Envisioning a Crossroads Library:

A Report on Public Engagement and the Future of the Southeast Library

Presented to Hennepin County Library

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In 2012 Great Britain lost more than 200 libraries as local governments struggled with limited budgets. The wave of library closures prompted many British authors to speak out. Here is a portion of one writer’s thoughts:

“A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold, rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen, instead. A human with a brain and a heart and a desire to be uplifted, rather than a customer with a credit card and an inchoate "need" for "stuff." A mall--the shops--are places where your money makes the wealthy wealthier. But a library is where the wealthy's taxes pay for you to become a little more extraordinary, instead. A satisfying reversal. A balancing of the power.” Caitlin Moran, Huffington Post Nov. 14, 2012, accessed 12/1/2014

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/caitlin-moran/libraries-cathedrals-of-o_b_2103362.html

Report of Southeast Library Public Engagement Project

Executive Summary

This document is the report of a project to engage the residents of four Minneapolis neighborhoods Cedar-Riverside, Marcy Holmes, Prospect Park and Southeast Como in discussions about their library learning and information needs. Hennepin County initiated the project as part of its consideration of the future of the Minneapolis Southeast Library located in the Dinkytown area of the Marcy Holmes neighborhood. Staff and research assistants at the University of Minnesota (UMN) conducted the engagement project under a contract with Hennepin County through the Hennepin-University Partnership. Because the County wanted innovative approaches to discovering the library, learning and information needs of the four subject neighborhoods, the UMN team used processes based on design thinking, that is, using methods developed in the design disciplines to explore ideas for improving public services that fall outside traditional design projects. The County, with the assistance of the UMN project team, named representatives of the neighborhoods and other stakeholders to be members of an Advisory Committee. The project team met with the Advisory Committee multiple times to discuss the engagement processes and the substantive issues related to the needs of the neighborhoods. The findings on which the Advisory Committee agreed are listed here.

Activities/Services

Finding 1- Members of the community desire to engage in traditional library activities: browsing a collection of books and other media, reading or studying in a quiet space, borrowing books and media, obtaining materials through interlibrary loan, and assistance with information requests. Community members value the provision of services for children.

Finding 2 – The provision of computers, related devices such as printers and scanners, software applications and access to the Internet are essential services for meeting the needs of these communities. Community members also value the potential of new or advanced information technology, including interactive video services that enable distant connections and interactive computer screens that support group collaboration.

Finding 3 – Community members want the library to act as a “crossroads”, facilitating connections among community residents, across generations, and with local experts and creators. They also desire the library to connect them to other local and global communities.
Finding 4 – The communities value the opportunity to create and collaborate facilitated by the library, especially the opportunity for individual or collaborative artistic creation.

Finding 5 – Community members see the value of learning activities offered at the library; the response to the opportunity for learning activities was especially strong among immigrant community members.

**Spaces**

Finding 6 – Community members value flexible library spaces that support changing activities and multiple spaces that can accommodate different activities happening at the same time.

Finding 7 – Community members desire spaces for formal meetings, informal gatherings and storytelling that support the community connections activities they value.

Finding 8 – Community members desire outdoor spaces that reflect a commitment to sustainability and could support community garden activities, outdoor gatherings and reading, individually or with children.

Finding 9 – Community members value a significant multi-function library branch in the neighborhoods and are open to the opportunity to expand access through bookmobiles or satellite or mini-branch (branchlets) spaces.

**Role of the Librarian**

Finding 10 – Librarians serving these communities should be prepared to meet diverse needs, including the ability to facilitate the community connections valued by the community.

**Access**

Finding 11 – To meet the variety of community needs in these diverse neighborhoods, the library services need to be available for more hours and at hours of the day that respond to the needs of community members between the ages of 12 and 25.

Finding 12 – The County should work with Metro Transit, the University of Minnesota and other partners to improve transportation access to the library, including considering expanding the availability of parking.
Observations on Key Findings

Finding 3 and the discussions related to the role of the library in creating community connections implies that this mission should not rely on the initiative of individual librarians but instead should be adopted as a strategy and supported operationally by Hennepin County Library. The adoption of a strategic approach to creating community connections and its implementation at the Southeast Library could be a key outcome of this process.

With respect to Finding 9, if Hennepin County Library were to adopt a “branch plus branchlet” strategy for meeting the needs of some of the neighborhoods in the study area, it would be a significant strategic innovation. One could foresee other neighborhoods and communities seeking similar storefront, express or branchlet facilities and the associated distributed service access they represent.

Increasing the number of hours that library services are available in the four neighborhoods studied would have obvious operating budget implications for the County. Adopting a “branch plus branchlet” facility configuration would likely increase rather than reduce costs paid from the operating budget. In addition, a full implementation of the community connections mission described under Finding 3 would require staff members dedicated to serving the Southeast Library communities who would not divide their time with other libraries. Although the Hennepin County Library may have been focused on facility and capital budget issues when beginning this process, it is important to recognize that the needs expressed by the communities cannot likely be fulfilled without a significant increase in operating expenditures in these communities in conjunction with whatever capital investment the County may make.
Project Report

Introduction
This document is the report of a project to engage the residents of four Minneapolis neighborhoods Marcy Holmes, Como SE, Prospect Park and Cedar-Riverside in discussions about their library learning and information needs. Hennepin County initiated the project as part of its consideration of the future of the Minneapolis Southeast Library located in the Dinkytown area of the Marcy Holmes neighborhood. Staff and research assistants at the University of Minnesota (UMN) conducted the engagement project under a contract with Hennepin County through the Hennepin-University Partnership. Because the County wanted innovative approaches to discovering the library, learning and information needs of the four subject neighborhoods, the UMN team used processes based on design thinking, that is, using methods developed in the design disciplines to explore ideas for improving public services that fall outside traditional design concerns. The County, with the assistance of the UMN project team, named representatives of the neighborhoods and other stakeholders to be members of an Advisory Committee. The project team met with the Advisory Committee multiple times to discuss the engagement processes and the substantive issues related to the needs of the neighborhoods. The project team also hosted four publicly-advertised meetings in order to obtain community members’ views. In addition to the advertised meetings, the project team met with other groups and interviewed stakeholders in order to get as broad a range of participation as possible. The specific design thinking methods will be described in the methodology section of this report.

The findings in this report represent a blending of the conclusions reached by the project team and the Advisory Committee. In some instances, certain ideas and observations were the product of the project team and were not necessarily endorsed by the Advisory Committee. Those items will be identified as observations or project team suggestions rather than findings.
Library services in Southeast Minneapolis began with John S. Pillsbury’s philanthropy. He gave the City of Minneapolis a Beaux-Arts style building on the corner of University and Central Ave., pictured above, which served as the local library between 1904 and 1967. The Pillsbury Library building now houses a philanthropic organization.

In 1967 the library moved to its current location at 1222 4th St. SE, which has been the library’s home since. The building is noteworthy for being designed by local famed architect Ralph Rapson. The building was originally designed and functioned as a credit union for four years prior to becoming the library space it is today.

The Southeast library was closed from 2006 to 2008 due to the Minneapolis library system’s budgetary issues. The library was re-opened following the merger of the Minneapolis Public Library system with Hennepin County Library.

In 2013 Hennepin County Property Services commissioned a Facility Assessment of the property. This assessment discussed the feasibility of a building renovation and found that the building was sound. The report also concludes, in part, that there may be inherent inadequacies: “The small footprint, restricted sight lines and inflexible spaces which would survive a sensitive renovation would also limit the type and size of library the building can support” (Executive Summary, pg. 12).

Sidebar: John S. Pillsbury on siting the original library in the southeast area: “I developed the plan of giving the East Side a library which would be suited to the needs of the whole people. Some of my friends do not like the site I have chosen, but I believe it is the best situated to serve the needs of the largest number.”
Data presented below comes from MN Compass staff at Wilder Research Foundation and is sourced from 2010 U.S. Census data and American Community Survey data. More recent data is unavailable at the neighborhood level but it can be presumed that the four subject neighborhoods have followed the ongoing regional trend of growing population and increasing diversification. Race statistics are reported as race-alone.

Compared to Minneapolis as a whole, the Southeast neighborhoods generally:
- are less diverse (with the exception of Cedar Riverside)
- younger
- have higher rates of renter occupation
- have lower income levels

Some of these effects may be attributed to the presence of the University of Minnesota and Augsburg College undergraduate population.

The table below displays select demographic and social characteristics. See the appendix for graphical illustrations of various demographic measures of Southeast neighborhoods.

| Select Demographic and Social Characteristics for Southeast Minneapolis, 2010 US Census and ACS |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Population                                        | Cedar Riverside | Como | Marcy-Holmes | Prospect Park | University | Minneapolis |
| 8,094                                             | 6,288            | 10,615 | 7,457         | 5,421         | 382,578     |
| Language spoken at home other than English        | 43.0%            | 14.8% | 17.7%         | 22.0%         | 8.2%        | 19.2%        |
| Households with children under 18                 | 21.40%           | 16.50% | 4.10%         | 11.40%        | -           | 29.50%       |
| Race                                              |                   |       |               |               |             |             |
| % White                                           | 37.1%            | 71.6% | 74.5%         | 69.0%         | 81.8%       | 50.3%        |
| % Black                                           | 45.0%            | 9.9%  | 4.5%          | 9.4%          | 2.9%        | 18.8%        |
| % Asian                                           | 11.0%            | 10.2% | 13.4%         | 16.1%         | 9.6%        | 5.6%         |
| Age                                               |                   |       |               |               |             |             |
| < 24                                              | 57.5%            | 63.3% | 64.2%         | 63.0%         | 97.8%       | 35.4%        |
| 25-54                                             | 28.3%            | 28.1% | 23.7%         | 25.2%         | 1.8%        | 46.9%        |
| 55+                                               | 13.7%            | 8.6%  | 7.1%          | 11.9%         | 0.3%        | 17.7%        |
| Tenure                                            |                   |       |               |               |             |             |
| % Renter Occupied                                 | 91.6%            | 75.5% | 83.9%         | 74.5%         | 92.3%       | 50.8%        |
| % Owner Occupied                                  | 8.4%             | 24.5% | 11.2%         | 25.5%         | 7.7%        | 49.2%        |
| Income                                            |                   |       |               |               |             |             |
| Median household income                           | $13,493          | $33,924 | $24,582       | $43,976       | $14,713     | $45,625      |
| % below poverty level                             | 50.1%            | 45.7% | 45.4%         | 47.1%         | -           | 21.5%        |
Cedar Riverside
Cedar Riverside is arguably the most heterogeneous neighborhood of the study area. Here, substantial immigrant populations reside in proximity to UMN, Augsburg College, and major medical institutions. Single-family detached housing is present alongside apartment high-rises so Census block densities can range from a few persons per acre to over 180 persons per acre; overall, this neighborhood is the densest of those in the study area.

