

Interim Report of the Library 21 Committee to the Cambridge City Manager
September 30, 1997

The Library 21 committee is very pleased to present to you this interim report on our comprehensive program for a library for the twenty-first century and to make recommendations regarding the building location. As of September 9, 1997 the committee has held 20 meetings, each one open to the public and fully reported in minutes posted in libraries, our web site and in frequent news articles.

Our charge in the March 25, 1996 City Council order was to: "... thoroughly review the proposed program and design in order to assure:

- a. That the program includes what is needed for a modern, first rate library to serve the citizens of Cambridge well into the 21st century; but that the program not include elements which are unnecessary or space that can be realistically shared with the nearby Cambridge Rindge and Latin School; and
- b. That the Library addition and parking be designed to ensure minimum encroachment on the existing open space; and
- c. That the plans for parking and traffic be satisfactory and feasible; and
- d. That as many appropriate program elements as possible be assigned to branch libraries; and be it further
- e. That the future operating cost of the main library and its effect on the operation of the branches be considered by the advisory committee, in conjunction with the Library Director and the Board of Trustees.

The Committee developed a mission to further guide our work:

Provide a set of recommendations to the City Manager for a library system that includes the roles, services and physical requirements to equitably meet the needs of the people of Cambridge and enhance the quality of life in the City for the 21st Century.

The Committee's strategies included significant public education and outreach that engaged all sectors of the Cambridge community to solicit their input. The Committee encouraged advice and assistance from a wide variety of experts.

The Program for a 21st Century Main Library:

The Library 21 Committee is proud to present the results of our work to date: a program that explains the vision, the audiences, the roles, and the space needs for a main library that will serve everyone in Cambridge well into the 21st century. We took several approaches to arrive at the final program: consulting with a wide range of individuals and groups all over the city, visiting recently enlarged or newly built libraries in Eastern Massachusetts, as well as others across the country, holding a well-attended symposium on libraries of the future as well as reviewing the "Needs Assessment" document prepared in 1994 with the help of the library staff. We went over this report with a fine-tooth comb and found that it provided the necessary baseline for defining the function and space needs for the proposed main library.

One of the most difficult aspects of establishing the program has been to develop the space requirements. How many square feet are necessary to give the city an outstanding main library without being extravagant? We have come to the conclusion that 90,000 to 100,000 square feet would house our program and provide for some future expansion. This size will encompass the technology needs, the increased reference and collection services, the expanded children's and young adults services -- and allow the main library to provide services to the entire public. It will also meet the American Disabilities Act requirements, including restrooms, and will give the staff much needed work space. (Note that the ADA requirements alone add 25% right off the top.)

Put into perspective, the American Library Association recommends 1 square foot of per capita; while the current main library, at 36,000 sq.ft., is woefully inadequate. During our study, we visited the new main libraries in: Waltham at 46,000 sq.ft, population 55,000; Arlington at 49,000 sq.ft., population 44,000; Newton at 91,000 sq.ft., population 83,000; Everett at 19,000 sq.ft., population 36,000; Plymouth at 55,000 sq.ft., population 40,000.

Santa Monica, a community of similar size and demographics in California, has plans to double its 74,000 sq.ft. main library. In contrast, many cities across the country: Broward County, Denver, San Francisco, San Antonio, Phoenix, to name a few, have new libraries that are pushing 300,000 sq.ft. The Boston Public Library is about 300,000 sq.ft.

To make sure we were on the right track, we invited four well-respected local library directors to critique our program; they gave it exceptionally high marks. After this review, we are confident that with our program in hand and with an appropriate site, an architect working in tandem with the library staff, could begin to design a building. The next step in our process, concurrent with the siting process (outlined below), is to give the program a solid public review.

During the last 15 months, we have focused on the program and what Cambridge needs in terms of services and space allocations for its library. Our primary concern during this period has been to learn what was possible and desirable for a new library to benefit all Cambridge citizens now and our children in the 21st century and to share that information with the community. We have provided a process that allowed for questions, dialogue and input from a wide range of professionals in the field. Many people have told us that they have never seen such a dedicated committee; we have certainly tried to be responsible and methodical and each member of our committee deserves significant credit for this work. We are now ready to move on -- and we believe the public is too -- to the issue of siting.

Recommendation for siting:

One component of our charge was to find a program that can be carried out on the Broadway site. But we have discovered there is much debate over this aspect of the charge within the community. There are questions about the amount of land available for expansion, the suitability of the building itself for expansion, sufficient parking, the traffic flow, access to public transportation, and the impact of an expanded building on the open space. The City, in fact, has

made a commitment to protect the open space from encroachment. We feel that to limit any discussion on siting to the Broadway location would not answer these and other questions.

Therefore, we recommend that the best approach is for the city to conduct an objective site search and analysis and include the Broadway site in this process. We have attached a scope of services for the search to this report.

