

Boston Public Library Branch Facilities Review



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Overview



From December 2012 through February 2013, a review of all Boston Public Library branch locations was conducted. The goal of the review was to evaluate how successfully the branches meet the Principles for Excellence established by the *Compass: Strategic Plan* approved by the library's Board of Trustees on November 15, 2011.

Process

A team (see Appendix A), consisting of representatives from Boston Public Library, City of Boston Office of Budget Management, and City of Boston Property and Construction Management Department, reviewed each branch according to 38 factors (see Appendix C) that support the Principles for Excellence established by the *Compass*. This report will inform the planning and prioritization of capital projects throughout the system.

Summary of Results

Boston Public Library's Branch Facilities Review identifies areas where libraries are performing well and suggests ways in which services and environments can be enhanced. Each branch review is included within this report. Based on the results of the review, branches were rated and organized under one of three categories:

1. *Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.*

These branches need only minor improvements or no improvements other than ongoing maintenance and repairs. The branches might benefit from certain minor targeted enhancements and from systemwide improvements.

Brighton	Lower Mills
Charlestown	Mattapan
Codman Square	South Boston
Connolly	South End
Grove Hall	West End
Honan-Allston	West Roxbury
Hyde Park	

2. *Meets some Compass Principles – consideration for future capital projects.*

These branches need improvements that may be larger than a maintenance initiative and may require a capital project and/or inclusion in a systemwide capital project.

Adams Street	North End
Egleston Square	Parker Hill
Fields Corner	Uphams Corner

3. Capital Projects Underway.

These branches have capital projects that are funded or are already underway. The projects typically fall into one of three categories: program study, design, or construction.

Dudley
East Boston
Faneuil

Jamaica Plain
Orient Heights
Roslindale

A **program study** involves the library staff, community, and design professionals in discussions about project goals and viable options for improvement for a particular library building, and provides an initial scope of work involved. **Design** involves the community further with architects engaged in the detailed process of specifying the appearance, relationships, equipment, furnishings, and underlying infrastructure for a particular project. **Construction** refers to the implementation of the program study and design information.

Next Steps

Many of the improvements identified in the report are already underway, scheduled for implementation, or undergoing additional review. As capital plans progress, a mechanical engineering and plumbing review will further inform the decision-making process.

Additional next steps and project timelines for each branch will depend on the scope of work needed. Approved projects are already underway. Maintenance projects are ongoing, and infrastructure-related projects and major renovations are requested on an annual basis through the City of Boston's capital budget process. As the library continues to review branch needs, suggestions are welcome from the people of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as other community partners and stakeholders.



THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
COMPASS: Principles for Excellence

The Public Library of the City of Boston built by the people and dedicated to the advancement of learning. The Commonwealth requires the education of the people as the safeguard of order and liberty. Free to all. MDCCCLXXXVII (1887).

Coverd in stone on the McKim Building of the Central Library in City Square

I) USER-CENTERED INSTITUTION
The BPL is a user-centered institution with services that anticipate and respond to neighborhood interests and the changing demographics of the City and Commonwealth.

II) COMMUNITY GATHERING
The BPL exists to serve and sustain communities that foster discovery, reading, thinking, conversing, teaching, and learning, in accessible, sustainable, and welcoming facilities throughout the City, as well as with an engaging online presence.

III) SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
The BPL is committed to the ongoing development and preservation of its distinctive special collections, which provide citizens from all walks of life with access to their common cultural heritage.

IV) CENTER OF KNOWLEDGE
The BPL is a center of knowledge that serves researchers, lifelong learners, and the intellectually curious through its incomparable collections, digital resources, and access to other scholarly networks.

V) CHILDREN AND TEENS
The BPL fosters the love of reading and skills in critical and creative thinking among children and teens – from early literacy through mature readership – by offering a slate of services that provide academic support and intellectual growth.

VI) ACCESS AND INNOVATION
The BPL provides access to and training in innovative technology, electronic resources, and digital information through its own holdings and its strategic position within the wider world of knowledge.

VII) SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION
The BPL depends on sustainability of resources through a judicious stewardship of finances; active employee participation and professional development in an environment of dignity and respect; and partnerships that enrich services, expand outreach, and leverage public investment through private support.

VIII) FUN
The BPL leads the way for people of all ages with recreational reading and media, invigorating programs, user-created content, and opportunities for discovery in settings that are stimulating and engaging.

The *Compass: Strategic Plan*, approved by the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, is the guiding document for services for Boston Public Library (BPL). The plan was the culmination of two years of collaboration among the BPL and the people of Boston and Massachusetts. This review produced many recommendations that will help BPL prioritize capital projects, library services, and future needs across the library system. To read the entire *Compass: Strategic Plan*, visit www.bpl.org/compass.

The Compass Principles for Excellence are:

I) User-Centered Institution

The BPL is a user-centered institution with services that anticipate and respond to neighborhood interests and the changing demographics of the City and Commonwealth.

II) Community Gathering

The BPL exists to serve and sustain communities that foster discovery, reading, thinking, conversing, teaching, and learning, in accessible, sustainable, and welcoming facilities throughout the City, as well as with an engaging online presence.

III) Special Collections

The BPL is committed to the ongoing development and preservation of its distinctive special collections, which provide citizens from all walks of life with access to their common cultural heritage.

IV) Center of Knowledge

The BPL is a center of knowledge that serves researchers, lifelong learners, and the intellectually curious through its incomparable collections, digital resources, and access to other scholarly networks.

V) Children and Teens

The BPL fosters the love of reading and skills in critical and creative thinking among children and teens – from early literacy through mature readership – by offering a slate of services that provide academic support and intellectual growth.

VI) Access and Innovation

The BPL provides access to and training in innovative technology, electronic resources, and digital information through its own holdings and its strategic position within the wider world of knowledge.

VII) Sustainable Organization

The BPL depends on sustainability of resources through a judicious stewardship of finances; active employee participation and professional development in an environment of dignity and respect; and partnerships that enrich services, expand outreach, and leverage public investment through private support.

VIII) Fun

The BPL leads the way for people of all ages with recreational reading and media, invigorating programs, user-centered content, and opportunities for discovery in settings that are stimulating and engaging.