The neighborhood obtains services from the commercial corridors of the intersecting Cedar and Riverside Avenues which feature ethnic foods and retail and other well-established Minneapolis favorites. Iconic institutions include the Cedar Cultural Center, Augsburg College (3,800 enrollment) and the Ralph Rapson-designed Riverside Plaza with 1,303 units (largely African immigrant families). The UM’s West Bank Campus is adjacent to the neighborhood on the riverfront and the University’s largest library, Wilson Library, is also found there.

Como
The Como neighborhood is predominantly residential development and lies between the UM’s East Bank and St. Paul campuses. There are several UMN buildings and services present in the neighborhood. According to the Minneapolis neighborhood profile, “the area is also home to several community gardens and a number of businesses, including shops, bars, and restaurants.” Van Cleve Park is a prominent neighborhood amenity and features a busy recreation center.

Marcy-Holmes
Marcy Holmes is a diverse neighborhood notable for a strong residential character and its very eclectic Dinkytown area, immediately adjacent to the UMN main campus. Dinkytown is home to the current SE Library location and offers an abundance of housing, retail, dining, and entertainment venues. Marcy Holmes also boasts great neighborhood amenities in three schools (early childhood, elementary, and high school) and five parks.

Marcy-Holmes is considered to be a very walkable neighborhood and has great proximity to downtown and the St. Anthony Falls area. There are five arts destinations and the neighborhood was also designated “One of the Country’s Top 10 Eco-friendly Neighborhoods”
by Natural Home Magazine in 2007. The Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association website claims “you’ll find bronze sculptures of our most famous buildings, award-winning gardens, many beautiful homes and a vibrant mix of students, professionals, families, artists and entrepreneurs.”

Prospect Park
The Prospect Park neighborhood contains great commercial activity along its segment of University Ave. The University culture is present, but so is a strong neighborhood identity which boasts five great parks, riverfront, two Green Line LRT stations, and unique curvilinear urban streets among other assets. The Witch’s Tower is a neighborhood landmark and the Textile Center is a major arts institution present in the neighborhood.

The neighborhood is also centrally located and has great access to both downtowns, though residents say they “enjoy its urban-village feel—a small town in the big city” (Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association website).

University
The University district area, naturally, is largely devoted to uses oriented towards the University institution. Academic buildings, administration, athletic facilities, student services, and student housing dominate the land uses and activities. This area is the University’s East Bank Campus. Total enrollment for the University is over 50,000.

Innovation and the Future of Urban Libraries

Library Innovation

This project focused on the library learning and information needs of four neighborhoods. To see the project’s findings in context, it is important to take a brief look at what is happening in public libraries more broadly in other U.S. cities and around the world. Dr. Jerry Stein’s team at Learning Dreams, based in the University of Minnesota’s School of Social Work, looked for examples of innovative libraries that were meeting community needs in striking ways. Participants in the engagement process were shown many of these examples as a way of stimulating their imaginations regarding the needs in their communities. Here are examples of what the Learning Dreams researchers and the project team found, organized by categories of activity:
Lending – The classic library activity is lending books, movies, magazines and other information media. Some libraries have extended that model to include lending tools (Berkeley Tool Lending Library), seeds (Richmond Public Library), musical instruments (Portland Public Library and Lopez Island Library), Wi-fi hotspots (New York and Chicago), human experts (Ottawa Public Library) and outdoor equipment (Topsham Public Library). Note that this trend requires librarians to develop skills at curating new resources, including skilled community members as library assets.

Makerspaces – Libraries have historically been places of creativity focused on the written word. Libraries are developing spaces and tools to support the creativity of their patrons in other media. These makerspaces or fab labs include wood and metalworking tools (Fayetteville Free Library), audio and music production equipment (Minneapolis Central Library), and a zine lab and 3-D printers (Chattanooga Public Library).

Art Incubators – Closely related to the makerspace movement, even overlapping with it, is the movement to promote libraries as incubators of the arts. The Library as Incubator Project, connected to the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Library and Information Studies, has a mission to “promote and facilitate creative collaboration between libraries and artists of all types, and to advocate for libraries as incubators of the arts.” Their efforts include writers and visual and performing artists. This movement goes beyond the library as a space for display of art, a function the Southeast Library currently performs, to providing space and tools for creating art. The Flushing Library has a dance space, for example.

Mobility and Outreach – Bookmobiles are remembered as the access point for many patrons who could not travel conveniently to a central library. Mobile library access has been updated to include the FryskLab (a mobile FabLab in Europe), a library on the tram (Brno, Czech Republic), StreetBooks (books on a bicycle, Portland OR), digital bookmobiles, Little Free Libraries, mini-branches (Chicago Public Library Water Works) and pop-up libraries in many places.

Dr. Stein’s full presentation on library innovation that was presented to the Advisory Committee and discussed at the public meetings is in the Appendix.

Trends in Urban Libraries

The advent of digital media and the Internet has prompted predictions of the obsolescence or disappearance of libraries over many years. The behavior of urban library patrons tells a different story. In a recent study, the Pew Charitable Trusts looked at what happened to
large urban library systems over the period from 2005 to 2011. Nine of the 14 libraries saw increases in library visits; Detroit had a 28% increase. Circulation increased at 11 libraries in the same time period. In Seattle, circulation increased by 50%, with 18.3 circulation events per Seattle resident in 2011. Seattle also had the top visits per capita in 2011 at 11.4.

Urban libraries are meeting the needs of immigrants for English language learning and citizenship preparation. They are serving seniors and teens. Libraries in New York City and elsewhere, including Hennepin County, are resources for people looking for work or trying to complete their GEDs. And for patrons of all ages who lack Internet access at home, libraries are the gateway to the Internet and to digital content.

Libraries are also helping entrepreneurs and business people with access to costly databases and information that will support a business plan. As co-working spaces for entrepreneurs have expanded around the country, libraries have been developing co-working spaces of their own. The fourth floor of the Chattanooga library has become a gigabit Internet hub and co-working and making space combined.

In a series of short Talking Points papers, the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services has described how it supports and recognizes the ways libraries meet the needs of young learners, teens, seniors and immigrants. They play a role in adult skill acquisition, economic development, STEM education and broadband adoption. [http://www.imls.gov/resources/talking_points.aspx?CategoryId=8&F_All=y](http://www.imls.gov/resources/talking_points.aspx?CategoryId=8&F_All=y)

*Sidebar: The physical library will become less about citizens checking out books and more about citizens engaging in the business of making their personal and civic identities. (Aspen Institute 2014 p. 14)*

It is beyond the goals of this project to summarize the whole range of innovation and changes happening in libraries across the country as urban libraries strive to meet the needs of their patrons and potential patrons. Although a skeptic might argue that libraries are engaged in a desperate search for ways to remain relevant in the digital age, the more accurate summation is that urban libraries, as community institutions, are seeing the needs of the people they serve and responding to them with new services that go beyond our traditional notions of a library.

**SE Library Project: Design Thinking Methods**

Design thinking employs methods drawn from or inspired by traditional design practices, including architecture and industrial and graphic design, to develop empathy with the users of a product or service and create innovative ways of meeting the needs of those users that are
superior to the current products or services. It has been popularized by individuals associated with the design firm IDEO and the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (often referred to as the d.school) at Stanford University. Many organizations have applied design thinking methods to better understand and meet the needs of the organization’s users or customers. For example, the Mayo Clinic’s Center for Innovation and Kaiser Permanente’s Innovation Consultancy have applied design thinking to improve the provision of health care to patients. IDEO was hired by an entrepreneur in Peru to design a new system of schools. The University of Minnesota’s College of Design has been an advocate for the application of design thinking outside traditional design fields. In cooperation with the University of Minnesota, Hennepin County has applied design thinking to at least two previous project involving juvenile justice and surface water governance.

The design thinking method description used by the d.school identifies five stages: empathize with the users through design research, define the problem, ideate, create prototype solutions and test them. This project was almost entirely in the empathy/design research stage, though the project team sought to stimulate some level of problem definition and ideation among the participants by prompting them with ideas about how other libraries were meeting the needs of patrons in other communities.

In order to improve the project team’s implementation of design thinking on this project, two graphic designers Sandra Wolfe Wood and Ange Wang were retained to be part of the project team and to act as facilitators for the Advisory Committee and neighborhood public meetings.

Tools

The project team used a variety of methods for data collection and public engagement, in settings that included individual interviews, public community meetings, and group interviews. Consistent with the design thinking approach, we created and used two main research tools inspired by the IDEO Human-Centered Design Toolkit (IDEO, 2014), and Stanford University’s Boot camp Bootleg (Stanford University d.School, 2014). The purpose of these tools was to gain an understanding of community members’ library, learning and information needs in a way that allowed them to be inspired and think creatively and to help the research team build empathy with the respondents.

- **Visual Collage Tool (“the Collage tool”)**

  Users were asked to create their own picture of ideal library programming by selecting from a menu of images, which included traditional and non-traditional library activities that could potentially take place within a library. Participants were instructed to choose images that represented the activities that they felt were most important to themselves and their community and drop them into a generic library floor plan. Users were asked to prioritize their
selections by attaching the chosen images to either a large, medium or small piece of foam board before placing the image onto the floor plan. The research team then asked each participant a series of questions to gain a deeper understanding of why the participant made the choices he/she made, what the significance of each space/activity was to them and if he/she felt that there were any activities or choices that were missing from the options provided. The purpose of this tool was to use images to inspire participants and capture the library, learning and information needs that may not have been as obvious or conscious in the minds of the respondents.

- Fill-In-The-Blank Activity (“MadLibs”)
The research team presented participants with a prepared template that told a story about a future Southeast Library. Respondents were asked to complete the story by filling in the blanks by describing the sentiments and activities that would take place in and around the future Southeast Library. The purpose of this tool was to use words to gain an understanding of how participants envisioned the library of the future.

- Personas and Storyboards
Using data collected prior to the second Advisory Committee meeting (9/26/14), the research and design team created four composite personas to illustrate library, learning and information needs that were expressed by community members. Each of these hypothetical individuals was created with the intention of representing distilled facets of community members’ personalities, goals, needs and hopes, that the Advisory Committee and attendees at the public meetings could use in design thinking engagement activities. A persona example appears below.
• **Elito Method**

The Elito spreadsheet method was used by the research and design teams to analyze and synthesize data collected during this research process in order to generate relevant findings. In this case, small groups of the Advisory Committee were each given a collection of data to review. They used the Elito spreadsheet to explore the meaning behind and values inherent in the research observations. From that information, the main findings were able to emerge. The Elito spreadsheet enabled the integration of the insights from several different research methods (i.e. interviews, Collage too, MadLabs, etc.), into a single resource that housed the main insights.