The L21 Committee is unanimous that the program not be sacrificed to fit a particular site. We have worked long and hard, listened to many groups across the city, studied libraries across the country and have come to the conclusion that the City of Cambridge needs a main library of the size and scope of the one that we are proposing. We have looked at a range of alternatives, including a completely decentralized main library with functions in various locations. None of these were cost effective or remotely feasible. We were skeptical at first that with so many branches, we needed a main library. The opposite is true. Branches can be cost effective only with a strong main library.

Given the issues surrounding the Broadway site, and the controversy during the previous expansion proposal in 1995, the L21 Committee feels that there will be very little, if any, chance of success if the Broadway site remains the only alternative. The physical plant of the Main Library is in dire need of improvement; the public has told us what the staff knows only too well: the Main Library simply cannot properly serve the community without appropriate expansion to accommodate our needs.

Role of the L21 Committee during the site analysis process:

Our role would be as advisors to the City Manager so he could make use of the depth of experience we have acquired over the last year and a half. The Committee would like to assist the City Manager and the professional team establish the criteria for site analysis and selection. The schedule of the Committee's involvement with the consultants during the process would be worked out ahead of time so as to ensure the independence of the site analysis process. We would also like to review the team's findings so that we could prepare a set of comments for the City Manager. Our communications with the team would be through the City Manager so as not to confuse the process. We also recommend that we continue to inform the public of the process status.

Submitted by the Library 21 Committee:

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A VISION FOR THE NEW MAIN LIBRARY

The Cambridge Public Library is a dynamic, community oriented library system providing services, collections, and programs for all members of the community. The Library 21 Committee has spent the past year focused on the creation of a program for a new library that will allow the library to grow and to serve Cambridge residents better. The goal of our work is the creation of a singularly outstanding facility, one that is in harmony with the unusual nature of our extremely diverse community, distinguished by age, history, institutions, individuals, and events which have given it world renown.

The new building should be the "civic heart" of Cambridge, providing equal access and knowledge for every person in the city, made manifest through a distinguished work of architecture, enlarged collections, and enriched programs that can serve and attract an even greater number of citizens than they do now. The enlarged space will be able to house resources from the traditional library as we know it as well as new services, especially those able to give access to new technologies that can serve as links unifying the city.

We hope when visitors come to Cambridge the library will be on their short lists of what they must see, and when civic officials retire the library will be on their lists of changes in the city of which they are most proud.

Audiences for the Main Library

The target audience for the future Main Library is as diverse as the city itself and includes everyone who lives in, works in and/or visits the City of Cambridge. The system as a whole (the main and six branches) should be known for its innovative outreach initiatives to serve this audience. The programs and services must evolve as the needs and interests of its audience change.

6/25/97

The Cambridge Public Library

Cooperation with Community Organizations and Other City Agencies

The Cambridge Public Library has a unique role in the life of the community. In order to fulfill this important mission, it is essential that there be meaningful interactions with other city agencies providing services that are complementary to the work of the library. Currently, there are ongoing cooperative efforts between the library and certain agencies, such as the Department of Human Services, the Cambridge Chinese Cultural Association, The Salvation Army, St. Paul A.M.E. Family Shelter, the YWCA, and the Cambridge Historical Commission. These interactions should be strengthened and improved as the library proceeds into the future, and new relationships should be sought to help make the library as accessible as possible to all Cantabrigians.

The library can only cooperate with agencies which have the desire to see such collaborations succeed. Most notably, the School Department needs to identify a key staff member who will commit to a long-term working relationship with library staff, since this is widely seen by the community as one of the most potentially important and very much needed links that is, unfortunately, a missing one. In working out the details of these interactions, it is important to keep in mind that the goal for the library is to provide library functions in ways that support the roles and missions of the other agencies; on the other hand, it is neither appropriate nor intended that the library should, in any sense, duplicate those efforts. The library will provide supportive resources, and perhaps space, for these activities, but it will not have the lead role in making these things happen.

Library 21: System Structure

The Issue

Public discussion of the proposed main library expansion raised the question of whether a “main library” in the traditional sense is in fact necessary in Cambridge today, or whether the main-and-branches system structure might instead give way to a “chain” of libraries of more equal size. Investigation of the system structure issue was part of the City Council’s charge to Library 21.

The Library System in the Strategic Plan

Under the Cambridge Public Library’s Strategic Plan, adopted in December 1995, the Library “is designed to work as a unified system with a strong main library and six active branch libraries each tailored to the unique constituencies and needs of its immediate neighborhood.” The Plan also calls for all locations to be “attractive, user-friendly and disabled accessible.” The same general mission and standards apply systemwide, as does the established process for program and services development. The principal roles of the system include support of both independent learning and formal education, children’s services, reference, and provision of popular materials. In addition, library facilities may serve secondary roles as community centers for information and activities.

