the first and second floor.
- A local history area.
- Computer lab for training individuals on how to use technology and access the Net.
- Expand the children's area but eliminate the story well.
- Spaces for teens.
- Other needs:
 - Improved ventilation, noise control.
 - An improved organization and layout, along with dedicated storage and office spaces.
 - Increased number of meeting rooms.
 - Potential development of a business centre that would offer printing, office supplies, faxes and so forth.
 - Introduction of a café.
 - Introduction of special needs computers with Braille and scanners.
 - Staff washrooms.

2.7 Management Staff

Two focus groups, one involving five management staff and one involving the Chief Librarian and Deputy Chief Librarian where undertaken to solicit their input.

Future Perspective

- The primary function of the library will not likely change though the focus could change more towards research, technology access and information.

- There will be significantly more technology in the library, some of it currently not available.
- Books will continue to be a major part of any library operation. They will not disappear.
- User education relative to applying the technologies and understanding them will become an increasing role for libraries.
- The changing funding for school libraries could result in increased use of public libraries by the school system.
- Increased emphasis on preschool stimulation and school readiness could position the libraries to undertake more programming and direct services to this particular age group.
- More electronic formats identified for the future in terms of electronic books, DVDs and so forth.
- The libraries will become more segmented in terms of specific service ranges and will need to find a variety of niches where it will provide services to residents.
- The role of the Central Library could change due to technology and how people access technology. However, the need for a central repository for specialized materials that will not be based on technology will continue. The Central Library will also be required for simple efficiency / specialization purposes but the roles of the branches will likely change to facilitate more technology access.
- Libraries could be the site for technology education centres and other related services.
- Future libraries will have more work stations and support space around technology to make them more effective.
- Future libraries will be more space flexible in terms of preschool discovery centres, computer training labs, the displaying of art work and as a meeting place.
- Technology takes up a lot of room in terms of workstations. The units and support spaces are large and are not provided for currently.
- What will the future impact of municipal amalgamation be on the need for central libraries in a larger community?
- Seen as very hard to project the future due to the rate of change that is being experienced.

Strengths of the Current Building

- Aesthetically, it can be very pleasing in light of the park setting, the light and glass proportions and overall scope.
- Creates private spaces for reading internally and can be used externally in terms of Central Park and treed areas.
- Free parking

Weaknesses of Current Building

- The lack of barrier-free access which is wrong and embarrassing
- No staff workspace. The space that exists has been created on an ad hoc basis.
- The whole check-in / checkout operation is makeshift and inefficient.
- Both entrances are confusing and difficult.
- Elevator location and the need for staff intervention to use the elevator.
- The washrooms are in the wrong location for security, access and convenience. They are there to serve Centennial Hall not the library.
- Tremendous difficulty in wiring and cabling the building for new technology.
- The boardroom is too small.
- The children's area is too small and the story well is not functional or safe.
- Too many isolated areas in the library, as the spaces are cut up and there is no logical division of resources.
- Storage space for seasonal items and all other applications is in short supply.
- The receiving area is inefficient and the inter-branch delivery is on the wrong floor.
- Lack of visibility from the street.
- Is Centennial Hall effectively utilized?

New Building Perspectives

- Alcoves needed to serve different population interests.
- Assembly spaces need to be bright with good sight lines and staffed appropriately
- Improved furniture that causes people to stay and read and be comfortable.
- Introduction of ancillary services, such as café, a service centre, information from HRDC and other government operations.
- Increasingly need to become part of multi-use centres in order to enhance overall economics and utilization.
- Increased interest in the use of partnerships to expand programming, services and outreach.
- The library will be increasingly seen as a place for literacy material, assembly, group work and socialization.
- The notion of book circulation will continue though it will be more technology based, possibly introducing self-checkout and related applied technologies. Also, information services could be more self-service based.
- Likely a significantly increased role for libraries in training activities which could change the staffing profile.

New Space Priorities

- Entrance area and foyer, with new desk so that it is more welcoming and directional.
- Staff spaces related to workspace, offices, storage and so forth.
- Computer services related to adequate space for new computer systems that are secure. Currently they are spread over three inefficient spaces.
- Twenty-four hour book-drop.
- A new children's area.
- Potential training centre.

- Consolidate computer services into a lab.
- Potential development of a business services unit with word processing, café, printers, photocopiers and potentially supplies.
- A café and concession stand, potentially tying into the Park.
- Teen space, which is better, designed for their particular interests.
- Alcoves for preschool, after school, teens, seniors, archives / local history and technology and uses.
- Increased talking books / large print resources.
- Integrate Information Burlington into one info-desk and the branches.
- Maintenance space requires separate ductwork for health and safety, more space and resources.
- Improved delivery and workspace for the cataloguing and organizing of books.
- Improved building finishes quality to reduce maintenance costs.

