September 2022

Stratford Public Library

Stratford Library

Final Report

Stratford PUBLIC LIBRARY

lemay

Land Acknowledgement

As we gather, we acknowledge that we are meeting on the original land inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning.

As settlers, we're grateful for the opportunity to meet here and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land since time immemorial.

In particular, we acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place. We also recognize the contributions of Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community in particular, and our province and country as a whole.

As settlers, this recognition of the contributions and historic importance of Indigenous peoples must also be clearly and overtly connected to our collective commitment to make the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our communities.

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Introduction

Project Overview

In the Spring of 2022, Lemay was engaged by Stratford Public Library to conduct a space needs assessment of their existing library and determine what their future space needs and requirements would be for a facility designed to continue and enhance the great work and public service that the Stratford Public Library provides to the Stratford community and the greater Perth County region.

As a public client, Stratford Public Library has complexity in a wide range of formal and informal stakeholder groups. Successful delivery required an engagement with a cross-section of these stakeholders, facilitating and empowering them through the process alongside the core client team.

The Place Strategy team's directive was to conduct a comprehensive review and engagement process to develop a thorough understanding of the library's service delivery goals, facility needs, and operational patterns. These were then translated into square footage requirements, and these requirements were then scaled to Stratford's 2042 projected population. From here the team provided scenarios of the square footage and program components required to enable the Stratford Public Library to continue delivering a high caliber of community services and programming for a growing city.

In addition to the report, the engagement team was tasked with the creation of a turn-key facility planning tool that the client could use to input, evaluate, and validate potential programming and support ongoing design development. The tool is flexible and supports modification to enable the library team to make design decisions and modifications to the potential space program as they occur after the project engagement completes.

The project was delivered through a combination of desktop study and evaluation, remote collaboration, and on-site design and engagement meetings. The space recommendations report and living tool framework are supported by a combination of real estate and facility industry best practices, Statistics Canada, and CMLC data, municipal and code and accessibility regulations, and guiding principals from the Ontario Public Library Guidelines – 6th Edition, and Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline 2009.

In addition to technical requirements, the report also accounts for a wide variety of levers at play in a project like this; financial, political, and social levers can all impact the delivery of a new municipal library building and were considered. A core goal for the team was to deliver a space needs study and recommendation that is practical, implementable, uplifts, and supports the truly awe-inspiring work that the Stratford Public Library does within its community.

Recognizing that successful strategies always take place within the larger context of their community and stakeholder goals and that there are multiple competing influences and levers that can impact success or viability, the participants in our engagement sessions were asked to prioritize four major levers: People & Culture, Space, Technology, and Budget as to their importance for the project and influence on the future of the Stratford Public Library.

Out of this exercise, stakeholders told us that the three primary levers that would influence the success of a new library project were **Space, People & Culture, and Budget.** On the whole, **Technology** was identified as a low priority due to the level of technological sophistication and services already in place.

The following options and recommendations in this report are measured against these priorities.

Engagement Summary

"This is a fork in the road moment for the board, stay in place or boldly go forward with a bold vision of a new future"

- POLITICAL STAKEHOLDER

"The library is doing great, but they could do so much more if they could expand" "

- COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER

"The library needs to set out a compelling vision, it has credibility to spend if they spend it well"

- POLITICAL STAKEHOLDER

Engagement Details
3 Focus Groups
Community stakeholders
Staff
Political representatives
3 Group Interviews
Executives
People and physical assets
Public service librarians
6 Individual Interviews
Mayor
Deputy Mayor
Councillor
Former board members
Author and Stakeholder
Volunteer coordinator
4 Building and Site Observation Tours
Programs & Collections
In-charge staff
Facilities
Library assistants

Priorities Summary

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Budget
- Technology

Sub-Themes

Legend

Community Profile	24%
Equity & Accessibility	23%
Location, Location, Location	16%
Service Diversification	16%
Retail Theory & Linger Time	9%
Partnerships	5%
Multi-Functional	4%
Heritage	3%

Voices at the Table

"Its important to protect heritage, but we need to recognize and address it when it stops working"

"My daughter's school was very crowded, she used to come to the library to get quiet space"

"Its important that we protect what we've got and make it even better "

- COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER, LIBRARY USER

"We need a library that is better suited to a town of this size and our growth trajectory"

"I'm concerned for the staff's physical safety, some of the layout seems challenging"

"A Stratford Library should be able to live up to the town statement "THE ARTS ARE WHAT WE ARE" "

- AUTHOR, FATHER, ENTREPRENEUR

"The renewal of a heritage building is a great vision and story for Stratford"

"The library is doing something special"

- POLITICAL STAKEHOLDER

"The program spaces need to expand because there are so many programs"

"There is no way to expand the physical building, the site is too constrained"

"Tech is great, but COVID proved that people need people"

- POLITICAL STAKEHOLDER, MOM

"Get me to the library on time grandpa!"

"The library isn't tolerating, its accepting, it meets people where they are"

- EDUCATOR, GRANDFATHER

What is Stratford Public Library?

Community

Service

Equity

Stratford Map

2

Analysis of Existing Space

Current Conditions

“The library is a place that people in the community know is safe to come to and that is key”

Political Stakeholder

The most dominant theme in our engagement was the Stratford Public Library Team’s authentic commitment to community service, diversity, inclusion, and openness to all, and the high public esteem that the organization enjoys in the Stratford community as a result.

The library team has truly leaned into community service and in addition to typical children’s and adult programs, its programs and services are specifically targeted toward helping members of the community across all demographics, with a proactive interest in supporting those less fortunate.

It is rare to find an organization as inspiring as the Stratford Public Library with the broad public support and high esteem that the organization enjoys in the Stratford community. This is further reflected in the rebound of program registrations and participants this summer to peak numbers enjoyed pre-COVID levels.

The other dominant theme of our engagement can be summed up by the following comment;

“The building is killing us”

Staff Member

Echoing the findings of the 2003 ‘Stratford Public Library Space Needs Study” the current facility size of 12,472 ft^2 is significantly undersized per Ontario Public Library Guidelines which state: Branches serving catchment areas of 10,000-35,000 population: Minimum 10,000 ft^2 or 1 ft^2 per capita in the library’s catchment area, whichever is greater. Statistics Canada reported the 2021 population of Stratford at 33,232, representing an approximate 20,000 ft^2 deficit in the space required for a public library to support a population of the municipality’s current size.

This space deficit creates significant impacts and risks for the organization. It should be noted however that the library staff has tried every possible layout and programming combination, playing an ongoing game of Tetris to get the most of what space they do have.

“The staff has done the best that they can with the space that we’ve got”

Community Stakeholder

BUILDING OPERATIONS

- Operational technology requirements and services like public access computer terminals are limited by the lack of space; in addition the physical construction of the building interferes with wireless signals and limits the ability to update the wiring for technology services.
- Technology services personnel are crammed into the basement, while the server room is on the third floor.
- Custodial services do not have enough space for the proper storage of cleaning materials and supplies.
- Children’s program supplies must be stored on the third floor while most children’s services take place on the basement level.
- Staff are constantly running up and down the stairs.
- Public washrooms are primarily on the basement level with only one single user facility on the main floor. This is a particular issue for parents or caregivers with dependants who have special requirements when programming is taking place in the auditorium on the third floor as there is no public washroom on that level.
- There is a shortage of space for storage, with materials, volunteer personal items, children’s toys and a host of other collateral crammed into any space that can be carved out.

LOGISTICS

- The lack of suitable shipping and receiving facility creates an excessive amount of material handling by staff members for inter-library and PCIN network as illustrated in the Book Flow Diagram on page 34. This also increases the risk of workplace injury for staff members.
- This constraint also heightens the risk of theft because assets belonging to SPL, PCIN and the wider inter-library loan system have no other options but to be left unsecured in multiple public places in the handling process.

Current Conditions

USER SAFETY & ACCESSIBILITY

- As is typical to a building of this age there is a distinct lack of accessibility and universal access for patrons and staff with mobility issues, e.g. stair treads in the single public stairwell are too steep, and the elevator is too small for a powered mobility device.
- The currently approved fire safety plan requires staff to leave a patron with accessibility issues in the open auditorium on the third floor in the event of a fire.
- While 'grandfather' clauses apply in the case of most pre-existing construction, the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal is increasingly finding in favour of accessibility complainants and the legal risks posed by accommodation issues increase year over year.
- The lack of space for patron lockers or cloakrooms means that patrons regularly create unsafe conditions at exit points by leaving clothing, coats, shoes, and strollers, crowding these exit points.
- Deliveries and inter-library crates often crowd the eastern basement exit when dropped off by courier and delivery services.
- The structure of the building creates a condition wherein the main public access point from the parking lot opens directly into the children's play area while a solid masonry wall between the children's play area and circulation desk blocks sightlines for staff.
- Further detail of these conditions and their risks and liabilities is outlined in the *2018 Broker Risk & Report, prepared by Frank Cowen Company.*

STAFF SPACES

- There is not enough office space for a staff of this size. The library has had to sacrifice program spaces to create workspaces for staff that are small, have poor ergonomics, and have no off-desk space for staff to perform duties. Many of these spaces also have little to no ventilation or natural light.
- The staff lounge on the third floor is small, segregated from other staff areas and has inadequate ventilation. This means staff are often required to cross public areas and leave the door open to the main auditorium inviting patron interactions during their breaks increasing the risk of exhaustion and burnout.

