

Purpose

Library building projects are often on a 20-year cycle, so it's important to consider the long-term trends that might reshape their location, design and financing. Identifying and prioritizing those trends is important to early planning. While accurate forecasts are impossible, it is possible and prudent to realize just how flexible the plan and the facility must be.

This 90-minute brainstorming session might suggest topics for further research and discussion.

Participants

- Joan Gillman
- Deb Haeffner
- Eileen Kelley
- Robert Seltzer
- Steve Soeteber
- Pamela Westby
- Angela West Blank
- Tina Gordon (Dimension IV)
- Jim Gersich (Dimension IV)
- Derrick Van Mell (facilitator)

Trends (preliminary prioritization in blue)

I DEMOGRAPHICS & SOCIAL NEEDS

A Increasing need for social gathering, personal interactions, and, therefore, gathering places. Need for more openness in the gathering place.

B Library needs will differ widely by demographic cohorts

C Aging population and older supporters

D Smaller households

E Higher socio-economic groups have less need for a library

F Increasingly divergent needs between young and older patrons

G Increasing responsibilities for the homeless and needy

H More school kids are homeless and hungry

I Students less able to get to the library

J Students have declining proficiency in English

K Growing need to serve multi-lingual population

II TECHNOLOGY

A More automation throughout the library

B Almost everyone will have a device; they will need help with their devices and with connectivity

C Increased need for meeting room technology

III ADMINISTRATION & STAFFING

A Need for much more staff training

B Greater need for marketing and communications

C More management and leadership abilities needed

D Need for greater interpersonal skills

E Increasing dependence on volunteers and interns

F Library science education is changing

G Use of technology will change staff roles and recruitment

H Increasingly hard to keep up with staff compensation needs

I Utilities becoming more expensive

IV PROGRAMMING

- A Need for more 1-on-1 services, e.g., “book a librarian”
- B More phoning in for services
- C Increasing interest in genealogy
- D Increasing interest in adult education
- E Increasing need for literacy program, particularly early literacy
- F Need for connecting to nature and the use of outdoor spaces
- G Scholarly research will be in specialized libraries
- H Desire to interact with innovations, more experiential
- I More 3D materials (not just 2D books and reading material)
- J Increasing need for displays, somewhat like a local museum
- K More collaborative work, tutoring, distance learning and proctoring
- L Need for multi-media creation
- M Library will not just be for Middleton, but more regional
- N Declining support for traditional library functions (e.g., quiet reading)
- O Less need for storage (collections will be distributed)
- P More interest in wellness and nutrition

V COMMUNITY TRENDS

- A Middleton will be an even great “importer” of jobs, more commuters
- B Sustained community support for library capital and operating donations
- C Government funding will not keep up with inflation
- D Middleton Library rated #1 in city survey—and hopes to continue
- E Middleton will continue to grow
- F Increase in corporate donations and book sale income
- G Middleton is landlocked; there will be more infill projects
- H Middleton will continue to protect its green spaces
- I There will continue to be ~50% multi-family housing in Middleton
- J Growing interest in recycling, reuse and sustainability
- K Local traffic will become busier

VI TRANSPORTATION

- A Increasing connections and uses of cars *and* bikes, walking, bus, Uber, etc.
- B Increased need for parking
- C More congestion
- D Public transportation not improving soon
- E More extreme weather will alter how people get to the library

VII GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP

- A More partnering generally
- B More inter-library cooperation
- C More opportunities to partner in economic development, incubation of ideas, and training
- D More partnerships at all levels of government
- E Possible consolidation among library systems

MIDDLETON LIBRARY

Facility planning: Future trends

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Things to think about

- Needs for data research?
- Improve articulation and prioritization?
- Shared articles
- How can we demonstrate library technologies in the building project?
- Other?