Branch Reviews

Adams Street

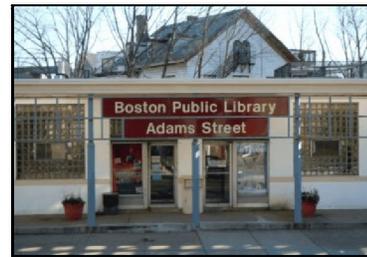
690 Adams Street, Dorchester

Branch Librarian: Kate Brown

At a Glance

Opened: 1951

Square feet: 7,200



The Adams Street Branch has been serving the people of Dorchester for more than half a century. The current building opened in 1951. In 2004, the branch's reading garden opened to the public. Collection highlights include outstanding mystery, history, and summer reading materials. The branch also features a large selection of films and audiovisual materials. Many local groups use the branch as a gathering place, including writing groups, neighborhood organizations, and schools. Regular programs include reading readiness and story times as well as a film series for adults. Special events include musical performances and lectures as well as a summer reading series. The branch partners with the Richard J. Murphy School and Murphy Community Center as part of the Community Learning Initiative, a citywide program.

Observations

The Adams Street Branch is situated in a popular community location on a busy street. The branch is welcoming, with an attractive backyard that is used for programming. The community room is well used by all ages for programming. The branch features a small local history collection, community bulletin boards, and computers for all ages, and partners with local organizations to enhance services. Recent improvements include the installation of a new self-checkout.

Opportunities

The user experience would be improved with a comprehensive, professional signage package on the exterior and interior of the building. Improvements in ADA accessibility could be made at the front entrance as well as throughout the building by reducing additional shelving through comprehensive collection management. The acronym "ADA" refers to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Improvements in flooring, layout, furniture, security cameras, and electrical capacity would also enhance services and experiences within the branch.

Rating: Meets some Compass Principles – consideration for future capital project.

Brighton

40 Academy Hill Road, Brighton
Branch Librarian: Uma Murthy

At a Glance

Opened: 1969/renovated 2010
Square feet: 22,400



After serving the people of Brighton for nearly 40 years, the Brighton Branch underwent an extensive renovation that was completed in 2010. The branch is LEED® certified by the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED® stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. The branch offers a strong local history collection, including photographs from the Brighton Allston Historical Society and oral histories of Brighton residents. The branch also holds a considerable collection of Spanish and Russian works, large-print materials, and audiovisual materials such as DVDs and CDs.

Observations

A renovation project was completed in 2010. Improvements included new windows, a major interior renovation and the addition of new technology. The Brighton Branch is now fully ADA accessible and features large signs on the exterior to guide people to the welcoming interior. The branch has all new furniture and finishes, spaces for all age groups, and active use of the meeting room through partnerships with community organizations. There are plenty of computers and electrical outlets throughout the building for patrons who use laptops. The collection is an appropriate size with a small local history collection and books, DVDs, and CDs in demand in the community.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional interior signage package would improve the user experience. Continued efforts to maintain flooring, furniture, collections, and technology will help the Brighton Branch provide excellent services to the neighborhood for years to come.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Charlestown

179 Main Street, Charlestown
Branch Librarian: Maureen Marx

At a Glance

Opened: 1970
Square feet: 10,300



The Charlestown Branch opened in its current Main Street location more than 40 years ago. The branch has an outstanding local history collection and an attractive outdoor space for readings and other events. Programming offered at the branch includes toddler story hours, reading readiness, and a monthly discussion group. There is also a writers' group for adults that meets twice a month. Lectures, musical performances, and cultural events and activities such as craft-making are offered at the branch.

Observations

The Charlestown Branch is situated in a busy, central location near many other amenities. With a small outdoor space, the branch is welcoming. The staff partners with many local schools and organizations to enhance programming. The branch holds a large and well-used local history collection. Improvements completed in 2012 include the installation of a new HVAC system, new roof, flooring, paint and windows in the community room, self-checkout and installation of energy-efficient windows. A 2013 Mayoral Initiative was completed with the installation of a new early literacy book nook in the children's room. New carpet, comfortable furniture, a refreshed board book collection, and early literacy toys were added. An early literacy computer station is scheduled for installation.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Additional computers for all ages with updated computer furniture would improve access to technology. New furniture and flooring would improve the interior of the branch.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Codman Square

690 Washington Street, Dorchester

Branch Librarian: Janice Knight

At a Glance

Opened: 1978

Square feet: 22,000



The Codman Square Branch has been an important part of the Dorchester community since 1978. The branch provides a reference collection on African-American history, a selection of biographies for children, and an urban fiction collection. The branch also has a local history collection and a strong selection of large print materials as well as Spanish and French language materials. The branch offers regular programming for children, including storytelling and weekly chess and film programs. Special programming includes lectures by local authors and summer reading programs for children. In addition to children’s programming, the branch offers programs for teens, including science and craft lessons. The branch is partnered with the Joseph Lee Elementary School, the Lee Academy Pilot School, and the Perkins Community Center.

Observations

The Codman Square Branch is in a central location on Washington Street near many area schools. The interior is attractively painted and features an open layout and a large lobby. The exterior includes a nicely landscaped garden area. The meeting room is an effective space for performances and training, as new audiovisual equipment was newly installed. Other recent improvements include computers for the teen area and a new self-checkout.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. A better-defined teen space is needed. More flexible furniture, updated flooring, and additional computers are needed. More lighting in the back of the branch and in the parking lot would help patrons navigate the area in the evening.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Connolly

433 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain

Branch Librarian: Jane Bickford

At a Glance

Opened: 1932/renovated 2004

Square feet: 9,700



The Connolly Branch opened to the public in 1932. The building has been renovated twice, most recently in 2004. The branch offers popular books and other materials in Spanish for both adults and children. An English as a Second Language (ESL) conversation group and monthly adult book discussion are some of the regular programs offered at the branch. The branch also holds a monthly family pajama story time and a summer reading program for children. Other programs such as film screenings and musical and theatre performances for all ages are held year-round.

Observations

The Connolly Branch is centrally located in the community. The interior of the branch and furnishings are in good condition overall. The exterior features a nice backyard for outdoor programs. There is a large lecture hall and a small conference room and community groups frequently use both spaces. The performance space's audiovisual system was recently updated. The Friends of Connolly Branch are sponsoring an exterior beautification project that will be completed by summer 2013. The Friends also provided a new audiovisual system and other community room updates in 2012. In addition to these improvements, a self-checkout is scheduled for installation in 2013.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. The exterior needs new lights, alarms, and outdoor furniture. Updated flooring is needed throughout the branch. Additional computers and outlets would help improve access to technology, especially in the children's area.