• **Outreach Tools**

The research team distributed custom bookmarks and fliers to individuals at the Advisory Committee meetings the Public Meetings, current users of the Southeast Library and to additional community members. These bookmarks included the dates and locations of the Public Meetings, an email address to send feedback to, and a Google Voice phone number so that community members were able to participate in a comfortable manner.

**Procedures and Participants**

Recognizing that design thinking methods are generally qualitative in nature, in order to capture the library, learning and information needs of the community members the Southeast Library is meant to serve, our aim was to reach as broadly as possible, using multiple methods of interaction and data collection in as many different locations/settings as possible. The following section is meant to serve as an outline of the participants involved in this research process. For an in depth description of our research procedures and where participants were reached, please see Appendix A.
● Advisory Committee (23 members)
  ○ The members of the Advisory Committee were chosen by the Hennepin County Library with advice from the research team and represented the subject neighborhoods and library stakeholders with the inclusion of members from outside the neighborhoods in order to provide a diversity of ideas.

● Stakeholder Interviews (20 Participants)
  ○ Stakeholders were defined as individuals who live and/or work within these communities, including (but not limited to) current librarians (at both Southeast and the University of Minnesota), community center directors, teachers at community schools, parents of students in the community, property managers of buildings in the area and members of the Dinkytown Business Alliance.

● Public Meetings (82 Participants; inclusive of some Advisory Committee Members)
  ○ The project team conducted a total of four public meetings, with one in each of the four neighborhoods selected for inclusion in this project.

● University Baptist Church Meeting (26 Participants)
  ○ At the invitation of the pastor, the research team conducted a research session at the University Baptist Church which adjoins the Southeast Library.

● University Student Interaction at Walter Library and Wilson Library (27 Participants)
  ○ The research team set up a table in the entryway of both of these University of Minnesota libraries to collect feedback from the University of Minnesota students on the Southeast Library Project.
Cedar Riverside Elders Meeting (18 Participants)
  ○ This meeting was arranged in partnership with the West Bank Community Coalition to reach Somali elders in this community.

Cedar Riverside Youth Meeting (25 Participants)
  ○ This meeting was arranged in partnership with the West Bank Community Coalition to reach Somali youth.

Van Cleve Recreation Center & Luxton Recreation Center Youth Engagement (8 Participants)
  ○ The research team set up a table in the entryway to both of these community centers to reach youth and community center staff.

FINDINGS

Activities/Services

Throughout the project, the research team kept the focus on discovering the library, learning and information needs of community members. Those needs will be met by providing library, learning or information services or enabling patrons to engage in activities that meet their needs. This section describes the findings related to the need and desire for the following services/activities: traditional library services, computer/technology services, community connections, learning activities and creative activities.

Traditional Library Services

Finding 1- Members of the community desire to engage in traditional library activities: browsing a collection of books and other media, reading or studying in a quiet space, borrowing books and media, obtaining materials through interlibrary loan, and assistance with information requests. Community members value the provision of services for children.

Community members in all research settings repeatedly expressed interest in and support of the traditional library services: books, reading/study spaces, reference help, etc. Responders from all communities, of all ages, races and genders, articulated this need. While adults expressed interest in maintaining this aspect of the library for themselves, and especially for the senior population in the neighborhoods (as they were identified as one of the most frequent current library user groups who read the newspaper and borrow books regularly), an even more prominent theme was how important it is to create/maintain a reading space for
children. While this point was raised through all research tactics, it is important to note that the image of children reading in a designated children’s section was the single most common choice of people who engaged with the interactive visioning collage tool, as it was chosen almost 70% of the time, and it was chosen as one of the top priorities more than any other image provided in that engagement activity. Common themes in discussions surrounded the importance of an established, designated children’s section to ensure that the children in these communities became familiar with the library from a young age to foster their interests/imaginations, to enhance their educations and to promote life-long relationships with the library. Additionally, the Advisory Committee specifically noted that children’s programming often brings families into the library, providing educational and community interaction opportunities for the whole family and broader community. Another prominent theme surrounded the librarian’s role in children’s education, related to books and other media, however this point will be further explored in the discussion of librarians’ roles in a subsequent section of the report.

University of Minnesota students also advocated strongly for traditional library services to meet their needs. Through interviews and the use of the collage tool, University students expressed a strong interest in continued and expanded use of the Southeast Library to study, complete homework assignments, interact with community members not necessarily related to the University community, and to locate books for pleasure that the University libraries may not provide. While one might assume that the student population is only using the University libraries for these types of activities, the librarian at the Southeast Library has identified the student population as one of the most prominent current user groups of the Southeast Library. The project team was also surprised that University students responded positively to the image of children reading.

As the demographic research revealed, all of the target communities that the Southeast Library is meant to serve have significant diverse and immigrant populations. Participants in the public community meetings and members of the Advisory Committee said it is important to consider and include traditional library activities for these populations. The inclusion of materials in the languages of immigrants is not a new idea for Hennepin County. For example, the Southeast Library has a Hindi collection and the Franklin Library materials in Arabic, Ojibwa, Oromo, Somali and Spanish. Participants in the public engagement process suggested non-English language book collections, culturally relevant programming (e.g. spaces and times for storytelling for Somali community members who value oral history) and a culturally competent/multilingual librarian as a navigator (again, the specifics of the librarian’s role in this capacity will be further explored in a subsequent section). Community members who participated in the public community meetings also noted that immigrant populations may not
be familiar with traditional library resources and activities, so education around the resources and services available would be extremely important in encouraging library usage among these communities.

Picture chosen most often by users of the collage tool

A sample collage
Finding 2 – The provision of computers, related devices such as printers and scanners, software applications and access to the Internet are essential services for meeting the needs of these communities. Community members also value the potential of new or advanced information technology, including interactive video services that enable distant connections and interactive computer screens that support group collaboration.

As technology continues to grow and transform our world, it has become increasingly important to everyone in these communities. Many community members across all four neighborhoods do not own their own computers or have access to the Internet at home. They are concerned that, as technology continues to advance, they will not readily have access to the latest technology in the future. Therefore, community members are looking to the Southeast Library to be an access point to current or “traditional” technology (e.g. computers/internet/printers/tablets, etc.) to provide access to advanced technology that will continue to evolve. Activities surrounding computer/technology services at the Southeast Library were identified as serving two main functions: education and inter-community connection. The emphasis on these uses is not meant to exclude the significance of technology access for other uses such as finding a job.

To meet education needs, community members are looking to the library as a place for students of all ages to have a quiet location to access information or conduct research pertinent to their learning and to complete assignments, especially for students who do not have this technology available at home or do not have a quiet space in which to work elsewhere. What is, perhaps, a little less obvious, is that community members are looking to libraries to provide ways to access a diversity of information for self-directed learning by all community members. These activities range from accessing world news, to retrieving the latest research available on a plethora of topics, to education surrounding how to actually use the technology effectively. Research indicated that a lack of knowledge regarding how to use computers, how to effectively search for information and how to use programs from email to website construction can be barriers for community members. It was, therefore suggested that educational activities take place surrounding technology that would be available in developmentally and language appropriate methods.

The notion of the library as a “crossroads” was a repeated theme throughout the research process. Above and beyond the need for a connection to information through technological tools, several groups within the community identified the need for inter-community connection as well. While one may not think of connection through technology as a way to foster human
connections, particularly with the immigrant populations, this may be the strongest method by which people can stay connected across communities, states, and even countries. This notion suggests that an interactive video system in a meeting room could act as a gateway to a world beyond the neighborhood to foster group connections and to promote the sharing of ideas and information outside the community. In addition, if patrons want to use Skype, Google Hangout or other personal interactive video tools, the desktop computers need to be in spaces or equipped with headphones and microphones that can preserve privacy and avoid interfering with other users. The role of the librarian as a facilitator/teacher/technology expert in technology available at the library has been raised around this point as well.

Community Connections

Finding 3 – Community members want the library to act as a “crossroads”, facilitating connections that build a unique sense of place among community residents, across generations, and with local experts and creators. They also desire the library to connect them to other local and global communities.

As briefly mentioned in the previous section, one of the most repeated themes throughout the research process was the need for the library to act as a “crossroads” for community members, or a place for the in-person transfer of knowledge. Success in expanding the community connections role of the library could contribute to enhancing a unique sense of place among these neighborhoods. Community members and Advisory Committee members alike envisioned a place where people from all four communities, as well as the University of Minnesota and Augsburg College communities, could congregate in small and in large groups, formally and informally, to share ideas, transfer knowledge and skills, and simply share space. One of the broad themes that arose from these discussions was the need for flexible spaces in which these interactions and activities would take place. While a discussion on spaces, specifically, appears later in the report, it is important to note the salience of flexible spaces within the context of creating connections.

Throughout the engagement process a number of activities related to creating connections were discussed. Community members expressed the need for opportunities to meet in small groups to work on school projects (for both K-12 students as well as for University students), to host various special interest meetings (i.e. the Rivendell Club, a current neighborhood discussion group that looks for meeting spaces or a photography club), to transfer knowledge (i.e. oral history sharing/storytelling groups), as well as the need to create the opportunity for serendipitous meetings which could promote more spontaneous community sharing and connections.
The community members also expressed the desire to meet in larger groups to be able to learn through presentations from experts from within and outside the immediate community. Through stakeholder interviews and public community meetings, participants discussed the opportunity to benefit from the range of learning and research that takes place at the University and to have, for example, graduate students share their expertise and ideas and foster connections with community members in larger-scale library environments. The Advisory Committee expanded on this concept, suggesting that, connections forged at the library could create groups that meet elsewhere in the community or generate outreach into the community, thereby ‘expanding’ the library space/footprint into the broader place comprising these four subject neighborhoods. The community members as a whole recognized the wide variety of backgrounds, experience, knowledge, skills and culture of their neighbors, and stressed the importance of the opportunity to connect with and learn from each other.

The role of the library in facilitating community connections aligns with forward-looking ideas described in a report by the Aspen Institute in *Rising To The Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries* published in 2014. The report described ways in which “people, place and platform” would be organizing principles for libraries today and in the future. Here are some of the report’s comments on the subject of the library as a platform:

“The library as community learning platform is the innovative proposition of the public library in the digital age. . .A great library platform is a “third place”—an interactive entity that can facilitate many people operating individually or in groups. . .The library as platform makes the library a participatory enterprise.” (Aspen Institute 2014, p.17 emphasis added)

Throughout the process of engagement and Advisory Committee discussion, it became apparent that feedback and ideas overlapped with themes of Placemaking theory. Project for Public Spaces describes Placemaking as:

“how we collectively shape our public realm to maximize shared value. Rooted in community-based participation, Placemaking involves the planning, design, management and programming of public spaces. More than just creating better urban design of public spaces, Placemaking facilitates creative patterns of activities and connections (cultural, economic, social, and ecological) that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. Placemaking is how people are more collectively and intentionally shaping our world and our future on this planet” (PPS, *What is Placemaking?*).

