



121 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, BC, V7M 1P2
604-998-3450 • Fax: 604-983-3624 • www.cnv.org/nvcl

New Library Facility

Update to 2000 Building Program

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Preface

Marshall Fisher Architects prepared a Building Program for a new 35,000 square foot library in 2000 (updated and attached). Four years later, the original building program needs to be updated. Below you will find a recommitment to the vision for the new library emphasizing the library as a community meeting place. Library staff has identified new developments in library service delivery, in technology and in library material formats that will have an impact on space and on how the new library will be designed. Preferred adjacencies have also been updated. Currently, the Collection Development Committee is meeting to confirm the size of each library collection for the opening day collection and the projected collection 25 years from now. These figures will be available in the next two weeks.

A. Vision of the New Library Building

The Heart of the City

The new library will be a landmark building in the heart of the city. It will be a source of civic pride – bold, distinctive and transparent, with a strong physical presence on Block 62. It will surprise and inspire with its beautiful design and incorporation of public art. It will be a destination point, a meeting place, a hub of activity, a social centre of the city. It will provide all residents of the community with access to the beautiful views of the North Shore and Burrard Inlet.

A Fine Balance

The new library will be a fine balance between complementary opposites: impressive, yet intimate and human in scale; preserving the best of the traditional and offering the best of new technology; state-of-the-art, yet non-intimidating; a hub of activity as well as an oasis; a place of excitement, and a place to reflect; juxtaposing the privacy and convenience of self-service with excellent staff-assisted customer service.

A Flexible Space

The new library will be a flexible space, adaptable to the changing needs of the community and to new trends in technology; expandable to accommodate new services and materials in new formats; with common spaces that can be transformed for a variety of uses; and with legible and intuitive demarcation of distinct areas.

B. Our Community

The City is a vibrant community with 46,000 citizens residing in a 5.5 square mile area. Because of the small area, it has been determined that library service is most effectively delivered from one location at the centre of the City.

Demographic statistics (2001) and customer satisfaction surveys (2002, 2003) show:

- 72% of residents of the City are registered Library borrowers.
- 51% of the population are renters.
- Average income of \$25,326 is lower than the rest of the North Shore.
- 31% use English as a second language.
- 48% of customers walk to the Library.
- 27% of our customers live in neighbouring District of North Vancouver and 3% in West Vancouver.

In spite of our current limited facility size and limited collection size, on an average day (2002):

- 900 people use our facilities.
- 1800 items are checked out.
- 1800 items are checked in.
- 50 holds are processed and filled.
- 150 information questions are answered.
- 375 sessions are booked on the public computers.
- 100 children attend literacy based programs.

The Library is located in the heart of the city, at the hub of the public transit system, where the residential density is the highest. Our customers, including a high percentage of renters and lower income people, use the Library as a social centre and learning centre. Many people use the library as an extension of their own limited living spaces. The new library will be an oasis for the refreshment of the spirit, situated in such a way on the Civic block so as to offer beautiful views of the North Shore for all.

There is a large and growing ethnic community of library users where English is the second language. The new library must be welcoming, inviting and non-intimidating to appeal to this sector of the population.

Many customers, including some from neighbouring districts, come to the Library more than once a week, and also shop in the neighbourhood and conduct business at City Hall. The new library within the Block 62 development offers an opportunity to be a destination point, an anchor for the Central Lonsdale business area. Ample parking space and a state-of-the-art library offering meeting spaces for social contact will draw more people to this business area.

C. Library Vision Statement

As a community meeting place and gateway to knowledge, North Vancouver City library provides high quality, citizen centred services emphasizing popular materials, supporting life long learning and literacy and encouraging independent decision-making and cultural awareness.

Community meeting place

As a community meeting place, the new library will be much more than a space for library materials and services. It will be a mosaic of intimate individual spaces, gathering points for conversation and coffee, quiet study corners, and places for larger events and functions.

Impact on design: There will be a variety of seating opportunities; meeting rooms of various sizes for various uses; an internet café and retail space; a showcase for community activities and artists. Public meeting areas will be designed for after-hours and weekend use. Building, grounds and parking areas will be safe, well-lit, with clear sight lines.

Ambiance: Welcoming, colourful, exciting, lively and vibrant.

Gateway to knowledge

Lifelong learning and literacy for all is a key role for the Library, and this is supported by a library materials collection that will strike a balance between books and technology. The interior design and floor plan will be flexible enough to support an opening day collection of 160,000 items that will grow to one of 227,000. The focus will be on the delivery of excellent customer service and provision of access points for staff/customer interaction.

Impact on design: The floor space will be designed with a fine enough grid to accommodate the expansion and reconfiguration of the seismic shelving as the collection grows and shifts from its opening day layout. There will be adequate space to house library materials in a variety of formats, some as yet unknown; a variety of spaces conducive to learning, studying, conducting programs, and interacting with library resources; quiet study areas with good lighting; computer workstations and training rooms with fixed or wireless network access; state-of-the-art media and presentation rooms.

Ambiance: Calm, contemplative, relaxing, spacious and intimate.

Popular materials library

Customers demand the newest and latest in books and other media. Focus groups and customer satisfaction surveys continue to reinforce the Library's role as a popular materials library. Popular and current materials make up 25% of the Library's current circulation.

Impact on design: The popular materials will be front and centre as customers enter the Library. This will be an area of "Wow!" displays, designed for showcasing and marketing our products. With more of a bookstore look, it will highlight our new and recommended materials for those who love to browse or find a quick read. The space will be flexible to accommodate the constant shifting of materials in a variety of formats, and their supporting technologies (CD and DVD players, online databases and online shopping, etc.) It will be age appropriate for children's materials.