Under the plan, the main library fulfills all the various roles. It is the only site where substantial reference services are available and, as the center of the system, it also backs up and supports the other services offered through the branches.

The branches are intended as gateways in various parts of the City to the resources of the entire system, and of the broader regional library network. All branches have as primary roles children’s services and provision of popular materials, which are both particularly important to the population segments most dependent on resources within the neighborhoods. Some branches may have additional secondary roles. The Central Square branch has a third primary role, independent learning support, as well as a significant function as a community activities center.

Library 21 Findings

Library system structure—Library 21 has concluded that the current “main-and-branches” structure, which is universal in American cities, is appropriate for Cambridge. It is, in fact, especially well-suited to a geographically compact city (every resident within three miles of the main library) with good public transportation. The current structure permits efficiency in the use of limited staff and materials, and affords flexibility so that branch services can evolve as their neighborhoods change. In addition, it helps the library balance its commitments to provision of “traditional” library services to regular patrons, on the one hand, and outreach on the other. Library 21 believes that an improved main library will strengthen the branches, and will enhance

their responsiveness to community needs. Certain unique materials and services may continue to be maintained at branches if they are thereby accessible to users and if their effectiveness does not depend on adjacency to central services and staff; examples include ethnic collections in certain branches, and some of the community activities in Central Square. Business-support centers in several cities, and the “tool library” in Berkeley, California, are branch-based successes that Cambridge might emulate if space and staffing permit.

Information technologies—The primary impact of new information technologies on library services is expected to fall in the reference field. Reference functions now possible only at the main library will become available at the branches; this will allow increased use of the branches *both* individually *and* as system “gateways.” The most significant issues raised by this development concern staffing levels and staff skills.

Capital versus operating issues—The major determinant of the effectiveness of branches is evidently the adequacy of the system operating budget, which controls staffing; among “bricks and mortar” issues, the appropriate location of branches (as in Cambridge) seems to be the most important consideration. The very-well-funded library systems of Berkeley, California, and Ann Arbor, Michigan, cities in many respects similar to Cambridge, have extremely vigorous branches, which are however fewer in number and no larger than ours.

Revised August 27, 1997

Roles for the Main Library

Preamble

The Public Library division of the American Library Association (ALA) has constructed a process to aid libraries in planning their missions, facilities, and activities. As part of that process, it defines the set of roles that a library can play and suggests that a degree of effort be assigned to each. Each role may be adapted and specialized to meet community needs with emphasis on specific areas. Consideration is to be given to the three forms of critical resources that contribute to meeting the system requirements: the collection, the staff, and the facility.

Library 21 has used these ALA definitions. Based upon its study of current Cambridge Public library practice, the vision of the library for the future, and a broad degree of public input, Library 21 has made a series of recommendations.

For each role, this report provides its name, the level of importance to meet the vision and mission of the library, a brief ALA description, a description of the recommendation for the future Cambridge Public library, and the rationale and other considerations for the recommendation.

The Main Library As "Civic Heart"

Primary

The *Civic Heart* is not an ALA defined role and is somewhat intangible. Discussion of this aspect of the library has generated a spirited discussion in several Library 21 meetings and Library 21 recommends that Civic Heart be considered as a role. When asked what Civic Heart meant, the following concepts were raised:

- the building is open to everyone and provides equal access and knowledge for every single person
- it becomes a destination for tourists and residents alike
- it provides a range of recreation, learning and teaching for wide range of audiences and interests: ethnic, multi-generational, etc.
- it is neutral territory; not owned by any neighborhood or group; it could and should be viewed as if it were owned by everyone; as such it becomes a catalyst for many activities

Library 21 is of the opinion that there is no single building or place in Cambridge that serves as the Civic Heart. The Charles River and in particular its annual festival was given as examples by several people, but this is seasonal and isn't centered about a building.

The new Main library as the Civic Heart of Cambridge will become one of the major cultural, social, and educational centers of the city; it will be an interlinked crossroads of people and activities.

Child's Door to Learning

Primary

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The library encourages young children to develop an interest in reading and learning through services to children, and for parents and children together. Parents and other adult caregivers can locate materials on reading readiness, parenting, child care, and child development. Cooperation with other child care agencies in the community is ongoing.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: *has a variety of materials and formats for preschoolers and for adults working with young children. Some libraries provide computers, audiovisual formats, educational toys, and games to help children expand their imagination and develop motor and sensory skills. Popular titles are available in multiple copies.*

The staff: *Are knowledgeable about early childhood development and children's literature and promote reading readiness to the community. They guide children's choices of books and other materials and are skilled in planning and conducting programs.*

The facility: *Ample, inviting space is available for programs and story hours, shelving and furnishings are attractive, accessible, and comfortable for young children.*

Library 21 Recommendation

Cambridge Public Library has redefined this role from *Preschoolers' Door to Learning* to *Child's Door to Learning* to reflect inclusion of all children, pre-school and in school regardless of where and how they are schooled.