Applied to the context of libraries, these spaces can “serve as centers of discovery and communication – places where people gather and where information comes alive through
teaching and personal interaction” (PPS, Libraries that Matter). These ideas focusing on interpersonal and community connections echo much of what the research team and Advisory Committee identify as solutions for creating a successful library for the subject neighborhoods. The area’s rich diversity of people and resources have potential to create powerful and innovative learning opportunities when the connections become strengthened and bring about a larger, collective civic vision.

As discussed in Finding 10, librarians and libraries have helped to create community members’ connections to each other for a long time. Finding 3 and the discussions related to the role of the library in creating community connections implies that this mission should not rely on the initiative of individual librarians but instead should be adopted as a strategy and supported operationally by Hennepin County Library. The adoption of a strategic approach to creating community connections and its implementation at the Southeast Library could be a key outcome of this process.

Creative Activities

**Finding 4 – The communities value the opportunity to create and collaborate facilitated by the library, especially the opportunity for individual or collaborative artistic creation.**

Beyond the desire for the library to foster community connections, the research also demonstrated the need for the library to act as a hub for community creation and collaboration. The community members envisioned a space that would promote the creation of art, making of music, and collaboration on creative projects; in other words, the creation of a “makerspace” of sorts. Though various kinds of makerspaces were presented at meetings or discussed with participants, the responses tended to focus on artistic creation. However, the Advisory Committee recommended against narrowing the activity opportunities to the arts; they stressed the importance of a flexible space for creation, as they were reluctant to limit the creativity of potential users.

While some community members had preferences in terms of specific creative activities that could take place, there was a general consensus that the space should not be a limiting factor on activities available at the library, and that categorical activities of importance were art (for both children and adults), music, and a sharing of skills. Another potential activity suggested by the Advisory Committee was the potential for the library to be a public “fix-it” resource for the community members. Though the Hennepin County Library has hosted fix-it clinics at library branches, the community interest in flexible making spaces could suggest a more regular or
ongoing activity. This activity could include volunteers in the community coming together and using their expertise to help repair small appliances or to help repair bicycles, as bicycles are a key mode of transportation for many community members. One group envisioned community members sewing or working on textiles together.

Beyond the activities that would take place within a “makerspace”, the “Mad Libs” research tool, along with subsequent discussions, revealed a strong desire for some kind of gallery space to display community art created both within the library and within the broader community. The display of art is a current library activity valued by the community. The library as a cultural center could foster connections and relationships among community members of all backgrounds and highlight diversity in the neighborhoods while simultaneously fostering a sense of identity and place within the community. The community vision of the library as a cultural hub had both creation and presentation components.

**Learning Activities**

**Finding 5 – Community members see the value of learning activities offered at the library; the response to the opportunity for learning activities was especially strong among immigrant community members.**

The role of the library in facilitating learning came up in many settings and is related to other activities and services described earlier. In research conducted with immigrant community members, the role of the library as a “second teacher” generated strong support. These activities include learning English, preparing for citizenship and completing the requirements for the GED. For example, using one of the composite personas provided by the research team, the Advisory Committee envisioned a learning opportunity for this hypothetical individual.

Through the creation of a story board, the Advisory Committee proposed the opportunity for a 7th grade Somalian boy to “borrow” a theater space from the library, and create a play with his friends that sparked conversation amongst Somali-Americans and non-Somalis about the challenges of immigration and the richness of culture in the community. The Hennepin County Library provides these services in a variety of settings, including the Franklin Learning Center.

Community comments on this subject likely reflected concerns about access. All the neighborhoods had significant numbers of immigrant and young (ages 15-24) residents. Even though learning activities are reasonably seen as traditional library activities or services involving technology available at the library, the significance of learning deserved to be specifically identified because of the composition of neighborhood residents and emphasis placed on learning in the responses.
As a result of the conversations with community members and with the Advisory Committee about the desired activities at the Southeast Library, a natural next step was to consider the spaces that would be necessary to host the various desired activities. This section will describe the findings related to types and characteristics of spaces envisioned by the community members.

Flexible Spaces

**Finding 6 – Community members value flexible library spaces that support changing activities and multiple spaces that can accommodate different activities happening at the same time.**

While it was alluded to in the discussion regarding library activities, it is critical to note the importance of flexible spaces in the Southeast Library. Flexible spaces are crucial components of both meeting spaces and “makerspaces”, as meeting spaces of varied size and capability were desired by almost everyone that participated in this research project, and “makerspaces” of varied function are necessary as well. It is even possible to imagine that meeting spaces and...
“makerspaces” could overlap, in terms of sharing spaces, which, in turn makes the flexibility of spaces even more pertinent. The theme of flexible spaces was raised and stressed by both the Advisory Committee and by those who attended the public community meetings. The community members believe that in order to serve such a diverse group of people and address everyone’s central needs as effectively as possible, the library spaces must be flexible in nature. The research showed that while the community desires physically flexible space (i.e. spaces that can be used for small meetings, individual work space, large group meeting space, storytelling, etc.), the activities that can take place within the spaces need to be varied as well. For example, if the library had a space that could be used for a knitting club meeting, an interactive video group meeting, or for storytelling or a video presentation, the space would need to have bright lights, room darkening shades and appropriate technology.

The Advisory Committee was also concerned about the risks of too much flexibility in a space. Rooms that are designed to try meet too many needs may serve none of them well by requiring too many compromises. Consequently, multiple spaces that are each flexible within a focused range of functions may make sense. Multiple spaces also would enable meeting more than one community need simultaneously.

Furthermore, stakeholders, community members and the research team all want to stress the importance of flexible space that can adapt with whatever the future brings. Recent residential development and projects under discussion reflect likely continued growth in these neighborhoods. Consequently, neighborhood needs will almost certainly change.

In addition, cultural and technological change will generate new needs and possibilities. For example, a technology space where outlet access and wiring arrangements are plentiful and varied so that new and emerging technology can easily be incorporated into the same space would be smart. Essentially, while flexible space is key in terms of bringing all of the community’s current desired activities to life, it is also essential to allowing the library to adapt and change over time so that it can more easily incorporate activities that may fulfill additional needs or desires in the future.

Meeting/Gathering Spaces

Finding 7 – Community members desire spaces for formal meetings, informal gatherings and storytelling that support the community connections activities they value.

While this subject has been touched on several times already, it is important to call out explicitly the value of meeting spaces to the community members. If the library is to serve as a
crossroads for these four neighborhoods, the community members strongly advocate for places in which to meet and share information and interests. Although there are public meeting spaces in the recreation centers operated by the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, these are often busy or may not be suitable for some neighborhood groups. In addition, library meeting space has advantages in contrast to a community center meeting space, because patrons have access to information and cultural resources to share with each other in real time. Community members requested varied meeting spaces in terms of size, technical capability and uses. One of the top image choices in the collage tool was a café-like space where food was served. Stakeholders and other community participants felt that food would draw people together, keep people at the library for longer and could create a welcoming and enjoyable environment for groups to meet.

Outdoor Green Space

**Finding 8 – Community members desire outdoor spaces that reflect a commitment to sustainability and could support community garden activities, outdoor gatherings and reading, individually or with children.**

The third most popular image among all participants that worked with the collage tool was the image of community members gardening. When asked to elaborate on this image, community members noted that, with these neighborhoods being located in a largely urban environment, green space is at a premium. A desire for green space at the library is a reflection of what neighbors are missing in their communities. Participants suggested that green space would attract neighbors to the library during the warmer months, as Minnesotans value taking advantage of the outdoors when possible, and could potentially present learning opportunities surrounding gardening and growing plants in an organic/sustainable way. Some Advisory Committee members suggested the creation of outdoor meeting spaces and quiet reading spaces. If the library had a “green roof”, it would reduce the environmental effect of the library and could provide opportunities for environmental learning, especially if combined with environmentally sensitive green space at ground level.

Multiple Spaces/Satellite Spaces

**Finding 9 – Community members value a significant multi-function library branch in the neighborhoods and are open to the opportunity to expand access through a bookmobile or satellite/mini-branch (“branchlets”) spaces.**
A common theme that community members and the Advisory Committee raised was the concern about being able to serve all of the needs of the community members in one space. This concern came from discussions about the desire to fulfill so many different needs and reach community members where they live. While the community as a whole strongly advocates for a single, main location for the Southeast Library, the Advisory Committee and the research team recognize that other library systems have been able to meet geographically distinct patron needs through the use of bookmobiles or satellite library facilities. These mini-branches or “branchlets” could be smaller offshoots of the main Southeast Library that house books, computers and space for additional activities pertinent to the specific community in which the satellite is located.

In order to save capital costs and to address the issue of meeting community members where they are already, the County should consider the potential for co-locating the library satellites with other services. For example, in Chicago a mini-branch is co-located with the visitor information center at the Water Works building on Michigan Ave. The Advisory Committee saw possibilities to co-locate a library satellite at a community school or at a community center that met other patron needs. Co-location in this case could help to foster a relationship between the Cedar Riverside community and the library, and help to meet the individualized needs of these community members (i.e. English Language classes, homework help, etc.) in a hyper-relevant location (more specific needs of the Cedar Riverside community will be discussed in depth in a subsequent section).

The use of bookmobiles to increase physical access arose in several conversations. Hennepin County Library staff raised concerns about operating costs of a bookmobile with the research team. Consequently, the research team put more emphasis on the idea of non-mobile but smaller “branchlet” facilities in its discussions with the community members and the Advisory Committee. Examples of successful mobile and small fixed locations exist in other communities. In Missouri’s St. Charles City-County Library District mini-branches can be as small as 1000 sq. feet while still providing a librarian, computers and material pick-up and drop off services. The Chicago Public Library mini-branch at the Water Works is shown in an image below. Some communities, including the subject neighborhoods, have seen the placement of “Little Free Libraries” that reflect a diversification of the scale at which library needs are being met.

If Hennepin County Library were to adopt a “branch plus branchlet” strategy for meeting the needs of some of the neighborhoods in the study area, it would be a significant strategic innovation. One could foresee other neighborhoods and communities seeking similar
storefront, express or branchlet facilities and the associated distributed service access they represent.

Chicago Public Library Mini-Branch at the Water Works

The Role of the Librarian

Finding 10 – Librarians serving these communities should be prepared to meet diverse needs, including the ability to facilitate the community connections valued by the community.