2.8 Lankester Interviews

Mr. and Mrs. Lankester were interviewed as original landowners. The following historical profile was developed:

- The family rented the property in 1927 and purchased it in 1928.
- In 1959, the City expropriated the property after a three-year expropriation process. This was the largest farm in the area in the forming of Central Park.
- The family has donated to the library a picture of the City, along with arrowheads, which are located in the children's library.
- The family would like some recognition for their 32 years on the site and the loss of the property, as they would likely still be living there today, from their perspective. They would like consideration of:
 - A family plaque on the building.
 - A room in the library named after the family.

- The potential naming of the lane from New Street to the library on the east side the property.

It was indicated that the City Fire Department is concerned about naming the lane Lankester Lane as there is a Lancaster Street in north Burlington but with a different spelling. Also, the City's naming policy identifies opportunities for naming based on significant contributions to the community.

The family had the following Central Park development inputs:

- Want the space to remain as a public park.
- Would like to see an increased number of trees.
- The north area above the arena should have pathways, trees and related passive areas.

3.0 PUBLIC FORUMS

3.1 Mainway Central Library Public Forum

.1 FOCUS GROUP 1

New Services in the Next Five to Ten Years

- Coffee bar, lounge, more comfortable seating; a lot like Chapters.
- New electronic services.
- Programming for seniors and an ageing population potentially coordinated with the Seniors Centre.
- More revenue generating services, such as programs.

Strengths of the Central Library

- Pleasant, knowledgeable staff
- Children's programs
- The Internet tutorials
- Size of the collections and its scope
- The location within walking distance from many residences
- Some accessibility by bus
- Links with education community, such as school tours
- The Information Burlington service

Weaknesses of Central Library

- Location of washrooms which are isolated and a safety issue.
- Limited weekend hours, such as Friday evenings and summer Sundays.
- Lack of space for collections

- Overall accessibility is not barrier free
- The facility is congested and crowded.
- The elimination of the children's checkout desk has resulted in longer line-ups.

Key Characteristics of Future Library Buildings and Space Priorities

- Expanded technology, some of it not even invented yet.
- Better access to collections.
- Future use will have more virtual access from home, work, schools, etc.
- Need for lounge areas for reading, browsing and magazines.
- There will still be books in the library which needs to be respected.
- Increased children's space and more revenue generating facilities and services.
- Increased meeting space.
- Increased linkages between the library and the culture community related to arts and so forth.

.2 FOCUS GROUP 2

Services Five to Ten Years in the Future

- More rentals of equipment related to CD players and DVDs.
- More space to accommodate expanded use.
- Specialized needs, scanners and similar equipment for citizens with disabilities.
- More hours of operation to accommodate students during examine time and to improve service

Strengths of the Central Library

- The staff at the library which are friendly and the key to good service delivery.
- The new drop-off box and area, including the fifteen-minute parking space.

Weaknesses of the Central Library

- Parking problems
- The stairs and access to get into the library
- The competition from Chapters and other similar ventures.
- The washrooms are distant and dark.

Future Library Buildings and Space Priorities

- Kids programs will need to expand.
- Improved parking
- Availability of adapted technology for disabled users, such as the visually impaired.
- Bringing more seniors to the Central Library
- Redesign space on the third floor
- Introduction of a coffee lounge and leisure area, as potential revenue generating areas in the library
- A family washroom

3.2 Centennial Hall Public Forum Session

.1 FOCUS GROUP 1

New Services in Five to Ten Years

- Weekend openings all year
- More computers and technology being available
- Better interior signage to get around (possibly a directory map)
- Develop a better range of books, such as a genealogy component like in Hamilton.
- A larger music section with written scores and other materials.
- Improved quality control to ensure videos are not given out damaged.

Strengths of the Central Library

- The architecture with the windows, light and overall aesthetics which provide an openness.
- The ability to browse
- The computerized services for renewals, book reserve, etc.
- Friendly staff
- Comfortable
- The facility is easy to get around
- The children's programs

Weaknesses with Central Library

- The lack of food services and revenue opportunities
- The hours of operation in the summer
- Computer research needs separate times and section for adults
- Lack of separate computers for children, adults or specialized research users.
- Long line-ups at the checkout, possibly need an express line with an extra user fee.