The emphasis in this role is on children as well as parents and other caregivers. A variety of programs, a broad collection of materials, and technology are included to attract and involve children and accompanying adults in a wide range of activities.

The collection contains a variety of formats (print and non-print) and material to support differing skill and age levels. The collection also includes a range of materials to help family members and other adults develop children's skills.

Flexible and attractive program space for noisy and messy activities as well as quiet ones will be provided. Dedicated staff with appropriate skills and interests are an important component.

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

Library 21 conducted considerable outreach to parents, teachers, and children and discovered very strong support for extensive programs in this area which require staffing, facilities, and collection content.

There is considerable evidence that children's success in school and then later life is very favorably affected by the activities that comprise this role; thus it is given considerable importance with adequate staff, facilities, and collections.

Popular Materials Library

Primary

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The library features current, high-demand, high-interest, materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages. The library actively promotes and encourages the use of its collection. Merchandising techniques, such as face-out shelving, displays or paperbacks near the checkout area, may be used within the library. Special book lists may be distributed or materials gathered to promote circulation in connection with the library program, such as a children's story hour, summer reading program, or young adult program. The library may circulate materials at off-site outlets such as community facilities. For residents in the community with limited access to library facilities the library may send materials to jails, nursing homes, etc.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: includes current and popular materials in a variety of formats, with sufficient duplication to meet demand. A substantial percentage of the collection has been published within the past five years.

The staff: Are knowledgeable about current popular interests and anticipate publishing trends and "hot" titles.

The facility: promotes browsing, has attractive displays and good signage. The building has adequate and easy accessible shelf space, provides casual seating.

Library 21 Recommendation

A well stocked collection with ample room to expand over time is an important component of meeting this role. The collection contains fiction and non-fiction in many subject areas. Books, magazines, large-print materials, video and audio tapes, CDs, CD-ROMS, are included. Equipment to view/listen to this material privately and in small groups and assistive technology is included. For videos, rather than competing with video stores, the library will carry videos of "classical" films and not focus on the latest releases; such an option is not currently available for most other forms of media, thus in most subject areas the collection must be comprehensive and be kept up-to-date.

The library will make use of latest merchandising techniques, organization of space and inclusion of thematic material to promote browsing, attract users, and generate interest in subject matter. (As a point of reference, notice the effect and usage of modern bookstores both of the mega-variety and specialized ones).

This role will include a young adult component with collections, staff, and space specifically devoted to the needs of this set of patrons.

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

Over 1/2 of the circulation is provided under this role. No other agency or institution provides this service.

Independent Learning Center

Primary

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The library supports individuals of all ages pursuing a sustained program of learning independent of any educational provider. These individuals set their own learning objectives to meet such concerns as citizen education, self-improvement, job-related development, hobbies, and cultural interests.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: has a wide range of circulating subject materials relevant to the interests of the independent learners of all ages. The materials are in a wide variety of formats and geared to varying levels of ability.

The staff: are knowledgeable about learning theory, general educational principles, and local opportunities for educational and training programs.

The facility: is easy to use with minimal staff assistance, has good signage, comfortable reading areas, and some space set aside for quiet study and for staff to counsel with learners.

Library 21 Recommendation

The rate of change in knowledge leads many people to be an independent learners throughout their lives. Independent, self-directed learning by adults is performed where the library acts as the institution of higher learning. Career changes, hobbies, financial planning, health matters are example of subjects covered as is help for people taking examinations for career-related requirements. This role includes support of independent learning about how to use technology.

Materials are arranged in a way to facilitate ease of use by self-directed users. Local collections are supplemented by interlibrary loan to meet the wide range of needs. The library needs to be aware of and anticipate changing needs and demands that would affect the collection and services provided.

Quiet study space, multi-media facilities, and current technology are needed to support this function.

This role provides an opportunity for volunteer tutors for one-on-one assistance; appropriate space is needed to support this form of activity.

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

The public will need a wide range of knowledge in the future and individuals will engage in many short to medium range learning efforts. Continuing education of a literate informed population and development of lifelong library users is an important goal for the library. There will be an increasing demand for support of independent learning.

Formal Education Support Center

Primary/Secondary

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The library assists students of all ages in meeting educational objectives established during their formal courses of study. This may include students in elementary and secondary schools, colleges, community colleges, universities, or technical schools, as well as those involved in training programs, literacy or adult basic education, and education courses. This emphasis on registration for formal instructions distinguishes this role from the Independent Learning Center.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: contains materials in all formats and at levels appropriate to the educational levels supported by the library.