Community feedback brought to light a tremendous need for explicitly recognizing and expanding the librarian’s role in creating connections among patrons and community members. As community members discussed the importance of the library in creating community connections (Finding 3), it became clear that librarians serving these communities would need to build on and dramatically expand existing efforts to create these human to human connections, in addition to carrying out the more traditionally recognized librarian roles of teaching about enabling access to information and to the library’s collections. This expanded community vision of the librarian’s role in creating connections extends to developing new collaborations with institutions inside and outside the four neighborhoods.

These neighborhoods have unique access to intellectual and creative resources associated with the University of Minnesota and Augsburg College, in addition to other community institutions, that could assist in meeting residents’ library, learning and information needs. The scale and variety of these resources present new challenges and opportunities to future Southeast Library staff to collaborate with the institutions and their faculty staff and students in order to meet
the needs of community members. These opportunities call for a time and attention commitment to collaboration and fostering community connections that is likely greater than efforts that librarians have previously made at the Southeast Library or in other communities.

An underlying premise of the vision of the library, as a **crossroads**, is that it is much more than a building. Its function is more of a hub or marketplace for the rich resources of these communities. Although community members may recognize the rich learning opportunities available nearby, it may be daunting to navigate the possibilities to meet one’s needs. Actively recognizing and supporting the librarian’s role in assisting with these human and social capital connections would be an innovative step that would have benefits in many libraries but especially at the Southeast Library with its array of educational and cultural resources.

The library’s role today is recognized as a successful community gathering place, and this feature is expected to continue and expand for new groups. As a community gathering place, the librarian is positioned at the center with access to see, listen to, meet with, and aid the breadth of library constituents. This performance of current librarians has been expressly appreciated during the engagement process, and the role also complements the vision for the library as a crossroads. This role requires shrewd understanding of community organizations, institutions, local experts, volunteers, cultural competency, etc. The **librarian's domain** expands outside of the building.

It may be impossible for library staff to be fully competent in all areas of learning for all the niche offerings and needs of SE. For this reason, the role of connector is expanded to include the collaborators and library patrons themselves. There are overlapping themes here associated with co-location. Participating and connected organizations can be a part of the "librarian" team in the sense that they also offer staff and personnel as connectors with unique perspectives and knowledge bases. Patrons can serve as connectors to other patrons. Volunteers can coordinate with their personal networks to find the right neighbor for needs expressed by other neighbors. Possibilities for the roles of University and Augsburg librarians are discussed in the collaboration section below.

**Access**

**Hours and Operations**

**Finding 11 – To meet the variety of community needs in these diverse neighborhoods, library services need to be available for more hours and at hours of the day that respond to the needs of community members between the ages of 12 and 25.**
Briefly, the library is open for three 8-hour days, including one weekend day. In light of the depth and variety of needs and opportunities in these communities, the Advisory Committee discussed the value of a library open 6 days a week. The Committee and community members also discussed the unique schedules of secondary and postsecondary students who need places to study, log on to the Internet and do research after the regular school or work day, well into the evening hours.

Later hours should be provided as many days of the week as feasible. Hours should be commensurate with demand, or when users and potential users are most likely to visit the library. The county should be strategic with scheduling for the different categories of current or potential users: pre-K through 12 students, college students, and senior residents.

*Operating Cost Implications*

Increasing the number of hours that library services are available in the four neighborhoods studied would have obvious operating budget implications for the County. Adopting a “branch plus branchlet” facility configuration would likely increase rather than reduce costs paid from the operating budget. In addition, a full implementation of the community connections mission described under Finding 3 would require staff members dedicated to serving the Southeast Library communities who would not divide their time with other libraries. Although the Hennepin County Library may have been focused on facility and capital budget issues when beginning this process, it is important to recognize that the needs expressed by the communities cannot likely be fulfilled without a significant increase in operating expenditures in these communities in conjunction with whatever capital investment the County may make.

*Transportation Access*

**Finding 12 – The County should work with Metro Transit, the University of Minnesota and other partners to improve transportation access to the library, including considering expanding the availability of parking.**

Neighborhood residents have identified many challenges for access under the existing conditions, including hours of service, transit options, and parking. The public engagement process did not involve a commitment to any specific geographic location for a future library. Nonetheless, community members commented on physical access with the current location in mind. The research team also explored issues and options related to the current location, in part because it would have been difficult to evaluate a full range of speculative options for a different location.
The site of the current Southeast Library presents physical access challenges and opportunities. On-site parking is limited to 8 vehicles, and other Dinkytown parking is difficult to find at peak hours, even when patrons are willing to pay for metered parking. The 2013 facilities assessment conducted by the County describes issues concerning the library spaces, accessibility, and site conditions.

In summary, the Marcy Holmes and Southeast Como neighborhoods have public transit options or are relatively close to the current location. Prospect Park has limited transit access, as does Cedar Riverside. Below is a map of the transportation situation related to the current locations - Routes 2, 3, and 6 are the routes currently servicing the library, with the primary access stop of all three located at 15th Ave SE and 4th St SE, 2 blocks from the library location. As illustrated in the map, most of Prospect Park does not have a direct connection to the library and Cedar Riverside’s Route 2 may be inconveniently out of the way. A fuller description of the transportation issues is in the Appendix.

These existing conditions, according to residents and stakeholders, do not meet the level of service expected or desired for a community library. Discussions by the advisory committee have shed light on two approaches to resolving access issues: one approach recommends improving transportation services and coordinating with relevant partners. The second approach spins off of the ideas around community partnerships for co-location and satellites.
The advisory committee proposes coordinating solutions among community partners offering transportation services. Partnerships can include the Universities and their bus systems to link neighborhoods to the library, such as a Cedar Riverside to Library shuttle. Conversations with Metro Transit should also be initiated to determine how routes, times, and stops can be altered to better promote library accessibility and inter-neighborhood mobility. This approach also introduces the library's assets and brand to these partners. Metro Transit can gain a broader ridership and positive image when strategically working with library users and community organizations. The University can improve relations with the surrounding neighborhoods and help outreach to the diverse talent of local public school students.

Cedar Riverside

Cedar Riverside has not been considered part of the Southeast community by the other three neighborhoods in this project. Although all of the neighborhoods in this project have significant numbers of immigrant residents, Cedar Riverside is home to a densely settled residential community of over (43%) immigrants who are primarily from East Africa, particularly Somalia. It is also separated from the other neighborhoods by the Mississippi River. These characteristics make it appropriate to comment on the needs of Cedar Riverside separately.

The Cedar Riverside neighborhood is underserved in terms of library, learning and information services, especially when the population and their specific learning needs are accounted for (see the Cedar-Humphrey Action for Neighborhood Collaboration – CHANCE – 2014 capstone report).

During the engagement process, Somali elders expressed a high value for the library as a potential resource for integrating better into U.S. culture but also for sharing their Somali culture. Language and computer literacy were emphasized as high learning priorities for being able to gain practical skills useful for signing documents, job training, or citizenship classes. Elders also expressed a desire to have a platform for sharing cultural knowledge of their native country, and they see the library as a place for passing cultural values on to younger generations. Specifically, storytelling was a recurring learning strategy and need. Somali women expressed much excitement at the thought of working with their hands, as they did in their native country.

Youth from the Cedar Riverside neighborhood expressed desire for a breadth of learning services, from traditional access to books, computers, and study space to guidance on college applications and career counseling. Interest in creative ventures such as clothing/shoe design, theater, and music recording were brought up, among others. Others mentioned interests
included gardening, theater, computer programming, and media software. An entrepreneurial spirit was evident in many of these youth. Also present was a frustration with existing conditions and the lack of resources in the immediate area.

Not surprisingly, the biggest need identified in Cedar Riverside was the need for convenient library access. Franklin Library and its Learning Center and Minneapolis Central Library serve many in the community, but these options cannot be reached conveniently by many in the neighborhood. Elders feel uncomfortable having youth so distant during late hours (especially when instances of harassment have occurred). The snow and ice are also major perceived barriers to making a commute to the libraries, especially so for limited-mobility elders. Although Hennepin County Library Outreach Services may be available for many of these residents, they expressed a strong desire for access to services within the neighborhood.

Another major perceived barrier is with the boundaries of the Universities – Wilson and Augsburg libraries on the West Bank are not utilized resources on behalf of the immigrant population. A testament to the value of having nearby neighborhood services is found in the afterschool tutoring and computers available to youth: Brian Coyle Center and Trinity Lutheran Homework Help – these tutoring and computer labs are overrun with demand. Brian Coyle has responded by rotating use of the computer lab by age group and the Homework Help staff is continually looking for additional volunteer tutors. These high-demand services underscore the need for more in-neighborhood facilities with walkable access. One student, in responding to “if you could borrow anything, what would it be?” said he would borrow a car.

Although the needs of Cedar Riverside are great, many potential solutions converge around the other findings of this report. A crossroads library would integrate the cultural value of Cedar Riverside in with the rest of the Southeast neighborhoods, which are also home to significant immigrant populations. East African crafts and stories can be created, shared, taught, or borrowed. Cultural experts can facilitate intergenerational cultural learning between immigrant elders and US born generations. A creative outlet that is a reflection of the community can occur. The advisory committee recognizes that culturally competent staff are game-changing when they are located accessibly to the population in need, and when well-connected to the rest of the community resources.

The ideas for partnerships, satellites, and co-location are especially appropriate for Cedar Riverside. Innovative community partnerships can contribute to operating cost and accessibility issues. More so, a librarian acting in a connector role can facilitate creative learning between entrepreneurial youth and other SE institutions.
Although concerns were expressed in the engagement process about the inclusion of Cedar Riverside in the study, this report reframes the conversation to be about what Cedar Riverside has to offer the other neighborhoods and the Southeast Library as a crossroads, rather than how it might detract from meeting the needs of the community. The Cedar Riverside community has many assets that can only improve the services of a community library modeled around social connections - including expansion of the knowledge network, volunteers, institutional staff and capital, community space, etc. Engagement in this neighborhood revealed a community that is conspicuously eager and excited about library and learning services. Ultimately, the conversation should not be an "either-or" decision, but how all neighborhoods can be mutually strengthened by the resources of each.

**Collaboration**

The four neighborhoods that were considered in this project present unique opportunities for collaboration with the County in meeting the library, learning and information needs of residents. Since all four border the University of Minnesota, collaboration with the University should be a high priority as library services planning moves forward. Augsburg College’s engagement in the Cedar Riverside community presents another special collaboration opportunity. Many other agencies and organizations are active in these neighborhoods and are potential collaborators. At this public engagement phase, it is premature to define exactly what collaborative opportunities would be most productive. Instead, this section will describe some possible collaborative opportunities that the County Board of Commissioners and staff may want to pursue.