MORALE

- The Stratford Public Library staff has a remarkable passion for public service, and commitment to creating positive and equitable experiences for patrons, they do their best to ensure that patrons feel welcome and supported.
- An underlying exhaustion and frustration with years of making do and a perceived lack of action by the board and the municipality on many of the issues identified in the 2003 Space Needs Study was present with much of the staff, raising concerns for employee wellness, burn out, and talent retention.

PROGRAMS

- The lack of space has a significant impact on the program offerings of the library, and growth in a program is only possible if a cut is made to another program.
- Children's programs are critical in providing equitable access and support for the community and the facility is woefully inadequate to support these activities.
- While the library has been able to mitigate some of these constraints by taking many programs off-site and into public parks, this mitigation strategy is seasonally constrained, and the library is unable to meet public demand for its programs.
- There are no public washrooms on the top floor adjacent to the program room, this forces parents to make tough decisions if they or a second child need to use the washroom during a program.
- Expansion of innovative new library programs and services like; tool and instrument lending libraries, entrepreneur spaces and services, technology lending and access, are non-starters because there is no space for them.

Current Conditions

COLLECTION

- Due to a lack of space in the building, the library is forced to regularly cull books simply because they have not been used within the last two years
- The small collection thus inhibits patrons from browsing and discovery, as there is little depth to the collection outside of best-sellers, reducing repeat visits
- This also results in approximately $18K in assets being removed annually that would otherwise be kept in the collection
- The library is often required to re-acquire titles that have been culled when they see a resurgence in popularity after being turned into movies, or more frequently, picked up by major book club promoters (Oprah, Reese Witherspoon, etc)

PARKING

- The library has only four parking stalls, with a further four shared with the neighbouring church outside of church hours.
- A moderate increase in available on street parking was created when the municipality reconfigured traffic on St Andrews St, however on street parking is shared with the surrounding business and continues to be inadequate.
- The lack of parking was cited as a complaint in virtually every session or interview conducted with a non-political stakeholder.

LOCATION

- The prominent downtown location, and the adjacency to the central shopping district and nearby town centre are benefits, however, the location is also completely constrained leaving no room for the library to grow or innovate services to serve the changing demographics of its stakeholders without eliminating programs and services for other stakeholders.
- The constrained location and the current configuration of the building also make major improvements to the property incredibly difficult to implement without shutting down operations.
- Most stakeholders do not want to see the library depart its current location, but they also recognize that it can not properly serve the community at this location.

"The library has, for far too long, "made do," and has perhaps done it too well. As a result, it has become necessary to shine a spotlight on problems long in developing. The Library has truly far and long outgrown its space. Each year it gets worse."

Stratford Public Library Space Needs Study, Ventin Report 2003

SUMMARY

The existing building is no longer suitable as a singular location for the operation and provision of library programs and services required to support a municipality the size of Stratford Ontario, let alone for the growth projected by Statistics Canada to a population of 44,000 by 2042, as such this report does not detail a status quo scenario as a viable option.

The many reasons that the current building is unsustainable are not only detailed in the pages of this report but were also detailed in the pages of the previous Ventin report issued 19 years ago, these issues have gotten worse and additional issues have developed in the time since.

After a renovation, it would be possible for the building at 19 St Andrew Street to find new life as a secondary branch location and it is our team's position that this should be considered as a future strategy once a new main branch library has been opened, but there is no reasonable approach to adapt this site into a primary branch capable of meeting the current and future Library needs of the Stratford community without significant disruption to operations and cost.

Site Observations

1	dangrous crossing
	scary corner
2	<3 new garden
	beautiful gardens and dowtown location
3	tension over shared parking with church
	need more free parking
General	weird off the main road location
	no main road signage/library sign
	cut off from downtown by Ontario Street
	lacks active transport infrastructure
	class division for those who shop downtown vs mall
	outside is a hill from every direction - poor for seniors/ acessibility, walkability, and biking
	landlocked, hard to navigate

Site Plan

N

Legend

Negative comment	text
Neutral/positive comment	text

Note: Verbatim comments and feedback collected from stakeholder

Site Observations

Basement Floor Plan

N

Legend

Negative comment	text
Neutral/positive comment	text

Note: Verbatim comments and feedback collected from stakeholders

1	like quiet spaces for working/tutoring
	no room for bins (transit)
	would love more space for programs for children & tweens who aren't feeling ready for adult floor
2	heavy doors
3	side door easy to get into with children & strollers, little kids love this door and entry way
4	narrow and cluttered
5	no sight lines, danger + mischief abound
	like that the washrooms are changing
6	too small
7	kids area is fun and has good flow
	like the children's area
	new colour scheme is so calming and welcoming
8	Like children's program office is near picture book area
	no windows
	too small, need storage
9	couriers etc. in and out of where kids play
10	no windows in IT offices
General	we have to carry everything from tech closet up and down through parking lot with not awesome carts
	not enough stacks, sacrificing quality of collection
	flow - office spaces butt up against spaces for children
	poor sightlines between sections
	more shipping and recieving space
	wish storage shelves had doors we could use for kids program
	lack of windows

Site Observations

Ground Level Floor Plan

N

Legend

Negative comment	text
Neutral/positive comment	text

Note: Verbatim comments and feedback collected from stakeholders

1	CD collection. What are CD's?
	Natural light
	more room for video game collection
	off white shelves are gross
2	computers - too few, time limits
	need more computers
	public computers are intimidating to a lot of people
3	new redesign configuration is much more welcome
	adult floor desk - set back, but central
	approachable from all sides, good sightlines
4	quiet is a service that people still expect
	new seating is very welcome
	adult floor couches - living room feel
5	not open enough, not a good view from desk
	seperate space for different needs
6	too small for mobility devices
	dangerous for trips and falls
7	so great but need more space. Increase size, increase capacity
	draws people in due to location
	WAY too small
8	teen area should be bigger and have privacy. Kids should be able to make noise
	teen area very small, don't teens want to be seen?
	teen area is seperate from adult
9	AODA shelf distances, most aisles still very narrow, not enough stacks for collection
	stacks are restrictive because of size
	stacks are not big enough, quality of collection is sacrificed
General	need more private spaces, especially for youth
	high ceilings are awesome
	main space is limited, a lot of open concept
	more private (bookable) meeting spaces
	showers
	CMHA, connection + presence
	windows
	no safe spaces on main floor in emergencies

Site Observations

Second Level Floor Plan

N

Legend

Negative comment	text
Neutral/positive comment	text

Note: Verbatim comments and feedback collected from stakeholders

1	great office but has too much stuff and clutter
	3 people crammed in space
	colour is gross
2	need more storage
3	auditorium rocks <3
	good meeting space - maybe we need more spaces like this for community groups to use
	«new» auditorium is very welcoming, people love the colour scheme and bright windows
	hidden gem
	nice that it's seperate from other quieter spaces
	elevator facilities access
	not enough program space... sharing one auditorium
	what's that smell... do we have an open plumbing stack in the attic?
	too big or too small depending on usage
	no bathrooms, no browsing
	community wants to book for private group use
	smart screen on wrong end
3	need more storage
4	colour of walls is awful and unwelcoming
5	SLOW
6	OMG have you seen the staff bathroom?
	works great for staff who are on the 3rd floor, not great for other staff
General	invest in staff spaces
	not enough office spaces - sometimes people have to share computers (even fulltime)

Book Flow Diagram

Basement Floor Plan

Ground Floor Plan

NEW INCOMING BOOKS

1	mail
2	tech services (computer, rack)
3	workroom (computer, rack)
4	out for circulation

RETURNED BOOKS

1	collected from outside 1, inside 1, and inside 2
2	workroom (computer, rack)
3	out for circulation, or out for PCIN (stays at 2, red bin)

HOLDS/SELF PICK UP

1	collected from stacks
2	workroom (computer, rack)
3	holds area
4	self check out, or staff counter

INTERLIBRARY INCOMING (PCIN)

1	delivered from door 1
2	stored in location 1
3	workroom (computer, rack) or (computer, bin)
4	out for circulation, or
5	delivery pick up area

INTERLIBRARY OUTGOING

1	collected from stacks
2	workroom (computer, bin)
3	delivery pick up area

7 Categories Summary

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The library has an incredibly high profile with the broader Community, the library is seen as being very community focused and the people that we interviewed were impressed and thankful for how the library has leaned into serving all levels of the community. Respondents were also thankful for the services that the library continued to provide during COVID. This was common with political representatives, not for profit groups and community members at large. However, some stakeholders also encouraged the library board to be mindful of pursuing a strategy that would be considered in-line with the municipal identity and compatible with other city priorities.

EQUITY & ACCESSIBILITY

There were two key themes for equity and accessibility, one positive: in that the library is very highly regarded for being a space that is open and accessible to all groups, and there was encouragement for the library to continue to engage with and provide space where possible for other community groups that are focused on serving these communities and providing access and equity. The other theme was a negative: the current space is viewed by many to have significant issues with accessibility and access, multiple issues for people that are differently abled, the expectation is that organizations be proactive in addressing accessibility issues.

