



News Release
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Berkeley, California

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**BERKELEY PUBLIC LIBRARY INVITES THE COMMUNITY TO DISCUSS
BRANCH LIBRARY BUILDINGS AND SERVICES**

The Berkeley Public Library has undertaken two major overlapping planning initiatives in 2008:

1. The development of a *Branch Library Master Facility Plan*, which will include assessing the current physical condition of the four branch libraries and the tool library and making recommendations concerning upgrades and modernization needs.
2. The creation of a three-year *Library Strategic Plan* that will describe Berkeley Public Library's needs, goals, and service priorities.

At their last Board of Library Trustees Meeting on February 13, the Berkeley Public Library Trustees instructed staff to continue to gather community feedback on their branch libraries by holding a series of neighborhood meetings open to all community members, one at each Berkeley Public Library branch. At these meetings community members will be able to discuss the condition of the branch buildings as well as the library services and programs offered within them. In January 2008 those visiting their neighborhood Berkeley branches were able to fill out a Facilities Master Plan survey about the Berkeley Public Library branch buildings. As a continuation of this process, the Branch Library Meetings will be held:

Wednesday, February 27, 6:00-8:00pm at the North Branch, 1170 The Alameda at Hopkins

Wednesday, March 5, 6:00-8:00pm at the South Branch, 1901 Russell Street at MLK

Thursday, March 6, 6:00-8:00pm at the West Branch, 1125 University at San Pablo

Saturday, March 8, 2:00-4:00pm at the Claremont Branch, 2940 Benvenue at Ashby

Following these Branch Meetings, there will be a presentation of the results of these discussions of library branch buildings, services, and programs at the next Board of Library Trustees Meeting, March 12, 2008, 7:00 pm at the West Branch, 1125 University Avenue (at San Pablo).

Related to the Library Strategic Plan, there will be a general community discussion of library services and programs to be held in the 3rd floor Community Meeting Room at Central Library on Saturday,

March 22, 1-3:00pm. The primary focus of this meeting will be on services and programs throughout the library system.

At the Board of Library Trustees meeting on February 13, a Workshop was held during which the local firm Noll & Tam Architects presented their study of branch libraries in Berkeley. Noll & Tam Architects were hired to complete a **20-year Library Facilities Master Plan (LFMP) feasibility study** for the Berkeley Public Library. Noll & Tam offered evaluations of each branch and several scenarios for solving the structural, mechanical, electrical, and architectural (including ADA access), as well as public and work space considerations. Their initial findings and the branch library surveys confirm the 1996 Branch study that all branches are in serious need of upgrading and expansion to truly serve the needs of all neighborhood branch library patrons.

The final plan, to be presented to the Board in Spring 2008, will provide relevant information to allow Library Administration and the Board of Library Trustees to set priorities and develop vital implementation scenarios. As with past library projects, extensive public involvement related to the public's service needs will be vital to the success of the project. These open public meetings are being held in order to relate the results of the studies and to get feedback all along the way.

Berkeley's branch libraries must be flexible enough to address not only current, but also future, public service needs; therefore this project is focused on the capacity of the facilities themselves. The goal of the project is to develop pertinent facility information and knowledge that will further the ability of the Library to make solid strategic decisions regarding facility expenditures useful in the short term, and that will be considered a significant asset in developing plans for the future.

For more information on these studies and meetings, please phone **(510) 981-6195, (510) 548-1240 (TTY)**, or go to http://berkeleypubliclibrary.org/about_the_library/our_organization.php

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