

**NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY**

**VISION: A new library for North Long Beach can be more than a library, more than just books, media and computers. The library will be a super center for education and community learning, a cultural center, and a gathering place for residents of all ages, an exciting place to go to with an Internet café, a wireless Hot Zone, art exhibits, a variety of programs for youth and adults. It will serve as a community and civic anchor, a showcase and landmark structure that can be leveraged to catalyze future investment in the Village Center and environs.**

**STRENGTHS OF THE PROJECT:**

- Needs of this multi-ethnic and large immigrant community for all services, but especially educational resources and programs for youth, are critical and have been well documented.
- As one of only two 21<sup>st</sup> century libraries in Long Beach, it will be a state-of-the-art community center for information, education, recreation and technology.
- The new library will incorporate energy management strategies and serve as a model “green” building for the future.
- Construction of the new library will eliminate neighborhood blight.
- Relocation to the Village Center will put the only library in North Long Beach in a more central location, more readily accessible by public transportation.
- Unlike businesses that come and go, the Library in a prominent location can serve as a permanent, well-maintained anchor; the lights will always be on. The building will be well maintained for the next 30-40 years. This area of the “Village Center” will always be active. Approximately 25,000 people per month visit the small facility on Orange. A larger, attractive, landmark facility would attract even more people, which in turn would stimulate business opportunities in the area.
- The new library will be a symbol of civic pride in an area in need of revitalization. The building can be a “landmark” along Atlantic Avenue and a major step into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**BACKGROUND:**

The need for a new facility to replace the current North Library has been recognized for the last 15 years. The Library’s Strategic Plan (2001) identified two communities in Long Beach that are critically underserved because of the constraints of the library buildings: MacArthur Park area and North Long Beach. While all of Long Beach’s neighborhood libraries are very small by contemporary standards, Mark Twain at MacArthur Park and North show the greatest disparity. The average neighborhood library in Long Beach is 7,000 sq. ft. and serves a community of 25,000 – 40,000 residents. The current North Library is the same size as other branch libraries but serves about 3 times the population.

A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted by Kathryn Page Associates from April – September 2002. Input was gathered from interviews with 13 community representatives, 6 focus groups, 12 neighborhood and community meetings, and 87 community surveys in English and Spanish. Subsequent studies have corroborated these findings.

## **NEEDS PROFILE OF NORTH LONG BEACH:**

- A community of 93,382 is served by a 6,800 sq. ft. facility (14% increase projected for 2020 = 103,083) (.07 sq. ft. capita currently vs. .25 sq. ft. recommended standard)
- North Library is the farthest from the Main Library, which means that many residents depend entirely on the resources of this small library
- Great need for educational resources in general and opportunities for youth
  - 40% of community is under age 19
  - nearly 18,000 are K-12 students
  - 30% of students are English learners

### **Compared to Long Beach overall, North Long Beach has:**

- **lower educational attainment levels for residents over 25**
- **lower adult literacy rate (large immigrant population)**
- **lower than average per capita and median household income and higher poverty rate**

## **SERVICE LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING LIBRARY (5571 Orange Avenue)**

- Severely overcrowded (only 6,800 sq. ft.)
- Over 50 years old (built in 1951 when population was 58,475)
- Resource collections cannot grow (built to house books, magazines and newspapers, not today's multi-media collections and computer resources)
- Needs of large youth population have completely overwhelmed the current library and displaced collections and services for adults and seniors
- Very noisy (one large undifferentiated space)
- Very limited seating (39 seats = 1 seat per 2,307 residents)
- Not enough computers (14 = 1 per 6,670 residents)
- Behavior problems with youth waiting to use computers and find a seat to study
- Meeting room too small and outdated (90 people capacity)
- Insufficient parking (only 17 spaces)

### **North Library is bursting at the seams:**

- **2<sup>nd</sup> busiest of the 11 neighborhood libraries**
- **The Family Learning Center, which provides homework assistance, has highest usage of all Long Beach libraries, with an average of 582 students per month**

## **RECOMMENDED SERVICES per the needs assessment (see attached sheets)**

## SERVICES AND RESOURCES

	<u>Today's North Branch</u>	<u>The New North</u>
Resources:		
Books	52,557	<b>75,000</b>
CDs	47	<b>1,500</b>
Books-On-Tape	231	<b>2,500</b>
Videos	263	<b>2,500</b>
Public computers (TOTAL)	14	<b>70</b>
Public access workstations	3	<b>20</b>
Kids workstations	3	<b>10</b>
Wireless laptops	0	<b>24</b>
Family Learning Center	8	<b>16</b>
Seating (TOTAL)	39	<b>85</b>
Quiet study and casual seats	21	<b>30</b>
Children's seats	12	<b>20</b>
Teen seats	0	<b>15</b>
Kids workstations	0	<b>10</b>
Adult workstations	6	<b>10</b>
Family Learning Center	8	<b>12-16 persons</b>
Community room/theater/performance space	90	<b>125 seats</b>
Listening stations	0	<b>5 persons</b>
Group study areas	0	<b>12-20 persons</b>
Children's program area (storytelling, puppet shows, etc.)	0	<b>19-25 persons</b>
Teen area	0	<b>15 persons</b>
Wireless Hot Zone	0	<b>25 persons</b>
Silent study room	0	<b>10 persons</b>
Distance Learning Center	0	<b>25 persons</b>
Library Internet Café	0	<b>20 persons</b>
Parking	17 spaces	<b>84 spaces</b>
Building size	6,800 sq. ft.	<b>20,000 sq. ft.</b>

## PROGRAMS

	<u>Today's North Branch</u>	<u>The New North</u>
<b>Literacy</b>		
Preschool reading readiness	1/week	<b>3/week (40 toddlers + preschoolers)</b>
<b>K-8</b>		
Family Learning Center (homework assistance)	582 student contacts	<b>900 student contacts</b>
After-school programs	1/week	<b>2/week (40 students)</b>
Enrichment programs	1/month	<b>1/week (80 students)</b>
Class visits	2/week	<b>2-4/week (50-100 students)</b>
<b>Teens</b>		
Teen Council	2/month	<b>2/month</b>
Teen programs	1/month	<b>1/week (20 students)</b>
Teen poetry	1/month	<b>1/month + coffeehouse (45 teens)</b>
<b>Adults</b>		
Book Discussion Group	1/month	<b>1/week (80 adults)</b>
Computer classes (software and online databases)	0	<b>2/week (30 adults)</b>
Citizenship classes	0	<b>1/week (20 adults)</b>
Employment/career development resources	0	<b>1 program/week (20 adults)</b>
Resume writing	0	<b>1-2 programs/week (20-40 adults)</b>
Adult literacy (ESL classes)	0	<b>1-2 programs/week (20-40 adults)</b>
Cultural programs	0	<b>1/week (35-90 adults)</b>