

IV. Needs Assessment

Condition of the Present Building

Meetings (See Appendix A for details.) with the Director, Board of Trustees, Staff, Building Committee, Friends of the Library, Volunteers, Community Leaders, and the public made clear the following points:

1. There is no space for:

- Off street parking
- Meetings and programs
- Library meetings
- Community meetings
- Expansion of the non-print collection
- Expansion of the print collection
- Seats for study
- Quiet study
- Exhibits or displays
- Additional computers for public use
- Young Adults' collection
- Young Adult social space
- Children's Services
- Toddlers
- Children's programs
- Arts and crafts
- Expansion of Children's collection
- Tutored students/teachers
- Archival storage
- Preservation of local history, genealogy material or exhibits
- Private space
- Desk space for staff
- Children's Librarian's office/work space/storage
- Break Room for staff
- Technical Services
- Director's Office

Lack of space creates problems:

- *Lack of adequate parking keeps people away.* "The only parking lot is for the staff and the handicapped and it is inadequate. There are only six spaces for staff and it's not adequate for all staff. Patrons are required to park on the street. The patrons are required to park on the street as there is no parking lot for them. People are reluctant to come to programs due to lack of parking space." (Meeting with Director Rownak Hussain, Jan. 22, 2008.) "There is not enough parking for staff. There is no parking." (Public Forum, Feb. 8, 2008.) "More people mean a worse parking problem." (Meeting with Board of Trustees, Building Committee, Feb. 28,

2008.) “There needs to be parking for families with children and others who have difficulty entering the library.” (Community Survey, 2008).



Staff and handicapped only parking.



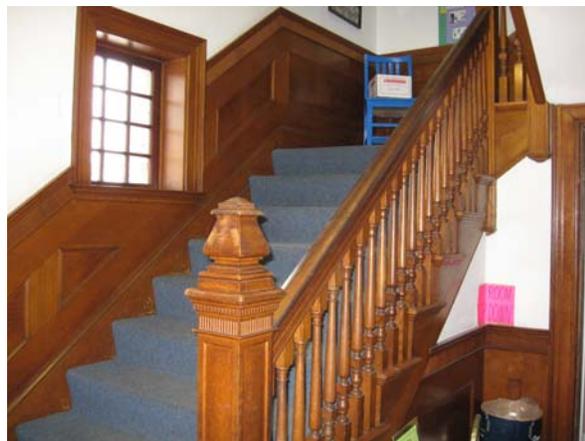
Street parking for patrons.

- *There is no meeting space at the Library.* “Meeting room space would make possible more programs.” (Public Forum, Feb. 8, 2008.) “There is no place to meet.” (Public Forum, Feb. 13, 2008.) “There is no separate room for book club meetings.” “There is no meeting/program space.” (Meeting with Board of Trustees and Building Committee, Feb. 25, 2008.) “More space; open space for reading/studying/computers, as well as meeting space.” “[Need] bigger meeting spaces so more programs...can be held.” “More meeting space for the public is also badly needed in this town.” (Community Survey, 2008.)



Storytime is held in public space.

- *Preschool Storytimes are held in the cramped, ADA inaccessible Children's Room. There is no separate room for stories or for crafts.*
“While I love the charm here, I feel bad for those who can't walk up the stairs. When my kids were babies, I hated to lug them up the stairs.” “Need stroller accessibility to the Children's Room.”(Community Survey, 2008.)
“The Children's Room is not handicapped accessible. There is no story hour room. Story hour is done in public space.” (Meeting with Director Hussain, Jan. 22, 2008.) “No separate space for school age children to sit and do a project. No separate space for children's programs.” (Meeting with Staff, Feb. 4, 2008.) “The Library is disrupted with children's programs.” “It is not stroller-friendly in the Children's Room.” (Meeting with Board of Trustees and Building Committee, Feb. 25, 2008.)



Seventeen stairs to Children's Room.



