



Halifax Public Libraries

**Needs Assessment
and Master
Facilities Plan**

Final Report

July 2004

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Halifax Public Libraries services are considered a valuable community resource. The Library is widely recognized as the key organization supporting literacy and life-long learning for the public. The Library manages 14 Branch facilities within its network, and offers an “e-branch,” Books by Mail, a Mobile Library, and related services.

As part of their planning process, the Halifax Public Libraries’ Board of Directors wants to further enhance their understanding of trends that impact on operations and capital development. Factors include population growth in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), changing demographics, shifts in urban/rural development, and commuter patterns. In light of this need, the Board has initiated a Needs Assessment and Master Facilities Plan. Terrain Group Inc. of Bedford, Nova Scotia, has been engaged to complete this assignment.

Study Objectives

The objectives of the study are to present recommendations and establish priorities regarding capital development in the Library system for an approximate ten-year planning horizon. Additional considerations include building capacity in an environment of fiscal restraint, and establishing a Central Library while strengthening the Branch network.

Context

A number of issues faced by the Halifax Public Libraries have been identified to date and should be addressed in the course of the study. These include the absence of a Central Library, repair and maintenance issues at the Spring Garden Road Branch in Halifax that are becoming cost prohibitive, and space constraints at the Woodlawn Branch in Dartmouth. A number of studies have previously been completed for Halifax Public Libraries on various aspects of capital development planning that were reviewed as part of this project.

Methodology

The Terrain Consulting Team followed a multi-phase research approach to complete this Needs Assessment and Master Facilities Plan. Key steps in the research process included a review of reports previously completed for Halifax Public Libraries, secondary research covering best practices within other Library systems in North America, population projections, an assessment of space standards, an overview of future development in HRM, extensive interviewing of Library stakeholders, and Focus Groups as part of community consultation.

Key Findings

Highlights of research findings are presented here.

- **Role of Central Library**
The A.J. Diamond, Donald Schmitt and Company, et al., Central Library Project Study for the Halifax Regional Library, 1998, identified the following roles for a Central Library:
 - Consolidate services and employees, providing centralized services from a strong core;
 - Serve as a resource centre to business, government, and the public, and consolidate rather than duplicate expensive technologies and collections to meet local community needs; and
 - Stand as a testament to the importance the City places on its Civic institutions, and its commitment to provide excellent education resources and information to citizens.

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- **Spring Garden Road Library/Central Library**
The Diamond report presented the following key findings in relation to the Spring Garden Road Branch and a potential new Central Library:
 - Renovation on the current Spring Garden Road site would not accommodate Central Library space requirements, and renovation costs are high;
 - Renovation to accommodate Central Library space requirements would not result in significant cost savings and would create a facility that is less efficient than a new building; and
 - Demolition and reconstruction on the current site would require relocation for up to two years, and two moves, at a potential cost of up to \$1.8 million.

Many stakeholders acknowledged the physical condition of the current Spring Garden Road Library presents significant issues that must be addressed in the short-term.

There were differing views on the location of a Central Library. Many stakeholders expressed an interest in the Central Library being located in downtown Halifax. They viewed the Central Library as an integral component of the downtown business and academic core, and a valued asset for the Capital District. The preferred location would be in very close proximity to the current Spring Garden Road Library.

When Focus Group participants were presented with the top two site options under consideration by the Board of Directors for a new Central Library, they chose the Spring Garden Road at Queen Street site that may incorporate the former Halifax Infirmary. Their second choice was the nearby Queen Street at Clyde Street site.

There are strong emotional and historical ties to the current Spring Garden Road Library building. Some Focus Group participants stated that, if it were not possible to remain in the current building, they would like to see it incorporated into a new facility. At minimum, dedicated effort should be made to preserve the building as an historical and cultural community resource with adequate maintenance and upkeep.

- **Woodlawn Library**
In terms of usage, the Woodlawn Library ranks seventh in circulation among the Halifax Public Libraries' 14 Branches, behind Keshen Goodman, Spring Garden, Alderney, Cole Harbour, Sackville, and Tantallon. Woodlawn Branch also has the fifth highest circulation per capita at 13.2 items per catchment area population. Woodlawn has the highest circulation per square foot in the Region at 84.06.

Focus Group participants expressed a preference for remaining at the current site in Staples Plaza in Dartmouth, and would simply like an expanded facility. Ease of access and ample parking were overriding factors. Their suggestions for an expanded Branch included increased resources, public computers, and programming space.

- **Ongoing Maintenance**
The Facilities Inventory Report, completed by the Halifax Public Libraries and HRM staff in 2002, identified a variety of maintenance issues at various Branches that require funding.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that the Board of Directors of Halifax Public Libraries focus on the following areas with respect to capital development.

Recommendations for Years 0 – 5 (2004 – 2009)

1. First Priority: Spring Garden Road Library/Central Library

It is recommended that a new Library be established on Spring Garden Road, or in the immediate vicinity in Halifax, and that it serve as both a Branch to the immediate catchment area and the Central Library for the Region.

The peninsula will continue to experience population growth, although not at the same rapid rate as experienced within the last ten years. A new facility will accommodate the needs of the immediate catchment area and fulfil the Central Library role. Repair and maintenance of the current building is becoming cost prohibitive. As previously noted, the Diamond report indicated that expansion or new construction on the current site would be highly expensive and would not achieve requirements for a Central Library.

In terms of a new site, there is a preference for the Spring Garden Road at Queen Street site, which may incorporate some of the former Halifax Infirmary. A close second is the Queen Street at Clyde Street. There are strong emotional and historical ties to the current Spring Garden Road building owned by HRM, and efforts should be made to ensure it remain as an historical and cultural centre with proper maintenance.

2. Second Priority: Woodlawn Library/Cole Harbour Library

The second priority is to address the space constraints and location of Woodlawn Library in Dartmouth. This can be achieved either by expanding in the current location in the Staples Plaza, or by establishing a new Branch in one of a number of potential sites in malls and commercial centres in the immediate area. A move to the Tacoma Dr. area is recommended if unable to expand at the existing location.

The Branch could be reasonably expanded from its current size of 4,000 square feet to at least 12,000 square feet, based on standards accepted by Halifax Public Libraries. There has, and will continue to be, development in the area in Portland Estates/Portland Hills, as well as Keystone and Port Wallace. There is also potential additional development in the Shearwater area. This development is totally dependent on the future of the airport and the speed with which lands may be declared surplus, and thus should be monitored. Lands controlled by the base combined with privately held lands could generate an additional five to ten thousand (5,000-10,000) people. Increased square footage can be achieved through expansion of Woodlawn Branch, or some combination of expansion for floor area of the Woodlawn Branch and the Cole Harbour Branch to support this population growth.

There is strong preference for remaining in the current site within the Staples Plaza and expanding the existing space. Ease of access and ample parking are important factors. If this is not feasible, a move to the Tacoma Drive area is recommended.

Recommendations for Years 6 – 10 (2010 – 2014)

3. Third Priority: Bedford Library/Keshen Goodman Library

Within five years or less, consideration should be given to acquiring more space at a new Bedford Branch, potentially located in Bedford South. Due to population growth in Bedford South, within five years or less, space constraints at Bedford Library and Keshen Goodman Library will become more significant. Consideration should be given to acquiring more space at a new Bedford Branch, potentially located in Bedford South.

Other considerations include possible expansion to Keshen Goodman to alleviate increasing space constraints. Also, a second Branch could potentially be established in Bedford North, specifically in the new development, Northgate, which would also serve Fall River.

Within years 5 to 10, the Bedford South and Bedford West developments will be well underway and receiving the majority of new development activity and growth within all of HRM. Approximately 35,000 new residents are projected for Bedford South and West together, and a new interchange on the Bicentennial Highway will “kick-start” growth. This growth will put a substantial strain on the available square footage within the Keshen Goodman Library given the existing location of the Bedford Branch being on the more easterly end of Bedford and not in close proximity to the Bedford South or Bedford West developments. Halifax Public Libraries should begin negotiations now for a new site in Bedford South prior to proposed interchange being built.

Given the potential for new development in the Rocky Lake area, the extension of Burnside Drive, and a shifting of traffic patterns to that area, consideration should be given to a second new Branch in this northern section of Bedford. This area is intended as a major recreational and institutional site, along with new residential and regional commercial uses forming a new node within the metropolitan region. This area, being in close proximity to the Fall River and Waverley communities, may also serve to improve Library services to those residential communities that will also be seeing some level of increased development in this time period.

Expansion at Keshen Goodman Library is feasible. This should be considered, as increasing population in the area will lead to heightened issues related to space constraints. Also, a second Branch could potentially be established in Bedford North, specifically in the new development Northgate, which would also serve Fall River.

4. Fourth Priority: Middle Musquodoboit, Musquodoboit Harbour and Eastern Shore Area

Middle Musquodoboit area meets the benchmarks for a rural level branch at this time but should continue to be monitored to ensure growth patterns remain consistent while the first three priorities are being addressed.

The Musquodoboit Harbour Branch should remain in its current leased location until growth patterns in this area become clear. The Porter’s Lake population does not warrant a branch. No significant growth expected in Porter’s Lake over the near term. It will see definite impact from the HRM growth management policies and there are few projects in line for approval. Residents tend to use the Cole Harbour Branch. Usage patterns should be monitored in relation to overall usage at Cole Harbour.

Additional Recommendations

5. Areas for Monitoring

Fall River, if not serviced by a future branch in Bedford North area, and Eastern Passage need addressing in suburban service delivery plans. Serving Eastern Passage may impact the Cole Harbour Branch.