The staff: Are knowledgeable about educational programs in the community and work closely with local educators. At least some of the staff are knowledgeable about curriculum needs and educational principles.

The facility: The building has quiet study space and carrels for individual study, and microprocessors with word processing software for students to use in completing school assignments.

Library 21 Recommendation

The collections in the library are oriented to general use and are not systematically acquired to support class assignments. Coordination with the School department, the Community Learning Center and other educational agencies is performed to help identify potentially useful resources for these students that would be useful to others

as well. Collection space to hold these additional resources is needed. A close tie to the Reference function will assist students in doing the "research" needed to support their studies.

Quiet study space for individuals and small groups equipped with technology, multi-media facilities and access to information and services located outside of the library is needed to support patron needs.

Support for the large body of young adults who are high school students, lower-division college students, and other adult educational program students is emphasized over university students.

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

The Cambridge Public Library, although not an academic or school library, plays an important role in supporting the studies of many patrons who are enrolled in formal educational institutions at various levels. The educational institutions are the primary supplier of required curricular texts, but the library supplies access to supplementary material. The Library 21 process has highlighted the differing mission of a public library and its academic counterparts - a distinction that must guide a public library serving the general public in a university city. Every resident was a student in his or her youth, and more and more people continue or restart their education during the rest of their life. We already have considerable use of the library for formal education related activities by the high-school population and by students who commute to schools outside the city.

The Cambridge public school system has libraries and librarians to serve the needs of the student body. The public library supplements the school system by being available for use by students when the school buildings are not open and by providing additional sources of reference material to support student's research activities.

We anticipate increasing future demand on the library to support distance and other technology-supported learning methodologies.

Reference Library

Primary

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The library actively provides timely, accurate, and useful information for community residents in their pursuit of job related and personal interests. The library promotes on-site and telephone reference/information services to aid users in locating needed information. Information provided may range from answering practical questions to specialized business related research, to answering questions about government, to providing consumer information. The library participates in interlibrary loan and cooperative reference services to meet patron needs for information not available locally.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: emphasizes informational materials to support individual, business, government, and community interests, materials are available for all ages and reading levels. The reference collection is extensive and includes a wide range of printed materials, electronic databases, and a large periodicals collection.

The staff: approachable and skilled in using reference tools and reference interviewing techniques.

The facility: has a clearly identified and visible location for reference and information services that is staffed during all hours of library service. Adequate facilities for telephone reference and database searching are provided.

Library 21 Recommendation

Library 21 assigns a high degree of effort to this role. The volume of reference materials is increasing as more information comes on line and is available electronically. We foresee an expansion and modification of this role over that which is currently offered by the library because of a larger numbers of users, increased breadth and depth of patron needs for specialized information, and the impact of computer and networking technology. Such growth has been seen by many other libraries which have expanded. This role provides key support for the Formal Education, Independent Learning, and Community Information activities. There is a very important service aspect of this role; the staff gives considerable guidance to individuals using this service.

Technology also affords new methods for service with the use of email, Web-based queries, desk-top conferencing between branches and the main library, as well as telephones can be used for access to reference services from outside of the main library (branches, homes, and offices).

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

Societal changes are placing increased demands on individuals to be better informed in a number of different areas. In particular, we see demands on the collection and reference staff for services in many areas including job & career development information; medical & healthcare related issues; and personal financial planning for retirement.

Home offices and small businesses that are forming a growing segment of the Cambridge economy have reference needs that can best be served by the public library. For this case the emphasis will be on access to information and as a gateway to other available resources.

Of all roles in the library, this one is most dramatically affected by computer and networking technology. The amount of information being created is increasing at a large rate and is difficult to search and understand. Information will be delivered in a wide-range of multimedia formats and methods as well as via traditional printed media. The technology needed to access this information; the assistance by skilled staff in selecting sources, searching, and evaluating information; and the licensing arrangements and fees are beyond what individuals and small firms can manage on their own. Many other libraries are seeing growing usage of the reference functions because of citizen needs and find that it must be well supported with staff to assist users in finding information and using the ever changing technology.

On-line information is expensive and beyond the budgets of individuals; since it is sharable among multiple users it is economically sensible to have the library manage, provide the technology, and fund its access. Projected Library Networks sponsored by the Commonwealth will be an important and effective mechanism for information access.

Research Center

Primary for Cambridge Research

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The Library assists scholars and researchers to conduct in-depth studies, investigate specific areas of knowledge, and create new knowledge. The libraries collection is a source of exhaustive information in selected subject areas (historical, cultural, scientific, or social). A library choosing this role should decide the subject disciplines in which it intends on being a research center.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: has a large number of title, serials, and other material in the subject area.

The staff: are likely to have advanced degrees in subject disciplines, to understand research methodologies, and are knowledgeable about the literature in their field of emphasis.