Cramped Children's Room

- *Children's Services are in a cramped Children's Room, inhibiting use by toddlers, school-age children, and parents.* "There is no dedicated display area so tables that should be used for study are used for display." (Meeting with Director Hussain, Jan. 12, 2008.) "The building is not user-friendly." "No space for school-age children to sit and do a project." "Only one old computer in the Children's Room for games, etc. Can't add due to lack of space." (Meeting with Staff, Feb. 4, 2008.) "I bring my children to the library ~1x per week. The library needs to be remodeled/updated..." "The Children's library is hard to access with strollers/car seats. It is too small for reading/craft and other enrichment programs for kids." "I feel the children's room staff does the best it can with the available space but it's a tough space to work with." "The children's area really needs expansion. In addition to books, most children's areas have toys and other activities for smaller children." (Community Survey, 2008.)



Cramped spaces for materials.

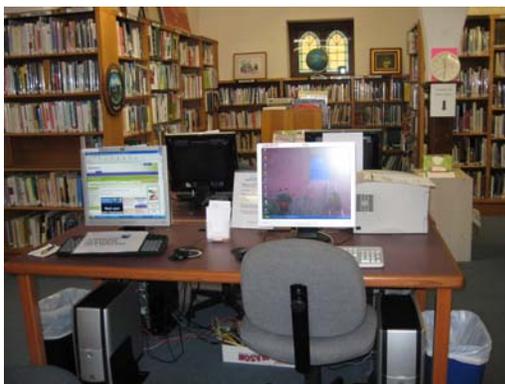


No space for toddlers.



Every available space is used.

- *Even though computer use has increased by 64% over two years, there are still only 6 computers for public use.* “Larger children’s room with access to computer for homework needs.” “[Need] more computers in study areas.” “Update! Computers, areas to study. We need a new library badly!” “[Need] more computer access and weekend hours.” (Community Survey, 2008.) “There is no room for computers so that people can do research.” “Young adults and adults share a computer.” (Meeting with Staff, Feb. 4, 2008.) “There is no homework station space.” (Meeting with Board of Trustees and Building Committee, Feb. 25, 2008.)



There are only four computers for adults and young adults.

- *There is a lack of space for quiet study due to the small size and open nature of the library.* “Tutors come to the Library, but there is not enough seating at tables for them, and for the general public.” (Meeting with Staff, Feb. 4, 2008.) “Need a quiet place to study.” “A few people talking can create quite a problem.” “Study research areas should be located away from book shelves. Many times not enough room for browsers to pass.” “Need quieter areas to read and work –e.g. study carrels, quiet corners, comfortable cozy seating in quiet area.”(Community Survey, 2008.)



Open study area in Reading Room.

- *There is a lack of space to expand the non-print collection, so choice is limited.* “I ‘read’ mostly audio books and I’m happy with the ability to get the books, but the browsing is pretty lean.” “There’s a lack of good DVD/VHS educational.” “Books on CD lacking.” “More books and DVDs, which requires a larger library.” (Community Survey, 2008.) “The library can’t invest in a new CD collection because there is no space.” (Public Forum, Feb. 8, 2008.)



Non-print items pack the shelves.

- *There is no space to expand the print collection, so books are too compact on the shelves and the selection for browsers is limited.* “The collection has been weeded. Every book you see has been justified. The shelves are full. If we add a book, a book has to be weeded. This sometimes causes a

dilemma since a choice must be made between a new title and a classic in the field.” (Meeting with Rownak Hussain, Director, Jan. 22, 2008.) “The collection is kind of ‘stuffed’ now.” “The fiction collection is split in a mishmash of bookcases.” (Public Forum, Feb. 8, 2008.) “Need more books – bigger non-fiction section. Art section too small.” “Need larger selection of books, especially classic literature.” “Need more available books.” “Obviously we need more room so we can have more books.” “More variety of books to choose from.” (Community Survey, 2008.)



Crowded shelves surround Fiction Room.

- *Young Adults have a small collection of books, but no space for socializing.* “There is no young adult section.” “There is not enough space for Young Adults.” (Meeting with Staff, Feb. 4, 2008.) “The building itself is not attractive to young people. There is not a YA space.” (Public Forum, Feb. 8, 2008.)



The Young Adult Collection. No other dedicated space for YAs.