HERITAGE

The city of Stratford is notable for the scale of heritage preservation in the town centre, and this was cited as a source of pride and ongoing aspiration for the city and many stakeholders. Stratford City Centre Core has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18, as a Heritage Conservation District and there were many comments around the interplay with any future library strategy and its alignment with the broader community's goals and aspirations when it comes to heritage preservation. However, there was also a recognition that the library could not just be moved from one heritage building to another without a significant renovation or addition to address these constraints. Any future strategy must take careful consideration and have a plan to address the importance placed on heritage in the Stratford community by key stakeholders and decision makers in its execution and communication.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

In our engagement sessions there were many discussions around the location of the library. Many stakeholders expressed that the downtown location and heritage quality of the existing library was desirable, however there was also a consistent recognition of the constraints presented by the site. There were concerns about counter effects in public opinion and community profile if the library were to leave the existing location at a primary activity anchor of downtown. In addition, the costs and optics of a net new library build and pre-existing first rights to locations from other stakeholders must be considered.

There were consistent themes across all interviews that the Stratford Public Library needs more space, better parking, direct access to park spaces, space for Indigenous programing, and co-location with other social services. Many stakeholders suggested that the library consider a new primary location that could service these needs that it should aspire to become a 'central library' for the broader Perth County Information Network.

PARTNERSHIPS

The library was recognized for and encouraged to continue to lean into more partnerships. This approach was encouraged by political representatives and not for profit stakeholders, in arts, culture, and community. Political stakeholders recommended that the library should "Come to the Council table with other partners and support, as it makes getting what you need more likely." The ability to house these groups within the library was also seen as a benefit to increase both the library's profile and as a lever increase support for funding. Partnerships and programs that support Wellness and Mental health are a large focus for stakeholders, and commercial partnerships are seen as something to be considered but the partner would need to be acceptable on a political level. There was also an encouragement to find a more permanent or visible way to recognize fundraisers or doners, paving stones, or bricks etc. however there was a consistent view that naming rights were not encouraged.

RETAIL THEORY & LINGER TIME

There was a general understanding that the library is doing the best it can with the space that it has, however many respondents encouraged the library to pursue a space strategy that will allow it to provide more retail and service options. This included more space for the stacks to increase the size of the collection and allow more browsing and discovery, as well as to encourage a more diverse users to come to the library and capitalize on opportunities to derive revenue from retail, and food service from the 1M+ tourists that visit Stratford every year. Ideas that were discussed positively were a café + bookstore, a speakeasy, space would highlight local authors and art, as well as more program and meeting spaces for external users to book.

SERVICE DIVERSIFICATION

A key message was the support from the majority that the library should continue to provide and further expand a variety of services and programs beyond books. While the collection remains a core component the decision to have a strong focus on providing equitable and accessible services for the under-privileged, entrepreneurs, and wellness services were supported by 99% of stakeholders that we spoke with. Respondents also encouraged the library to pursue a space strategy that allows it to provide even more services and public spaces like, music and recording places, a more diverse lending library for tools, technology, and instruments, as well as public meeting spaces and a theatre and music venue that is accessible to the community for individuals that can't afford the market rates in other spaces.

3

Option 1
New Build

New Build Option (Library + Affordable Housing)

PROS

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- Ability to provide optimized staff and client experience (e.g. larger collection = longer linger time).

SPACE

- Ability to provide "full" core library, community, retail, and outdoor services.
- Space allocation is equitable and right-sized for the future projections of Stratford.
- Key services and adjacencies are accommodated.
- All staff are located in one location.
- The process and flow of books and people are maximized.

TECHNOLOGY

- Ability to provide the latest technology (budget dependent)

BUDGET

- Potential to harness community and private investment
- Option to access affordable and attainable housing programs in a combined facility

CONS

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- Loss of historic site and anchor building within downtown Stratford
- Loss of connection/memories with the original building

SPACE

- Site allocation is unconfirmed

TECHNOLOGY

- n/a

BUDGET

- Large budget investment
- Cost of site acquisition

Programming Breakdown	
Stacks & Core Program Areas	13,511 ft²
Reader Seating Areas	6,925 ft²
Staff Spaces	4,724 ft²
Logistical Spaces	2,937 ft²
Building Infrastructure (Mech + HVAC)	2,072 ft²
Building Infrastructure (Washrooms)	548 ft²
Core Library Services Total	**30,716 ft²**
Community Services	9,330 ft²
Retail	4,000 ft²
Outdoor Areas	25,438 ft²

Legend

Core Library Services	44%
Outdoor Area	34%
Community Services	16%
Retail Area	6%

Scenario Summary			
Core Library Services Area (circ. 30%)	39,931 ft²	Total Usable SF	59,954 ft²
Community Services Area (circ. 30%)	14,823 ft²	Rentable SF (10% Gross Up)	65,949 ft²
Retail Area (circ. 30%)	5,200 ft²	Scenario Location	60,000 ft²
Outdoor Area (circ. 25%)	31,438 ft²	Gap +/- for Core Services	20,069 ft²
		Gap +/- w/ Community and Retail Services	46 ft²

7 Category Analysis

Independence Library and Apartments

Precedent Analysis

Chicago, IL

Architects John Ronan Architects

Year of realization 2019

Area 60,000 f²

Typology Library, Affordable Housing

Key Takeaways This project combines a two-story 60,000 f² library with a 44 unit affordable housing complex for seniors. The library component includes a large community multipurpose room which supports public lectures, gatherings, and events, as well as reading and learning areas for all age groups. A terrace space over covered parking on the second floor serves as an outdoor amenity space for residents and library users on occasion.

4

Option 2
Retail Conversion

Retail Conversion Option

PROS

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- Ability to provide enhanced staff and client experience (e.g. larger collection = longer linger time).

SPACE

- Ability to provide increased core library services, community and outdoor areas
- Space allocation is equitable and right-sized for the areas that are included
- Key services and adjacencies are accommodated.
- All staff are located in one location.

TECHNOLOGY

- Ability to provide the latest technology (budget dependent)

BUDGET

- Potential to harness community and private investment

CONS

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- Loss of historic site and anchor building within downtown Stratford
- Loss of connection/memories with the original building

SPACE

- Site allocation is unconfirmed (gaps in the area to due size restrictions)
- Lack of dedicated retail area

TECHNOLOGY

- Potential restrictions by location

BUDGET

- Moderate budget investment

Programming Breakdown	
Stacks & Core Program Areas	11,948 ft²
Reader Seating Areas	5,075 ft²
Staff Spaces	4,664 ft²
Logistical Spaces	2,537 ft²
Building Infrastructure (Mech + HVAC)	2,036 ft²
Building Infrastructure (Washrooms)	548 ft²
Core Library Services Total	**26,807 ft²**
Community Services	1,920 ft²
Retail	- ft²
Outdoor Areas	21,150 ft²

Legend

Core Library Services	52%
Outdoor Area	40%
Community Services	8%
Retail Area	0%

Scenario Summary			
Core Library Services Area (circ. 30%)	34,849 ft²	Total Usable SF	39,992 ft²
Community Services Area (circ. 30%)	5,143 ft²	Rentable SF (10% Gross Up)	43,991 ft²
Retail Area (circ. 30%)	- ft²	Scenario Location	40,000 ft²
Outdoor Area (circ. 25%)	26,438 ft²	Gap +/- for Core Services	5,151 ft²
		Gap +/- w/ Community and Retail Services	8 ft²

7 Category Analysis

McAllen Main Library

Precedent Analysis

McAllen, TX

Architects MSR Design

Year of realization 2011

Area 125,000 f²

Typology Library

Key Takeaways This abandoned Walmart turned library is the largest single-story library in the United States, with an area equivalent to 2.5 football fields. Primary program areas (such as community meeting rooms, children's areas, staff spaces) are located in quadrants of the building for easy wayfinding and access from a central circulation spine.

5

Option 3
Normal School

Normal School Option

PROS

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- Ability to provide enhanced staff and client experience (e.g. larger collection = longer linger time).
- Ability to attract clientele from the surrounding park and theatre area (1M annual visitors)

SPACE

- Ability to provide increased core library services, community, retail and outdoor areas
- Space allocation is equitable and right-sized for the areas that are included
- Key services and adjacencies are accommodated.
- All staff are located in one location.