The facility: has adequate space to house the collection, a photocopy center, quiet study areas, and carrels.

Library 21 Recommendation

The only in-depth scholarly research role the library will play will be for Cambridge materials. The library can provide access to city and library archives, but these archives must be catalogued and stored properly. Genealogical research opportunities would be included.

The library will have space for displays of historical materials.

An archivist and Cambridge history specialist is needed to maintain the collection and support the patrons. There will be overlap between City documents and library content; focus here is on material of historical interest and not to meet the legal requirements of archival storage by the city. Consideration should be given to combining these overlapping functions with suitable funding and facilities.

There is a potentially separately funded, 2 to 3 year task to collect and catalogue the information; it should be carried out prior to the library taking on this research role.

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

Cambridge's unique history is of greater value if it is made more accessible. There is no other appropriate institution for this role.

If this role is taken on and well-publicized, the use of these resources by residents, tourist, and visiting scholars will increase.

This is the only in-depth research topic to be covered in the library since there are many other institutions in and around Cambridge serve patron needs for other topics.

Community Information Center

Secondary

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The library is a clearinghouse for current information on community organizations, issues, and services. The library maintains a high profile as a source of information about community services. The library may create local directories, maintain files of local organizations. The library participates in community referral networks and participates in program planning with other agencies.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: contains locally developed files with data on community agencies, clubs, and interest groups.

The staff: Are skilled in reference and referral reviewing techniques, knowledgeable about community resources and services and are competent in organizing and maintaining locally constructed files and indexes.

The facility: has adequate telephone lines and meeting room space.

Library 21 Recommendation

The library can be viewed as a source of a large and diverse set of information about the activities and organizations within the city. The library will provide space for information, with staff assigned to organize and classify the information in cooperation with the suppliers of information. The information would include brochures, reports and information produced by city government organizations as well as by community organizations.

The library can also host and manage an Internet Web site as a means to organize and deliver this information while relying on the community organizations themselves to maintain the content.

Meeting this need requires a small amount patron space, some storage space and adequate staff assigned to organize the information and assist patrons in accessing it.

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

Cambridge needs a centralized resource center. Librarian skills are ideal to organize the information and help people access the information.

A large staff effort would be needed for full implementation because of coordination requirements and the desire to ensure that information is complete and up-to-date. By suitable selection of information focus and inclusion with other functions handled by the reference department, the cost can be kept in balance with other library functions.

Community Activities Center

Secondary/Tertiary

ALA Definition of Role

DESCRIPTION: *The library is a central focus point for community activities, meetings, and services. It works closely with other community agencies and organizations to provide a coordinated program of social, cultural, and recreational services. The library provides both meeting room space and equipment for community- or library-sponsored programs.*

CRITICAL RESOURCES:

The collection: not emphasized here.

The staff: have wide, direct involvement in many community organizations. They promote community activities and act as liaisons between library and community groups.

The facility: is central to this role. It might include AV production lab, display facilities, conference rooms, teleconferencing facilities, or community bulletins. In some instances, the library may share facilities with other community agencies

Library 21 Recommendation

This role is not emphasized in the library. The facilities such as meeting rooms whose primary purposes are for library-sponsored activities can also be used for community activities, but little staff-time would be assigned. A well-specified meeting room use policy should be established to handle difficult situations that might occur.

Library 21 Rationale and other Considerations

Cambridge has a large set of other resources that provide this function. The main importance of this role is to draw people into the library who then use other services in the library.

Activities sponsored and staffed by the library are distinguished from those community activities sponsored by other unaffiliated organizations that desire to use the resources of the library.

This role might have a higher priority in the branch libraries than at the main library; particularly for those branches with active outreach programs.

Functions and Space Needs

OVERVIEW:

As part of the effort to determine the Program for the Main Library, the Library 21 committee has considered the functions of the library and how they get translated into space within the library building. In 1994-1995, Aaron Cohen Associates (an experienced library planning consultant) was hired by the Library Trustees to prepare the *Cambridge Public Library Needs Assessment Report* which projected the needs for 2014. This report was prepared with input from the library staff and the public through patron surveys and focus groups. Library 21 used this report as a valid baseline of needs for the future, and it should be used as a source of details. Library 21 augmented the findings based upon multiple sources of information including public input and has produced this series of recommendations.

The public access space/functions devoted to library services are Circulation/Browsing/Vestibule, Reference/Periodicals, Audiovisual Collection, Cambridge Room, Circulating Collection, Young Adult Area, Children's Room and Meeting Space. The library will also have space allocated to staff and building systems (such as bathrooms, HVAC, etc.), most of which are not part of the public space. This report does not describe this space in detail, but it is important for the staff to have adequate space for work, rest and eating, plus good climate control. The present situation is woefully inadequate. Library 21 accepts the staff's professional judgment of their space requirements. Library 21 is concerned that climate and air control and adequate facilities meet or exceed ADA requirements.