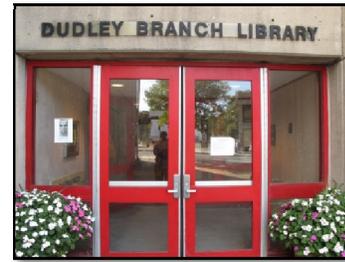
Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Dudley Square & Dudley Literacy Center

65 Warren Street, Roxbury

Branch Librarian: Janet Buda

Coordinator of Literacy Services: JoAnn E. Butler



At a Glance

Opened: April 1978

Square feet: 21,000

The Dudley Branch has been serving the Roxbury community for more than thirty years. The branch provides spacious meeting rooms and hosts many popular events, including a jazz series. The branch also offers extensive children’s programming, including weekly film showings, story hours, and Museum of Science events. The branch collection includes a focus on the African-American experience, with materials on topics such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Harlem Renaissance, and blues, jazz, and soul musicians. The Dudley Literacy Center located at this branch offers classes, tutoring, and other literacy resources for adults.

Observations

The Dudley Branch and Literacy Center are conveniently located within walking distance of the MBTA and many local schools. The branch is very spacious and there are numerous places for patrons to gather. The branch hosts many programs for adults, teens, and children as well as extensive literacy training through the Dudley Literacy Center.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. The interior needs new furniture, paint, and carpeting as well as electrical and IT infrastructure upgrades. More computers and other lending technologies are also needed. Security cameras, additional lighting, and landscaping would make the exterior more welcoming. A major building study is currently underway. In addition to the study, phase one improvements are in process for an enhanced entryway to the branch. Enhancements include prominent signage, lighting on the plaza, tree pruning, and an entry beacon to cover part of the concrete wall and direct people to the front entrance. Other recent projects include the installation of energy-efficient lighting, a new HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system, and self-checkout.

Rating: Capital Project Underway – Construction/Program Study.

East Boston

276 Meridian Street, East Boston

Branch Librarian: Margaret Kelly

At a Glance

Opened: 1914

Square feet: 13,000



The existing East Boston Branch was not reviewed during the study due to the planned opening of the new branch in East Boston. The existing East Boston Branch will merge services with the Orient Heights Branch and will be relocated to a state-of-the-art facility on Bremen Street. The new branch is scheduled to open in fall 2013.

A site study for the new branch was completed in July 2009 after a yearlong public process to discuss the services, programs, and spaces most valued by East Boston residents. At 15,000 square feet, the branch will be more than double the size of the current public space of both East Boston branches combined. The branch will be environmentally friendly and will feature more flexible meeting and study spaces, a refreshed collection, more computers, free building-wide wireless access, and an early literacy space for children. There will also be adult reading, computer, and work spaces, along with a teen zone with opportunities for technology collaboration and social gathering. Located close to an MBTA station and bus routes and adjacent to the East Boston Greenway bike path, the new branch will also feature on-site parking.

Rating: Capital Project Underway – Construction.

Egleston Square

2044 Columbus Avenue, Roxbury
Branch Librarian: Audrey Leppanen

At a Glance

Opened: 1953
Square feet: 6,800



The Egleston Square Branch opened to the public in 1953. The branch collection reflects a focus on children; more than half the branch space is dedicated to materials for young children and teens. The teen collection includes school support and nonfiction books about urban life. The adult collection includes ESL and test prep books, audio books and magazines, science fiction and poetry, and a large collection of street literature. The branch's recurring programming includes pre-school story time, out-of-school time programming, reading readiness, and activities for tweens such as a board game club. Adult programs include book clubs, theatre and poetry groups, and resume writing and job skills workshops.

Observations

The branch's interior features open, easy-to-navigate spaces. The woodwork is attractive and there is a community mural on the exterior as well as a display window. The wood furnishings are in good shape. There is a backyard that is used for events. The branch partners with many organizations, including Teen Empowerment, Rogerson Egleston Adult Day program, the Franklin Park Coalition, and the Food Project. Recent improvements include the installation of self-checkout. The Friends of the Egleston Square Branch recently funded an exterior book drop. A 2013 Mayoral Initiative was completed with the installation of a new teen area with computers and comfortable furniture.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Flooring, including the ramp in the children's area, needs to be replaced. More IT infrastructure and wire and outlet management is needed to support laptops, e-readers and future lending technologies. Better options for display shelving would make it easier for staff to highlight aspects of the collection.

Rating: Meets some Compass Principles – consideration for future capital project.

Faneuil

419 Faneuil Street, Brighton
Branch Librarian: Dorothy Keller

At a Glance

Opened: 1931
Square feet: 7,600



The Faneuil Branch opened more than 80 years ago in its current location in the Oak Square area of Brighton. The branch offers a strong collection of fiction, bestsellers, mysteries and romances, non-fiction, magazines, and DVDs. The branch also has a good selection of travel, college reference, large print, and Spanish and Russian materials. The children's room features a special science projects area. Regular programming includes an out-of-school time activity program, preschool story times, ESL discussion groups, computer workshops and book groups for adults. Special programming includes a summer reading club and cabaret nights featuring local talent.

Observations

The Faneuil Branch is located in a central part of the neighborhood. The exterior features an inviting backyard space that the public uses for concerts and movies. The branch partners with many organizations, including Little Sprouts Daycare, Allston Brighton Adult Education Coalition, Unbound Visual Arts, and the YMCA. The Friends of Faneuil recently purchased an electric piano for performances and furniture for the adult room. There is an attractive exhibition space over the fireplace. In 2004, more energy efficient windows were installed. Recent technology improvements include the installation of a self-checkout. An early literacy computer station is scheduled for installation.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Exterior lighting could be improved, and the front stairs need repair. On the interior, more computers and new furniture would enhance the appearance and utilization of the space. Accessibility improvements are needed throughout the building. A building programming study is proposed for FY14 to review the library through the lens of the Compass and make recommendations for interior and exterior improvements.

Rating: Capital Project Underway – Program Study.

Fields Corner

1520 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester
Branch Librarian: Kimberly McCleary

At a Glance

Opened: 1969
Square feet: 9,700



The Fields Corner Branch has been serving the community for more than 40 years. The branch collection offers a range of Vietnamese materials, including books, DVDs, CDs, and magazines. The teen, children's, and African-American fiction collections are also strong. Recurring programming includes preschool film showings and story times, an art enrichment program for children, and drop-in science and craft programs.

Observations

The Fields Corner Branch is located in a prominent area on Dorchester Avenue. The branch is spacious with an open floor plan and the exterior of the building is well maintained. The library has partnerships with local groups like the Dorchester Youth Collective and DotArt. Recent improvements include a new roof and windows that were installed in 2009. A self-checkout is scheduled for installation before July 2013.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Early literacy toys would enhance the children's area and the library currently lacks a dedicated teen space. Better options for shelving would improve interior sight lines. Security cameras and additional computers, especially laptops, are needed. New ceiling tiles and updated flooring and lighting as well as more comfortable and matching furniture are also needed throughout the branch. More outlets and data infrastructure are needed for computers.