TECHNOLOGY

- Ability to provide the latest technology (budget dependent)

BUDGET

- Potential to harness community and private investment

CONS

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- Loss of historic site and anchor building within downtown Stratford
- Loss of connection/memories with the original building

SPACE

- Building allocation & lease agreement with the city unconfirmed
- Amount of adjacent parkland that can be allocated for parking & new addition unconfirmed
- Heritage constraints
- Location is not central to routine traffic for majority of residents (not co-located with shopping, transit, other amenities)
- Potential loss of parkland

TECHNOLOGY

- Potential restrictions by location

BUDGET

- Moderate to high budget investment

Programming Breakdown	
Stacks & Core Program Areas	11,978 ft²
Reader Seating Areas	4,450 ft²
Staff Spaces	4,114 ft²
Logistical Spaces	2,537 ft²
Building Infrastructure (Mech + HVAC)	2,108 ft²
Building Infrastructure (Washrooms)	1,187 ft²
Core Library Services Total	**26,373 ft²**
Community Services	6,945 ft²
Retail	8,200 ft²
Outdoor Areas	24,150 ft²

Legend

Core Library Services	39%
Outdoor Area	35%
Community Services	14%
Retail Area	12%

Scenario Summary			
Core Library Services Area (circ. 30%)	34,285 ft²	Total Usable SF	56,714 ft²
Community Services Area (circ. 30%)	11,769 ft²	Rentable SF (10% Gross Up)	62,386 ft²
Retail Area (circ. 30%)	10,660 ft²	Scenario Location (existing)	36,717 ft²
Outdoor Area (circ. 25%)	30,188 ft²	Scenario Location (new build)	20,000 ft²
		Gap +/- for Core Services	22,432 ft²
		Gap +/- w/ Community and Retail Services	3 ft²

7 Category Analysis

Montmagny Library Heritage Transformation Precedent Analysis

Montmagny, QC

Architects Lemay

Year of realization 2016

Area 46,800 f²

Typology Library

Key Takeaways This project by Lemay converted a building with important heritage value for the community into a public library ensuring integration with its surroundings. The new construction provides additional building services, and program spaces and ties them into the heritage building and landscape, fostering an approach that is in harmony with nature. Montmagny residents rallied around the new library's preservation of a heritage building and its clean and articulated architecture, it has since become a regional attraction.

6

Conclusion

Final Recommendation Summary Page

Stratford Public Library requires a library facility of 34,000 ft² to meet the needs of its current population, its present facility of 12,472 ft² is undersized by 21,528 ft² which creates significant constrictions and challenges to its operations and ability to service the community.

This lack of space is responsible for the many issues outlined in this report and places the size of library's collection at 12th place out of 15 similarly sized municipalities.

Best practice within the building industry and by Ontario Public Library guidelines recommends a 20-year demand and population forecasting model for a 'new' facility, placing the Stratford Public Library's space needs recommendation for core library services including the collection, reader seating, staff spaces, building logistics, existing programming spaces for children and adults, and logistics at a facility size of 44,000 ft².

The library's core service offerings, provide upwards of $11M in direct tangible benefit to the Stratford community. Stratford Public Library is however more than just its core services and over and above this tangible benefit the library provides additional social services support, wellness and community benefit services, entrepreneur and arts services, and a safe space for community members to find refuge without user fees.

There are many user benefit and impact stories that outline how the library has helped members of the community, whether that's by supporting their transition from an at-risk population in need of social assistance into a business owner and taxpayer, or by providing a safe space for children to go when things aren't great at home. In the consultations during this process, community members and stakeholders consistently encouraged Stratford Public Library build up more of these services and co-locate additional social services support and wellness programming within a future facility, building off and leveraging the community's comfort with accessing these services at a location that comes without stigma.

In addition, members of the community also encouraged the library to create and access additional sources of revenue through retail offerings like a bookstore café, a speakeasy, and/or a family focused picnic and beer garden.

To allow the library to provide these additional services and retail offerings on top of its core program offerings it is our recommendation that an additional 16,000 ft² be included for a total space recommendation of 60,000 ft² for the library of 2042. This will not only allow the library to continue to provide its core services and build up its partnerships with other social and community programs, in the right location it will also allow the library an opportunity to create its own revenue streams by providing more activity options for community members and the 1M+ tourists that visit Stratford annually, and open more opportunities for giving within a community that per CRA data has the highest per capita charitable receipts in the country.

Based on our engagement our team sees two primary, but disparate avenues that the library board can pursue. The first is a net new mixed-use Library & Affordable housing facility like the Independence Library and Apartments located near or adjacent to the Cooper Site, the second is a renovation and addition to a city owned heritage asset like the Normal School. Both options come with their benefits and challenges, and both offer a route towards growing the Stratford Public library into a centerpiece of the Perth County Information Network and capturing the imagination of the community and its visitors. Its up to the library board to determine which of these routes is the right option for their community and set a out a bold new vision of 'Ever Wonder'.

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Document Tracking

Document Tracking Log	
Name of document	**Date Submitted**
Stratford Library Engagement Summary Report	July 15, 2022
Stratford Library Needs Assessment Final Report Draft	September 22, 2022
Stratford Library Needs Assessment Final Report	September 29, 2022

Appendix A
Precedents

St. John's Library Restoration

Winnipeg, MB

Architects Public City Architecture

Year of realization 2019

Area 7000 f²

Typology Library

Key Takeaways This 100 year old city-owned Carnegie Library restoration and addition involved upgrades to building systems and accessibility, in addition to an entry hall which doubles as a reading room. Since the renovation, attendance and circulation numbers have nearly doubled previous statistics.

This is one of 20 libraries in the Winnipeg Public Library system supported by a 189,000 f² main branch.

Viby Library & Culture House

Viby Sjælland, Denmark

Architects Christensen & Co. Architects, Primus Arkitekter

Year of realization 2021

Area 15,070 f²

Typology Library, Community Centre

Key Takeaways This Library serves as a new culture house for a small town in Denmark. With a focus on social spaces, accessibility, and open architecture, the library is a social hub for for all citizens regardless of age, gender, and interests.

Bishop's University Learning Commons

Sherbrooke, QC

Architects Lemay
Year of realization 2018
Area 60,000 f²
Typology Library

Hankou Junior High School Library

Taichung City, China

Architects Tali Design
Year of realization 2020
Area 1940 f²
Typology Library, Elementary & Middle School

Norwell Public Library

Norwell, MA

Architects Oudens Ello Architecture
Year of realization 2021
Area 21,000 f²
Typology Library

Appendix B
Engagement Summary Report

Project Success Factors

People and Culture

Collaboration between the board and staff, as well as communication or involvement of the community

Staff will feel like they are heard. Measurable outcomes

Representation of the community and mutual communication

Appreciate your guidance and advice to the board. Want to do the best for the staff too

Community and staff satisfaction

Belonging

Community satisfaction

Looking forward to the future

Results that tie in current operations with future vision and needs of the community

Legend

- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

It would be helpful if the project was clearly articulated on this survey. I'm guessing improving library services. More full time opportunities - PT employees can feel disconnected from the creation of new programming and services.

If met the needs of the public and staff.

Happier staff

Better communication with all staff

A library presence in the neighbourhoods we don't currently reach

Longer hours, open Fri, Sat, Sun, increased presence in schools and community centres to direct the public to us

If staff ideas were considered and some hopefully implemented. If some ideas were taken into consideration is a new facility is ever being built.

Talk to everyone--EVERYONE--involved in library services and programming. Every little bit of information helps!

The community would realize and support the Library moving from its downtown location

More consultation with patron-facing staff when making changes to how services are delivered and staff safety concerns when dealing with continually volatile patrons. Staff should not be made to feel they are wrong for wanting certain patrons barred.

I'm not sure what this question refers to. The strategic planning process? If so, it will be a success if as many segments of the community as possible are able to voice their ideas and concerns, and if the library can act on the ones most prevalent.

Staff would feel as if they have been heard. So staff buy-in for whichever outcome would be high

Staff not being excited about the changes

More supports for marginalized members of society that can be accessed in the library immediately. A dedicated telephone that goes to a 24-hour crisis services line (211) and is available near the washrooms would be great.

Not sure what the project IS so can't say completely. If gathering info: then listening to all voices is a success. If creating a map to move the library forward, then convincing the city to fund and support the library appropriately is success.

Project Success Factors

Space

Broad community and political support for SPL to expand its physical footprint

Actionable strategy that leads to SPL growth in a sustainable and meaningful way

Legend

- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

New building, larger budget, better communication between all departments.

Make certain all books display a proper description for the public in BiblioCommons.

This project would be a success I think if a vision for the future of SPL can be achieved.

I'm unclear as to what the project is, so it is difficult to pinpoint a factor that would equal success. If it's a sustainable library for the future, I would say that a successful outcome would be a new, bigger building with sufficient funding.

Finding ways to make more workable spaces

Providing a convincing argument to municipal decision-makers that more space is needed for the library. But also, to make the space we have now as functional as possible.

The community and city council would realize the overall value of a public library in bringing new families and investment to Stratford; and would fund us (for space) accordingly

A new location that is one-floor for accessibility, greater staff communication, better work-flows, collection spaces (with sight-lines), visible but private meeting or study rooms and dedicated programming spaces

Using the feedback submitted to make positive changes. Being bold. Being brave. Being visionary. Build it and they will come. We've proven this in the past, and the community is happy with what we offer.

By continuing to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all patrons of the library, Stratford, and surrounding areas.

That it would lead to funding for a new library building.

The building is being used in very creative ways. Success would be the building continuing to supply what we need for now and in the future. That is a high bar.

I know we are crying for space, but a dedicated area for a largish TV screen, video games, and a couple of beanbags might take some of the demand off the public Internet terminals.

By finding ways to make more space available to both staff and patrons

Any convincing evidence to provide to the City re: the liability of potential injury to patrons due to the inaccessibility of the building, the need of more community space given a growing population.