- *There are no private spaces for tutoring, social discourse, discussion groups or studying.* “There is no separate room for book club meetings.” (Meeting with Board of Trustees and Building Committee, Feb. 25, 2008.) “There is no private meeting space.” “[Need] the ability to support book groups. Our book group uses the Holliston Library....Hopkinton said it could not accommodate us, but Holliston does it for several book groups and we are a Hopkinton based club.” (Community Survey, 2008.)



The only semi-private space is the Director's Office at the end of the open Reading Room.

- *There is no private office space for the Director.* “My makeshift work space is not private. It’s next to the staff bathroom. It’s very drafty. There is no place to hold private conversations.” (Meeting with Director Hussain, Jan. 22, 2008.) “There is no office for the Director.” (Public Forum, Feb. 8, 2008.) “The Director’s Office should have a window!” (Staff Meeting, Feb. 4, 2008.)



Director's Desk is off the Reading Room and not private.



The staff bathroom is next to Director's cramped desk space.

- *There is not enough space for Technical Services nor Staff.* “The staff room and the technical services room are in the same space. There is no place to put deliveries.” (Meeting with Director Rownak Hussain, Jan. 22, 2008.) “We need a staff room.” (Meeting with Board of Trustees, Feb. 25, 2008.) “There is no space for library administration and processing.” “There is no Technical Services space.” (Public Forum, Feb. 8, 2008.) “Tech. Services is cramped.” “There is no staff area.” (Meeting with Staff, Feb. 4, 2008.)



Staff meeting in crowded Staff/Tech. Services Room.



Technical Services and Storage.



Staff eats lunch in the Technical Services/Staff Room.

- *There is not enough storage space leading to items being stored all over the Library.* “There is no storage.” (Staff meeting, Feb. 4, 2008.) “There are no storage areas. Everything is exposed to the public.” (Meeting with Director Hussain, Jan. 22, 2008.)



Storage in Children's Librarian's Office.
Office is not closed off from the public.



More storage near Children's Librarian's Desk.



Magazine storage in Director's Office.
Office is open to the public.

2. Handicapped accessibility needs to be improved and enhanced.

- *There is no handicapped accessibility to the Children's Room.* "Access to the Children's Room is up two sets of stairs." (Rownak Hussain, Director.) "...the Children's Room of the Library is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments." (United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Region I. Nov. 21, 2006.) "The Hopkinton Board of Selectmen and the Hopkinton Library Board of Trustees are working together to address the ADA accessibility issues identified with the Hopkinton Public Library....The Library Director has also established a posted policy and procedure guidelines, so that anyone in the public that needs help accessing the Library or services can get the assistance they need." (Letter to Ruth Ricker, Equal Opportunity Specialist, US Dept. of Education, Office for Civil Rights, from Linda Kimball, Chairman, Hopkinton Library Board of Trustees.) See p. 22 for more details.)



Seventeen stairs lead up to the Children's Room.

3. There is no climate control for valuable books, photographs, and other historical material.

- *Local History and Genealogy* items are kept in the "Treasure Room" just off the Reading Room. It is kept locked, so security is good. It is too small for the amount of material it holds. "No historical archival space." (Staff Meeting, Feb. 4, 2008.) "There is no space for the historical collection." (Meeting with Board of Trustees and Building Committee, Feb. 25, 2008.)



Crowded shelves in the “Treasure Room”.



These “Treasures” need a climate controlled environment.

4. **It is either too hot or too cold in the Library.**
“Drafts come from the fireplace, windows, doors, hallways – the entire library. There are no windows that open so no ventilation.”
(Rownak Hussain, Director.)
5. **“The structure of the two buildings does not function well as a library. Therefore, there are physical restrictions. Shelving is built-in against walls, so these are single shelves. Everything is bolted to the floor.”**
(Rownak Hussain, Director)

Studies and Reports

The following call attention to the problems and needs of the Library.

State of the Library Address 2007 (Appendix B)

This study by Rownak Hussain, Library Director, points out the “growing number of Library programs, the 59,000 visitors (record year), the 103,000 items checked out”. She compares, through a chart, the Hopkinton’s library allocation as a percent of total municipal expenditures is only 0.64%, while Holliston’s is 1.00%, Milford’s is 1.50%, Medfield’s is 1.26%, Northborough’s is 1.65%, Southborough’s is 1.14% and Westborough’s is 1.23%. She also compares the “Main library square footage” of these libraries to Hopkinton. Hopkinton has 5,015 sq. ft. (0.35 per capita), Holliston has 9,217 sq. ft. (0.66 per capita), Milford has 24,695 sq. ft. (0.90 per capita), Medfield has 18,756

sq. ft.,(1.51 per capita) Northborough has 15,000 sq. ft. (1.05 per capita), Southborough has 14,000 sq. ft. (1.47 per capita), and Westborough has 20,076 sq. ft. (1.07 per capita).