Rating: Meets some Compass Principles – consideration for future capital project.

Grove Hall

41 Geneva Avenue, Dorchester

Branch Librarian: Paul Edwards

At a Glance

Opened: 2009

Square feet: 21,000



While there has been a branch of the Boston Public Library in the area since 1919, the current, state-of-the-art Grove Hall Branch opened in its Geneva Avenue location in 2009. The branch has a strong collection of local history as well as African-American literature, history, and research materials. Programming offered at the branch includes a weekly preschool story time, art exhibits, jazz performances, and extensive resources for teen patrons.

Observations

The Grove Hall Branch provides multi-use gathering areas for all age groups as well as space for quiet study and training. One unique space is the jazz lounge, where performances are regularly held. The furnishings are only a few years old and remain in good shape. The children's area was flexibly designed and can accommodate a variety of programming. The branch offers training and programming on a variety of topics, including technology and crafts. The library is co-located with the Jeremiah Burke High School and has a teen librarian and a teen room. Teen programming and events include book discussion groups and video game design activities.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Updated lighting and outdoor furniture would enhance the exterior. Security cameras are needed and additional laptops would be welcome. A review of the heating and cooling systems is necessary, since temperatures tend to fluctuate in the branch when the Burke School is not in session.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Honan-Allston

300 North Harvard Street, Allston

Branch Librarian: Carin O'Connor

At a Glance

Opened: 2001

Square feet: 20,000



The Allston neighborhood has hosted a Boston Public Library branch in other locations since 1924. In 2001, the Honan-Allston Branch opened in its current location. Highlights of the branch include a large literacy collection and more than 100 newspapers and magazines. Collection strengths also include science fiction, literary fiction, emerging technologies, career development, cookbooks, and legal information. A recent grant from Boston College helped the branch expand their audiobook collection. Regular programming includes a monthly book discussion group, weekly ESL conversation groups, and computer training. Children's programming includes story times, chess instruction, summer reading, and hands-on science programs.

Observations The Honan-Allston Branch is well laid out with plenty of space, including areas for group work. The branch is in good condition overall. The exterior is nicely landscaped. There is plenty of space for children's programming and events. The branch partners with the Jackson/Mann School and the Jackson/Mann Community Center as part of the Community Learning Initiative. The branch also partners with Pierce House and the Home for Little Wanderers. Recent improvements include the addition of a teen nook and the installation of self-checkout.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Security cameras are needed on the exterior and new paint is needed in the teen area.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Hyde Park

35 Harvard Avenue, Hyde Park
Branch Librarian: Mary Margaret Pitts

At a Glance

Opened: 1899/renovated 2000
Square feet: 23,000



The Hyde Park Branch opened its doors more than a century ago. When Hyde Park became part of Boston in 1912, the branch became part of the Boston Public Library. A renovation and expansion was completed in 2000. The branch collection includes a focus on local history, children's picture books, and hobby books on subjects like quilting and golf. Regular programming at the branch includes preschool story hours, weekly films for children, and monthly book discussions for adults. The branch also offers an annual winter musical program and lectures sponsored by the Friends of the Hyde Park Library. Special programming includes local history lectures and summer reading activities for children.

Observations

The branch is well cared for and is easy to navigate. The exterior features a garden that is used for concerts. The interior has a variety of spaces, large and small, for group gatherings and quiet study. There is nice, solid wood furniture throughout the branch. The Hyde Park Historical Society has space in the branch and offers an extensive local history collection. The staff works with local schools, community centers, and day care centers. A self-checkout was recently added to the branch. A 2013 Mayoral Initiative was completed with improvements to the teen room including new paint, computers, and furniture.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Security cameras and updated lighting and heating/cooling systems are needed. Smaller furniture, additional computers, and better definition would improve the teen space. The wood flooring near the circulation desk needs replacement.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Jamaica Plain

12 Sedgwick Street, Jamaica Plain

Branch Librarian: Betsy Clarke

At a Glance

Opened: 1911/renovated 1936

Square feet: 9,600



The Jamaica Plain Branch has been serving the community for more than a century. The branch holds a large collection of local history books, mysteries, cookbooks, travel guides, and books for teens. The branch also has extensive materials for children, including a collection called “Picture Peace,” which includes books on peace, respect, and creative conflict resolution. The branch houses a collection of adult and children’s Spanish language materials. Regular programming for children includes story hours, tween book discussions, and crafts. In the summer, the branch offers reading programs and musical, theatrical, and puppet shows. Adult programs include author and local history lectures, a weekly English/Spanish language exchange group, and Irish music.

Observations

The branch is located off South Street, one of the main avenues through Jamaica Plain. The concrete walkway leading to the South Street entrance is nice and provides easy access. The main floor has good visibility and the branch features some attractive gathering spaces. The multipurpose room is a good event space, with a stage and piano available for performances. Energy-efficient fixtures were retrofitted in 2012 and a self-checkout is scheduled for installation in 2013. The branch also received a generous bequest in 2012 that allowed staff to upgrade book trucks, get new window treatments, new audiovisual for the meeting room, and add an exterior book drop.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Security cameras and additional lighting are needed. Repairs are needed for the front entrance wall and the side entrance stairs. More comfortable furniture, a new coat of paint and matching shelving are needed throughout. Technology upgrades and new computers would enable staff to use the meeting room and mezzanine as classroom space. The children’s area could be relocated. ADA improvements are needed throughout the building. In the spring of 2013, the library worked with Miller, Dyer, Spears and a community advisory committee to review the 2006 program study and update it according to the Compass Principles. The next phase of this project is design, which will begin in the Fall 2013. That phase will inform the future timeline for construction.

Rating: Capital Project Underway – Program Study/Design.

Lower Mills

27 Richmond Street, Dorchester
Branch Librarian: Margaret Phillibert

At a Glance

Opened: 1981/ renovated 2005
Square feet: 8,000



The Lower Mills Branch opened in its present location in 1981. The building was most recently renovated in 2005. The branch features a strong mystery collection and a range of medical study and reference materials to support local colleges and schools. The branch also holds a number of books and ephemera related to Dorchester and the Lower Mills area. The branch offers weekly preschool story hours and films, an after-school events series, out-of-school time programming, and a monthly trivia night for school-aged children. Programming for adults includes monthly book discussion groups and basic computer instruction. Special programs include lectures, summer outdoor music concerts, and summer reading for children.