To grow and expand on the solid base we already have established improving in key locations

Project Success Factors

Other

Legend

- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

Simplicity

Simplicity is key!

Simplicity and tangible results

To have tangible outcomes. Not just another document that tells us what we already know.

To grow and expand on the solid base we already have established improving in key locations

Project Success Factors: How will value be measured?

BOARD

STAFF

Understanding SPL: What are you proud of? People and Culture

Friendly staff

Addressing community need

Belonging

Community engagement

Staff. Community engagement. Leadership. Serving everyone across all groups and life stages.

Staff!

Ability to “pivot”

Our standing in the community, positive comments from people I know

Our staff go above and beyond to help our clients

Our staff. The innovation in programs. Collaboration with front garden.

Accessible

Variety of programs

Innovation and engagement above our weight

Programming needs

Staff

Legend

Board Results (left page)
Staff Results (right page)

I’m proud of the learning opportunities I’ve been presented with and have taken advantage of from my supervisor in order to better myself, not only as a public servant, but also as a human being.

Staff response to community needs while maintaining an honourable reputation within the city

Staff are resilient. They creatively found ways to meet needs of community during pandemic. Programs reach a wide variety of attendees. Community called us a “lifeline” even before pandemic.

We are progressive, inclusive and caring when it comes to dealing with the public.

Staff find creative solutions for overcoming obstacles and challenges.

Programs, people, community

Our team gets along with each other and communicates kindly and efficiently

We are a safe welcoming place. And we mean that. Staff go above and beyond to welcome patrons and help them find what they need.

Programs, People, community relationship.

Our vision and our capacity to make that vision a reality.

I’m also proud of how hard everyone works here at the Library. Everyone seems to really care about their jobs and the community that they serve and I think that really shows.

Staff, community connections, programs

How friendly and helpful we are to our patrons. How we work as a team. How we make the most out of a sometimes challenging situation - limited space, funds, supplies.

Our many services and staff

Meeting the needs of the community & creating smiles

That we now focus more on the impacts we have than just numbers (ie numbers of card-holders or views or attendance in programs, and instead on how much value we give people)

Continued adaptation

Our move towards programs (esp adult) that are environmentally friendly and promote sustainability

What the staff is able to achieve in terms of programs and services.

I am proud that our patrons find genuine value in SPL. It is essential to make our patrons our ambassadors to the larger community, and to help generate support for our cut of the budget.

Excellent customer service, supportive/friendly staff, expansion of program options

The work that the staff does with the space and time they are given

I am proud that almost everything there is free! You can come and just borrow free things and do free stuff. Also all the programs offered to people.

Having a strong community presence, a good “brand”, and earning the trust of the community.

So much! First, our friendly, approachable staff who are able to learn and grow with our community.

Wide variety of services provided that the community needs

We are able to help most patrons and solve their questions or situations or direct them to a place that can.

Our reputation in the community, compassion, accessibility, innovation

We do our jobs so well people haven’t realized how limited we are

Committed staff going above and beyond. Main floor staff bear the brunt of social problems in the community.

I’m very proud to be apart of the children’s summer programming this year. We are doing so many great things for the community and families involved, and I really love that we ensure inclusivity for everyone.

I am proud of the variety of services that SPL offers to the community. The front line staff is very friendly, promotes all programs well and just helps with everyday questions.

I think the team at SPL deliver great services at a phenomenal value to the community. I appreciate my coworkers’ willingness to help each other out and their genuine care for their team mates and their patrons.

I appreciate that we have a forward-looking CEO who is willing to try new things and to fight for our support from the city.

I’m proud of the many unique personalities, talents and views that make up the staff at SPL.

Our commitment to excellent service, materials, and programming despite setbacks like the pandemic. Our reciprocal borrowing relationship with PCIN. Our efforts to serve vulnerable members of the population with empathy. Our creative staff.

Customer support

Excellent customer service, respectful work environment, value to the community and patrons.

Understanding SPL: What are you proud of?

Space

PCIN

Makerspace

Legend

Board Results (left page)
Staff Results (right page)

The diversity of books within the library as well as the inclusive and accessible programs the library offers.

We can provide access to some pretty cutting edge gear and interesting opportunities through the makerspace.

Making the best use of the building we have

Pushing the boundaries of what libraries do.

I'm proud of the services and programming we provide through the Children's, Tween and Teen channels, particularly through the makerspace. In continuing to build on my career here, I'm looking to steer myself in this direction of programming more.

That we can still function even without adequate funding, staffing or space. That the customers don't suffer from these struggles.

Staff work hard to create a safe/ inclusive environment which fosters creativity, curiosity and play.

Understanding SPL: What are you proud of?

Technology

* No answers were provided specific to this topic

Legend

- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

Staying up to date with technology, equipment and learning

Excellent tech services and staying relevant with technology and learning

Understanding SPL: What suffers more breakdowns?

BOARD

Legend

- Budget
- Technology
- Other
- Experiences (staff)
- People & Culture
- Collaboration with community
- Process
- Experiences (public)

STAFF

Understanding SPL: How can we fix this?

Community, mostly powers that be, understanding the true value of the infrastructure and services

Partnering with a tech company

Brainstorm a new space, find partnerships, find meaningful ways to make staff heard

So much is contingent on budget - space constraints, technology, staffing, etc...

Increased budget and space to grow capacity for successful library initiatives and collaborations. Devoted makerspace facility

More collaborative experiences. More space. Budget.

Provincial government understanding of budgetary constraints.

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Technology
- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

Re: tech - I do think we have a good, responsive tech team. Occasionally they are stretched thin. Re: processes - I think library assistants and librarians should have meetings together on a regular basis so we can all be on the same page.

A building that meets current requirements, ie: is at least 4x larger with modern conveniences and room for bigger collections, programs and all staff. More staff so services can expand. BIG investments in the future.

Increased building size to increase collections, staff work space, parking, community meeting space

Having tips and tricks for staff when new features or updates happen

Space for sure. Parking. More spaces for programs, meetings, community space. The Library is free, but parking (and parking tickets!) is costly. It is a barrier for some people. Invest in the library building. A new one would meet the needs.

Programs are our most public facing events. More space to enhance user experience. Unfortunately that would also mean increase in staff and affect the budget

Upgrade of technology whenever possible, renovation of public spaces, more consideration of budget objectives

-hiring fairly - hiring based on ability and potential-showing respect for all employees contribution eg. pages are just as important as PSL.:s or program staff -valuing all programs and recognizing their importance to the library and the community

Better communication

Investment in new updated technology.

I truly think providing more parking and more public space will help grow the library community

Space is the ultimate need for the library from my perspective. That's not to say I feel we could do more with the space we currently utilize, however I feel there is so much more we can do for the public if we had the space for it.

We've made a start with connections to social services in the city, but staff are often on their own in dealing with the social issues that come into the library

I think that increasing the space in this library is key. It is currently a very small space that still manages to run so many programs and have so many resources available to the public ... just imagine what more could be done in a bigger space!!!

Can SPL have a fundraising group for the purposes of building a new library? It is a long-term goal. but we are now hampered by our existing building. A larger building to help centralize PCIN book sharing, offer more space for parking, and dedicated

Understanding SPL: What are SPL's future focused objectives?

- Expanding facilities
- New partnerships addressing community needs
- Be a part of the community hub
- Satellite library
- Defining and communicating how libraries are highly relevant in the future
- Would love to know what staff see the future to be
- More people focused programming - music lending, recording spots, enhanced maker space
- Continued innovative collaboration. Engagement on multiple levels. Makerspace.
- Makerspace and industry collaborations
- Instruments, bigger maker space, group engagement rooms
- Partnering in the new @hub

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Technology
- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

- Community leadership
- More programs for all ages. Diverse collections. Safe welcoming space for everyone
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion. Decolonization.
- Inviting more people to visit the library and find what it has to offer.
- Increased usership which will put a strain on our already cramped space and limited staff
- Being seen as a community-building asset by City Hall (they have never listed a public library as an asset that draws families - why?)
- More collaboration with community. Attract more users
- I'd like to see us continue our 'audacious' vision - I don't think we reached its full potential (esp as we were limited during 2 years of pandemic)
- Sustainability - where of environmentally friendly practices {programs and collections), economic feasibility (ie disaster recovery (ie pandemic planning), and social equity intersect
- Expansion of community outreach as the community evolves
- spaces for community (study, meetings), deeper collections and programs
- Support for the public but that requires a lot of support for staff
- Getting more patrons into the building.
- Firm up staff resources, get more community engagement
- I would suspect they should be a building that is big enough to serve the community, with adequate funding and staffing.
- Staff morale
- Engaging programming.
- To continue to offer an accessible, welcoming, and inclusive environment.
- Collaboration with community organizations/social workers to address the needs of people experiencing poverty and mental health crises - this alleviates staff stress and better serves the community
- continuing to develop strong core programs to meet needs of all ages, retain interest in the library throughout life
- Areas for things like an expanded maker space, computer access, auditoriums and meeting rooms, a meeting space for the community created in consultation with local Indigenous knowledge keepers, and better accessibility.
- Continued relationship building
- Strong staff
- Growing Patronage, Opportunity for more programs, Opportunity for more technology, New Building
- Ideally our objectives should be to relocate to a newer, larger, more accessible building to better serve our community; to collaborate with more community organizations to reach shared goals; hire more diverse staff to better reflect our community
- Increasing family interest in the library year-round (not just in the summer)
- Meeting people where they are, and providing possibility for all.
- Staffing issues are at crisis point as well. We can't grow because there aren't any extra hours to use for new programs or services. Also no space for new staff. Staff are used to fill gaps, leaving them unable to use their expertise or creativity.
- To continue to adapt whilst serving the community of Stratford and Perth County beyond with their changing needs, informational, technological or otherwise.
- The current downtown location could become a secondary branch to maintain service to that area and also house some of the social services that we currently have to refer patrons in crisis to.
- In my limited understanding, growing our user base & increasing usage are goals. However, this isn't possible in this space - it's a Catch 22 where we need to be innovative to gain funding, but can't be innovative because of lack of space & funding
- continuing to increase maker space resources
- Getting more patrons to sign up for library cards.
- Increasing library user numbers, retaining patrons (having patrons renew their accounts after 2 year expiry), remaining friendly to a large aging population (a large user group), being more accommodating for disabled users, being a community hub