**University of Minnesota**

The University administration is interested in deepening its engagement with the neighborhoods adjacent to the Twin Cities campus. The County could partner with the University to meet community learning needs through the Southeast Library and related activities. Since University students are public library patrons, it would be in the University’s interest to support keeping the Southeast Library open for longer hours or at hours that meet student needs, typically late evening. The University Libraries do provide extended hours access during examination periods. Nonetheless, additional University commitment to greater library access would benefit the community and University students. One of the challenges identified in the study is related to transportation. The University operates a bus service for students that connects the East and West Banks of the campus. It would be worthwhile for the County to explore with the University (as well as Metro Transit) ways to improve community transportation access to the Southeast Library. Use of the
University Transportation Service could be especially helpful to residents of the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.

If the County acts to include opportunities for arts creation or a makerspace/fablab, University colleges or schools with an interest in these activities could become partners. The College of Liberal Arts contains the arts programs that might provide faculty and student resources for the library. Both the College of Science and Engineering and the College of Design are interested in spaces for making. The University Libraries are also potential partners.

In the Cedar Riverside neighborhood, students, faculty and staff at the West Bank colleges could be learning resources in collaboration with the County.

The University may also be interested in co-locating with a library facility. It has ongoing needs for space for students, faculty and services. Collaboration on facilities could reduce the capital cost for the County and might enable the budget to stretch to include the branchlets, or satellite services discussed in the Access section of this report.

University of Minnesota Libraries

The services available to community members through the University of Minnesota Libraries appear to suffer from a marketing problem. Many community members lacked awareness of how they could use the resources available at UMN libraries. Here are some of the services:

The University Libraries have Road Show public programming opportunities that could be brought to a Hennepin County Library location, including the Southeast Library. See: [http://www.continuum.umn.edu/roadshow/#.VI2fWcbZpV4](http://www.continuum.umn.edu/roadshow/#.VI2fWcbZpV4)

All libraries at UMN are open to anyone; use of computers requires securing a guest pass with an ID. Over 10% of the use at University Libraries is from unaffiliated users. Hennepin County Library staff could help promote this option to community patrons.

The University Libraries operate the state-funded Minitex service that shares resources and services across all libraries in Minnesota. Minitex also enables any resident in the state to get access to materials held in UMN libraries (article copies are scanned and sent to an individual’s computer; books are delivered to local library). These materials can be requested online via the Minitex MnLink service (no need to go to a library). An HCL branch or "branchlet" would have access to these services. Alternative delivery options could be pursued, working with HCL and the metropolitan area library delivery services. Stronger promotion of these services could address the perception of inaccessibility of the University Libraries as well as benefit community users.
Augsburg College

Augsburg is an active partner in collaborations in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood related to a workforce development center and other initiatives. If the County takes up the idea of some form of library facility and services in Cedar Riverside, Augsburg should be seen as a strong potential partner. Its students, faculty and staff are potential volunteers in creating learning opportunities for young children, teens and language learners. It is not clear whether Augsburg would have a need for, or interest in, co-locating for space needs.

Other Area Collaborative Possibilities

Brian Coyle Community Center operated by Pillsbury United Communities is a major potential collaborator in creating new opportunities for a Cedar Riverside library space. Planning for a new facility has been funded by the Legislature. The County should consider active engagement with that planning process.

Cedar Riverside Adult Education Collaborative primarily serves East African immigrants and could provide programming if County Library space were available in the neighborhood. Collaboration with this group could reduce the load on County Library staff and create opportunities for services to meet the adult learning needs of residents of the other neighborhoods included in this project. East African immigrants live in Como SE and Prospect Park.

Trinity Lutheran Church supports Safe Place: Homework Help which provides tutoring services to students of all ages. Its staff and volunteers could fit well with the community learning mission of the Southeast Library envisioned in this project.

The Textile Center located in Prospect Park operates a library related to the textile arts. It was represented on the Advisory Committee for the project and it could be a collaborator with respect to space or staffing if a branchlet were located in Prospect Park.

The Center for Book Arts is located between Cedar Riverside and the Minneapolis Central Library. It provides programming related to the art of making books and could be a partner in educational programs related to the appreciation of books.

Elementary/Middle Schools

Pratt School, Marcy Open School and the Cedar Riverside Community School serve students from the four project neighborhoods. Current partnerships between these schools and the County Library could be expanded in the event that a library was open longer and had a larger range of services available.
Co-Location

During the engagement process, a number of participants raised the possibility of co-locating the Southeast Library with other facilities or services. Co-location could improve geographic access cost effectively if, for example, a “branchlet” were co-located with another organization in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. However, co-location presents opportunities for other benefits, including improvements to the library services offered, the availability of other services not currently offered in the community, reduced construction costs and the potential for generating revenue for the Library. This discussion of co-location is intended to alert the Library and the County Board to options that could be considered as plans for the Southeast Library move forward.

One possibility is that the University of Minnesota Libraries would be interested in co-locating a service or facility with the Southeast Library. If UMN moved forward with creating a makerspace that was shared with the Southeast Library, it would serve UMN students and enhance the library services available to the broader community. Another possibility would be the co-location of a branchlet with a workforce center where workforce center staff could be trained in providing library services and thus enhance access to library services while containing operating costs for the County Library.

Advisory Committee members suggested possibilities for co-location of a library with other services such as a health clinic or a school in a way that would support the availability of the other service and of library services too.

With significant private development occurring in parts of the subject neighborhoods, it is possible that the Library could partner with a developer to locate a public library space in a building that would otherwise be dedicated to private uses such as residential or commercial spaces. This type of co-location could reduce construction and facility operating costs compared to a stand-alone library building, depending on the arrangements with the developer.

The access issue highlighted the need to keep the Southeast Library open longer hours. Adding to days of operation would increase the operating cost of the Library, requiring cost savings or a new revenue that could be dedicated to keeping the Library open more hours. For example, if a new library building included parking spaces that could be used by library patrons and visitors to other buildings in the neighborhood, the County could commit the parking revenue to the operating budget of the library. Alternatively, solar panels on a library could reduce electricity costs or even on some days bring in revenue while at the same time communicating a commitment to sustainability. Another way to generate revenue would be to arrange a co-location deal with a compatible entity that pays rent to the Library rather than contributing to the upfront construction.
References


APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A - Research methods and sample responses

APPENDIX B - Neighborhood maps and demographics

APPENDIX C - Transit access analysis

APPENDIX D - Advisory Committee

APPENDIX E - Ideas for Libraries in the 21st Century, a Short Introduction; report by project advisory Dr. Jerry Stein

APPENDIX F - Libraries and Innovation: 21st Century Themes; presentation by project advisor Dr. Jerry Stein
The Advisory Committee played an integral role in this research process. During a total of six work sessions, the Committee engaged in creative brainstorming sessions surrounding goals of library users, helped to create a strategy for the public meetings, reviewed and organized the data collected from all research tactics to converge on general concepts/findings, and studied, edited and approved the final draft of this report. During the work session in which the Committee helped to comb through data, an Elito Spreadsheet was used to integrate the information. The Advisory Committee also helped to direct the research team to key groups of people and key places to go to collect information and feedback.

Stakeholder Interviews (20 Participants)

Stakeholders were defined as individuals who live and/or work within these communities, including (but not limited to) current librarians (at both Southeast and the University of Minnesota), community center directors, teachers at community schools, parents of students in the community, property managers of buildings in the area and members of the Dinkytown Business Alliance. Stakeholders were current users, potential users or represented groups of current/potential users of the Southeast Library. Stakeholders were referred to the research team by Advisory Committee members, community members or by other stakeholders. The research team interviewed these individuals one-on-one or in small groups to try and gain a better, more holistic understanding of the communities at the focus of this project. The interviews were conducted in an open-ended manner, with stakeholders providing insights into the community members, the unique elements of the communities and, from their perspectives, how the library could best serve the population. The research team was able to use the information garnered from these interviews to identify additional individuals to interview, populations to focus on and questions to ask additional participants. Additionally, the research team used the information gathered from these interviews to create four personas, which were composite representations of four members of the community. The personas were used to create scenarios describing how a community member might use a future Southeast Library and these scenarios were used to generate responses from the Advisory Committee and public meeting participants.

Public Meetings (82 Participants; inclusive of some Advisory Committee Members)

The project team conducted a total of four public meetings, with one in each of the four neighborhoods selected for inclusion in this project. Community members were encouraged to
join whichever meeting was most convenient, and were not instructed to only attend the meetings in their neighborhood of employment or residence. The majority of participants were adults, but all four neighborhoods and the Universities were represented. The meetings took place at Van Cleve Recreation Center (27 participants), Marcy Open School (13 participants), Brian Coyle Center (24 participants) and Luxton Recreation Center (18 participants). Each of the four meetings followed the same general agenda. Participants were asked initially to answer two questions: “What brings you to this meeting?” and “How do you imagine the library helping you or someone you know?” After writing down their answers, each participant was asked to share the answers to these questions to the larger group, which was meant to help the research team and the other participants build empathy and gain an understanding for each attendee’s motivations for participation. At this time, the team also introduced the “suggestion board” which was open throughout the entire meeting for anyone to add thoughts, concerns or suggestions as they arose.

Next, the project team provided a project overview designed to familiarize the group with the purpose, process and methods of the project. The next phase was a brief presentation of the findings of Dr. Jerry Stein’s Learning Dream team regarding the innovative activities and spaces that currently exist or are being developed at libraries across the country. The purpose of this step was to provide the participants with inspiration and to open their minds to the larger scope of possibilities. After this presentation, the design team led the participants through an activity with the four personas that had been developed as a result of the stakeholder interviews. Participants were asked to use the innovative ideas they had just heard about as inspiration, think about their values and the shared values of the communities and come up with ideas for how the Southeast Library could creatively address those values and meet the community’s needs. Participants were instructed to use a storyboard template and to work in groups to create a story of a library that served the needs that they had. Finally, the project team led the participants through the MadLibs and the Collage activities to collect additional data.

University Baptist Church Meeting (26 Participants)

At the invitation of the pastor, the research team conducted a research session at the University Baptist Church which adjoins the Southeast Library. While it is important to note that many of these participants lived outside of the four focal neighborhoods, they all expressed a vested interest in the community. The research team was contacted via the project email address by the church’s pastor to set up this meeting. The format of this meeting was similar to that of the public meetings in that it began with two questions: “What brings you to this
meeting?” and “How do you imagine the library helping you or someone you know?” had a suggestion board, and asked attendees to participate in the MadLibs and Collage activities.