Observations

The Lower Mills Branch is well situated with many other agencies and schools nearby. There are wide, clear paths leading up to the entrance. There is a fair amount of shelving space throughout the branch. The meeting room is well positioned for events and also functions as a gallery. The room also provides a nice space for children's programming. The branch works with many community organizations and several local schools. A new self-checkout was installed in 2012. When the branch was renovated in 2005, the work included a new façade and updates to the heating and cooling systems.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. More lighting and security cameras are needed at the front entrance and the interior needs new paint, flooring, and furniture. Updated software and additional power outlets would help patrons better utilize computer resources. Shelving is needed to help the staff better organize the workroom. Additional early literacy toys are needed for the children's area.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Mattapan

1350 Blue Hill Avenue, Mattapan
Branch Librarian: Maurice Gordon

At a Glance

Opened: 2009
Square feet: 21,000



The state-of-the-art Mattapan Branch building opened in 2009. The branch holds strong collections in urban and teen fiction, popular music, and a wide range of movies. Extensive programming is offered, including weekly films for toddlers, teen movie matinees, author talks and readings, adult book groups, workshops, and more. The branch also offers summer reading programs and has teamed with the Mildred Avenue Middle School and the Mildred Avenue Community Center as part of Boston's Community Learning Initiative.

Observations

The Mattapan Branch is fully ADA accessible and features easy-to-navigate interior and exterior spaces. The building is in excellent shape. There are numerous meeting areas and rooms for large or small groups to gather or study. There is also a nice courtyard used for programming. The layout provides good visibility throughout the branch. There is a welcoming and comfortable space for teens.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. On the exterior, lighting at the staff entrance, security cameras and updated alarm systems are needed. Inside the branch, more options for displaying highlighted collections and mounted artwork would be welcome. Additional computers for teens would also be welcomed.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

North End

25 Parmenter Street, Boston
Branch Librarian: Susan Voloshin

At a Glance

Opened: 1965
Square feet: 8,200



The North End Branch, a building designed to resemble a Roman villa, opened on Parmenter Street in 1965. The branch collection includes a focus on adult fiction, non-fiction, bestsellers, mysteries, classics, and large-print fiction. The branch has many children's books, including picture books and first readers, and a large selection of popular magazines for adults and children. Regular programming includes preschool films and story hours, computer training, and book discussion groups. Special programming includes a children's summer reading program and lecture programs on topics of local interest such as North End history and holiday programs.

Observations

The North End Branch is located in an area with plenty of foot traffic. The branch offers some nice seating areas and attractive reading tables and lamps. The collections include a focus on Italian-language materials, reflecting the community's strong connections to Italian heritage. The branch partners with many community organizations such as St. John's School and the North End Against Drugs Organization.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. On the exterior, cobblestones and some tight corners make the entrance difficult for wheelchair access, and some mortar work and tile repair are needed. A security camera and alarm is needed at the back door and electrical upgrades are needed throughout the branch. New, more flexible furniture and updating flooring would improve the interior. More outlets and data infrastructure are needed for computers. The circulation desk could be repositioned; currently its back is to most of the branch.

Rating: Meets some Compass Principles – consideration for future capital project.

Orient Heights

18 Barnes Avenue, East Boston
Branch Librarian: Laura Pattison

At a Glance

Opened: April 1912
Square feet: 3,100



The existing Orient Heights Branch was not reviewed during the study due to the planned opening of the new branch in East Boston. The Orient Heights Branch will merge services with the existing East Boston Branch and will be relocated to a state-of-the-art facility on Bremen Street. The new branch is scheduled to open in fall 2013.

A site study for the new branch was completed in July 2009 after a yearlong public process to discuss the services, programs, and spaces most valued by East Boston residents. At 15,000 square feet, the branch will be more than double the size of the current public space of both East Boston branches combined. The branch will be environmentally friendly and will feature more flexible meeting and study spaces, a refreshed collection, more computers, free building-wide wireless access, and an early literacy space for children. There will also be adult reading, computer, and work spaces, along with a teen zone with opportunities for technology collaboration and social gathering. Located close to an MBTA station and bus routes and adjacent to the East Boston Greenway bike path, the new branch will also feature on-site parking.

Rating: Capital Project Underway – Construction.

Parker Hill

1497 Tremont Street, Roxbury
Branch Librarian: Rebecca Manos

At a Glance

Opened: 1931
Square feet: 10,200



The Parker Hill Branch has been serving the community for more than 80 years. The branch has collections in health, history, college and careers, crafts, and religion as well as ethnic and teen popular fiction. The branch is home to the Streetfeet Archives, which tell the history of a diverse group of local performers and writers founded in 1982. Branch programming includes weekly preschool story times, a summer reading program, monthly book discussions for adults, and art workshops. The branch partners with the Maurice Tobin School and the Tobin Community Center as part of the Community Learning Initiative. The branch has also partnered with local colleges, including the Massachusetts College of Art and the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

Observations

The Parker Hill Branch is located in the heart of the medical community and near schools and the MBTA. The interior features an attractive layout and includes a multipurpose room with a stage that is often used for concerts and meetings. The exterior includes an attractive garden dedicated to a former staff member. The branch is currently scheduled for self-checkout and early literacy computer station installations.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Some masonry repairs and new paint are needed, and the heating and cooling system needs to be reviewed since temperature regulation is an issue. More comfortable and flexible furniture would be welcome. A dedicated space for teens, including space for computers, would also be an improvement. More electrical outlets are needed throughout the building.

Rating: Meets some Compass Principles – consideration for future capital project.

Roslindale

4246 Washington Street, Roslindale
Branch Librarian: Catherine Clancy

At a Glance

Opened: 1961
Square feet: 13,900



The Roslindale Branch has been an anchor in the community for more than 50 years. The collection includes a large selection of materials for teens as well as numerous books on ESL, religion and spirituality, and health. The branch participates in the Community Learning Initiative in partnership with the Washington Irving Middle School, the Phineas Bates and Charles Sumner Elementary schools, and the Roslindale Community Center. Regular events include afterschool programs, preschool films, a weekly ESL conversation group, and a monthly book group for adults. Special programming includes a Reading Readiness series, a summer reading group, musical performances, and author appearances.

Observations

The Roslindale Branch is centrally located on Washington Street. The exterior is attractively landscaped. Some of the library's furniture has been recently updated. The local historical society keeps its entire collection in the Roslindale Branch, so there is a nice selection of works on local history. There are displays both in the rotunda and in the windows of the Washington Street side. The branch offers programming in partnership with local organizations like the Roslindale Adult Literacy Coalition. In 2013, a new HVAC system was installed. At that time, a new self-checkout was also added.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Benches, security cameras, and additional lighting are needed for the exterior. Inside the branch, new flooring, paint, and window treatments are needed. More computers, wire management, and data drops are also needed. In June 2013, the Library begins a programming study for this branch with the firm Leers Weinzapfel Associates and a community advisory committee. This project will review the library through the lens of the Compass Principles and make recommendations for interior and exterior renovations.