Given the increase in population in the Tantallon catchment area, it is also recommended that the Tantallon Branch be monitored. The Tantallon area will continue to see growth a reasonably high rate given the extent of the supply of vacant lots in the area as well as the applications for new development in the system before the growth management policies were introduced. Once this supply is exhausted the population will stabilize and possibly decline. Any potential decline will be outside the study time frame.

It is also recommended to maintain Branches at their current size and monitor growth in the following catchment areas: Captain William Spry, Halifax North, Dartmouth North and J.D. Shatford, Sackville and Sheet Harbour.

6. Ongoing Maintenance

The Facilities Inventory completed by Halifax Public Libraries and HRM staff in 2002, recognized the need to refurbish a Branch once a year based on identified criteria.

Halifax Public Libraries needs to maintain Branches as safe, pleasant, accessible and efficient facilities for clients and staff. Maintenance requirements should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. It should be noted that if a decision is not made to go forward with the building of a new Spring Garden Library, major funds would need to be invested in the existing building.

Acknowledgements

The Terrain Group Consulting Team would like to thank those who participated in the research process for this study. Their input and insight provided valuable direction.

The team would like to thank those who participated in the Strategic Interviews. Participants included Mayor Peter Kelly, Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Councillors, HRM staff, members of Halifax Public Libraries' Board of Directors, a stakeholder with the Nova Scotia Department of Education, and partners in business and community associations.

The team would also like to thank all those who participated in Focus Groups. Various stakeholder groups were represented, including Library clients, and community and business associations.

In addition, the team extends appreciation to the Halifax Public Libraries staff for their input during the Strategic Interview phase, and their coordination in planning Focus Groups. Finally, the team acknowledges the ongoing direction and support of Halifax Public Libraries senior management during all phases of this assignment.

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Appendix A: Strategic Interview Guide

Appendix B: Focus Group Moderator’s Guide

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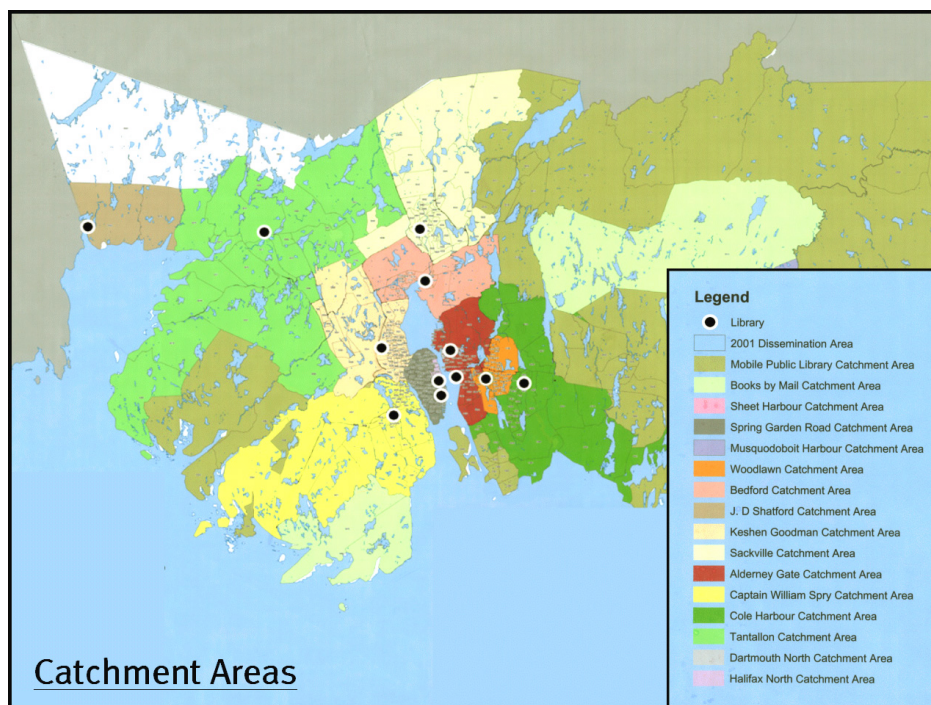
1 Introduction

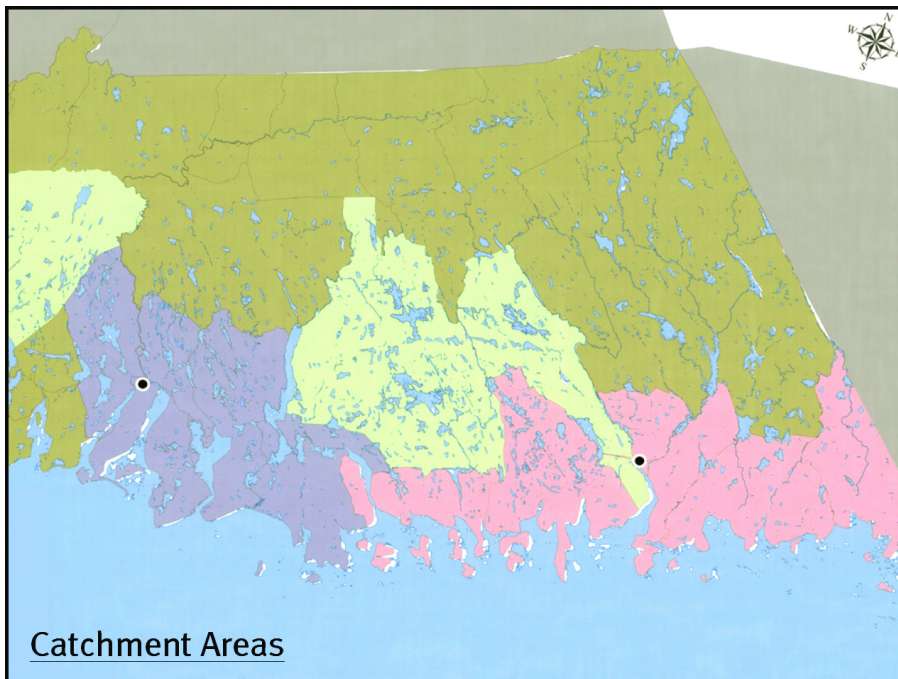
1.1 Background

The Halifax Public Libraries offers a valued resource to the community. The Library manages 14 Branches within the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Other services include an “e-branch,” Books by Mail, a Mobile Library, and related services. The Board of Directors continually plans for both operational and capital budget requirements. A goal of the Library is to build capacity in an environment of fiscal restraint.

Many factors impact on the planning for Halifax Public Libraries facilities, including the following:

- Population growth – within HRM and the various Library “catchment” areas (please see images below), or service areas, for each Branch;
- Changing demographics – including changes observed in the various age categories among the population;
- Shifts in urban and rural development – including growing communities outside the core of HRM; and
- Commuter patterns – requiring an understanding of how and where clients use Library facilities.





1.2 Study Objectives

The Library Board of Directors has initiated a Needs Assessment and Master Facilities Plan to effectively support their long-term planning efforts. Terrain Group Inc., based in Bedford, Nova Scotia, has been engaged to complete this study. The objective is to make recommendations and establish priorities with respect to capital development within Halifax Public Libraries’ system. A multi-phase research approach has been followed to address the requirements of this assignment.

1.3 Priority Issues

The Board of Directors has identified a number of priority issues with respect to capital development planning. These include:

- **Maintenance of Spring Garden Road Branch**
The repair and maintenance of the current facility on Spring Garden Road are becoming cost prohibitive. Previous research has identified significant challenges with respect to expanding or building a new facility on the current site.
- **Absence of a Central Library**
The Halifax Public Libraries system currently lacks a Central Library. A Central Library manages core administrative and support functions, and houses specialized collections and resources. A Central Library supports Branches and makes the system stronger through achieving efficiencies. Halifax Public Libraries is currently operating with a decentralized system and a tiered structure to service delivery. The Spring Garden Road Branch would typically fulfill this role, given its location in the Capital District. However, alternative approaches have been adopted given the above-mentioned challenges with the facility. Spring Garden Road now shares the Resource Library role with Alderney Gate and Keshen Goodman Libraries.
- **Space Constraints at Woodlawn Branch**
Space constraints at the Woodlawn Branch in the Staples Plaza in Dartmouth have been identified as an issue. There are other Branches facing space constraints, and this trend may continue given projected population growth. These Branches include Bedford, Cole Harbour, Keshen Goodman, and Sackville.

- Ongoing Maintenance and Repair
All Branch facilities within the system require ongoing maintenance and repair funds. The Library requires funds in their budget to ensure each Branch offers a clean, safe, accessible, and appealing environment for clients and staff.

A number of studies have been completed for Halifax Public Libraries on various aspects of capital development and facilities management, which are covered in Section 3.1 of this report.

1.4 The Central Library

The previously-mentioned Diamond report identified the following roles fulfilled by a Central Library:

- Consolidate services and employees providing central functions and create a strong core from which new services can be developed and supported;
- Serve as a resource centre to business, government, and the public, providing the opportunity to consolidate rather than duplicate expensive technologies and collections to meet local community needs;
- Signify the importance the City places on its civic institutions, and its commitment to provide excellent education resources and information services to citizens; and
- Stand as a signature building to showcase design excellence in the HRM core.

The priority sites currently under consideration as potential locations for a new Central Library are Spring Garden Road at Queen Street in Halifax, and the nearby Queen Street at Clyde Street. Benefits associated with the Central Library being located near the current Spring Garden Road site in the downtown core include:

- The Central Library would be in close proximity to partner organizations, including City Hall and universities. The location would facilitate meetings with municipal stakeholders.
- The Central Library would be centrally located to serve key client groups such as the business community. If the Central Library was based in another Branch, some reference material may need to be duplicated at additional cost.

