

Berkeley Public Library Facilities Master Plan Survey

COMMENTS

West Branch

- The Branch Libraries are always bursting at the seams with patrons. They desperately need additions!
- Nice Library
- The Children's room is very noisy, i.e. the sound is heard all over the library, but I can't see how this could be helped. The librarians are helpful. Hard to see materials on top and bottom shelves (especially CDs). Love the library anyway.
- This library is great. We are very happy with the materials and the service. We love this library even though we live in Albany.
- I really like the variety and amount of activities / toys that you offer in the Children's section. I also like that it is separated from the rest of the library by stairs.
- I like the improvements to the West Branch Library!
- Library staff is extremely helpful.
- 1) WiFi services are mandatory. 2) West needs outlets available for laptop users. ****
- Room with a door for kids to have loud fun.
- Better music selection, a few more computers
- The customer service at this library is EXCELLENT. My experience is that staff goes beyond expectation to service the public. That's why I return frequently.
- Take out books
- The librarians are excellent at West Branch – always helpful, informative + willing to help you.
- Get a stamp! & CDs
- I use three different library systems (Contra Costa, Alameda, Berkeley) and am pleased with all of them. I use BPL West Branch because it's on the way home and the ease of parking is superior (in a pinch one can always use the Pet Smart/Longs parking lot).
- Shelf space for new fiction books – they may or may not be "popular."

Building Layout Comments

- Demo existing (outer walls) and Additions (enclose outside spaces and extend street-side portion of building)
- Add access to reading programs in back of building, add access to teens and adult reading on street-side of building, and add seating outside by the ramp.
- Add roof over all of the entry way
- Move bathroom facilities. Meeting room is valuable stack space! Every study table needs outlets for laptop users.
- More space between DVD/VHS shelf and CDs/Paperbacks shelf. More space in the Teen Area.
- Add comfy chairs around the adult fiction area.
- Add a chair or bench near the Adult New shelf.

South Branch

- Love the library
- Move South Branch to Ed Roberts Campus & keep existing South Branch building for the Tool Library and special functions.
- Rain is not directed away from entrance. Acoustics in library are good (unfortunately).
- Love this branch. Nicest workers.

- South Branch librarians are helpful – friendly. This is the most important thing.
- I appreciate the radiant floor heating. It's comfortable and I don't really notice it until its wintry outside. I like that So. Branch is so easy to use – feels very accessible most of time. It has great neighborhood value, a gathering spot. Perhaps something could be done for the school/students who use So. Branch late in the afternoon – there's a small number who occasionally act out – Is a good solution having their own table / own activity? Or do they need to be diverted to community work or an eye opening activity?

Building Layout Comments

- Reorganize or move the tables in from of the circulation desk.
- Maybe So. Branch should be all children & tool library w/ adult staff going to ERC in 2 yrs.
- Maybe move the computers so people who are walking by don't bump into the people focused at the computers.
- Put children's in meeting room and meeting room in Children's. Build a wall to separate from main adult library.

Claremont Branch

- Comfy chairs
- Temperature is cold, but that's ok!
- More books on tape for children. More Nancy Drew note books.
- I would like more books on tape for children.
- Glenn is very helpful.
- Sometimes too much noises/Voices in computer area
- It is not the newest biggest prettiest library I've used, but it does what it does very well + the staff are the best. We all eagerly anticipate our many visits.
- A staff that is happy and not overworked. Paid well.
- Fire Place! Yay! Change soap dispenser (no lotion holder!)
- This is a wonderful branch: its small but works well + has excellent staff.
- Safety is important now that people plug in their own computers + cords wherever
- Some "isolation structure" around service desks (walls, partitions, screen, etc.) since library transactions are rarely done with lowered voices anymore.
- I depend on the library. It's great. Self-checking makes me miss interaction w/ librarians, but I guess that's progress.
- The best: a considerate & friendly staff!
- Link+ is awesome! Some areas in adult fiction smell bad. Location of men's bathroom (in teen area) is terrible. Great idea to move holds to self-serve.

Building Layout Comments

- I love this library!
- Get rid of Teen Area – have never seen a teen in it. Get rid of computers – service not appropriate for a library.
- More people less tech!!
- Leave it alone! Please – It's a branch, not the main/Central – Its supposed to be "local."
- Is there space adjoining behind the community room that could be expanded if additional room is needed???
- Space is always limited. Earthquake restrictions may be harder than I imagine, but often novels do not all fit on shelves and get put in "overflow" or sold. I like perusing "overflow" but floor-to-ceiling stacks would hold many more books. I have even seen libraries use moving stacks that slide more stacks into a small area – it also makes reshelving an easier job.