Rating: Capital Project Underway – Program Study.

South Boston

646 East Broadway, South Boston

Branch Librarian: Frances Francis

At a Glance

Opened: 1957

Square feet: 10,700



There has been a branch in South Boston almost continuously since April 1872. In its current home on East Broadway, the branch has been serving the community for more than half a century. The collection includes local historical materials and a permanent display of Boston historical maps. Programming includes computer training, two weekly film series, a book discussion group for adults, and a monthly family game night. Children’s programming includes toddler and preschool story times and a summer reading program. Special programming ranges from lecture programs on topics such as local history to an annual art festival.

Observations

The South Boston Branch is located in a well-trafficked area close to many businesses. The branch has an open layout and an attractive fenced-in backyard. There are many bright, welcoming spaces for adults and children. There is a cabinet in the meeting room that houses a sizeable local history collection. The branch partners with several local organizations, including Young Audience for Massachusetts: Arts for Learning, JazzBoston, and the annual South Boston Saint Patrick’s Day Parade. There is exhibition space available for local artists and a stage for performances in the community room. A 2013 Mayoral Initiative was completed to upgrade and enhance the outdoor reading garden. A self-checkout was also installed.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Comprehensive collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. New flooring and computer furniture would enhance the space. New window treatments are needed in the meeting room. More outlets and electrical infrastructure are needed for laptops, e-readers and future lending technologies. Some early literacy toys would be helpful in the children’s area.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

South End

686 Tremont Street, Boston
Branch Librarian: Anne Smart

At a Glance

Opened: 1971
Square feet: 10,800



The South End Branch opened in its current location in 1971. The building site was also the home of the first library in the South End that opened in 1877. The branch features a diverse collection of materials for adults that includes urban fiction, local history, audiobooks, and DVDs. The children’s collection includes many picture books. Regular programming at the branch includes preschool story hours and a film series for children. Adult programs include a weekly ESL conversation class, local history lectures, and an annual tax-help program. Seasonal programs include crafts, music performances, and a summer reading club for children.

Observations

The branch uses the park next door for events. The interior has many different rooms for patrons to use as meeting spaces. The children’s area is large and suitable for a variety of programming. The circulation desk works well for staff needs. The branch has a large local history collection. The branch partners with many groups, including South End Writes, South End Reads, and Lifetime Arts. There is a monthly teen/tween night for young branch visitors. New paint, computers, roof, and windows were completed in 2009. Upcoming improvements include a new self-checkout.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Security cameras are needed for the exterior. New paint and more flexible furniture are needed in the children’s area. A more defined space for teens would be welcomed. Storage, wire management, outlet availability, and computer placement need review. More display furniture would be helpful.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement projects.

Uphams Corner

500 Columbia Road, Dorchester
Branch Librarian: Georgia Titonis

At a Glance

Opened: 1902/renovated 2004
Square feet: 6,300



The Uphams Corner Branch opened in 1902 and was renovated in 2004. The collection includes a focus on African-American fiction and romance, books on career exploration, and materials in French, Portuguese, and Spanish. Programming includes weekly family story times, technology classes, concerts, crafts, a summer reading series, and lectures about topics of local interest. The branch also offers special programming for school-aged children during out-of-school time. Children’s programming includes story time and reading readiness, crafts, and more.

Observations

The branch is in a shared municipal space, which helps bring in foot traffic. There are some nice wooden tables and attractive moldings, and most of the furniture is in good repair. The branch has a good teen collection and offers unique programming such as Teen Tech Week. The staff organizes special events such as open mic readings and film screenings. Local art is exhibited in the hallway area. Upcoming improvements include a self-checkout. In 2013, the building that houses this branch is undergoing renovations that will include a new roof, windows, and HVAC system, as well as entryway improvements.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. Security cameras and general ADA improvements are needed. Updates are needed throughout the branch, including new computer furniture and new chairs for the adult and community areas. The children’s room is currently located on the lower level in a room that was originally used as a swimming pool. While functional, navigation and accessibility is challenging as the structure and material of the old swimming pool remain. The teen collection is currently on two floors; consolidating the collection into one area would provide a more dedicated and welcoming space. Temperature fluctuation is an issue. More outlets and data infrastructure are needed for computers. There is limited space available for performances and displays.

Rating: Meets some Compass Principles – consideration for future capital project.

West End

151 Cambridge Street, Boston
Branch Librarian: Helen Bender

At a Glance

Opened: 1968
Square feet: 9,700



The West End Branch opened in 1968. The collection includes materials on a range of topics that include biography, history, finance, travel, and interior design. The branch has a good children's collection with many picture books. Regular programming offered at the branch includes preschool and toddler story times, film showings, ESL conversation groups, author readings and lectures, and a monthly book discussion group. Special programming includes art exhibitions and musical performances.

Observations

The branch is located in a busy location for foot traffic. The branch has a nice garden space at the entrance. There is good visibility in the branch interior. There is limited space for training, but laptop training and workshops on a variety of topics, including yoga, are offered in the community room. There is also a weekly ESL conversation group. The branch partners with groups such as MGH Senior HealthWise and Young Audiences of Massachusetts: Arts for Learning. A new HVAC system and roof are in progress, scheduled for completion by fall 2013. Other improvements planned include electrical upgrades for the adult area and a self-checkout.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. The community room needs new window treatments and furniture as well as a pull-down screen for film showings. Security cameras are needed for both the interior and exterior. Carpets and display furniture could use improvement. Wire management and outlets need updating throughout the main library space.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement.

West Roxbury

1961 Centre Street, West Roxbury

Branch Librarian: Sheila G. Scott

At a Glance

Opened: 1922/renovated 1989

Square feet: 24,200



The West Roxbury Branch opened in 1922 and was expanded in 1989. The collection features works about Irish history, literature, and world language materials. The branch also has a strong collection of fiction, folktales, and picture books for children. Recurring programming offered at the branch includes art exhibitions, lecture programs, and summer reading programs for children. The branch also holds the “West Roxbury Reads” event annually in partnership with the Friends of the West Roxbury Branch Library.

Observations

The branch has large, accessible spaces and a community room that is well used by all ages for various programs. There is also a nice art gallery and new materials are displayed throughout the building. The courtyard is attractive and the staff uses it for programming. The branch is also home to the West Roxbury Historical Society, and there is a special room for the local history collection. Recent technology improvements include the addition of self-checkout.