Various studies have identified challenges to modifying the current Spring Garden Road Library. The Diamond report presents the following key findings:

- Renovation of the existing Spring Garden Road Library does not address the need for a Central Library, while the construction of a Central Library in the vicinity of Spring Garden Road facility would accommodate the current branch functions of the existing Library.
- The costs of renovating the existing facility are high.
- Renovation of the existing Spring Garden Road Library to accommodate space needs of a Central Library on the site does not result in significant cost savings, and would create a facility that is less efficient than a completely new Central Library building.
- Demolition and rebuilding a new Central Library on the existing site is a more expensive option than construction on adjacent sites, because the Library would have to temporarily relocate for approximately two years and move twice at an additional cost that could approach \$1.8 million. It would also not address deficiencies such as the lack of public parking surrounding the site.

2 Methodology

This Needs Assessment and Master Facilities Plan is based on a multi-phase research approach. Key phases in the methodology are summarized here. Findings by research Phase are presented in Section 3 of this report.

2.1 Review of Previous Studies

The Terrain Consulting Team reviewed a number of previous studies completed for Halifax Public Libraries by other consulting firms and by Library staff. The reports covered various aspects of capital development and facilities management. A list of reports reviewed is included in Section 3.1.1.

2.2 Strategic Interviewing

The Consulting Team interviewed a total of 28 stakeholders for Halifax Public Libraries. Their direct, first-hand knowledge offered valuable direction. A list of participants is included in Section 3.2.1.

2.3 Population Projections and Future Development in HRM

Understanding population growth within HRM and Library catchment areas is key to understanding current and future usage levels, and corresponding space requirements. Further, it is important to consider changing demographics to more fully understand user profiles and how they vary by catchment area. The Terrain Consulting Team employed a Cohort-Survival model for the purposes of this study, using Canadian Census data from 2001. In addition the model incorporates anticipated growth patterns and restrictions over the horizon time line and is designed to account for net migration. An overview of future growth in HRM is also provided and is based on Terrain's extensive experience with development in the Region.

2.4 Review of Space Standards

Using the results of the previously mentioned population projections, the Consulting Team reviewed published space standards for populations served. The Nova Scotia Provincial Library, "Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries," 2nd edition, September 2001, was used to evaluate current and projected space needs in relation to the population of HRM and individual catchment areas.

2.5 Review of Library Models

A review of current trends and practices in capital development or expansion in Library systems throughout North America was completed. Locations were selected based on knowledge of active projects among Halifax Public Libraries staff and the Consulting Team.

2.6 Community Consultation

Community consultation was an integral component of the research process. It was valuable to gain input from clients and partners with a direct relationship to the Library, and to engage them in planning efforts for their community Branches. Focus Groups were held in the locations that emerged as priority areas through research. Two Focus Groups were held at Spring Garden Road Branch and three at the Woodlawn Branch. In the latter case, an extra Focus Group was held to ensure adequate participation from those in a broader range of age categories, such as parents with young families, teachers, etc. Participants included youth, parents, program participants, partners in business and community associations, school representatives, and others. A Moderator's Guide (see Appendix B) was developed that incorporated questions on desired programs and services available through a new or expanded facility, and preferred sites.

3 Key Findings

Key findings are presented here by research Phase.

3.1 Review of Previous Studies

Methodology

Previous studies completed for Halifax Public Libraries by consulting firms and by staff were reviewed for the purposes of this study. The reports covered various aspects of capital development and facilities management. Other sources related to library facilities planning were also reviewed.

3.1.1 Previously Completed Studies

The reports reviewed in the course of this project are listed here.

- Halifax Regional Library, “Performance Measures – Monthly Statistics,” March 2003.
- Halifax Public Libraries Staff, Rural Services Review, February 2003 (Confidential).
- Halifax Public Libraries, Strategic Plan 2003 – 2004.
- Halifax Regional Municipality, Capital District Urban Design Project Update, August 2003.
- Hennen, Thomas J., Jr., “Great American Public Libraries: The 2003 HAPLR Rankings,” American Libraries, October 2003.
- Halifax Regional Libraries staff and Halifax Regional Municipality staff, Halifax Regional Library Facilities Inventory, 2002.
- Canadian Administrators of Large Urban Public Libraries (CALUPL), “2002 CALUPL Annual Statistics,” 2002.
- Townsend, Phillip, Halifax Regional Municipality – Building Management Services, “Memorandum: Spring Garden Road Library – Structural Evaluation,” March 20, 2001.
- Nova Scotia Provincial Library, “Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries,” 2nd edition, September 2001.
- Pulse Marketing, Halifax Regional Library Services Marketing and External Communications Plan, March 18, 1999.
- Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council, “Ontario Public Library Guidelines – A developmental tool for small, medium and county libraries,” 2nd edition. 1999.
- A.J. Diamond, Donald Schmitt and Company, et al., Central Library Project Study for the Halifax Regional Library, 1998
- Burke/Oliver Consultants Ltd. et al, Halifax Regional Municipality Major Recreation Complex Final Report, July 15, 1998
- Halifax City Regional Library, Towards a New Central Library, March 1996
- Beckman Associates Library Consultants Inc., Halifax Regional Library Space and Services: Needs Assessment Study, December 1994
- Duffus, Romans, Kundzins, Rounsefell Limited, Architects & Consulting Engineers, Halifax Memorial Library Building Feasibility Study, December 1987.
- Nova Scotia Provincial Library, “Charting our Course – A Strategic Plan for Nova Scotia Regional Libraries.”

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3.1.2 Key Findings

Key findings of previous studies reviewed in the course of this project are summarized here in chronological order.

Halifax Public Libraries Staff, Rural Services Review, February 2003 (Confidential).

Halifax Public Libraries staff completed this study in 2003. Preceding the study, the Library had been receiving requests to increase library service levels in rural areas. An integrated library service plan was required for rural areas to anticipate customer demand for service, define equitable service levels, and determine budget impacts. Services have been revised and improved over the past six years in response to community demand. Developments included: extended mobile Library service hours, the Tantallon Public Library opening in 2001, equitable service and collections improved, and an e-branch launched in 2001.

Desired enhancements included a branch for Middle Musquodoboit, expanded library service hours for rural branches, and a long-term facilities plan for Musquodoboit Harbour, among others. The team compiled and reviewed use and population trends, customer and Library surveys, and cost of services.

Key findings are outlined here:

- Per capita spending in areas served by rural branches is more than twice that of urban/suburban branches.
- In areas served by Mobiles and Books by Mail, per capita spending is more than three times less that of urban/suburban branches.
- Use of the Mobile Service and Books by Mail Service is nine times less than per capita use of rural branches.
- Middle Musquodoboit meets the benchmarks for a rural level branch library.

Short-term recommendations to be implemented in 2003 included the following:

- Approve criteria for Rural Branch Libraries and for Rural and Suburban branches.
- Expand existing branch catchment areas based on criteria for rural/suburban branches.
- Maintain the present service level at the J.D. Shatford branch.
- Investigate feasibility of using Alternative Service Delivery mechanisms (ASDs) for regular delivery of material to Sheet Harbour branch.
- Approve criteria for establishing Mobile stops, and operate Mobile service with one vehicle with an extended schedule.
- Approve criteria, continue Books-by-Mail service, and allocate staff resources.
- Promote the use of e-branch as an integrated component of Rural Service Delivery.

Long-term recommendations requiring farther investigation between 2004 and 2008 included the following:

- Establish a suburban level Branch in Porter's Lake to replace the current Musquodoboit Harbour Branch. (Note: It has been decided not to include the Musquodoboit Harbour catchment area within the Porter's Lake catchment area. The Musquodoboit Harbour Branch will remain and as a result, the Porter's Lake area does not have the population to support a suburban Branch.)
- Include Eastern Passage and Fall River in suburban service delivery plans.
- Establish priority for branches in Porter's Lake and Middle Musquodoboit within the demand for new/expanded branches within other library service areas.
- Establish a rural level Branch in Middle Musquodoboit.

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Next Steps included the following:

- Recommendations for new branches must be integrated with regional plans for branches, including Spring Garden Road and Woodlawn branches.
- Recommendations for branches must be integrated with the Facilities Review process.

Halifax Regional Libraries Staff and Halifax Regional Municipality Staff, Facilities Inventory, 2002.

The Halifax Public Libraries compiled an inventory in 2002 of all facilities within the system. Further, in consultation with HRM Real Property and Asset Management, they noted key details around the condition of facilities and evaluated interior, exterior, and systems.

General upgrades of buildings required on a short-term basis include the following.

Alderney Gate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace carpet in Front entrance.
Bedford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled access doors.
Captain William Spry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace carpet in puppet room and adult programming room.
Cole Harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled access doors. • Book Drop. • Circulation Desk requires redesign.
Dartmouth North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulation Desk requires redesign.
Halifax North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heinish Room Learning Centre • Replace carpet throughout the Branch. • Electrical upgrades.
Keshen Goodman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve acoustic issues with sound system replacement; requires analysis to recommend additional solutions.
Sackville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled access doors.
Shatford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arsenic present in water; drinking water is provided for staff.
Sheet Harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace carpet.
Spring Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major problems with the building to be addressed with replacement of building. • Masonry work. • Oil tank replacement. • Repair elevator.
Woodlawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled access doors.

A.J. Diamond, Donald Schmitt and Company, Central Library Project Study for the Halifax Regional Library, 1998.

The purpose of the Architectural Consultation Study was to address preliminary planning, design, and implementation issues so that a decision could be made to proceed with design and construction of the Central Library.