Although these space/functions appear to be rooms, these Library 21 recommendations describe the overall program and do not imply how space is to be divided or organized. Actual space allocation would be done as part of developing building plans using standard planning guidelines and other considerations.

For each function, we provide a brief combined description and recommendation.

1 & 2. CIRCULATION/BROWSING/VESTIBULE

This area will be the library entry and exit, and it will contain the circulation desk, new book display in attractive face-front format, and display/exhibit space for both library and community information. The circulation desk is for all services including the children's room. A possibility for the exhibit space would include changing multi-media displays including books on tape, music, children's materials and periodicals. Important features are staffed- and self-service check out stations, a vandal proof bookdrop, sorting area, office/workroom space and automated book return. There will be some seating for those waiting pickup and such amenities as pay-phones and a photocopier.

The spaces provided in the existing library for these functions are minimal. Library 21 recommends a much more inviting and functional entry. The success of this area (as well as all of the facility's spaces) will, of course, depend upon its architectural treatment. The committee would like to encourage the use of techniques to welcome visitors, including an orientation map, changing and engaging visual displays and a reference to the multi-cultural diversity that characterizes Cambridge. The library should have a designated snack area that is easy to find and easy to supervise. It may be located here, or closer to the meeting spaces of the library.

3 & 4. REFERENCE/PERIODICALS

The staff will provide one stop service: one staff member provides assistance until the patron's needs are met. The demand (including E-mail) for reference services and the complexity of their use are likely to increase, so more staff may be necessary. The collection will include health, retirement, financial, nutrition, career, parenting and business materials, among others. Assistive technology will be available.

The majority of computers for reading, writing, Internet access, local web pages and language instruction will be placed here.

Library 21 recommends that there be an ample number of PC's, 2 person tables with wiring potential for computers and small study rooms for tutoring and group projects, some of which could be soundproofed and some of which could have flexible dividers for configuration as larger spaces. There should be a training room with PC's for all kinds of learning programs including reading and computer skills. There should be ample staff workspace and a photocopier alcove. The project desk will have workstations, and the telephone reference services will have a separate space. Periodical space will be doubled to hold current and back issues and include new materials such as international foreign language periodicals.

5. AUDIOVISUAL COLLECTION

Although this is singled out as a separate collection, some of the collection will be shelved with related print material, e.g opera videos with scores. The shelving would be primarily for browsing. Patrons want more educational training programs, listening spaces, language programs, listening equipment (headphones, tape recorders, etc.) popular music and more books on tape. Popular educational programs such as from Discovery, Learning, History channels and Nightline should be considered for inclusion. Non-commercial video tapes of local performance, workshops, training programs, lectures, and significant city hearings and presentations would be useful. Materials should be available on reserve for specific group programs. Catalogs (paper or computerized) should be kept of alternative sources for A-V materials.

Note that Library 21 is aware that A-V usage and collection is growing as new technologies become cost effective and more popular. Therefore Library 21 recommends that the space be flexible for expansion, types of shelving (for protection against magnetic damage, scratching and heat) and to maximize the efficient storage of different sizes and shapes of material. Flexible listening and viewing spaces for one-person and groups are needed.

6. CAMBRIDGE ROOM

This collection contains archival and historical materials about the city and its population, but is not the repository for all city records. It will include Cambridge local history, information about people of note, maps, portraits, pamphlets, artifacts and genealogical materials, etc. The materials will be readily accessible to researchers, lay people and school children. The bulk of city records will be placed in off-site storage, but will be catalogued as part of the Cambridge Room collection and made available on demand.

Library 21 recommends 2-person tables, study carrels, climate control, compact shelving, lockable shelves or files for storage of irreplaceable materials and archival displays. Computers and a photocopier will be present for patron use, and there will be a processing and preservation work area.

7. CIRCULATING COLLECTION

This includes all the fiction and non-fiction shelving, except for new books. There would be occasional chairs, 2 person tables for quiet activities and on-line OPAC terminals. Carrels in the stacks and a quiet room have been suggested. Attention will be paid to the diverse and special needs population with materials at various levels of reading skills, support for visual handicaps, foreign language requirements and multi-cultural materials, etc. Some items might be stored off-site in conjunction with other libraries, but readily available.

Library 21 is recommending extensive linear feet of shelving here as well as in reference, browsing, children's and the Cambridge collection in order to plan for growth, flexibility, and to meet the demand for older and current materials in the collection.

7. YOUNG ADULT AREA

Young adults desire their own space where they can be comfortable. A responsive staff, "quiet" and "noisy" areas are high on their wish list. This area will contain 2 person tables, lounge chairs, study rooms and carrels, computers for homework and games, and young-adult oriented browsing materials.