Opportunities

A comprehensive, professional signage package is needed for the exterior and interior of the branch. Ongoing collection maintenance will improve the visitor browsing experience. New benches and security cameras are needed for the exterior. Interior improvements needed include furniture refinishing, additional computers, new computer chairs, and a dedicated space for teens. Additional display options would be helpful. In 2013, a bequest of \$70,000 was made and is planned to support improvements in the meeting room.

Rating: Meets most or all Compass Principles – may benefit from minor improvement.

Appendices

Appendix A – Facilities Review Team

Appendix B – BPL Fact Sheet

Appendix C – Map of BPL Locations

Appendix D – Facilities Review Checklist

Appendix A – Review Team

Boston Public Library

Christine Schonhart, Project Leader and Director of Library Services, Branches
Eamon Shelton, Major Projects Program Manager
Vlad Yampolsky, IT Director
Jim Meade, Superintendent of Facilities



Branch Librarians

Kate Brown	Betsy Clarke
Uma Murthy	Margaret Phillibert
Maureen Marx	Maurice Gordon
Janice Knight	Susan Voloshin
Jane Bickford	Laura Pattison
Janet Buda/JoAnn Butler	Rebecca Manos
Margaret Kelly	Catherine Clancy
Audrey Leppanen	Frances Francis
Dorothy Keller	Anne Smart
Kimberly McCleary	Georgia Titonis
Paul Edwards	Helen Bender
Carin O'Connor	Sheila Scott
Mary Margaret Pitts	

City of Boston Property and Construction Management

Maureen Anderson, Senior Project Manager
Alistair Lucks, Staff Architect



City of Boston Office of Budget Management

Abi Vladeck, Special Assistant, Capital Planning

Appendix B – BPL Fact Sheet

The Boston Public Library

Libraries	Built/Expanded Renovated/ Square Feet	Collections	Hours/ Week*	Public Computers and Laptops	Meeting Rooms	Parking Spaces
Central Library Copley Square 700 Boylston St. Boston 02116	1895/1972/2002 930,000 sq. ft.	22,720,000	68	152	Yes	0
Adams Street 690 Adams St. Dorchester 02122	1951 7,200 sq. ft.	37,000	48	26	Yes	0
Brighton 40 Academy Hill Road 02135	1969/2010 22,400 sq. ft.	52,000	48	33	Yes	Shared
Charlestown 179 Main St. 02129	1970 10,300 sq. ft.	37,000	45	24	Yes	0
Codman Square 690 Washington St. Dorchester 02124	1978 22,000 sq. ft.	62,000	48	28	Yes	20
Connolly 433 Centre St. Jamaica Plain 02130	1932 9,700 sq. ft.	34,000	45	27	Yes	0
Dudley Dudley Literacy Center 65 Warren St. Roxbury 02119	1978 21,000 sq. ft.	66,000	75	44	Yes	0
East Boston 276 Meridian St. 02128	1914 13,000 sq. ft.	37,000	45	22	Yes	0
Egleston Square 2044 Columbus Ave. Roxbury 02119	1953 6,800 sq. ft.	29,000	45	26	No	0
Faneuil 419 Faneuil St. Brighton 02135	1931 7,600 sq. ft.	33,000	45	27	No	0
Fields Corner 1520 Dorchester Ave. Dorchester 02122	1969 9,700 sq. ft.	48,000	45	33	Yes	0
Grove Hall 41 Geneva Avenue Dorchester 02121	2009 21,000 sq. ft.	32,000	45	50	Yes	21
Honan-Allston 300 North Harvard St. Allston 02134	2001 20,000 sq. ft.	57,000	48	27	Yes	20
Hyde Park 35 Harvard Ave. 02136	1899/2000 23,000 sq. ft.	63,000	48	32	Yes	Shared
Jamaica Plain 12 Sedgwick Street 02130	1911/1936 9,600 sq. ft.	40,000	45	22	Yes	0
Lower Mills 27 Richmond St. Dorchester 02124	1981 8,000 sq. ft.	44,000	45	20	Yes	0
Mattapan 1350 Blue Hill Ave. 02126	2009 21,000 sq. ft.	33,000	45	47	Yes	21
North End 25 Parmenter St. Boston 02113	1965 8,200 sq. ft.	33,000	45	22	No	0
Orient Heights 18 Barnes Ave. East Boston 02128	1912 3,100 sq. ft.	27,000	45	19	No	0

Libraries	Built/Expanded Renovated/ Square Feet	Collections	Hours/ Week*	Public Computers and Laptops	Meeting Rooms	Parking Spaces
Parker Hill 1497 Tremont St. Roxbury 02120	1931 10,200 sq. ft.	24,000	45	20	Yes	0
Roslindale 4246 Washington St. 02131	1961 13,900 sq. ft.	45,000	45	30	Yes	0
South Boston 646 East Broadway 02127	1957 10,700 sq. ft.	43,000	48	23	Yes	Shared
South End 685 Tremont St. 02118	1971 10,800 sq. ft.	32,000	45	30	Yes	0
Tierney Learning Center Neighborhood Services 125 Mercer St. South Boston 02127	2012 Shared space	Browsing	Programs for All Ages	Learning Center Lab	Yes	0
Uphams Corner 500 Columbia Rd. Dorchester 02125	1902/2004 6,300 sq. ft.	27,000	45	23	Yes	0
West End 151 Cambridge St. Boston 02114	1968 9,700 sq. ft.	35,000	45	22	Yes	0
West Roxbury 1961 Centre St. 02132	1922/1989 24,200 sq. ft.	88,000	48	25	Yes	0
TOTALS	1,259,400 sq. ft.	23,778,000	1,244	854		

*Sept. – June

RESEARCH, CENTRAL LIBRARY

Books & Periodicals	7,200,000
Rare Books	500,000
Manuscripts	1,000,000
Maps and Atlases	200,000
Music Scores	97,000
Sound Archives	2,000,000
Microforms	7,000,000
Government Documents	2,000,000
Architectural Drawings	700,000
Photographs	1,000,000
Prints, Drawings and Postcards	300,000
Ephemera (greeting cards, calling cards, etc.)	75,000
Subtotal	22,072,000

CIRCULATING, CENTRAL LIBRARY

Books, DVDs, audio visuals, etc.	648,000
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City of Boston Archival Center

Books, magazines, newspapers, government documents, etc. *available by request at the Central Library	663,000
Total Central Library, Copley Square Collections: Research, Circulating, Archives	23,383,000

Online Digital Resources

Downloadable Collections

Books, maps, photos, postcards, etc.	123,000	E-books, audiobooks, music and videos	47,000
Subscription databases	125		

Updated 6/7/13 N. Grilk

Appendix C – Map of BPL Locations



Appendix D – Facilities Review Checklist

The facilities review checklist focuses on select strategic plan outcomes and strategies as they relate to facilities. To read the entire *Compass: Strategic Plan*, visit www.bpl.org/compass.