University Student Interaction at Walter Library and Wilson Library (27 Participants)

The research team set up a table in the entryway of both of these University of Minnesota libraries to collect feedback from the University of Minnesota students on the Southeast Library Project. Students entering and exiting the library were asked to step aside and discuss their thoughts on the Southeast Library. A brief description of the scope of the project was provided; participants were asked to engage with the Collage tool and provide verbal feedback.

Cedar Riverside Elders Meeting (18 Participants)

This meeting was arranged in partnership with the West Bank Community Coalition to reach Somali elders in this community. The meeting was hosted in the Riverside Plaza apartments and an interpreter was present. Both men and women participated. The research team solicited open responses from participants regarding their desires for library services and access issues. Following the open-ended questions, the team prompted the group collectively with questions about some of the potential innovative services and the potential for a mini-branch that served the West Bank.

Cedar Riverside Youth Meeting (25 Participants)

This meeting was arranged in partnership with the West Bank Community Coalition to reach Somali youth. Participants were all male, and ranged in age from 10-17 years old. They attended various schools within the city and some were frequent library users. The format of the meeting was free response and questions posed to the youth participants included (but were not limited to):

- What do you do after school?
- Where do you do your homework?
- Do you currently use a library? When? Which one? Why or why not? What do you do there?
- If you could borrow anything, what would you borrow?
- Would you be interested in a makerspace? What would you want to make?
- If you could learn anything, what would it be?
- What resources would you want at a library?
Van Cleve Recreation Center & Luxton Recreation Center Youth Engagement (8 Participants)

The research team set up a table in the entryway to both of these community centers to reach youth and community center staff. Two of these participants were adults and the remaining six were youth (five boys and one girl) ranging in age from 10-17 years old. The research team asked participants to interact with the Collage tool and provide explanations surrounding the choices made.
My Library Vision.

No one will ever believe this, but yesterday I was actually able to see the Southeast Library of the future! Who knew that time machines were available to check out at the Minneapolis Central branch? (Secret floor...shh.) That place is awesome... Anyways, I borrowed a time machine which transported me just outside of the SE Library to the year ___________.

Being outside of the library was a(n) _______________ experience - passersby greeted each other by saying "_____________!" which reminded me I was no longer in 2014!

I found myself walking through the entrance and its display of _______________ which I appreciated. Then there was a room filled with _______________ and so people were busy _______________. I liked this space because it would be somewhere I could _______________.

Soon I found the librarian. He/She said "Welcome to the Southeast Library! Our branch is all about _______________; that's right, you can learn or make anything related to _______________. If you need, we also lend out _______________; tool you'd like to borrow what you're interested in was excited because this was something I was always interested in exploring further.

One thing completely unexpected, yet relevant to my learning habits, was the _______________ found upstairs - that was just plain cool.

My 2-hour time machine rental was up, so I was taken back to Minneapolis 2014. I can't wait for the library of the future and its _______________ atmosphere!
My Library Vision.

No one will ever believe this, but yesterday I was actually able to see the Southeast Library of the future! Who knew that time machines were available to check out at the Minneapolis Central branch? (Secret floor...shh.) That place is awesome. Anyways, I borrowed a time machine which transported me just outside of the SE Library to the year 2025.

Being outside of the library was a(n) calming experience - passersby greeted each other by saying "Wow!" which reminded me I was no longer in 2014!

I found myself walking through the entrance and its display of local history, which I appreciated. Then there was a room filled with design spaces and so people were busy designing, ideating with others, and so I liked this space because it would be somewhere I could ideate with others. I was excited because this was something I was always interested in exploring further.

Soon I found the librarian. He/she said "Welcome to the Southeast Library! Our branch is all about lifelong learning, that's right, you can learn or make anything related to sustainable urban communities. If you need, we also lend out [indicated tool you'd like to borrow]" I was excited because this was something I was always interested in exploring further.

One thing completely unexpected, yet relevant to my learning habits, was the found upstairs - that was just plain cool.

My 2-hour time machine rental was up, so I was taken back to Minneapolis 2014. I can't wait for the library of the future and its mindful atmosphere!
APPENDIX B
Neighborhood maps and demographics
B.1
APPENDIX C
Transit Access

Note: The existing conditions analysis is based on the library’s current location. It is also assumed the primary visitors to the SE Library, regardless of future location, will be community residents, from the library’s “service area” - transit access from outside of the study area boundaries is not within the scope of this discussion.

Transit Access Details

Routes 2, 3, and 6 provide neighborhood connections to the Library. All of these routes have stops at the 4th St. SE / 15th Ave SE intersection. This is considered the primary transit access point to the Library and is located two blocks from the Library’s location, as shown in the map.
Cedar Riverside connects to the SE Library via routes 2 and 3, both of which stop two blocks from the current library location. Route 2 is accessible via Riverside Ave and one stop on Cedar Ave. However, Route 2 first passes through the East Bank campus making the trip approximately 15 minutes or more - this may be considered an inconvenient transportation option. Route 3 has limited accessibility in the neighborhood, with stops only along Washington Ave on the UM West Bank Campus.

The Como neighborhood is serviced by Metro Transit routes 3 and 61 – both routes service downtown St. Paul to downtown Minneapolis. Route 3, however is the only practical route option which connects to the SE library (without a transfer) – riders taking this option can access the library at 4th St SE and 15th Ave SE and walk 2 blocks to the library destination (indicated as the primary access stop above). Route 3 is accessible via Como Ave SE, which most neighborhood homes are within walking distance to.

Prospect Park is ostensibly well serviced by transit, with connections to the University and downtowns via routes 16, 63, 67, and the Green Line LRT. However, Route 16’s western terminus is near the UMN TCF Bank Stadium, a mile from the current library location. The Green Line platforms at Stadium Village and the East Bank Campus are also approximately a mile to the SE Library. A convenient direct transit connection does not exist for Prospect Park residents.

Most households in Marcy Holmes are located within a mile of the current library location. Route 2 along 8th St SE can get residents to 15th Ave SE, two blocks from the library. Alternatively, route 6 along University Ave can also get residents within two blocks walking distance of the library.
APPENDIX D

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Appendix E Jerome Stein/Learning Dreams Innovations Summary


A short Introduction.

by Jerry Stein

Sept. 5, 2014

This introduction and summary is based on a review of about 100 studies, articles, books, blogs, and a few key websites. Key writings can be reached by the provided link.

As residents of Southeast Minneapolis begin to consider and develop a vision for future library activities and services in our community, it should be of enormous help to be aware of the large number of creative experiments, programs, delivery modes, and new ideas and that are being considered and implemented right now by people who care about their communities, and their libraries. As we begin to create a vision for our future, we can be helped by learning about others in our circumstances, both in our own region, and around the world, who are creatively taking on similar challenges, even if our community is in many respects unique, as are theirs.

This introduction will discuss a few key areas in which the new trends are tending. It will be accompanied by a list of core articles and reports with links so that members of our advisory board, and of our community, and anyone else, can read through the ideas for themselves. The efforts and ideas, and creativity that are bursting out around the globe are inspiring, and knowing about these efforts should inspire us as we take up our work.

Many of the new trends in library activities and services build on aspects of library work that have deep roots in the past. But significant changes in society and in the world over the past 50 years necessitate new developments and directions.

1. Central to these changes are changes in the nature of learning. In a brilliant piece produced by the Urban Library Council in 2013 it is argued that libraries must “embrace the library’s role as a learning institution” which include: “raising the library’s profile as a community learning leader”, building strategic partnerships to form learning networks that will broaden impact, designing space around learner priorities, increasing staff capacity to support learning strategies, offering high quality programs to diverse audiences. Action steps include “encouraging and supporting experimentation, creation, along with discovery, particularly among young learners.” Kit Hadley, Director of the St. Paul Public Library, in a recent piece for the Star Tribune summarizes some of these ideas saying, “The mission of libraries as centers of community learning is enduring...the job of libraries, as ever, is to help people navigate the learning environment...

Question: What would it mean for the library to be a community learning leader, to build networks that would broaden its impact, to help people navigate the learning environment?
2. These changes in the social context of the library pervade all aspects of library functions, like lending. Of course most libraries still lend books. But now, responding to different ways that citizens want to learn, grow and gain information, some libraries lend tools, others lend seeds, one lends craft materials, in Washington state you can borrow musical instruments (and a music teacher), and at the Toronto library you can check out all kinds of interesting people. From the website of the Oakland Tool Lending Library we learn that it is located in the basement of the Temescal Branch Library. It started as a response to the Oakland Hills Firestorm of 1991, to help residents rebuild and repair after the fire. The library saw a need and met it. The tool lending library evolved naturally out of these efforts. Now, in addition to the tools you can also get workshops in tool safety, plumbing repair, and much more depending on local need and request.

Question: Are there any needs for specific/unique lending that might be suggested by the task force?

3. The change in the nature of lending, one key aspect of the library world highlights the very important tension in new library development between universal service versus, or balanced by, unique and particular services. A key concept to maintain in our thoughts as we move forward is how much do we see universal or near universal needs for learning and information in our community; and how much do we suspect could be local and/or unique about our library functions? Phil Shapiro, in his blog, “Creative Libraries, a Partial Bibliography”, argues that “Specialty Public Libraries Offer More”. He suggests that each branch could have its own specialty, expressed through collections, programming, subject specialists, lending, etc.

Question: Are there any possible unique or local functions (beyond lending) that the southeast community advisory committee might want to suggest/consider as a focus for local library efforts?

4. This increase in variety of functions, diversity of offerings, and enlargement of the kinds of learning supported by libraries certainly applies to how libraries use their spaces to support community learning and programming. Within the library we expect now to find a space that community members can sign up for to hold meetings, classes, clubs, or social gatherings. Libraries also use these spaces to run programs for youth, reading circles for parents and kids, job search support, tax help, and much more. In Frankfort Indiana the use of space has been so crucial that with a donation from artist Harlan Hubbard the library built on a new wing, the Hubbard School of Living, which hosts bread baking, belly dancing, art galleries, and a theater. The Community Led Library Tool Kit shows how committed libraries can become and how far they will go to train their staffs to make sure that the activities and spaces within a building work on behalf of the community members.

Question: what kind of spaces and programs might we imagine are needed for the future of learning in southeast Minneapolis, and in the communities around the University of Minnesota?
5. A certain point is reached when internal creative space use and library programming that is oriented toward community reaches a kind of critical mass, crosses a line, and the library becomes a major public place, almost a community center, an anchor of life in the neighborhood. In “Libraries and Placemaking” Diantha Dow asks what it takes for a library to become the 21st century “agora” or town square and meeting place? She argues that it is an accumulation of community collaborations, creative programs, and library commitment to co-location. In this blend the library, over time, does less and less its own programming and more and more it “builds on new relationships with community partners”. And in “Libraries Strengthen Communities in Uncertain Times” Cat Johnson argues that it is the vitality of a mix: of intergenerational activities, of cultural events, that makes a home for new immigrants, that honors teens with their own spaces, that out of these diverse commitments emerges a beloved public place.