The study concluded that the current Spring Garden Road site is not suitable for the new Central Library. It stated that the Spring Garden Road Library is unable to meet the needs of its current catchment area.

The study team stated that the need for a new Central Library facility in Halifax was established and documented in previous studies for Halifax Public Libraries. With amalgamation in 1996, the need for a Central Library became even more pronounced, as centralized service needs to be provided for an even larger population base.

The role of the Central Library includes:

- Consolidation of services and employees,
- Establishment of new services,
- Serving as a resource centre; and
- A visible civic commitment to education and information for citizens.

The Diamond report stated that, based on current and projected population for HRM and standards from other Canadian cities of similar size, the City can justify provision of an additional 140,000 square feet of system-wide library space. Through consideration of program requirements, the study concluded that the Central Library needs a floor area of approximately 95,000 square feet. This leaves a margin of justified future service expansion of approximately 45,000 square feet over the next 20 years. As the population of HRM is dispersed across a large area, this service expansion can be dedicated to the provision of additional branch library services in the future.

The study analyzed several different options for renovation, renovation/expansion, and demolition and replacement, and developed cost estimates for each option. The conclusion of the analysis was not to use the Spring Garden Road site for the new Central Library. Reasons included:

- High renovation costs, and that a new facility could incorporate both central and branch functions;
- Renovation did not result in significant savings;
- Rebuilding a new library on the existing site is more expensive than construction on an adjacent site, mainly because the Library would have to relocate for approximately two years and move twice, additional costs that could approach \$1.8 million, and would not address deficiencies such as lack of public parking.

Site analysis included six sites in central Halifax, including:

- A waterfront site owned by the Waterfront Development Corporation;
- A North Halifax site on Gottingen Street;
- A site at Barrington and George Streets;
- The existing Spring Garden Road Library site;
- A site at Spring Garden Road and Queen Street; and
- An adjacent site at Queen and Clyde Streets.

The site selected by Diamond for the Central Library is at Queen and Clyde Street occupied by a municipal parking lot.

Costs of construction and implementation of the new Central Library were estimated at \$24 million. This included:

- Construction costs of \$16.3 million;
- Other costs of \$6.4 million; and
- Collection expansion of \$1.3 million.

Operating costs were projected to increase for a new Central Library, but otherwise compared favourably. Total annual operating cost would be approximately \$2.8 million (\$29.30 per square foot), compared to current operating costs of \$2.0 million (\$53.24 per square foot) for Spring Garden Road and Technical Services at a second location that would be replaced in the new facility.

The new building would provide 150% more floor area for a 37% increase in operating costs. Major savings come from reduction of required staff per square foot because of improved building organization and efficiency, and from reduced building maintenance costs. Additional savings will result from the reorganization of library system services through reduced travel time, reduced vehicle maintenance costs, and general improved efficiency.

Halifax City Regional Library Staff, Towards a Central Library, March 1996.

A study was completed in 1996 by an internal team to provide the groundwork for a building plan for a new Central Library in post-amalgamation HRM. The study was initiated to address the following: assess the perceived limitation of the Spring Garden Road Library Building; study requirements for space, service, and collection needs; identify present use; and develop a user profile. The research approach incorporated various surveys, Focus Groups, and past data.

The limitations facing the current Spring Garden Road branch facility include:

- The majority of borrowers use their local branch library and visit Spring Garden Road for additional materials.
- The Spring Garden Road Library has at least three times the level of activity it was originally designed to handle. The Halifax Regional Library Space and Services: Needs Assessment Study, conducted by Beckman Associates Library Consultants Inc. in 1994, identified several significant limitations at the Spring Garden Road location.
- Results of the survey showed the community agree. In all three surveys, respondents identified limitations, including: inadequate quiet reading areas, inadequate space for books, no passenger drop-off areas, and absence of convenient or affordable parking.
- There is a desire for affordable, convenient parking near the Library, although Focus Group participants indicated this is both a municipal and business concern. They also identified a need for parking for disabled individuals as well as accessible drop off areas.
- There are issues related to security and access, particularly for seniors, disabled individuals, youth, and parents with children.

With amalgamation, it has become more important to have a Central Library to support the extended network of branch libraries throughout the region. Staff specialists will be able to complement and support the work of librarians in the Branches. Benefits include:

- Space for materials;
- Quiet reading and study space;
- Accessibility to the physically challenged;

- A projected increase in use of about 25% to 50%, based on the experience of other new central libraries;
- Support of an active downtown core, complementing commercial, residential, harbour, and cultural developments and initiatives;
- A potentially attractive feature to new residents and businesses, further enhancing quality of life;
- Offering excellent service in providing quality information that is free and accessible to all; and
- Integration of technology for improved service delivery.

Next steps resulting from the study were as follows:

- Develop a Central Library Building Proposal, and
- Develop a Funding Campaign.

Beckman Associates Library Consultants Inc., Halifax Regional Library Space and Services: Needs Assessment Study, 1994.

With concerns of overcrowding, a feasibility study was conducted to analyze the space requirements for library services within the City of Halifax. As well, the quality of collections and the status of library automation were to be examined. The assessment was to include comparisons with other large, urban public libraries.

The feasibility study, commissioned by the City of Halifax, found that the Spring Garden Road building was not adequate, nor could it possibly meet the future demands of the amalgamated region. The report stated (as summarized in Towards a Central Library) the following:

- The present main library is a 1951 building, expanded by an unfortunate design in 1974. It cannot support new collections and services, sophisticated users, and resources.
- It is difficult to meet technological requirements in a 1950s building, and impossible to introduce power and communications in mid-floor locations.
- There are several special relationships between collections due to lack of space and building configuration; ease of use is compromised, and the environment is generally considered crowded and dark.

The following studies are less directly related to this Needs Assessment and Master Facilities Plan yet offer relevant findings.

Pulse Marketing, Halifax Regional Library Services Marketing and External Communications Plan, March 18, 1999.

Pulse Marketing completed a Services Marketing and External Communications Plan for the Halifax Public Libraries in 1999. Key highlights follow here:

- Current users are very satisfied with virtually all aspects of the Library;
- An important strength of the Library was the trained, helpful staff;
- An area requiring improvement was hours of operation; and
- The overall image of the Library is one of a safe and predictable environment.

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Burke/Oliver Consultants Ltd. et al, Halifax Regional Municipality Major Recreation Complex Final Report, July 15, 1998.

Halifax Regional Municipality commissioned a study to ascertain the need and optimum siting for a major recreation facility complex to serve Districts 2, 16, 21, 22, and 23. Additional goals were to determine what facilities would be required in the areas not considered optimal for the major centre, as well as to examine willingness to pay. Burke/Oliver Consultants Ltd. completed the study in 1998 with The ARA Group, and Sperry Partners Architects and Planners.

Study components included: background research, Focus Group meetings, user group questionnaires, interviews, existing facilities assessments, and a public survey. The public survey methodology was seriously hampered due to the mailing list.

A key finding was that, while the public survey focussed on a wide variety of recreational activities, libraries services and facilities figured very prominently among the responses. Highlights included:

- Library received top ranking with respect to present activities, future activities, and desired facility.
- The top three present activities remain consistent at Library, Walking, and Recreational Swimming. Future activities follow this order as well.
- Library, Indoor Pool, and Walking Trails are the top three facility preferences.
- People are willing to drive farthest to access walking trails, arena and indoor pools, but generally prefer facilities closer to home.
- 77% of respondents currently use public recreation facilities.
- 57% of respondents believe more recreation facilities are needed.
- 81% believe the operation of public recreation facilities should be tax supported.

3.2 Strategic Interviewing

Methodology

The Consulting Team interviewed a total of 28 Halifax Public Libraries stakeholders. These individuals were interviewed early in the research process. Their direct, first-hand knowledge offered valuable direction to the project. There was representation from various stakeholder groups including Halifax Public Libraries Board of Directors, staff, HRM Councillors, business and community associations, Provincial partners, and others.

3.2.1 Strategic Interview Participants

The following individuals participated in Strategic Interviews.

Halifax Public Libraries Board and Staff	
Branch Managers: Darlene Beck, Spring Garden Road; Charby Slein, Woodlawn; Helen Thexton, Musquodoboit Harbour and Sheet Harbour; Kathleen Peverill, Sackville and Manager of Mobile Libraries	In-person group interview.
Susan McLean, Director of Public Services	In-person interview.
Board of Directors: Peter Doig, Chair; Leo McKenna, Vice-Chair; Bev Sweetman	In-person group interview.
Alex Handyside, Board Member.	Telephone interview.
Betty Thomas, Board Member.	In-person interview.
Lorna Crawley-Mulolani, Board Member.	In-person interview.
Halifax Regional Municipality Council	
Mayor Peter Kelly	Ex-Officio Board Member. In-person interview.
Councillor Ron Cooper	Representing Cole Harbour North – Cherry Brook. In-person interview.
Councillor Shelia Fougere and Councillor Sue Uteck	Board Member (Councillor Fougere), and representing Connaught – Quinpool and Northwest Arm – South End respectively. In-person group interview.
Councillor Len Goucher	Representing Bedford. In-person interview.
Councillor Robert Harvey	Representing Lower Sackville. In-person interview.
Councillors Dawn Sloane and Councillor Jerry Blumenthal	Representing Halifax Downtown and Halifax North End respectively. In-person group interview.
Councillor Steve Streach	Representing Eastern Shore – Musquodoboit Valley. In-person interview.
Councillor Brian Warshick	Board member, and representing Westphal – Waverley Road. In-person interview.
Halifax Regional Municipality	
Mike Labreque, Director of Real Property and Asset Management, HRM.	Telephone interview.
Carol Macomber, Capital District Planning Initiative, HRM.	In-person interview.
George MacLellan, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), HRM, and Dan English, Deputy CAO, HRM.	In-person group interview.
Nova Scotia Department of Education	
Wayne Doggett, Senior Executive Director, Dept. of Education	In-person interview.
Business Associations	
Paul MacKinnon, Downtown Halifax Business Association.	In-person interview.
Bernie Smith, Spring Garden Road Business Association.	In-person interview.