Future Building Perspectives and Spaces

- Quiet, non-smoking area for reading and research that would have:
 - Study tables
 - Comfortable seating
 - Computer cubicles
- Support the current information provided by the library with some growth in information services related to:
 - Books

- Reference material
- Knowledgeable staff
- More special interest opportunities related to:
 - Customer surveys to get ideas and identify needs
 - Authors' nights
 - Discussion groups
- Relative to interior design, ensure:
 - Openness
 - Bright
 - Colorful

.2 FOCUS GROUP 2

Library Services in Five to Ten Years

- Increase revenue generation opportunities, through hospitality services, such as a coffee shop
- A potential gift shop
- Improved kitchen facilities
- Larger community spaces with a good PA system

Strengths of the Central Library

- Extensive resource that is central to the City.
- Good parking
- Service staff are very good
- The existing meeting rooms are effective.

Weaknesses of the Central Library

- Hours of operation which have been reduced due to cost constraints.
- Need more enhanced movie selections
- The washrooms, security and elevator access

Library Buildings of the Future and Space Priorities

- Continue to be located in Central Park
- Ensure continuing user friendliness
- Ensure accessibility, maybe 24 hours per day

In terms of space, the following priorities were identified:

- Expansion should be environmentally friendly and save green space
- A greenhouse should be visually soothing
- Increased hospitality services
- Improved parking

.3 FOCUS GROUP 3

Library Services in Five to Ten Years

- Expanded Internet and individual terminals
- Need for increased filtering by age group relative to policing the Internet
- Outside meeting area
- Electronic book access
- Expanded, improved attractions that increase use.

Strengths of the Central Library

- Busy, well utilized

- Promote access to Biron

Weaknesses of the current Central Library

- Need more copies of popular titles
- The multi-level facility design is weak
- Hours of operation are too limited, such as Sundays in the summer and Friday evenings
- The entrances and access to the facility are not barrier free and are complicated

.4 FOCUS GROUP 4

Library Services in the Next Five to Ten Years

- Electronic books that are downloaded to hand held units.
- E-Commerce facilities
- Will always still have books and will need them.
- Increase in non-fiction / information type services and materials.
- Increased space for historical archives and Historical Society resources.
- More access tools to find information
- Self-checkout strategies
- Increased meeting rooms for seminars
- Potential Burlington Campus for McMaster University
- In-depth reference resources for entire community

Strengths of the Central Library

- “It’s here”
- Extensive information resources reside in the library

- Good access from street, bus and so forth.
- Staff well informed and helpful.
- Library's automated systems
- Internet and web site access
- Variety of materials relative to print and A/V
- Information Burlington
- Generous loan periods

Weaknesses of the Central Library

- The disabled access which is very poor
- The children's area which too small and cut up
- The entrance from the back parking lot which is complicated
- The white noise on the upper level
- The overall parking situation and the one way entrance
- The upper level is crowded

Libraries of the Future and Space Priorities

- More people spaces with comfortable chairs and desks in the collection area.
- Facility that better accommodates an ageing population and needs of children relative to having:
 - A more welcoming space that feels comfortable and creates a love of books.
 - More rooms for seminars and training with better acoustics
 - Improved lighting
 - Adult programming activity

- Accommodates significant art works within the overall architectural design.
- Increased multi-media capacity within the library

.5 FOCUS GROUP 5

Library Services in the Next Five to Ten Years

- Coffee shop / tea room and related hospitality services
- Sunday opening all year
- Selling of books
- A gift shop
- Extended hours, possibly 24 hours per day
- More programs, lectures, movies and so forth

Strengths of the Central Library

- Helpful staff
- Bright and airy with natural light
- The overall location in Central Park and the setting, which allows for one stop shopping
- Good neighbourhood

Weaknesses of Central Library

- Short on shelf space
- Handicapped access / is not barrier free
- Inconvenient elevator that needs staff intervention
- Poor acoustics in Centennial Hall
- Not open on Sundays year round

Libraries of the Future and Space Priorities

- Being wired for more technology applications.
- Expanded children's facilities and ensuring that the place is "kid friendly"
- Services for seniors, such as remote access

.6 FOCUS GROUP 6

Library Services in the Next Five to Ten Years

- Adaptive technology for seniors and those with visual and hearing impairments.
- Expanded children's area
- More accommodating to an ageing population
- A café service
- Improved internal structure of the library related to atmosphere, accessing information, etc.