*Question: can we imagine a new kind of public space that would enrich life in the communities around the University?*

6. Another aspect of a community-centered place that can emerge in its own right, is the library as a center of democracy. The Urban Library Council is arguing that because of its reputation as “highly-trusted and valued public resource” libraries could play “an extremely important role in advancing dialogue and community engagement.” In” Libraries Leading Community” 2012 Laura Fulton lays out an ambitious agenda calling for libraries to move beyond the “constraints of its walls and into its community” with information, creativity, mobility, and support for other learning institutions. Kretzman and McKnight in their classic “Building Communities from the Inside Out” from 1993 suggest how libraries can be a leader in community renewal.

*Question: Does democratic public life need a boost in this area? What could give it such a boost?*

7. Libraries are also responding to the often-noted fact that today people can create knowledge as easily as they can consume it. Every phone and computer gives youth their own studio on which they can film, record, edit and share with the world their work. We have all become producers (at least under a certain age). Thus we see some libraries embracing the “maker space movement”, a movement to provide spaces with technology tools and staff to support these growing needs. The Fayetteville Free Library provides a 3-D printer to its patrons and has expanded into a disused factory to become one of the country’s first free maker spaces. The downtown Minneapolis Central Library of Hennepin County offers a new Teen Tech Center, linked with 100 other such centers worldwide, where teens have their own music studio, t.v. studio, filming studio, access to the most current computers and software, where they create, create, create. South Minneapolis near Lake Street houses the new Hackfactory, a cornucopia of making and creating possibilities.

*Question: How might our community embrace this exciting emerging movement?*
8. **The creative maker movement in the library world is the yin to the Public Library as an incubator for the arts, yang. The other half of the maker movement is all about the arts.** In 2012, Erinn Batykeker, co-founder of the Library as Incubator Project” (which is based in Wisconsin) argued that “we think creativity – like information – should be accessible to everyone in a community, and that the library is the perfect democratic space to make that happen. “ As long as a library is about lifelong learning, and self-directed learning, she continues, we hurt ourselves if we do not embrace the arts. Again, she argues: “no one would question the validity of children’s art programming at a library as an important component of early literacy education. Yet somehow, once you’re an adult, libraries are just about books.” The reach of artistic activities that libraries support is comprehensive, from creation, to appreciation, to collaboration with arts organizations, to direct support of artists. Indeed, our community is rich with artists and art non-profits with whom we could collaborate.

*Question:* In what ways might/should our vision incorporate the arts?

9. **The art and tech maker movements in the library world also are part of new paradigms in teen services.** In “The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action,” 2014 there is a telling quote: “Libraries used to be grocery stores. Now we need (them) to be kitchens.” This quote refers to the need for teen programming and interactions to be creative, messy, and not passive. For teens it also refers to the fact that life is not so simple anymore, and that teens today must be able to read, write, but also interact across a range of platforms, tools, and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio, and film, to digital social networks. For libraries to connect to teens, a large percentage of library users, we will need librarians that understand and like teens. “Designing Libraries that encourage Teens to Loiter” 2013, captures the mood perfectly.

*Question:* How can our vision ensure that we welcome our teens in creative and relevant ways?

10. **Collaborations, Partnerships, and Networks are fundamental to the future of our work in the community, and with teens as well.** Many of the sections in the review do overlap, and collaborations have already been mentioned. However, they need their own section for consideration for at least two reasons. The first is that, many have argued (see both reports in section 9) without collaborators such as community programs, schools, parks, and youth groups and organization, the skills and knowledge we need to bring to support teens may be lacking; that what takes places within a library worldview is not disconnected from the rest of the teens life. This is fundamental to our future. But also, as Havens and Storey argue in their brilliant article: “From Community to Technology and Back Again”, 2013 future collaborations and connections must encompass technology. And they argue that the model that can connect libraries to other networks in the community is “inside out”, meaning that libraries will have to “adopt community goals within library contexts.” Additionally, they argue that in their research “the most profound opportunities for service (for libraries and staff) seemed to occur when
libraries placed their resources within the networks and environments already being used and valued by their communities.”

**Question:** Who should we envision collaborating with? What kinds of collaborations can we imagine? Can we extend who we serve, what audiences we care about through such collaborations? Is this too much to ask of ourselves?

11. **Mobility, equity, and outreach are a key aspect of many library functions and commitments.** Of course mobile libraries go far back in history, as does visiting people at home who are disabled, and creating library collections at places where people may not be able to physically visit a library. But the new efforts at mobility and flexibility of service seem designed specifically to increase participation in library services and functions by people who can benefit, but will not come to the library. A good example is described in the article “Vroom (Valero Roving Outreach Online Mobile) an article about the San Antonio Public Library teen outreach vehicle. Through “roll-ups by VROOM! Teens interact with technology to explore, create and participate in unexpected ways”. Other forms of flexible library delivery include pop-up libraries, store front libraries, express libraries, and more. These are often designed to cross both the digital divide, but also the participation divide.

**Question:** Might our vision benefit from incorporating mobile and flexible services to overcome the digital and participation divides that exist in our society? Can we imagine/suggest a few experiments that could be tried?

12. The attached link will take you to the articles that are relevant to the sections in this short review and analysis. It is not necessary that anyone read the articles before the advisory group meets again, but if you are interested here they are. The file names and numbers correspond to the 11 sections above. There is a twelfth section that includes other reports and comments that do not fit into any specific section above. The link to the articles follows: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vevv5l3awzo3ktw/AAAkoPijV1wpFjpjDUGOAoXQa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vevv5l3awzo3ktw/AAAkoPijV1wpFjpjDUGOAoXQa?dl=0) We will augment the sections as the advisory group continues to meet.
Lending

Lending, a traditional library function, has grown to allow libraries to fit into their own communities by being able to offer unique services targeted toward the needs and desires of the specific location. If, in addition to book lending, a library also lends unusual items, objects or services - such as musical instruments - over time, the branch often follows through with additional support like music teachers, concerts, etc.

Here are some examples:
Tools
Berkeley's Tool Lending Library
Berkeley, California

Seeds
Seed lending library
Richmond Public Library | Richmond, California
Musical instruments

Ukulele lending library
- Portland Public Library
  Portland, ME

Musical instruments
- Lopez Island Library
  Lopez Island, WA

Internet

Check out the internet at
- New York Public Library
  New York, New York
Humans

Ottawa Public Library
Ontario, Canada

Cake pans

New Gloucester Public Library
New Gloucester, Maine
Outdoor equipment

Topsham Public Library
Topsham, Maine

Outdoor exploration

York Public Library | York, Maine
Makerspaces

The nature of knowledge is changing. With technology becoming increasingly accessible, more and more people are transitioning from simple consumers of information to creators and inventors of knowledge. Anyone with a smart phone has, in their pocket, a sound studio, a video production system, an artist's palette and more.

The library “makerspaces” movement is a response to this change in knowledge. These unique library spaces provide an environment where people collaborate, create, learn skills and share creations with others.

Fabulous Laboratory (FabLab)

Fayetteville Free Library | Fayetteville, New York
Best Buy Teen Tech. Center

Hennepin County Library, Central Library | Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Hack Factory

Minneapolis, Minnesota
Libraries as art incubators

Like the makerspace movement, libraries are now at the forefront of local art movements, providing space for people to create, tinker, team-up and share inspiration in a neighborhood-friendly atmosphere. Local residents and artists also use the space to display a variety of creations.

The arts are a key way to advance learning and support the growth of community residents.

Hidden stories

The Bubbler
Madison Public Library | Madison, Wisconsin
Community Mural

Poudre River Public Library District
Fort Collins | Colorado

Playbods
Dance, sensory play and storytelling experiences in unusual places

Leeds Libraries | United Kingdom
“Homespun”
Library-as-a-gallery idea

Albany Public Library | New York

Art installations

The Reading Nest
Cleveland Public Library | Ohio

Book benches
London | England
Mobile libraries

Mobile libraries dramatically increase the ability for libraries to connect with people and communities who are not currently using library resources. It is also a way to increase contact with new audiences, and connect to underserved communities.

Mobile libraries and pop-up libraries can also deliver creativity and library support to just about any part of a community, making it easy to partner with other community programs and institutions.

Bookmobile

Mount Vernon Public Library
VROOM!
Valero Roaming Online Outreach Mobile Library

San Antonio Public Library | San Antonio, New Mexico

Library in the Tram –> Tram to the Library

Brno, Czech Republic
FryskLab

Europe's First Mobile Library FabLab

sPARKit

St. Paul, Minnesota
The Sketchbook Project

Brooklyn, New York

Streetbooks

Portland, Oregon
Hospital bookmobile
The Los Angeles Public Library, 1928

Digital Bookmobile
Driven throughout the United States
Little free libraries

Stereotank: the little free library | New York City, New York

Pop-up beach library

La Romaniquette | France
“The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action,” (2014) holds this telling quote: “Libraries used to be grocery stores. Now we need (them) to be kitchens.”

This quote refers to the need for teen programming and interactions to be creative, messy and not passive. For libraries to connect to teens - a large percentage of library users - we will need librarians who understand and enjoy teens. Many libraries are meeting the challenge.

“The Circle”
Teen only library space

Tucker-Reid H. Cofer Library | Tucker, Georgia
Breakdancing classes

Washington County Cooperative Library Services
Washington State

Open-air library

Magdeburg, East Germany
Teen space
Delft Public Library, Holland

Library After Dark
Rice Street Library | St. Paul, Minnesota
Teen Central

Spaces, community & democracy

Author Cat Johnson argues: “It is the vitality of the mix: of intergenerational activities, of cultural events, that makes a home for new immigrants, that honors teens with their own spaces, that out of these diverse commitments emerges a beloved public place”.

Here are a few of many possible examples:
Contemporary dance workshop

Flushing Public Library | Queens, New York

Niños Conarte

Conarte Children's Library | Monterrey, Mexico
Reading net

Game night
Graphic Novel Symposium
Moraine Valley Community College
Palos Hills, Illinois

Exploring comic books, gaming, and pop culture.
Thursday, Sept. 18, and Friday, Sept. 19
morainevalley.edu/comicculture

Shared working space
Sidewalk talks

Interactive installations & swapping services

“I have/I need…”

Melbourne, Australia
Before I die | Candy Chang

Converting An Abandoned Walmart
Into A Public Library

McAllen, Texas
Homework help

Cultural and historical engagement
The Hubbard School of Living

Frankfort Community Public Library
Frankfort, Indiana

Arlington Hills Community Center

St. Paul, Minnesota
Footnotes


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41. NA

42. NA

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