3.2.2 Key Findings

The Interview Guide (see Appendix A) did not deal exclusively with issues related to branches and site selection. Rather, it addressed broader issues such as the objectives of the Library, client groups, and key resources. This directional information provided useful context for discussions on Branch facilities.

Primary Objectives of the Library

Interview subjects were asked their opinion on the primary objectives to be fulfilled by the Library.

Most respondents readily indicated a library offers access for all, which is the right of citizens in a democratic society. Many identified “life long learning” and support of literacy as primary functions.

Almost all participants said the Library should be a gathering place for the community, both formal (for example, for community meetings or speakers) and informal (for example, to see friends and neighbours). Terms used to describe library facilities included, “safe, pleasant, welcoming, quiet, and comfortable.”

Participants placed high importance on Library Branches as community resources. They indicated that the prevalence of the Internet and the ability to access information on-line does not diminish the need for libraries. There was still a need to access books. As one respondent noted, “books are real.” It was important to have a place to interact with neighbours and other in the community.

Client Groups

Respondents were asked to identify the primary and secondary client groups served by public libraries.

Most respondents indicated the primary clients of the Library are “all residents,” a basic tenet of library service. In terms of specific client groups, many respondents identified children, adding libraries encourage an early “love of reading.” One respondent said, “They become patrons for life.” With school-age children, they indicated libraries fulfill an important purpose, given many school libraries either do not exist or are “shell” facilities.

Seniors were another key audience. They often need large print books and related resources, and are perceived to be more frequent users.

Library Resources

Respondents were asked to identify the most important resources, services, and programming the Library should offer.

Respondents said libraries should offer all the traditional resources, including books, reference materials, periodicals, and others. This included audio/visual resources, books on tape, CDs, and DVDs. One respondent noted the high cost of books on tape, which can be prohibitive for disabled and disadvantaged persons.

Participants said that individual Branches should offer resources unique to the catchment area. This included archived information, newspapers articles, and speakers and writers from the area. In other words, Branches take on the character of their communities.

Many participants indicated that a key resource of the Library was its “human resources.” As one participant noted, “We have people... smart people.” Experienced, capable staff members help patrons navigate information and effectively use resources. Respondents had very favourable comments on the quality of service delivered by Halifax Public Library staff.

The prevalence of computers and the Internet did not reduce the need for staff. Technology simply changes the way librarians do their job. There was a clear need identified for librarians to assist many clients in navigating the information available on the Internet to find what is most relevant.

Other respondents noted the high demand for library programming, including literacy services. Some respondents expressed opinions on what a library should not be offering, including “recreational” activities such as puppet shows. One respondent said the Library should not be involved in small business support, as other organizations are better suited to this role.

Priority Branch Facilities

Participants were asked what areas within the Libraries’ network of Branches were priorities in terms of facilities issues.

Respondents identified sites including Spring Garden Road, Woodlawn, and Musquodoboit Harbour. As one respondent indicated, “The locations of branches are not wrong, it is just that they’re the wrong size.”

Respondents said Spring Garden Road is a priority, referring to it as an “anchor.” Respondents were aware of the significant issues related to the condition of the building, and acknowledge steps should be taken in the short-term to address the problem.

Woodlawn was also identified as a priority area. Participants noted the space is limited and a move to a new facility would likely be necessary. The Branch was described as “small and outdated,” especially compared to other facilities. One respondent indicated it should be better positioned to serve both municipal Districts 6 and 7 in Dartmouth.

Bedford was identified as an area that will experience significant population growth in the next few years. This may require an increased space or possible change of location for the Branch. One respondent noted that the “centre” of Bedford is shifting with growth in areas such as Hammonds Plains.

The size of the Cole Harbour Branch was described as “not inadequate, but at times it does get crowded.” A number of respondents stated the importance of aligning with HRM’s Regional Planning Process.

Some respondents did not identify specific areas as priorities. They were aware of current space issues, but wanted to see “what the data tells us” in the course of the research process.

Different perspectives were presented on available financial resources. One view was that there are insufficient funds available given other demands in HRM, and that modest building proposals should be considered. Conversely, other participants said that priorities resulting from this study should not be bound by financial constraints, and exploring alternate sources of capital funding would expand options. They added a Central Library should have a physical “presence,” making a statement about the importance of literacy and learning.

One respondent suggested libraries in rural communities should be located where people gather, saying, “look at the focal points and utilize them.” In other words, “Location, location, location” was important. Some identified Tantallon as the “entry model” for community libraries. The Cole Harbour library is a useful model, as it maintains its own presence while still being located in a recreational facility.

Role of the Central Library

Respondents were asked to define the role of the Central Library.

Respondents identified functions typically associated with a Central Library. These included housing resources that would not be cost-effective to offer in multiple locations, storage of reference and historical information, and serving as an administration base. As one respondent mentioned, “Any system has to have a core.” Another respondent described it as the “nerve centre for all Branches.”

Many respondents felt strongly about the importance of a Central Library. As one interviewee said, “Great cities have great libraries. It’s part of what defines us.” Another said, “Libraries say, ‘We are a community.’” It was noted that, “If the right decision is not made it will be a lost opportunity, and it will be another generation until the opportunity presents itself again.”

One respondent did not see as significant a need for the Central Library function, given the prevalence of information technology, adding traditional cataloguing of resources has been changed through computerization.

Several respondents said it was appropriate to have the Central Library in downtown Halifax, the commercial centre and core of HRM. A number of respondents felt people would still find a way to travel to the Central Library to access the broader resources available. One participant noted this aligns with HRM Regional Planning. If more people move to the downtown core as hoped, the Branch should be able to serve the catchment area as well as fulfill the Central Library role.

There were varying views on whether Alderney Gate Branch in Dartmouth could fulfill the Central Library role. Some did not consider it as appropriate, with one interviewee stating that Halifax Harbour “presents a barrier.” There was concern about having two “significant” branches close together. Further, it was noted that parking at Alderney Gate is a challenge. Alternatively, at least one interviewee wanted to see Alderney Gate as the Central Library.

Some respondents said there might be a perception that committing funds to a new Central Library would come at the expense of Branches. However, others stakeholders clearly stated there should not be “trade offs,” and that a “Central Library is not a substitute for another Branch.” They noted, “Capital and Operating budgets are two different things.”

Respondents said a Central Library should have prominent architectural design, and is “not just a slightly larger branch.” Another said it should be an “iconic” structure. However, design must also address functional requirements. Respondents said a Central Library could have limited multi-use space, such as retail or coffee shops. However, the Central Library should not be a small tenant in a large facility in order to maintain its profile and identity.

The former Halifax Infirmary site was referenced as a potential location for a new Central Library. Other suggested sites included the Halifax Waterfront, Bell Road, and the Queen Elizabeth High School site.

Partnerships

Partnerships were viewed as important. A key example is the Library’s partnership with the Provincial government. Other partnerships were important with respect to accessing building funds from non-government sources, and for building support at all levels of government. Of course, care should be taken with corporate partnerships to ensure the Library does not lose its identity.

Socio-Economic Trends

Respondents were asked whether there were any current social or economic trends they believed the Library should help address. Support of literacy was identified as a key trend. Some respondents observed a recent trend towards “cocooning” and saw the Library as a place to go and interact with others.

Rural Services

Respondents offered views on Library services in rural areas.

One respondent felt strongly that Library planning should include: maintenance of the Musquodoboit Harbour branch; establishment of a small branch in Middle Musquodoboit; maintenance or enhancement of the Sheet Harbour branch, even if at a deficit; and establishment of a Branch in Porter’s Lake, but not at the expense of the Musquodoboit Branch. Another participant noted the need for a Branch in Middle Musquodoboit, and to maintain services on the Eastern Shore.

It was important to maintain Library Branches in rural areas to provide meeting places, support to job searchers, and generally maintain service levels. There were mixed comments on Mobile service. Some emphasized the importance of Bookmobiles, while others thought clients drive to Library Branches.

Service Standards

Respondents were asked what services standards were most important with respect to Library services.

Respondents commented that the Library system should help clients leverage resources. As one respondent said, “Give more remote users access to Spring Garden Road.” Another respondent added, “A Central Library project is much bigger than facilities, it’s technology and infrastructure.” Another respondent emphasized how to “maximize” use of the Central Library. Yet another referred to smaller Branches as “starting points.”

Those interviewed agreed technology plays an important role. They mentioned advanced reserves, e-services, and fax could be more widely used. The key was ensuring adequate staff support for proper turnaround. This needs to be taken into account when planning facilities, particularly a new Central Library. Some respondents had an interest in greater cooperation and sharing of resources, such as increasing inter-library loans with universities. Interestingly, this is currently offered, so the issue may be more one of awareness.

Convenience was key, as many people have busy schedules. Services such as on-line reserves, drive through drop offs, and others were considered important.

Use of Technology

Several questions addressed technology requirements.

Participants noted it is an incorrect assumption that everyone can access the Internet. Many people have little or no access. Offering this service was seen as an important Library function. The challenge of access speed in rural areas was frequently noted, as many locations do not have broadband connections. This makes remote use of databases and catalogues a challenge. Community Access Program (CAP) sites were considered valuable resources.