- More use, change layout of teen area. Another table?
- Tape player!
- Meeting room area: I don't see this area used. Seems like dead space.
- Area in front of circulation desk: a tight area – people checking out and traffic to + fro, when busy this is very tight
- SOLAR PANELS upon the roof!
- I'm sure it will be difficult to make significant changes since the building does seem crowded right now. "Ribbon racks" are much more flexible for bike parking than those currently installed. The benches are great! Please keep them no matter what. Move main reference desk away from quieter areas (I am often distracted by loud voices @ reference desk when using computer).
- The donation books + hold books are too close together, but I don't know how this would get rearranged.
- Teen Area: never seen teens there
- Men's Bathroom: Terrible location! While I'm looking at teen A/V, it's almost like being inside the bathroom with the user!

North Branch

- The best thing about the libraries (for a family) is the variety of programs for kids!
- I like the tables / programs and selection of books. Use North Branch because the staff is nice and the building is warm & inviting also small. Parking like at the main branch is a nightmare.
- Need more open space – not so cluttered "service areas." Look like small town library from 1950s.
- The staff at North is very helpful
- The only real problem I note is the disgusting & overpowering smell in the women's restroom. How can we address this issue?
- It would be helpful if there was a notebook or something to write down what books you want the library to get.
- The North Branch is my favorite facility despite its limitations
- No musty smell is important
- I wish library (North) could open every morning @ 10:00
- Upgrade bathrooms – smells! Need more room/shelves for DVD, books on tape, CD, now MP3 books. Larger area for magazines, news
- Please do not waste our valuable tax money fixing what does not need fixing!
- I love the building and highly value having the branch. Staff is great!
- Outlets for laptops desk lamps
- Need more room for DVDs/videos. They need their own wall.
- North Branch building is cramped for space + floor plan is confining. Staff space/service desk are poorly configured, impinge on shelving, etc.
- At meetings, please address issue – when Library Aides push chairs in, do so without hitting tables, in order to avoid damaging beautiful oak chairs, denting upright part.
- 1) Need room when checking books out – I'm always having books fall off whatever they are stacked on. 2) Very congested, by entrance, book return, new books, movies floor area.
- I like the comfortable feel of the North Branch, but I also like the others. I don't go to the Main Library very often. Parking more difficult.
- Doing great – couldn't do without you! (Bathrooms need upgrade + more frequent cleaning)
- North is my favorite branch – its just too small. They do a fantastic job in the space they have, but its too small
- WiFi is detrimental to human health and well studied now by the Scandinavians – prefer none in library.

- My only “problem” with this beautiful, well-run, helpful library is the amount of noise that arises at times. Any small spaces are well worth squeezing for the charm.
- I make great use of requesting materials from other branches that I pick up here, so it doesn’t matter to me whether the books + DVDs I want are in this building so long as they are somewhere in the branch system. I don’t feel a need for this building to be changed to fit more materials if that’s a goal.
- Doors left open – cold air on computer users. Fix door stop on N. entrance door – door stop won’t stay up.
- I love N. Branch though its crowded. Its warm, cozy, friendly! Please continue the quilt show.
- The staff has always been very helpful. The computers are not user friendly.
- Me personally, I just want the books. As a member of the community, I want others satisfied – but they can fill out their own form.
- Bathrooms
- I understand lighting wants improvement so ceiling (at desk) can be seen – yes! Didn’t know ceiling existed. No need to change furniture in reading room – solid + comfortable.
- I love it the way it is! I’m more concerned about getting BOOKS.
- Building has a unique beauty of form and vibrations – as you expand/remodel – Preserve!
- LOVE the North Branch!
- Don’t change it too much!
- Computer (doc) program doesn’t function very well. Twice had an appointment, came in the doc. Didn’t show and it was a problem.
- The staff is excellent!
- Wonderful staff – beautiful architecture – but too crowded.
- I really hate the magnetic checkout system! Change the 50s lighting in main room to show the gorgeous ceiling. We need another computer and the computer should be more private.
- Don’t like cold, impersonal libraries – this one is pleasant, informal and helpful. Area near information desk could be neatened up a bit with cabinets to hide clutter – people very helpful.
- North Branch has done a great job utilizing this rather small space.
- This library is just about perfect. Don’t add or detract.
- North Branch is the step-child of the BPL system. Claremont has been enlarged, remodeled twice, as has West Branch, South Branch the newest has had more don’t to it. When will you improve this library? Better facilities, more space for books and a larger, better collection – both reference and other. Needs expansion of physical building and also the collection. Someone drew a plan several years ago but the Board spent all the month on Central Library, including expensive hand-carved chairs that are not even comfortable.
- Seems like North Branch gets less new books than other sites.
- This library is beautiful & accessible by walking for me – but it needs MORE ROOM. It is heavily used & often very crowded.
- Computers that will not destroy flash drives and floppy disks and yes I’ve written (to no avail) to the new library director & the head of I.T. about this & was ignored AGAIN. Computer stations that have adjustable height of monitor keyboard & chair (each independently adjustable) at every computer. Computers with private quiet location w/o constant nearby noise.
- The Public Library the best deal in town.
- I love North Branch! And the online reserve feature.
- Maybe one more self-checkout computer
- I think the staff is very responsive & attentive
- Bring back the original fixtures – the fluorescent lights detract from the beauty of the building. Update like at Main
- In the summer it is stuffy inside. More room for music/classical CDs – well, more, anyway
- The library is busy – it is important to note that many users are non-Berkeley residents.