Project Priorities

BOARD

1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Budget	Space & Real Estate	Technology	People, Culture, Experience

Space & Real Estate

- **Space allocation (for the public)**
- **New Build**
- **Integration with other spaces (community, gov't)**
- Space allocation (for staff)
- Consolidated site (one building)
- Distributed site(s)
- Retrofit (remain in current building)

Technology

- **New technologies**
- **Public experience with technology**
- **Staff experience with technology**
- Stack areas transformation (digital, retrieval, etc.)
- Hybrid models for programs
- Other

People, Culture, Experience

- **Support services for the community**
- **Equitable and inclusive experience**
- **Public experience**
- Staff experience
- Security and safety experience
- Other

STAFF

1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Space & Real Estate	People, Culture, Experience	Budget	Technology

Space & Real Estate

- **New Build**
- **Space allocation (for staff)**
- **Space allocation (for the public)**
- Integration with other spaces (community, gov't)
- Consolidated site (one building)
- Retrofit (remain in current building)
- Distributed site(s)

People, Culture, Experience

- **Equitable and inclusive experience**
- **Security and safety experience**
- **Public experience**
- Support services for the community
- Staff experience
- Other

Technology

- **Public experience with technology**
- **Staff experience with technology**
- **New technologies**
- Hybrid models for programs
- Stack areas transformation (digital, retrieval, etc.)
- Other

Project Priorities: Any other priorities we want to discuss further?

Being people focused

Understanding community needs

Advocacy for infrastructure needs

Representing different cultures from community

Stable long term funding model

Having the budget, staff and building to sufficiently serve the community

Parking

Staff value, experience, safety

Keep in touch with the staff instead of just surveying us at the start of the project. Tell us the results of this survey and then ask for reactions to it.

1 floor for everything or elevator(s) that work well

Automated circulation options

I think getting the staff to full time positions or as close to as possible should be a priority. The sense of security and well-being that comes along with that could go a long way in creating a happier, more permanent and well-engaged staff.

The priority is to have a functional workplace with modern & up-to-dates spaces, collections and the budget to make the space work effectively. More staff to run programs and develop services.

Storage?

Continue to build relationship with community. Listen attentively. Strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones.

Too many stairs for both the public and staff! Aging public population, but also many staff are getting older or experience disabilities that effect their mobility. Elevator is not always time efficient, so you see them using the stairs (tiring)

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Technology
- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

Project Strategies: Which strategies resonate with SPL?

BOARD

STAFF

Project Strategies: Any strategies we want to discuss further?

Communications, advocacy, promotion in order to deliver services

Strategies must be innovative but realistic with the concept that SPL can and has delivered services well above our weight

That the world would live in perfect harmony!!

How to balance providing needed social services in our community vs core library services.

Pushing the city to the services they should be delivering

How do we get non library users interested in the library

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Technology
- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

Helping areas of the community that are under-served find value in using the library

Any building we create or move into should have great ventilation, lots of open space for social distancing and the ability to be easily reconfigured. There will be more pandemics in the future.

Make the building as green as possible. Make certain to generate as much of our own power as possible, have windows that reduce thermal load from the sun, make certain birds won't crash into the glass.

Make the building as accessible as possible. No narrow stacks. Keep all service areas at a level accessible to those in wheelchairs, and drop the floor behind them so staff are comfortable. Ensure the library doesn't amplify ambient sounds.

Future-proof the new building. Make it capable of handling new technologies that may be developed in 50 years time. Run connection boxes in the walls and floors for future connectivity even if we don't have the actual cabling yet.

Focus on library as an information centre, not a social services centre. Co-location only reasonable if not tied to social services needs.

If possible, keep the entire library on a single floor. Have doors that automatically open and close for patrons, which staff can close automatically at the end of the day. Have a separate entrance and exit to help with the flow of traffic.

Have sidewalks and walkways through the parking lot that use waste heat from the building to prevent snow and ice buildup.

Project Opportunities

Make use of all sources of media for outreach. Involve schools.

People/Intergenerational connection

Community hub partner would be a future opportunity that may need working on now

Satellite library closer to schools (with no libraries)

Incorporating industry, tourism, and the wide assortment of potential user groups that might not have the library top of mind.

1.7 million visitors to the city per year. Consider including visitors as part of the community who engage with the library.

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Technology
- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

I have always wondered why Program Librarians don't have at least one shift on desk so that they can actually mix with the public they are serving.

I think we will get much input on grand ideas but what we need is ideas that are based in reality.

Long term goals are important too. While we can't get a new library now, perhaps down the road 15-20 years. Stratford and Perth County is expanding population-wise rapidly. We must keep up with service demands to stay competitive with private sector.

More resources (space, staff time) allocated to the makerspace

There is a separation of Service Librarians (desk staff), and Program Librarians (not desk staff), depending on which role you have, there may be no project opportunities.

9-5, IT. Responsible for keeping 3 Libraries up and functional

Bring SPL to the forefront for this community. Stratford NEEDS a library that will serve them appropriately. This community gets behind things that matter. A library that is free and accessible for all matters. Get that message out there

This will take time. Set goals, and milestones. Dream big and get the community excited.

Wish List

Accredited self-paced education degrees via the library

Expanded service, space and program

Engaging children' space for caregivers to meet up and share their love of books

Better sustainable budget, more space, larger and more encompassing collection, all members of the public being members & making use of the library ABUNDANTLY HAPPY STAFF

Collaborating with other social and cultural organizations to develop and share resources and space

The beer garden out front for book clubs :)

Community hub built around a library

A cafe in the library

That the world would live in perfect harmony!

Fully rationalized strategy and communication for SPL to grow beyond capacity limits due to space and budget restrictions.

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Technology
- Board Results (left page)
- Staff Results (right page)

An upgrade to the elevator.

More self-serve technology that is user friendly/encourages self-direction (instructions on screen that give clear instructions), more natural light, more space for patrons to take meetings (Zoom and in-person)

Larger space for the library in general, including parking

Mobile wifi units for programming staff

Bike and stroller parking that is not up a hill but visible via security camera

Way to within the realms of science fiction than could be provided!

Dedicated programming spaces (small, med and large) PLUS larger maker space

A larger area for children to gather, read and play.

Enough room for a deep collection but with shelving units that can be accessible (not too high, sight-lines over and around, books not on floor-level shelves and wide enough to allow wheelchairs/ walkers/ single-kid-strollers) 000 Stroller parking

All staff office areas on the same floor

Book drop that goes to a check-in room

More public washrooms.

A larger building with ample space for staff to work and provide programs for the community, good circulation work-flow, lots of storage, significantly increasing our collections, increase parking, providing quiet space and semi-quiet (small meetings)

More kid friendly OPACs (stools we use can present a safety hazard). This would facilitate their browsing experience and digital literacy skills

Sufficient parking for the public, safe parking for staff

Larger space allocation for children's programming

A completely separate lounge area for patrons to truly feel at home comforts.

New building, increased budget, increased schedule flexibility for staff, more programming for all ages, staff to work shifts for staff who are unable to manage evenings and/or weekends

New building, desk and bathroom locations that allow for staff surveillance and allow staff to check in with patrons before they use bathroom/get into funny business

New Building, better parking options for staff and patrons, with better/more physical support for technology, better staff washroom, opportunities to assist with programs rather than having separation of librarians

New modern building with appropriate space for larger collections, community space (ie: study rooms, public meeting rooms, auditorium), programming spaces, safe and comfortable staff spaces.

Parking lot (old Legion) is purchased by the City for SPL use. Free parking for patrons and staff

A window in my office. better ventilation and closed cupboards so my office doesn't look like a computer room blew up in it. Possibly change the layout of my office.

More full-time positions. A library hosted community day. A monthly Draw for all card-holders. Video Gaming/E-sport potential hosting. Highlight our ability to host local artists and their work and expand this to having shows/openings + recordings

New building. One story. Lots of community spaces and program spaces.