Ambiance: Exciting, vibrant, attractive, dynamic, spacious, interactive, fun and whimsical.

D. Basic Assumptions of the 2000 Building Program

The Marshall-Fisher Library Space Needs Analysis (2000) provided a detailed Building Program based on the population growth of the city, established public library building standards, the need to incorporate new technology, and the Library's established vision to serve as a community meeting space in addition to providing high quality library services that focus on popular materials, lifelong learning and literacy.

The basic assumptions of the building program (with updates) are:

- A landmark building
- A 35,000 sq ft building to deliver library service for the next 25 years
- Two floors
- One main secure entrance/exit
- A variety of spaces for quiet study & noisy activity, small & large meeting rooms, individual & group study, self-service & staff-assisted service points
- Housing for up to a maximum of 227,000 items
- Balances traditional services with new technologies
- Supports wireless technology
- Supports RFID technology
- Flexible space to accommodate future new services, materials and technologies
- Legible space and signage
- Ergonomically sound spaces and furnishings
- Incorporates green space, example: reading garden/courtyard/patio
- A sustainable, green building
- Adequate parking

The Library's preference is to build the new library in a new location on Block 62, so that library services remain uninterrupted until the move into the new facility.

E. Updates to the 2000 Building Program

The following are new items to be added to the 2000 Building Program in light of new developments in technology and new concepts of service delivery.

1. Wireless Network

The new library building will support wireless network technology in public areas, some staff areas, and possibly some of the adjoining public green space. Wireless network coverage will be over small discrete areas that can be turned off or on depending on the usage of that area. There will still be a network of cables delivering secure network connections to all areas of the library, to which wireless hubs, switches and routers can be attached. Fiber optic cables are preferable.

Impact:

Wireless networks create flexible space for computer, laptop and hand-held device usage, downplaying the need for dedicated computer areas and training rooms. Common seating areas will double as laptop access areas to the internet. Meeting rooms can be easily converted to computer training rooms and language learning labs and back again. Design considerations will include sight lines for optimal placement of routers and reduction of barriers to wireless broadcast. A fine grid system of electrical outlets will be required, as will storage space for hardware to be loaned to customers for use in wireless areas.

2. RFID and Self-Check Technology

The Library will use an RFID security system for the new building. All materials will have RFID tags, and customers will be able to check their own items out and in.

Impact:

RFID technology is still evolving and its effective range of detection will no doubt be increasing. Clear sight lines and space considerations may be an issue in the future. Self-checkin also requires increased space in the circulation check-in area to accommodate the self-sorting conveyor system and drop bins. Self-checkout machines will also require their own space on both floors and near the entrance/exit, all within sight of a staff service area.

3. New Equipment

With the increasing demand by customers for high-end hardware in public institutions, the new library will have to accommodate new equipment. There will be more computers to access new electronic formats, more laptops, notebooks and hand-held devices. The Library will have a stock of equipment for loan and use in a wireless environment. There will be a public Print Shop area where customers can have access to high-end colour photocopying, photo printers, scanners and the like. There will be a need for more computer equipment with adaptive technology for the sight and hearing impaired.

Impact:

Fixed computer stations to access electronic information will take up more space (35-50 sq ft per station) than information in traditional formats on shelves. In addition, more space and furnishings will be required to accommodate laptop users on the wireless network.

4. New Services/Concepts

Though the majority of the library materials are grouped into large categories and arranged sequentially on shelves, there are certain high-use sections targeting specific groups in our community that the Library will highlight in kiosk form.

- Reader's Advisory Centre
- Job Search Centre
- ESL and Language Learning Centre
- Community Information Centre
- Consumer Information Centre
- Small Business Centre
- Homework Help Centre

Impact:

These kiosk areas will include books, AV materials and other resources which could include computers with specialized access to that subject area, multimedia equipment for accessing AV formats, tables and chairs for interacting with staff or for discussion groups, etc. These kiosk areas will each have their own adjacencies. For example, Reader's Advisory will be adjacent to Popular Materials, a quiet reading area and a meeting room for book club discussions. The others will be adjacent to the Non-Fiction and Reference collections and an Information Desk.

5. Retail and After-hours Public Area

A small retail area for sale opportunities is required. In addition, use of the internet café and public meeting room(s) should be maximized to include after-hours operation.

Impact:

The design of these potential after-hours areas should take into consideration that library materials must be secured after-hours, and the place must be safe for public use in the evenings.

Adjacencies

Based on the assumption that the new library will be a 35,000 sq ft building on two floors, these are the preferred adjacencies.

Main Entrance Level

- The busy, lively, exciting, activity-oriented part of the Library.
- By the main entrance --- reception area (directional service desk, registrations, orientation), circulation work area, check-out desk, self check-out machines, check-in drop slots, public washrooms.
- Retail area and internet café adjacent to magazine/newspaper reading area.
- Prominent Main Information Desk to accommodate three staff members.
- Popular materials and recommended reading up front.
- Readers Advisory and Fiction collection next to the Popular Materials.
- Teen and Children's collections, storytime structure and stroller parking areas.
- Group meeting spaces for homework help and group study.
- Multi-purpose meeting room for seminars, library programs and other public use.
- Home Services and Large Print collection in a quieter area.

Other Level

- The calm, contemplative, engaging, study/research-oriented part of the Library.
- A second central Information Desk to accommodate two staff members.
- Non-Fiction and Reference collections.
- Computer stations for access to electronic resources.
- Print shop and kiosk areas near the Information Desk.
- Quiet study rooms.
- Large divisible multi-purpose meeting room.
- More public washrooms, self-checkout unit
- Administration and staff offices, staff washrooms, lockers, showers.

Shared Space with City Hall

- Galleria for receptions and gatherings
- Auditorium
- Shared meeting room(s)
- Storage