- Please dump tons of old New Yorkers, Via Via Via & low-brown celebrity junk- Weed It! Or Reject It!

Building Layout Comments

- More space for audio recorded books would be nice, but not at the expense of well-balanced compromises already in place. Do not encroach on existing open traffic space in front of circ. desk.
- Increase computer terminals. Extend building and increase shelf-space collection in back of Adult Fiction and Teen Area.
- Lots of under utilized wall space in general. New Materials shelf: back to back shelves, instead of against entry (lots of room wasted here). Space between Circulation Desk and Children's Videos: Too Tight!
- I like it the way it is! Thank you for everything!
- Space seems to be used as well as possible. Building isn't large enough, but expense of enlarging is probably prohibitive.
- Utilize this unused area. Outside space behind staff offices: build-out towards property line. Outside space behind Adult Non-Fiction: build-out. More shelves for books, magazines, newspapers.
- Create lobby space with terminals
- Fireplaces could be removed
- Spaces on either side of entry way: cramped area. Adult Non-Fiction: inadequate shelving, space, narrow aisles. Poorly configured staff space service desks. Branch needs larger space! (has site area available for expansion)
- All work well at present
- I don't understand why teenagers need their own room. They should be able to be quiet. If there were some way of putting the circ desk further from the reading tables, that would be great. People tend to talk loudly to the library staff.
- I use everything. Keep the beauty + charm. I've lived nearby since 1971.
- Audio books and Paperback shelves: Move to Adult Non-Fiction area. Children's Videos shelf: Move into Children's room.
- Don't change! I love this comfortable, easy-to-use library!
- I think this is a beautiful old building and it works just fine for me.
- Generally lighting is ugly and not in sympathy with the character of the building.
- If you can go down – several floors or add a tower.
- Remove fireplaces and replace with shelves
- Open up the entrance by the women's restroom – It's a maze.
- Nothing just refinish/replace/restore as needed to preserve this jewel of a building.
- New Materials area: this area gets very crowded. Adult CDs area: too crowded. Adult-Fiction area: could you make more room between shelves.
- Teen area: add teen computers, more chairs and more teen books.
- I would add better self-checkout areas. I had the opportunity to use the self-check at Palo Alto Library and their system is much better (ok I know they probably have more money). Might explore other machines. Thank you!
- I would somehow create a "door" to children's area so it doesn't matter if my child is talking.
- Need community room, a real teen area, offices for staff, space for an expanded reference room with chairs and tables, a computer center. Space needed for more good quality books, maybe fewer mysteries, more biographies and history. This library is heavily used why has nothing been done to it for 30, 40 or 50 years?? Now is the time.
- Children's area: I like the way this functions as a multi-purpose area + separates "loud" activities. Children's reading area: too crowded. Circulation Desk: seems to be a lot of

wasted space, push this back. Info Desk area: too crowded. Videos area: this area very crowded. Entry way: completely open entry way.

- More book stacks, take out Teen Area, add Community Room to back of building, increase Staff Area, push back Circulation Desk and have more computers, and have a parking lot in the back.
- More recoded books (tape, CD)
- All is needed, build another wing
- Too bad the building is not larger.
- Children's area: I can't speak to the usage of this space. What do parents think? An awful lot of space per patron as compared to the rest of library. Front of library: this whole area is too cramped, trying to get everything in. Tables in Adult Non-Fiction area: smaller tables, I have never seen them all full. Add on to the back of the building.