Improve staff hrs & roles. There are many elements of library services we could increase & improve with current staff expertise if skilled staff weren't being used as clerks. New positions could cover gaps & allow prof. staff more time for prof. work

Enough room for everyone, public and staff, so everyone is not piled on each other as visits start to increase

New city council embraces SPL and recognizes the possibilities and potential.

I'd wish for us to continue engaging the community with programs and get them around Stratford, not just in the library itself!

Larger more private space for teens

A number of separate private meeting rooms for public use.

Storage space

Secure bike parking

Cafe

Space for strollers

Staff showers for those using active transportation methods

More space that can facilitate outreach programs that don't disrupt regular "flow" for patrons who are browsing collection

Summary

Engagement Details
3 Focus Groups
Community stakeholders
Staff (programs team)
Political representatives
3 Group Interviews
Executives
People and physical assets
Public service librarians
6 Individual Interviews
Mayor
Deputy Mayor
Councillor
Former board members
Author and Stakeholder
Volunteer coordinator
4 Building and Site Observation Tours
Programs
In-charge staff
Facilities
Library assistants

Priorities Summary

Legend

- People & Culture
- Space
- Technology
- Budget

Sub-Themes

Legend

- Community Profile
- Equity & Accessibility
- Heritage
- Location, Location, Location
- Multi-Functional
- Partnerships
- Programs
- Retail Theory & Linger Time
- Service Diversification
- Training
- Vision

Themes

Community Profile

Summary Statements
Positive
How adaptive the library team has been, how the library was able to pivot
It's showing the community that the library is more than just books
The library is valuable because it is accessible for all people, all abilities, independent groups, etc.
Negative
The library board needs to set out a compelling 15 year vision, look at the 2010 & beyond example
Is there a library Foundation? The library should actively cultivate it and donations
The community needs to do more to ensure safety and access / accessibility
Recommendation
The library is doing great, but they could do so much more if they could expand
Engage the 500K theaters goers and the 1.5M visitors Stratford gets per year, gateway to international recognition and support
Tech is great, but COVID proved that people need people

Theme Overview

The library has an incredibly high profile with the broader Community, the library is seen as being very community focused and the people that we interviewed were impressed and thankful for how the library has leaned into serving all levels of the community. Respondents were also thankful for the services that the library continued to provide during COVID. This was common with political representatives, not for profit groups and community members at large. However, some stakeholders also encouraged the library board to be mindful of pursuing a strategy that would be considered in-line with the municipal identity and compatible with other city priorities.

Community Profile

Themes

Equity & Accessibility

Summary Statements
Positive
The library means accessibility and equity for all
We're much more part of the community in the last decade
The Library is a public space
Negative
The placement of services and elements translates to people making assumptions about our priorities, but the space constrains us
The layout of the building makes it hard for us to keep eyes on so that we can pro-actively defuse situations
We need a location that is much more accessible
Recommendation
The library should be able to support local musicians, artists, independent publishers, they are not often given the platform they should
The library needs showers, a space for people to clean up vs. trying to use the sink, includes kids changing between classes
There's an older population in the core, how do we service them? Reflect what they are used too, coming from bigger centres

Theme Overview

There were two key themes for equity and accessibility, one positive: in that the library is very highly regarded for being a space that is open and accessible to all groups, and there was encouragement for the library to continue to engage with and provide space where possible for other community groups that are focused on serving these communities and providing access and equity. The other theme was a negative: the current space is viewed by many to have significant issues with accessibility and access, multiple issues for people that are differently abled, the expectation is that organizations be proactive in addressing accessibility issues.

Equity & Accessibility

Themes

Service Diversification

Summary Statements
Positive
The Makerspace location is good as it's visible so people investigate
I love the idea of the library as a space to support creation
Monday Night Story Time; when virtual families missed being able to brows afterwards
Negative
We have to choose between books and programs (db: opportunity with more space for both)
We can't offer anything new, without sacrificing something that already works
The logistics require us to run all over the place, which is time and energy and takes us away from serving clients at the desk
Recommendation
The library could service a need for flexible conference, meeting, and event spaces
The Library should lean into the growing sharing economy
Don't make it all digital and tech based, human contact and interaction is still key

Theme Overview

A key message was the support from the majority that the library should continue to provide and further expand a variety of services and programs beyond books. While the collection remains a core component the decision to have a strong focus on providing equitable and accessible services for the under-privileged, entrepreneurs, and wellness services were supported by 99% of stakeholders that we spoke with. Respondents also encouraged the library to pursue a space strategy that allows it to provide even more services and public spaces like, music and recording places, a more diverse lending library for tools, technology, and instruments, as well as public meeting spaces and a theatre and music venue that is accessible to the community for individuals that can't afford the market rates in other spaces.

Service Diversification

Themes

Retail Theory & Linger Time

Summary Statements
Positive
My daughters school was very crowded, she used to come to the library to get quiet space
I love the way that the auditorium is more flexible
Daughter even used the library to change between dance class and other activities
Negative
We have to toss / cull books that still have value because we have no room on the shelves
Think of the 14 year old who loves 'airplane' and will discover and read every airplane book on the shelf, because we have to cull so much they end up discovering everything very quickly and then their done
Teenagers when they come the noisy outnumbers that quiet
Recommendation
Find ways to leverage the visitor revenue to feed your local services
Increase linger times with target demographics
The Normal School site would provide opportunities to link into the speaker series + knowledge series (forum series)

Theme Overview

There was a general understanding that the library is doing the best it can with the space that it has, however many respondents encouraged the library to pursue a space strategy that will allow it to provide more retail and service options. This included more space for the stacks to increase the size of the collection and allow more browsing and discovery, as well as to encourage a more diverse users to come to the library and capitalize on opportunities to derive revenue from retail, and food service from the 1M+ tourists that visit Stratford every year. Ideas that were discussed positively were a café + bookstore, a speakeasy, space would highlight local authors and art, as well as more program and meeting spaces for external users to book.

Retail Theory & Linger Time

Themes

Partnerships

Summary Statements
Positive
Library has done well to bring council along - lots of credibility
Negative
There is an inability to work collaboratively as an external partner in this building, there's no space
Room to grow is a necessity not to die
Recommendation
Partner should be very aligned with the values of the library, not a brand-wash
Private interests can't dictate what is going to happen, they need to be willing to benefit from the library's great stature and community support
Free little libraries, could the library partner with that group as an option to deploy books that get weeded?

Theme Overview

The library was recognized for and encouraged to continue to lean into more partnerships. This approach was encouraged by political representatives and not for profit stakeholders, in arts, culture, and community. Political stakeholders recommended that the library should "Come to the Council table with other partners and support, as it makes getting what you need more likely." The ability to house these groups within the library was also seen as a benefit to increase both the library's profile and as a lever increase support for funding. Partnerships and programs that support Wellness and Mental health are a large focus for stakeholders, and commercial partnerships are seen as something to be considered but the partner would need to be acceptable on a political level. There was also an encouragement to find a more permanent or visible way to recognize fundraisers or doners, paving stones, or bricks etc. however there was a consistent view that naming rights were not encouraged.

Partnerships

Themes

Location, Location, Location

Summary Statements
Positive
I love the location of this library, its an anchor of downtown
The Art program is nice in that it livens up what would be empty walls
I love the location being downtown and part of the downtown community
Negative
The projected population growth, and that we're the feeder / hub for the surrounding communities makes this critical
We have no room to grow, the building is limiting everything
There is no way to expand the physical building, the site is too constrained
Recommendation
The library needs to have access to outdoor space
We need room for Indigenous communities within these community spaces
The downtown site can continue to exist as a satellite but the Normal School has room to grow

Theme Overview

In our engagement sessions there were many discussions around the location of the library. Many stakeholders expressed that the downtown location and heritage quality of the existing library was desirable, however there was also a consistent recognition of the constraints presented by the site. There were concerns about counter effects in public opinion and community profile if the library were to leave the existing location at a primary activity anchor of downtown. In addition, the costs and optics of a net new library build and pre-existing first rights to locations from other stakeholders must be considered.

There were consistent themes across all interviews that the Stratford Public Library needs more space, better parking, direct access to park spaces, space for Indigenous programing, and co-location with other social services. Many stakeholders suggested that the library consider a new primary location that could service these needs that it should aspire to become a 'central library' for the broader Perth County Information Network.