Communications

Some respondents commented on the importance of communications. In particular, more ongoing communication about the quality of programs and services offered by the Halifax Public Libraries was recommended. As one participant noted, “They win national and international awards, and offer a high quality system.” Communications with the general public was considered important. One participant mentioned, “Well over half of the population have Library cards.”

The need for communications also extended to the Central Library. One participant said, “The Central Library is a support to Branches. It’s not as effective when it’s spread all over and diluted. I don’t think people understand this point.”

A suggested approach was to gain support from high profile people in the community who credit the Library as playing a role in their success. They could serve as leaders and champions in moving forward with facilities planning.

3.3 Population Projections and Future Development in HRM

Methodology

Terrain Group has undertaken a two-part analysis with respect to projecting population changes within HRM. This analysis has been considered on the basis of Library catchment areas provided by Halifax Public Libraries that require consideration in light of projected population changes.

The first step in looking at population change was the utilization of a Cohort Survival model which injects birth rates, death rates, and in and out migration patterns as derived from previous statistics provided by Statistics Canada. The model utilizes 2001 Census Data to project forward to the year 2021. This process considers the distribution of this population throughout HRM and how this distribution may impact future planning as it relates to the various Library Branches within the Region.

3.3.1 Demographic Overview

There have been a number of population projections undertaken within HRM over the last few years that have been reporting extraordinary growth within the region. As an example, the Greater Halifax Partnership projected population growth within HRM when analyzing the impact of offshore natural gas development to range from a low of 434,000 to a high of 466,000 in the year 2021. Terrain has projected to that same timeline of 2021, an overall population by catchment area of 456,149. The Terrain team believes that this projection will realistically reflect what is likely to occur within HRM given reasonable expectation with respect to aspects of offshore oil development, continued increases in the high-tech environmental aspects of industrial development within the Region, and a continual strengthening of HRM as the major service centre for Atlantic Canada.

3.3.2 Future Development in Halifax Regional Municipality

The following commentary is based on the Consulting Team's knowledge of future growth within HRM, given the extensive experience of Terrain Group in residential and commercial development in the Region.

Alderney Gate

The Alderney Gate catchment area, generally speaking, encompasses the land inside the Circumferential Highway, Burnside Industrial Park, and a portion of Woodside. It is projected to have a very stable population with enough development or redevelopment occurring within that area to replace the aging and out-migration that is occurring within this older section of this former City of Dartmouth.

Captain William Spry Catchment Area

Within the Captain William Spry catchment area there have been several new residential projects planned and in the process of approval over the last several years. From a market desirability perspective, this area is not considered to be a strong market. While it does provide some opportunity for starter home sites, the cost of servicing within this substantially rock environment has caused the unit prices of available land to be driven upwards. With the development cost rising, the market has not kept pace in this area and, as a result of a developer's desirability point of view, there has been very little activity actually undertaken. There is just barely enough new development being projected to substitute for the out-migration that has been happening in this area over recent years. With the introduction of a new sewage treatment plant in the Herring Cove area, recent changes to the Municipal Planning Strategy has further tightened the development regulations. Along with the recent moratorium on unserviced development within the region, this area has and will likely continue to be a very slow development area.

Cole Harbour Catchment Area

The Cole Harbour catchment area is located in an area that has grown significantly over the last ten to fifteen year period and is now slowly running out of serviced developable lands. Servicing capacity issues at the Eastern Passage treatment plant and limitations in the transmission system have prohibited significant development projects to go forward in this area. In addition, the development restrictions recently placed by HRM on unserviced lands has a significant impact on the Cole Harbour, Lawrencetown, Eastern Passage, and Cow Bay areas. It is this area that will see the greatest impact as a result of the tightening of development regulations, restricting new subdivisions with on-site services.

Dartmouth North Catchment Area

This small branch is located in an area that is presently built to capacity with respect to available lands for development and given the nature of this development, is primarily multiple-family. It is expected that the population in this catchment area and around its borders will be stable over the projection period to 2021.

Halifax North Catchment Area

There is no significant growth anticipated in this area. Small pockets of growth may occur, but none that will have a dramatic impact on capital development needs in the area.

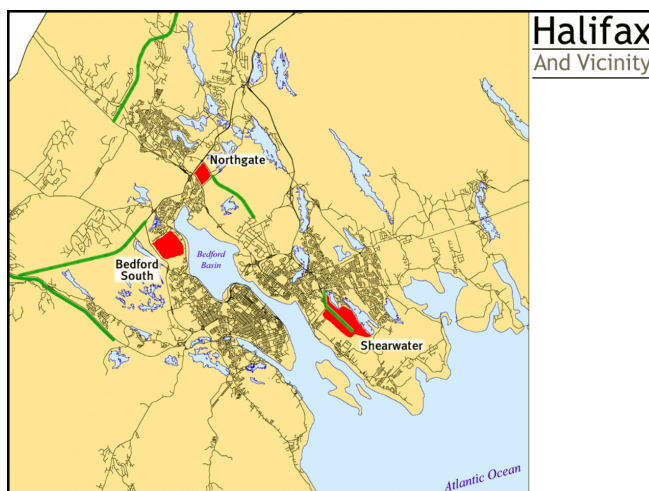
Hubbards Catchment Area (J.D. Shatford)

Hubbards is in a similar situation to Porters Lake in that it will be quite affected by growth management policies and as a result, will not experience significant growth in the near future. Similarly, there are not many projects currently in line for approval. As previously noted, most of the growth in this area will be in Tantallon. The twinning of the Highway only extends to Tantallon and not as far as Hubbards.

Keshen Goodman Catchment Area and Bedford Catchment Area

The Keshen Goodman catchment area is an area that has experienced considerable growth over the last number of years and will continue to experience exceptional growth into the future. This catchment area, which abuts up against the Bedford catchment area, shares a boundary for their catchment areas representing the next major development areas within the region. The northern portion is adjacent to the Bedford Basin and the southern portion of the Bedford catchment area is identified as Bedford South. This region has recently gone through a master plan exercise and a series of approvals by Regional Council, setting this area up as the next major growth centre for HRM. It is projected that within the vacant lands of both of these catchment areas as identified above, the population over the next twenty years will increase by 20,000 people. In addition, again on lands that are shown to be covered by both the Bedford Catchment area and the Keshen Goodman area, there is a considerable parcel of land that is also going through a master planning exercise that are currently being designed to handle an additional 18,000 to 20,000 people. Together, these two areas will absorb the vast majority of serviced land development in the region over the next twenty year time period.

It is in this area that Halifax Public Libraries must give serious consideration to the ability of its two current libraries to handle this additional growth.



Middle Musquodoboit, Musquodoboit Harbour Catchment Area, Sheet Harbour Catchment Area and Eastern Rural HRM

With the introduction of growth management policies, immediately adjacent the suburban areas of Cole Harbour, the Middle Musquodoboit/Eastern Shore areas may experience a minor increase in development. This development will likely be in the form of large unserviced lots dispersed along the existing road pattern. This growth will come from people looking for a rural lifestyle, who are having to consider locating further from the Cole Harbour area as a result of the new planning policies. There is no significant growth expected in Porters Lake, and the Sheet Harbour Catchment Area may experience a slight decline in growth overall. These areas will see definite impacts from HRM growth management policies. It will likely be several years before any noticeable signs of growth occur in this area.

Sackville Catchment Area

The population projection within the Sackville area is projected to decline over our time horizon by approximately 3,000 people. This decline is primarily due to the lack of available servicing capacity within the sanitary sewer system, of which extensions to the system or a further upgrading are very expensive in order to enable additional development of any significance to occur. On the southern boundary of this area as the Sackville catchment area approaches the Bedford catchment area, there is, however, a new development being proposed in the Rocky Lake area that will be called Northgate. It is being planned as a major mixed-use development that will include a significant recreational complex including outdoor soccer, baseball, and tennis facilities, indoor gymnasium facilities, and a multi-ice surface arena. In association with these recreational projects, it is anticipated that there will be an additional 3,000 people living in this area in the next eight to ten-year time period. While this site in particular is right on the boundary of the Bedford and Sackville catchment areas, it is strategically located and may enable further servicing of Fall River, Waverley, Sackville, and portions of the Bedford community. This site in particular will also be affected by an upcoming highway improvement that will see the extension of Burnside Drive through to Highway 102. This final link in the 100 series highway around metro is anticipated to carry high volumes of traffic right by the site identified above. While the Sackville area proper will see a reduction, this portion of the eastern end of the Bedford catchment area will see an increase in population.

Spring Garden Road Catchment Area/Halifax North Catchment Area

Spring Garden Road catchment area covers the majority of the peninsula of Halifax, with the exception of a small area identified as part of the Halifax North catchment area. The Peninsula has historically been a very desirable location and has seen considerable growth over the last number of years. In considering projections for this area, it will continue to see growth primarily in the south end and in the central portions of the region, while the north end of the peninsula will see a reduction in population over our time period. This projection is due primarily to the lack of available land, given that all new development that happens within the peninsula is in essence a redevelopment site which requires a considerable amount of time for land developers to assemble parcels of land as well as going through the approval process within HRM. The second component that causes this area to be modified slightly from the trend projection that has been evident in this area has to do with new development happening within other areas of the region where there has been a stronger focus for both single and multiple family developments.