Strengths of the Central Library

- The research material
- Good service
- Quality of staff and their friendliness
- A public institution that is publicly controlled and not privately operated

Weaknesses of the Central Library

- Hard to find new books (use of paperbacks to save costs could result in more availability)
- Available parking close to the library

Future Library Buildings and Space Priorities

- Ability, through technology, to provide access for those with special needs, such as visual and hearing impairments.
- Expanded children's area

4.0 CURRENT CENTRAL LIBRARY

4.1 Strengths of the Current Central Library

The following strengths were repeatedly identified for the current Central Library.

- Park like setting, the trees, the rose garden and the overall ambience of the site.
- The windows, natural light and airiness of the current library
- The proximity to the Seniors Centre and other users in a multi-use environment.
- The staff
- The resources that are available in the library
- The levels and quality of service offered.

4.2 Weaknesses / Concerns with the Current Central Library

The following weaknesses and concerns were repeatedly identified:

- Lack of barrier free access and the ability to get into the building in terms of the complexities with the two entrances, going up the hill, the elevator, etc.
- The whole front area of the library in terms of the desk and circulation space, which was seen as crowded, dysfunctional, uninviting and overly complicated.
- Parking and vehicular access related to the roadway coming in, abuse of the short term parking in the circle, the handicapped access which is on a slope and the competition for parking with other Park uses, such as the soccer fields.
- Air quality and the noisy HVAC system that is currently under redevelopment.
- The crowded / cluttered appearance of the library.
- Makeshift / ad hoc staff office space, storage and non-public areas.

- The lack of convenient washrooms for users, and the darkness / security concerns related to the existing washrooms which are primarily designed to serve Centennial Hall.
- The limited quality of the meeting rooms and spaces.
- The competition for computer access and their location related to research materials.
- The smallness of the archive / local history / Historical Society space
- The complicated nature for receiving books from branches, processing them and sending them back out which has to cover multiple floors.
- The maintenance area related to not having a separate ventilation system, washrooms or adequate space.
- The limited space for and dispersal of Technology Services which results in productivity and efficiency related issues.
- The poor step design and the way strollers must travel through the gardens in order to gain access to the front of the building.
- The children's story well, which is unsafe and poorly designed, and is starting to become a storage area within a too small children's area.
- The lack of amenity services related to food services, comfortable furniture, good lighting and so forth.
- Poor directional signage.

5.0 FUTURE SPACE PRIORITIES

The following future space needs / suggestions were identified:

- Increase preschool and children's area in terms of space, segmentation and variety. Need for a preschool and children's discovery area.
- A teen area that can absorb noise and teen type activities
- Quiet area for reading and individual work activity
- Increased technology areas with adequate workspace
- Ancillary services related to a café. Also, consideration needs to be given to a gift shop, printing shop and a related business support area.
- Improved gathering areas with multiple sized rooms and spaces for adult and children's program delivery.
- Significantly enhanced accessibility to the facility
- An improved front service desk operations related to functionality, identification, directions and related components.
- Enlarged Historical Society / archives / local history space, along with improved research furniture and equipment and associated workspace.
- Increased space allocation for large print / audio books, audio and videotapes, DVDs and related equipment.
- A computer / technology training centre / lab
- Increased staff office space, storage and Technology Services spaces
- Improved availability and presence of washrooms in the main activity areas of the facility and for staff.
- Better location for an elevator and the possible use of an escalator

External to the building, the rose garden was seen as a strong feature, as was the overall connectivity to Central Park. Parking was a continuing issue, along with road access. Participants generally felt that parking needed to be improved on two fronts:

- Parking with respect to directly accessing the library.
- Parking and access at the front of the library so that it is not abused and is more functional.

Overall, no real solutions emerged related to parking. Parking will likely be part of a larger master planning consideration for the Park. Dedicated parking for the library is a significant operational and security concern.

6.0 CENTRAL LIBRARY AND CENTRAL PARK

Very little input was received to suggest that there were negative impacts on the Park or that the Library should relocate. In fact, one of the most significant strengths of the Central Library is its place, presence and connectivity with the Park and its multi-use environment. In most of the focus groups and public forums, relocating the Curling Club, the Drury Lane Theatre, the Minor Hockey house and so forth, were identified. Virtually no identification of the need to relocate the Library was received.

The input from the various participants would indicate that the Central Library should stay in Central Park and be a key part of the Park's future. What was addressed in several sessions was whether enlarging the library would have a major impact on the Park. The following points received some identification.

- The rose garden would have to be replaced
- Expansion could only occur to the south as the other sides tend to be blocked.
- There should be no cutting down of trees or loss of mature natural features to accommodate growth in the library building's footprint.
- Is the library examining use of the lower level for public service space, with the possible relocation of administrative and other services off-site as a possible strategy so as not to increase the footprint of the Central Library building.