Hopkinton Public Library Long Range Plan FY2004 – FY2008.

Goal 1:

All residents will have access to an efficient and effective public library that provides space to support the community's identified service needs.

Note: The Hopkinton Public Library has numerous space deficiencies that make it difficult to offer all of the programs it would like; in addition, it is lacking accessible hands-on children's activity spaces, an inviting young adult space, and quiet study areas.

Objective 1.1:

During the planning cycle, continue to determine community needs for an expanded library facility.

Hopkinton Public Library Long Range Plan FY2009 – 2013.

See *Library Goals that Cannot be Met in Existing Facility*, p. 25.

ADA Violation and Response, 2006.

The Library received a letter on Nov. 21, 2006 from the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Region 1, giving notification that there was a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability. "The Complainant alleged that the Children's Room of the Library is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments." After making some changes to doors, and bathroom, the Library responded on August 28, 2007, that the "Library has posted a policy and procedures guidelines, so that anyone in the public that needs help accessing the Library or services can get the assistance they need. We are jointly committed to addressing accessibility issues at the Library and ensuring that the public can access the services provided by the Library and Staff." The letter was signed by Muriel E. Kramer, Chairman, Hopkinton Board of Selectmen, and Linda Kimball, Chairman, Hopkinton Library Board of Trustees.

Surveys

The following surveys express the needs and expectations that the public has for the Library. The surveys are summarized as follows:

Hopkinton Public Library Community Survey, February 2008.

456 surveys were returned.

77% of the respondents were female.

39% had advanced degrees.

25% used the library weekly.

90% had a library card.

36.8% lived under five miles from the library..

89.6% were between 18 and 35.

Users were asked to rate the following services either Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Don't Know.

Seating Availability: 36% - Fair

Collections of books and other material – 34.8% said it was fair.

Availability of tables for studying – Most Don't Know, but 26% thought it was fair.

Is library size adequate? – 47.5% said that it was poor.

Is parking adequate? – 51.7% said that it was poor.

Some comments:

We are in desperate need of a new expanded facility. Most of the books in which I have interest have to be ordered from other libraries.

Enlarge the book collection. Improve parking access. Increase music collection.

Enlarge the facility. Additional off street parking.

Larger children's section. Complete handicap access and facilities.

A new library! The town deserves it!

A renovation: new carpets, seating, lighting, etc. To make it feel less musty and more updated.

Larger computer area.

Larger, modernize.

More material, larger facility. I would use my hometown library if it were upgraded/expanded.

Replace with a new facility with enough space and adequate technology.

Better hours, more space, and handicap accessibility.

More videos and audio books.

Better storage, protection, and display of historical documents and material, some kind of gallery.

More books and DVDs (which requires a larger library.)

Enlarge the library but keep the small friendly atmosphere.

I never think about using the library but realize I should! I'd use it if I could gather people, have meetings.

Larger children's room on the first floor!

The full results of the Community Survey may be found in Appendix C.

Hopkinton Public Library Student Survey, February 2008.

Grades 6,7,8, Middle School, were given surveys to fill out. 600 were returned.

The following are some of the results:

60.8% have a library card.

60% used the library in the past year.

72.9% come into the library with family.

30.2% say that their parents never use the library.

27.4% say their parents sometimes use the library.

68% check out books from the library.

62.7% check out videos/DVDs

56.7% use the Internet at the library.
53.9% want music CDs at the library.
40.7% use magazines/newspapers at the library.
38.2% come to the library to hang out.
35.4% want quiet study.
22.7% are interested in crafts/book groups, etc.
22.1% want the Librarian to answer questions.
21.4% want homework help.
17.3% want career or college information.