Tantallon Catchment Area

The Tantallon area has also been one of those areas that has experienced considerable growth over the last ten year period, and it is anticipated that this growth rate, while lessening slightly, will continue, in essence doubling the population in that catchment area over the next 20 years. There are a number of reasons for this continued development in this area, despite recent policy changes by HRM that will eventually lead to a slow down in development in this area. The first major change is the twinning of Highway 103 to the Tantallon interchange, and the planned construction of Highway 113 that will link Highway 103 through to Highway 102. These two major highway projects are expected to attract additional development opportunities as it becomes easier and more efficient to use an automobile traveling to and from the downtown core. The second reason for the continued

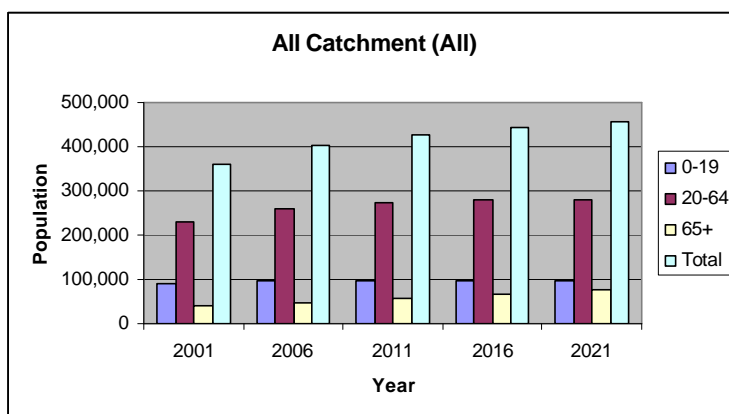
growth in this area is the current abundance of supply particularly as it relates to unserviced lots. Major land developers in late 1999 and 2000 developed a considerable number of lots in anticipation of HRM policy changes, restricting development on unserviced lots in the rural areas.

Woodlawn Catchment Area

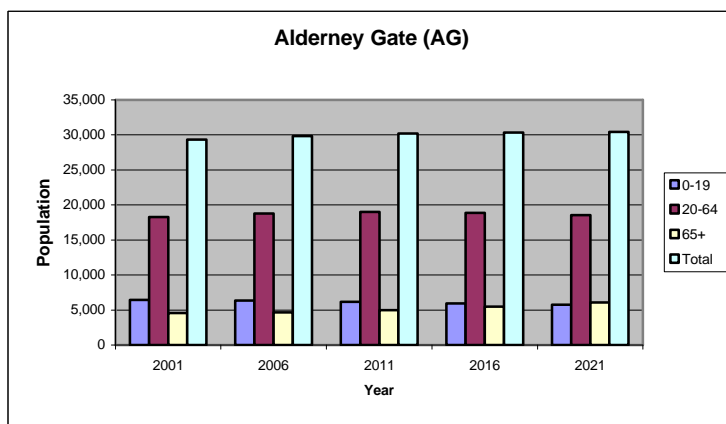
The population within the Woodlawn catchment area is projected to be fairly stable and able to hold its current population despite the fact that it is a maturing neighbourhood. With development occurring in the Keystone and Port Wallace areas, and in Russell Lake/Portland Estates area, there is sufficient new development to enable this population to be at a minimum maintained. One element that may affect this catchment area is the possible future development or redevelopment in the Shearwater area, and the introduction of a new interchange off of Highway 111 servicing these lands. While this development opportunity is a number of years away, it is conceivable within the span of this projection that significant portions of land within the Russell Lake/Shearwater area could become available for a mixed use development with a significant portion being residential if the decision is made to redevelop the Shearwater airport facility. The Shearwater areas future development is totally dependent on the future of the airport and the speed with which lands may be declared surplus. The lands controlled by the base have been looked at in some detail as to their potential for residential / commercial and industrial uses. To date there have been no conclusions as to the percentage split in these uses. Currently the sizing for future infrastructure is considering approximately half of the lands will be available for residential uses. These lands combined with the privately held lands could generate an additional five to ten thousand (5,000-10,000) people. The availability of the federal lands combined with the need for major infrastructure will cause these lands to be delayed for development It is also reasonable to expect that further growth will occur in the Port Wallace area within a 10-year time frame.

3.3.3 Halifax Public Libraries Catchment Areas

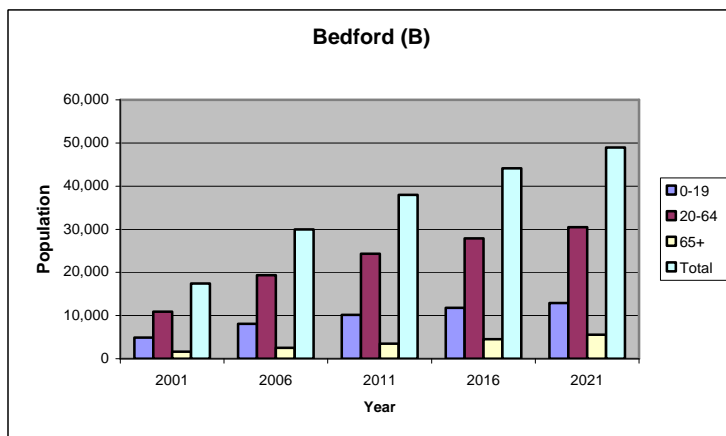
The following charts show population projections for each catchment area as broken down by age into five-year segments. The data is presented both numerically and by graph.



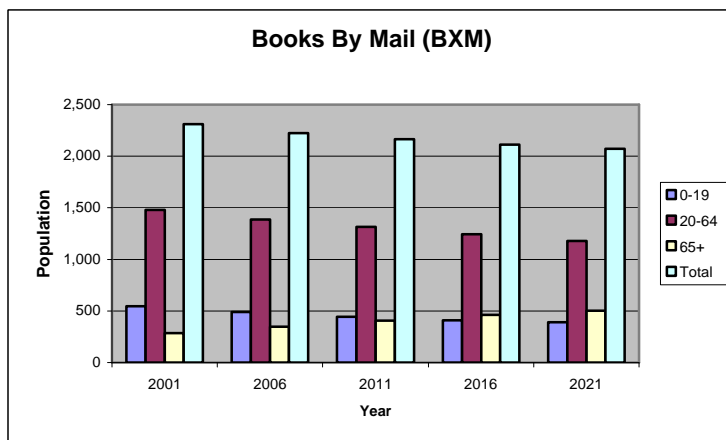
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	88,883	230,733	39,567	359,183
2006	95,845	260,944	46,105	402,894
2011	97,582	274,132	55,040	426,755
2016	98,130	279,664	65,688	443,481
2021	98,224	281,383	76,542	456,149



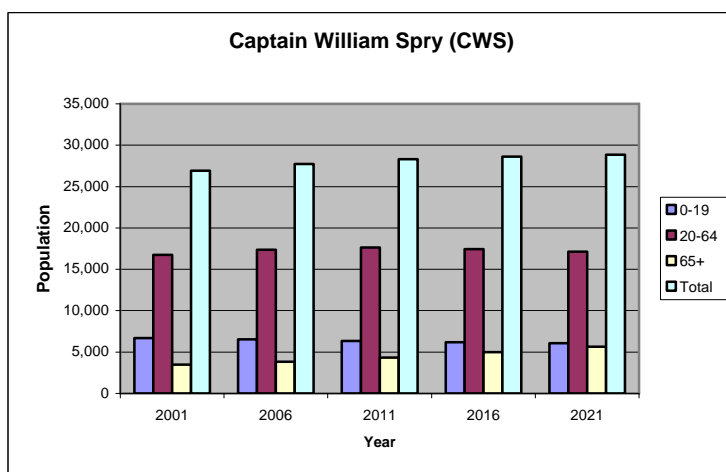
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	6,460	18,315	4,570	29,345
2006	6,355	18,800	4,667	29,821
2011	6,186	19,045	4,975	30,206
2016	5,965	18,889	5,494	30,348
2021	5,774	18,575	6,089	30,439



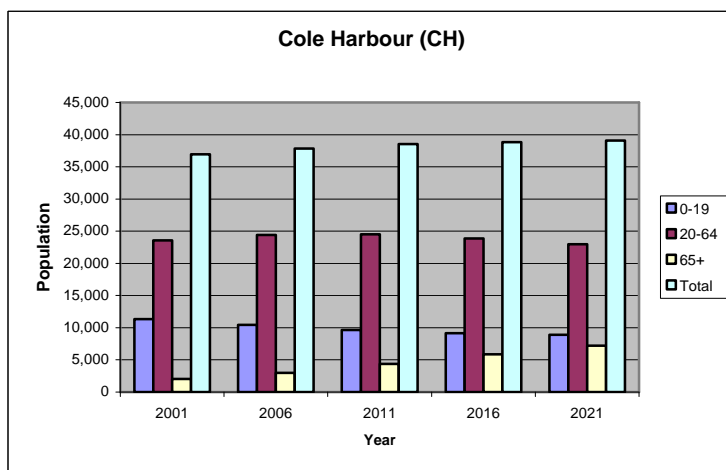
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	4,865	10,900	1,655	17,420
2006	8,098	19,379	2,501	29,979
2011	10,190	24,330	3,452	37,972
2016	11,798	27,856	4,503	44,157
2021	12,898	30,451	5,594	48,942