Library 21 recognizes that young adults want space of their own, but do not necessarily wish to be segregated. Consideration for proximity to the reference area would facilitate usage and would be helpful for them to carry out their assignments. Young adults could also be a resource for others in computer use. Library 21 thinks the square footage proposed is minimal even if the area is well integrated into other related spaces such as reference, computer workstations and study rooms.

8. CHILDREN'S AREA

This space will be "homey" with carpeting and a flexible layout. It will include a reference desk, self-checkout stations, age-appropriate seating (chairs for toddlers, bigger children and adults), love seats, comfortable chairs, 2 person tables for homework, PC's for writing, reading and research, photocopier alcove, nearby rest rooms, a program room and study/listening area. Children want computer and other games, Internet and e-mail, a puppet theater, storage bins for toys, space for crafts and homework, quiet areas, group study areas and thematic activity boxes like those at the Science Museum. The children's staff would have nearby office and work areas. There would be no staffed circulation desk as this would be handled at the main checkout where the stations would be at 2 or 3 different heights.

Library 21 places a high priority on a greatly expanded children's area. It accounts for at least 30% of the Main Library's circulation and is very heavily used. The committee feels that children's services are a very important part of the library program.

9. MEETING SPACES

These should be flexibly configured spaces throughout the library with options for use by moderate and large sized groups to support a wide range of library programs. In the *Needs Assessment Report* the children's meeting rooms are included in the Children's Area; the study and training rooms are included in the Reference Area. An additional meeting space configuration would include an auditorium for 200-350 people. It would have its own lobby, rest rooms, exhibit space, storage area and green rooms.

Library 21 feels that there is a strong need for performance area, meeting space for the community, book clubs, discussion groups, etc. that can be partially met by the auditorium space. Additional quiet and noisy study rooms for groups larger than 4 people may also be needed. While the exact configuration of meeting spaces cannot be determined at this time, Library 21 has found that large and small meeting and work rooms in new libraries in comparable cities are heavily in demand. Therefore, Library 21 recommends that the new Main Library have a broad menu of meeting and work spaces and develop a comprehensive use policy.

8/19/97

Functions and Space Needs - Appendix
Sizes in *Current Library* and *1994-95 Needs Assessment Report*

1. & 2. Circulation/ Browsing/Vestibule

	Current	Needs Assessment
Shelving	404	1431
Seating	4	10
PCs/OPACs		6
Area (sq. ft)	400	2965

3. & 4. Reference/Periodicals

	Current	Needs Assessment
Shelving (l ft)	992	2,000
Seating	73	107
PCs/OPACs	14	38
Area (sq. ft)	3,500	9,013

5. Audiovisual Collection

	Current	Needs Assessment
Shelving (l ft)	373	3,000
Seating	-	-
PCs/OPACs		4
Area (sq. ft)	1,056	3,000

6. Cambridge Room

	Current	Needs Assessment
Shelving (l ft)	2,166	4,000
Seating	0	10
PCs/OPACs	0	1
Area (sq. ft)	1,319	2,532

7. Circulating Collection

	Current	Needs Assessment
Shelving (l ft)	20,158	26,947
Seating	10	87
PCs/OPACs	4	16
Area (sq. ft)	11,515	22,243

7c. Young Adult Area

	Current	Needs Assessment
Shelving (l ft)	0	500
Seating	0	18
PCs/OPACs	0	2
Area (sq. ft)	0	744

8. Children's Room

	Current	Needs Assessment
Shelving (l ft)	1,460	5,584
Seating	37	112
PCs/OPACs	2	16
Area (sq. ft)	3,500	8,749

9. Meeting Space

	Current	Needs Assessment
Seating	100	350
Area (sq. ft)	1,060	4,800

Summary of size information for Public Spaces above

	Current	Needs Assessment
Patron seating	139	344
PCs / OPACs	20	83
Shelving (l. ft)	25,553	43,483
Auditorium seating	100	350
Area (Sq. ft.)	19,071	54,037



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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

October 20, 1997

To the Honorable, the City Council:

I am pleased to submit to the City Council, for your information, the Interim Report of the Library 21 Committee.

I have met with members of the Library 21 Committee to discuss the report, and am extremely satisfied with the process undertaken and program developed. I also support the recommendation of the Committee: that the City hire a consultant team to undertake an objective site search and analysis, and include the Broadway site in this process. A Request-for-Proposal for site selection services has been developed and will be available as of today; proposals will be due on November 6th. The site selection process, which will include at least three public meetings, will be concluded within four months of contract award.

I applaud the sound work and dedication exhibited by the Committee, and in particular the extensive work on the part of the co-chairs, Nancy Woods and Richard Rossi.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

Consent Agenda #18

S-638

Transmitting communication from
Robert W. Healy, City Manager,
relative to the Interim Report of the
Library 21 Committee.

In City Council October 20, 1997

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