43.6% get the books used for school work from the school library.
25.9% get them from the public library.
15% get them from the book store.

42.7% get the books read for fun from the book store.
33.3% get them from the Hopkinton Public Library.
17.7% get them from home.

25% get their music and movies from Blockbuster.
17.5% get them from the Hopkinton Public Library.
15% get them from other stores.

Some comments:

They don't have current movies.
The librarian helps with school reports.
It's not useful to me.
They don't have the books I like.
Books are ruined and I can't use them.
No middle school books.

More hours.

More computers.

More CDs and games, parties, etc.

Duplicate copies of favorite books.

More books for old kids.

Not many new things.

They should hold more books that students are required to read.

You should have a section to study, and a section of books from our parents' time.

The full results of the Student Survey can be found in Appendix C.

Chart Showing Space Needed for Present Collections Using Accepted Formulas.
 Formulas as averaged from “A Library Building Program Workbook” by Patience Kenney Jackson, June 1999.

Area	Present Holdings	Present Space	Standard Formulas	Present Need
Adult Stacks Fiction, Non-fiction	17,323	848 sq. ft.	9.75 vol./sq. ft.	1,776 sq. ft.
Children’s Room, Fiction and Non-fiction Stacks	8,125	172 sq. ft.	12 vol./sq. ft.	677 sq. ft.
Total	25,448	1,020 sq. ft.		2,453 sq. ft.

Hopkinton Public Library needs 140% more shelving for its present holdings. There is no room for additional holdings. This collection has been crowded into an area much too small for the present collection. The children’s collection, in particular, is squeezed into an area 293% too small.

Library Goals that Cannot be Met in Existing Facility

Hopkinton Public Library’s Long Range Plan FY2009-FY2013 (Appendix B) is the result of meetings and forums with members of the Community, Library Staff, Board of Trustees, Community Leaders, and the Building Committee. Five Service Priorities were identified. Five Goals respond to those Priorities. The Plan recommends objectives that will benefit the community. Among these improvements are some that the staff cannot meet without a new facility.

A. The Library will be a safe, accessible and comfortable community place for all. (Goal 1)

Spatial Constraints:

- The existing facility is only partly accessible. There are only 37 public seats available for children and adults for reading or study. There is no meeting space. The Library is too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter.

New Facility:

- There will be complete accessibility to the entire building. The Children’s Room will have 29 seats, and there will be an additional 71 seats available for adults and young adults for reading and study. Community meetings and programs will be able to be held in a Multipurpose Meeting Room and a Conference Room. There will be better temperature regulation.

B. The Library will provide Story Time programming to pre-school patrons and continue to develop more school-age book groups and programs to

promote reading and literacy and increase circulation by 10% by the end of 2010. (Objective: 2.2)

Spatial Constraints:

- Story Time programs are held in crowded public spaces. Children or adults needing to study are disturbed during these times. Parents and children do not have room to participate. The small space limits the number of children participating. Book groups or other programs are also held in public spaces since there are no separate meeting rooms.

New Facility:

- A Children's Program Room, seating 25, will accommodate story hours and any other programs for children. Parents and children will have plenty of room to participate. Noise from the story hour does not disturb anyone else in the library, since the session is held in a closed room. Larger audiences will be accommodated in the Multipurpose Meeting Room, seating 150.

C. The Library will provide an up-to-date collection that supports leisure reading and listening as well as the school curriculum by 2013.

(Objective: 2.3)

Spatial Constraints:

- Shelving is over capacity in the children's room and also in the adult and young adult areas. Lack of enough space for the current collections makes it difficult to add titles without weeding sometimes equally necessary titles, decreasing the depth of the collections.

New Facility:

- Materials can be added easily to the current collection.
- Non-print for all ages and in all formats will be easily accommodated.

D. Develop instruction programs and schedule instructional classes to foster skill development. (Action Plan under Objective 4.1: Patrons will have increased their electronic information self-sufficiency by 10% by the end of 2010.)

Spatial Constraints:

- There is no room for additional computers, or any other technological hardware.
- There is no place to hold classes.

New Facility:

- Additional computers will be able to be added to the adult, young adult, children's areas and other areas of the library.
- There will be a Conference Room and a Meeting Room where classes could be held.