Checklist for BPL Facilities Review Walk-Through

_____ Branch Library

Date: _____

Areas to review:

- Restrooms
- Lighting
- Carpets
- Circulation desks
- Temperature
- Entrance ways and lobbies

Evaluation criteria:

- **Excellent** - performs above expectations and is in excellent working condition
- **Good** - Performs basic tasks and in good working order
- **Needs Improvement** - unable to perform some basic functions (identify) and needs repairs

I. User-Centered Institution. The BPL is a user-centered institution with services that anticipate and respond to neighborhood interests and the changing demographics of the City and Commonwealth.

Outcomes

A. Enable easy and effective access to library services.

2. Improve navigation and use of physical locations for able-bodied users and those with physical, vision, or auditory challenges

User-Centered Institution	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
Ease of use and navigation for able-bodied users and those with physical and vision challenges				
Interior wayfinding				
Exterior wayfinding				
Suggestion box to allow staff to track suggestions				

II. Community Gathering. The BPL exists to serve and sustain communities that foster discovery, reading, thinking, conversing, teaching, and learning in accessible, sustainable, and welcoming facilities throughout the City, as well as with an engaging online presence.

Outcomes

- A. Provide library spaces that are inviting, stimulating, comfortable, clean, and safe.
 - 1. Develop a long-term capital plan for existing and potential locations, including the reduction of physical barriers to accessibility
 - 2. Develop a plan to update or renovate furnishings, as needed
 - 3. Review security plan to foster a safe workplace
 - 4. Evaluate existing locations, including outdoor spaces, in order to maximize usage
 - 5. Look for opportunities to create “innovation lab” space in existing buildings for group work, conversation, and conference

- C. Link community members to library programs and services within the BPL system and beyond.
 - 1. Position library as a community information node linking library users to other resources in their communities

- D. Minimize the library’s environmental impact.
 - 1. Improve existing environmental and recycling efforts

Community Gathering	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
State of public furnishings				
State of interior finishings				
Usability of interior space				
State of exterior finishings				
Usability of exterior space				

Usability of community or multi-purpose room				
“Innovation lab” space for group work, conversation, and conference				
Location's position as community information node through use of bulletin boards, newspaper racks, etc.				
Facility support for environmental and recycling efforts				
Visibility throughout library				
Exterior lighting				
Security cameras				
Alarm systems				

III. Special Collections. The BPL is committed to the ongoing development and preservation of its distinctive special collections, which provide citizens from all walks of life with access to their common cultural heritage.

Outcomes

A. Strengthen and grow collections that focus on existing strengths and geographic specialties.

1. Prioritize the preservation of the City’s local history; identify, exhibit, and promote appropriate collections

Special Collections	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
Local history collection display area				

IV. Center of Knowledge. The BPL is a center of knowledge that serves researchers, lifelong learners, and the intellectually curious through its incomparable collections, digital resources, and access to other scholarly networks.

Outcomes

- A. Develop community-responsive and neighborhood-reflective circulating collections.
 - 1. Assess current circulating collections and develop plan for maximizing the use of existing collections through weeding and collection development

- B. Develop and support a public training program that meets the needs of a wide range of communities.
 - 2. Provide and enhance public training program to include technical, health, civic, and financial literacy

- C. Support the research, scholastic, and literacy needs of the City and Commonwealth.
 - 3. Establish the library as the go-to place for basic computer skills learning

Center of Knowledge	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
Ratio of collection size to shelving capacity				
Accommodations for public training				
Accommodations for basic computer skills learning				

V. Children and Teens. The BPL fosters the love of reading and skills in critical and creative thinking among children and teens – from early literacy through mature readership – by offering a slate of services that provide academic support and intellectual growth.

Outcomes

A. Focus on providing early learning experiences.

1. Enhance early literacy programs, such as reading readiness, including age-appropriate, multilingual collections

C. Invest in and support systemwide youth services.

3. Provide positive and energetic programs for children and teens
7. Update and enhance technology provided for youth and teens

Children and Teens	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
Accommodations for early literacy programs, such as reading readiness				
Accommodations for children's programming				
Accommodations for teen programming				
Capacity and availability for technology for children				
Capacity and availability for technology for teens				

VI. Access and Innovation. The BPL provides access to and training in innovative technology, electronic resources, and digital information through its own holdings and its strategic position within the wider world of knowledge.

Outcomes

B. Provide state-of-the art public computing spaces.

C. Keep pace with evolving standards on in-person access to public computing resources, and to online resources.

Access and Innovation	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
In-person access to public computing resources				
Overall state of computing spaces and IT infrastructure including the ability to support laptop, e-reader and future lending technologies				
State of audio/visual equipment				

VII. Sustainable Organization. The BPL depends on sustainability of resources through a judicious stewardship of finances; active employee participation and professional development in an environment of dignity and respect; and partnerships that enrich services, expand outreach, and leverage public investment through private support.

Outcomes

C. Evaluate business practices and workflow to optimize efficiency.

- 2. Improve fine receipt procedures and explore alternatives to current pay-for-print system
- 5. Streamline workflow in collections, technology and resource sharing areas

D. Seek out and establish partnerships that enhance services.

- 1. Explore a new programming model where partner organizations complement and enhance library services and expertise
- 3. Provide collaborative opportunities to foster connections/relationships with local schools, businesses, and improve coordination with city agencies

Sustainable Organization

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
Location's ability to accommodate updates to business practices and workflow efficiencies				
External book drops				
Self-checkout				
Self pick-up				

Space for storage and support of library operations				
Identify any partner agencies at this location				
State of overall facilities and systems				

VIII. Fun. The BPL leads the way for people of all ages with recreational reading and media, invigorating programs, user-created content, and opportunities for discovery in settings that are stimulating and engaging.

Outcomes

A. Connect people to popular books, music, films, and artwork – whether the materials are brand new or simply new to select audiences.

- 3. Rededicate efforts to support interactive formats through collections and programming

B. Embrace role as a cultural and entertainment hub in the City of Boston.

- 1. Embrace neighborhood branches as tourist destinations, exhibition spaces, architectural attractions, and performance venues

Fun	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Notes
Exhibition and performance spaces				
Space to allow staff and community to highlight popular books, music and films				

Boston Public Library

700 Boylston Street

Boston, Massachusetts 02116

www.bpl.org | ask@bpl.org | 617.536.5400 | 7.2013