Location, Location, Location

Appendix C
SPL Material Economic Benefit Tables

Population Household Graph Data

Population, Household and graphing data	Library Name:	Stratford Public Library			
Total Stratford Residents	30,886				
% of Library Users - per current survey results	31%				
Total number of households in Stratford (Stats Can)	13,892				
Based on the **total of direct benefits** up to	**$ 14,907,986.30**				
and **use of the Library by**	**31%**				
31 % of Stratford Population use Stratford Public Library	9,512.89				
Value of a Library membership - 31% of Stratford residents who use SPL services receive a total direct benefit of this amount	**$ 1,567.14**				
The value of $1 invested in the Stratford Public Library, residents receive this benefit amount	**$ 7.48**				
Total Value of all Library Hours in 2013 - total direct benefits that require a branch to be open for the services to be available	**$ 5,818,779.87**				
Average value generated of one open hour - direct benefits that are only possible because the branch is open	**$ 1,940.34**				
Average cost of one open hour - The total direct spending to fund benefit-generating services, that are only available when a branch is open.	**$ 550.58**				
Total Direct Spending	$ 1,992,550.52				
Less: Capital	$ 43,436.06				
Less: e-Titles	$ 298,003.20				
Direct spending to fund benefit-generating services	$ 1,651,111.26		Total Open hours	2998.84	
Graph Data					
Total Direct Tangible Benefits	$ 11,218,114.27				
Collection Use (including in-library use)	$ 4,831,986.31				
Meeting & Study Space	175,410.64				
Technology Access	$ 73,338.00				
Reference & Database Services	$ 5,553,804.32				
Programs	$ 583,575.00				
Total Indirect Tangible Benefits	$ 1,697,321.51				
Total Direct Spending	$ 1,992,550.52				
City of Stratford Total Economic Impact	$ 14,907,986.30				
Total Economic Impact **for PER HOUSEHOLD** within the City of Stratford	$ 1,073.13				
Total Economic Impact for **PER RESIDENT** within the City of Stratford	$ 482.68				

Quantifiable Benefits Table

		Library Name:	Stratford Public Library	
Total Quantifiable Benefits				**Exhibit 1A**
		Low* ($)	**Estimate* ($)**	**High * ($)**
Direct Tangible Benefits	Collection Use	$ 1,610,662.10	$ 4,831,986.31	$ 8,053,310.52
	Programs	$ 583,575.00	$ 583,575.00	$ 583,575.00
	Reference & Database Services	$ 5,553,804.32	$ 5,553,804.32	$ 5,553,804.32
	Technology Access	$ 73,338.00	$ 73,338.00	$ 73,338.00
	Meeting & Study Room	$ 58,470.21	175,410.64	292,351.06
	Total Direct Tangible Benefits	**$ 7,879,849.64**	**$ 11,218,114.27**	**$ 14,556,378.90**
Direct Spending	Operations		$ 389,709.00	
	Capital (annual average)		$ 62,051.52	
	Employment		$ 1,779,212.00	
	Materials		$ 191,558.00	
	Total Gross Spending		**$ 2,422,530.52**	
	Revenue offsets to Cost		429,980.00	
	Total Direct Spending	**$ 1,992,550.52**	**$ 1,992,550.52**	**$ 1,992,550.52**
***Indirect Tangible Benefits**	Operations	$ 155,883.60	$ 272,796.30	$ 389,709.00
	Capital (2013 actual)	$ 24,820.61	$ 43,436.06	$ 62,051.52
	Employment	$ 711,684.80	$ 1,245,448.40	1,779,212.00
	Materials	$ 76,623.20	$ 134,090.60	191,558.00
	Pages Employment Experience Benefits	$ 885.80	$ 1,550.15	2,214.50
	Total Indirect Tangible Benefits	**$ 969,898.01**	**$ 1,697,321.51**	**$ 2,424,745.02**
		LOW	**MIDPOINT**	**HIGH**
Total Economic Impact		$ 10,842,298.16	$ 14,907,986.30	$ 18,973,674.44
Impact per Dollar Spent (Total Direct Spending /Total Econ Impact)		$ 5.44	$ 7.48	$ 9.52
Impact per Stratford Resident (Total Economic Impact/Population)		$ 351.04	$ 482.68	$ 614.31
Impact per Stratford Household (Total Economic Impact/# of households)		$ 780.47	$ 1,073.13	$ 1,365.80
Total Benefits - Total Direct & Indirect Tangible Benefits		$ 8,849,747.64	$ 12,915,435.78	$ 16,981,123.92
Return on Investment (Benefits/Total Direct Spending)		444.1%	648.2%	852.2%
Average Value of One Open Hour			$ 1,940.34	
*	Indirect Tangible Benefit - taken as multiplier benefit			
	AssumesCity of Stratford Population of	30886		
	Assumes number of Stratford households	13892		
	Total Economic Impact = All tangible benefits and direct spending			
	Total Benefits - The sum of tangible benefits			
	Direct Tangible - directly measurable			

Summary Economic Impact

Library Name: Stratford Public Library

Summary - Economic Impact of Library

Exhibit 1B

Direct Tangible Benefits

Economic Benefit - Collection Use

Category	From Exhibit #	Volume	Total Value 80% Discount (Low)	Total Value 40% Discount (Midpoint)	Total Value Without Discount (High)
Circulation	1	354,006	1,366,243.03	4,098,729.10	6,831,215.17
In-house Use	2	50,024	210,100.80	630,302.40	1,050,504.00
Materials Delivered	3	97,767	34,318.27	102,954.81	171,591.35
All Incentive Programs	6	0	-	-	-
TOTAL		**501,797**	**$ 1,610,662.10**	**$ 4,831,986.31**	**$ 8,053,310.52**

Total Economic Benefit - Programs Offered

Program Category	From Exhibit #	# of Attendees	Total Economic Value
All Programs	4	13,857	$ 583,575.00
TOTAL		**13,857**	**$ 583,575.00**

Total Economic Benefit - Reference and Database Services provided

Category	From Exhibit #	Amount	Total Economic Value
Total Reference Queries	5	33,572	253,804.32
Licensed Web Databases Searc	5	212,000	5,300,000.00
TOTAL		**245,572**	**$ 5,553,804.32**

Total Economic Benefit - Technology Access

Technology Accessed	From Exhibit #	# of sessions (60 Minutes)	Total Economic Value
Total Workstation Usage & WiF	7	21,054	73,338.00
TOTAL		**21,054**	**$ 73,338.00**

Total Economic Benefit - Meeting & Study Space Available

Meeting & Study Space	From Exhibit #	# of Bookings	Total Value 80% Discount (Low)	Total Value 40% Discount (Midpoint)	Total Value Without Discount (High)
Meeting Room	8	134	$ 882.50	$ 2,647.50	$ 4,412.50
Study and Work Space	8	71985	$ 57,587.71	$ 172,763.14	$ 287,938.56
TOTAL		**72119**	**$ 58,470.21**	**$ 175,410.64**	**$ 292,351.06**

Total Direct Tangible Benefit	**7,879,849.64**	**11,218,114.27**	**14,556,378.90**

Direct Spending & Indirect Tangible Benefits

Total Economic Benefit - Library Operations Spending

Expenditure by Location	From Exhibit #	$ Spent (direct spending)	Multiplier: 1.4	Multiplier 2.0
ALL LOCATIONS	10	389,709.00	545,592.60	779,418.00

Total Economic Benefit - Library Capital Spending

Year Range	From Exhibit #	Total Capital Spending	Multiplier: 1.4	Multiplier 2.0
2013 Actual	11	$ 62,051.52	$ 9,652.46	$ 13,789.23

Total Economic Benefit - Library Employment Spending

Year Range	From Exhibit #	Annual Salary Costs	Multiplier 1.4	Multiplier 2.0
2013	12	$ 1,779,212.00	2,490,896.80	3,558,424.00

Total Economic Benefit - Work Experience -Library Pages

Number of Pages working a	From Exhibit #	Total Value	Multiplier 1.4	Multiplier 2.0
1	12	$ 2,214.50	$ 3,100.30	$ 4,429.00

Total Economic Benefit - Library Material Spending

Year Range	From Exhibit #	laterials Expenditure	Multiplier: 1.4	Multiplier 2.0
ALL LOCATIONS	13	191,558.00	268,181.20	383,116.00

Total Direct Spending & Indirect Tangibl	**2,424,745.02**	**3,317,423.36**	**4,739,176.23**
	Low	Midpoint	High

Appendix D
2020 Ontario Public Library Statistics; Collection Sizes of Similarly Sized Municipalities

Appendix X - 2020 Ontario Public Library Statistics; Collection Sizes of Similarly Sized Municipalities

Municipality	Population	Library Collection	Rank
Dunnville	45,608	142,604	1
Timmins	41,788	123,718	2
Cornwall	45,723	116,127	3
Paris	30,781	116,082	4
Alliston	34,242	95,337	5
Bradford	38,559	91,841	6
Trenton	43,577	88,153	7
Owen Sound	34,585	84,590	8
Woodstock	40,902	78,622	9
Fort Erie	30,710	78,579	10
Stouffville	30,705	77,799	11
Stratford	31,465	74,359	12
St. Thomas	41,813	72,454	13
Orillia	31,128	70,303	14
Innisfil	40,784	62,748	15

Average Collection size	91,554

CREATIVE THINKING.
COLLECTIVE VALUE.

CANADA

Montreal

3500 Saint-Jacques St.
Montreal, QC, Canada H4C 1H2

T 514 932-5101

Quebec City

734 Saint-Joseph St. E., 4th floor
Quebec City, QC, Canada G1K 3C3

T 418 647-1037

Toronto

60 Adelaide St. E., Suite 401
Toronto, ON, Canada M5C 3E4

T 647 382-3168

Calgary

340 12 Ave. SW., Suite 1180
Calgary, AB, Canada T2R 1L5

T 403 245-3089

Edmonton

10526 Jasper Ave., Suite 202
Edmonton, AB, Canada T5J 1Z7

T 780 429-3089

USA

New York

362 Fifth Avenue, Suite 801
New York, NY, USA 10001

T 212 219-9810

lemay.com