



Community Town Hall Meeting Reporting Form

Library and date of meeting: NORTH, July 15, 2014

Number of people in attendance: 24

Exercise #1: *What is the single most important contribution the library makes to our community today?*

Top responses:

- Safe community space providing resources for reading, information, and enrichment.
- A warm and approachable democratic source of uncensored world wisdom and information
- Easy access to a wide variety of materials, tools, spaces, and culture for all members of the community

All responses:

- I notice that parents of small children check out dozens of books at a time. Nothing better than getting books to the very young. Better readers do far better all through school.
- Provides equitable, easy access to printed, visual, digital, and performed information and culture during wide hours (that could be wider, as they were before building projects).
- Berkeley's libraries are the repository for the tools we need to shape our lives, access the deep wisdom of the past, and best guess of the future based on our decisions made today.
- Classical choral music scores!
- "Happiness" and lots of interesting books we learn about and read reviews in the NYT about and want to read but we wouldn't be able to afford to buy all of them.
- A sanctuary for individual and community activity.
- Library: Meeting, safe, media/information, hard copies, educational, usable space, study space; Starbucks: wifi, space, public access, noise, 24/7 & after hours, food/coffee
- A community Nexus!
 - Identity of community/neighborhood
 - Outgoing/incoming
 - Honoring the past, living the present, creating the future.
- Provide books, magazines, computer access to all members of the community (the public) free of any direct charges.
- Disperses information. Great staff to answer questions
- Introduces "fun in reading" for children
- Reminding people of the importance of READING – particularly in these days of fast-food- style information. This is still a place to which one can escape for the sole purpose of reading – a less and less fashionable exercise these days.
- Wifi access/computers
- Making books and information available to one and all (real books as well as e-books)
- FREE access to physical media and book resources with helpful staff and programs in a local setting; Searchable, procure-on-demand knowledge
- Supports the possibility of democracy with free access to wide variety of materials
- Not only provides access to information for all the community, but leads us to the varied and new ways to find info and learn.
- Supports democracy with uncensored free access to information, supported by an approachable, knowledgeable staff.
- Makes books available for free to anyone (*but of course there are many, many more!)
- Free endless stream of information.
- Repository for communal/world wisdom
- Bring people together
- Safe haven
- Entertainment
- Education
- It is a community center, a warm and welcoming one.

Exercise #2: *What one thing could the library do to better serve the community?*

Top responses:

- Get out of the library! Mobile units, be more places, work with other groups, find communities of non-users and promote services in new ways. The library is in the COMMUNITY SERVICE BUSINESS.
- More youth outreach
- Longer hours
- Develop stronger partnership with UC Berkeley, including (but not limited to) borrowing and lending.

All responses:

- More books in Urdu – my native language, spoken by at least 500 million people. A great pool of literature, art, political thought
- Hours
- Contemporary, fresh titles
- Promote its programs and offerings widely to bring more of the community into the library
- Offer regular meeting space to nonprofit groups that is either free or nearly free
- Provide professional librarians, both adult and children’s reference specialists at each branch
- More material (books, newspapers, magazines) in foreign languages...
- Interface with UCB.
- Expand evening hours back to pre-construction levels
- Make the central library’s interior and exterior spaces more welcoming for general users(not as a smoking or boom-box lounge).
- During the school year, students who want to “just socialize” should not be allowed to “hang out” in the teen study room.
- Raise awareness, engage all youth, get them in the library early on.
- Perfect. Very satisfied.
- I am satisfied with the library as it is, especially the search system via computer.
- I use the Tool Library (South Branch) regularly, and would like to have more hours of use, rather than the ½ days we are currently given. The time for teaching care and use of tools is very important.
- Keep the books; keep the people. New buildings are sterile (specifically South, West)
- I’ve noticed you have every few interactive events for adults (maybe more community art shows using the quilt show as an inspiration. e.g. You could have more art shows that are group shows, in which many people contribute their work, maybe some around a medium and some around a theme.
- The quilt show warmed up the North Branch Library.
- Need community bulletin boards.
- Expand the books on tape collection or similar technology, especially non-fiction.
- Bring the library to the people. Mobile units.
- Make it easier to renew books online, make the “log-in” button more prominent.
- A Successful Organization’s mission:
 - Great people
 - Great programs
 - Great facilities
 - Be Proud! Be Compassionate! Be 5 stars and more!
- Find a way to target and lure community members who typically don’t use the library.
- Don’t know HOW, but ... Go to the Library campaign?
- The library should consider providing access to electronic books, the devices that can access them, and training on how to use them.