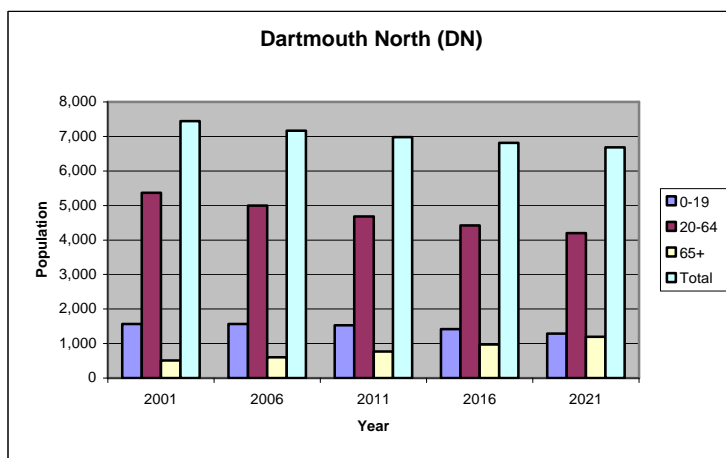
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	545	1,480	285	2,310
2006	491	1,388	346	2,224
2011	444	1,317	406	2,166
2016	410	1,242	461	2,114
2021	392	1,178	504	2,073



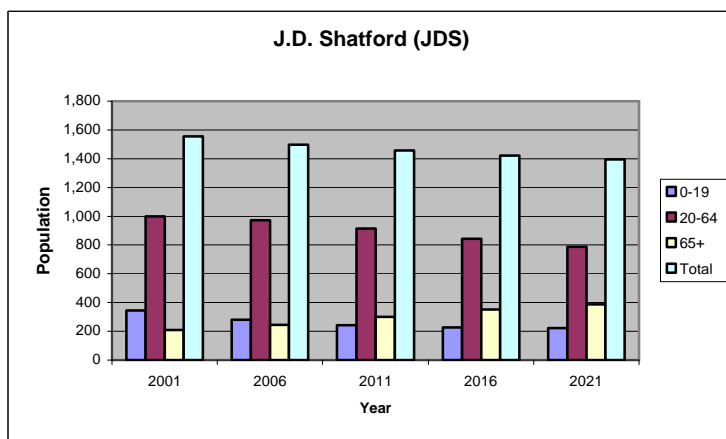
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	6,695	16,765	3,475	26,935
2006	6,534	17,369	3,812	27,716
2011	6,354	17,619	4,342	28,315
2016	6,178	17,442	5,003	28,623
2021	6,063	17,126	5,649	28,838



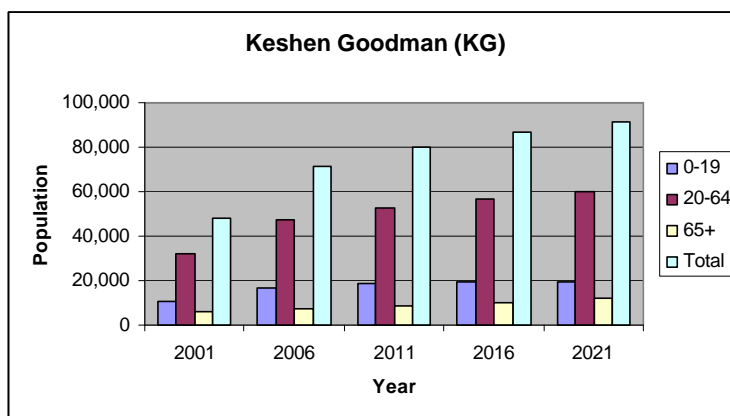
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	11,325	23,550	2,060	36,935
2006	10,434	24,393	2,999	37,825
2011	9,652	24,515	4,351	38,518
2016	9,128	23,859	5,860	38,847
2021	8,877	22,977	7,218	39,072



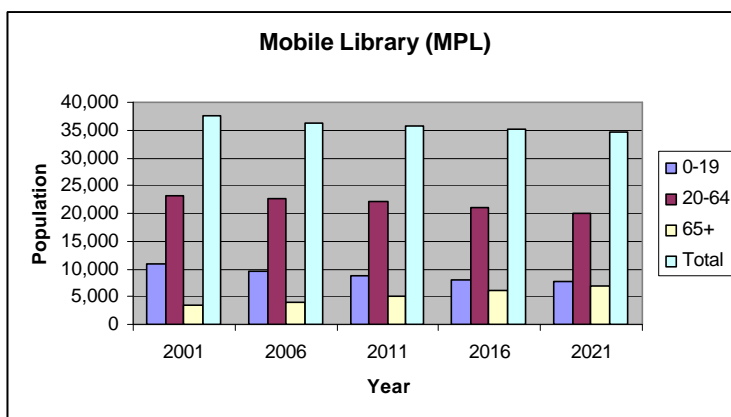
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	1,570	5,365	510	7,445
2006	1,565	4,996	607	7,168
2011	1,530	4,683	769	6,982
2016	1,418	4,417	976	6,812
2021	1,287	4,198	1,198	6,683



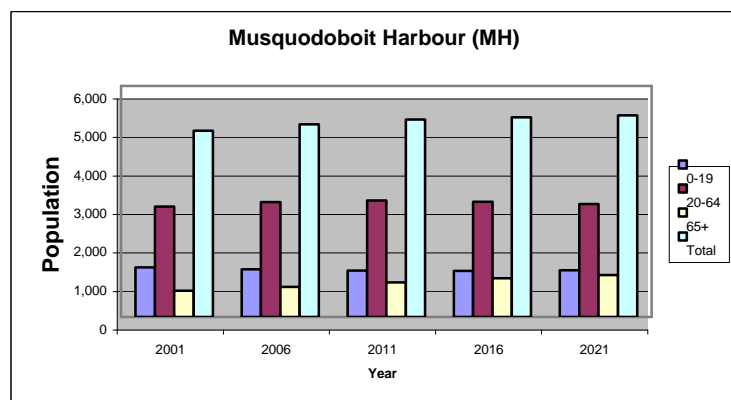
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	345	1,000	210	1,555
2006	280	972	245	1,497
2011	243	915	299	1,458
2016	227	844	352	1,423
2021	222	787	386	1,396



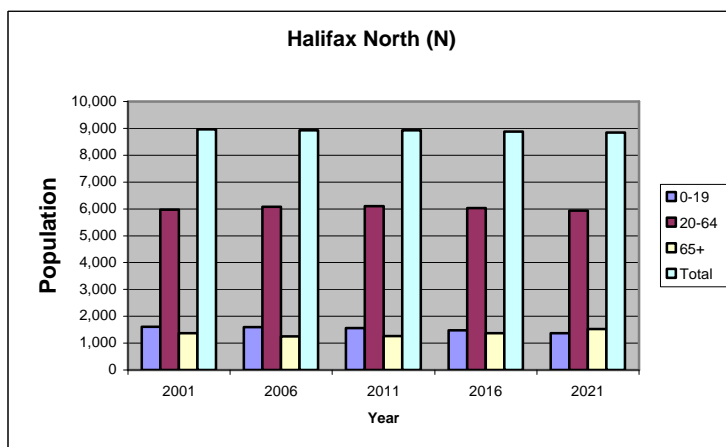
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	10,485	31,815	5,750	48,050
2006	16,912	47,211	7,340	71,463
2011	18,597	52,618	8,655	79,871
2016	19,317	56,825	10,234	86,376
2021	19,379	59,868	12,163	91,410



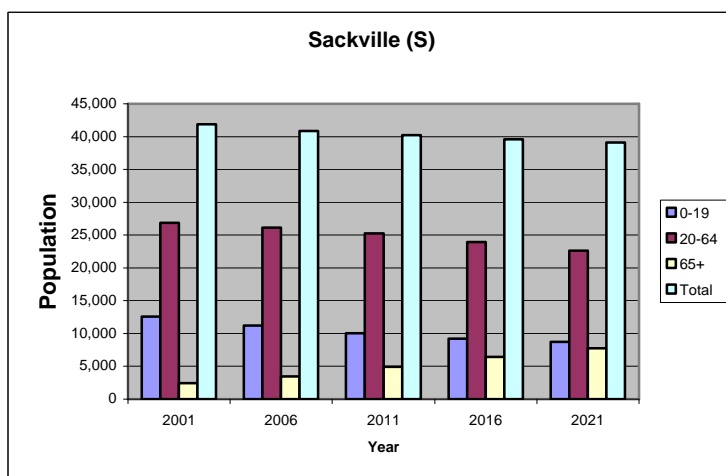
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	10,933	23,093	3,507	37,533
2006	9,698	22,617	4,018	36,332
2011	8,698	22,135	4,937	35,770
2016	7,997	21,166	6,026	35,188
2021	7,625	20,076	7,041	34,741



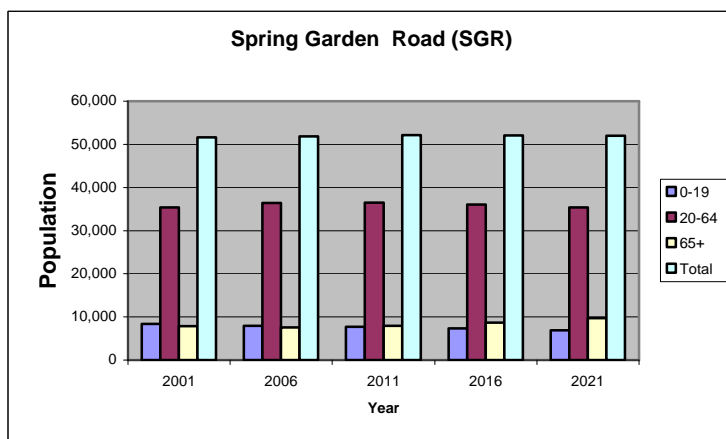
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	1,285	2,870	685	4,840
2006	1,236	2,984	781	5,001
2011	1,204	3,025	894	5,123
2016	1,196	2,989	1,004	5,189
2021	1,211	2,935	1,090	5,236



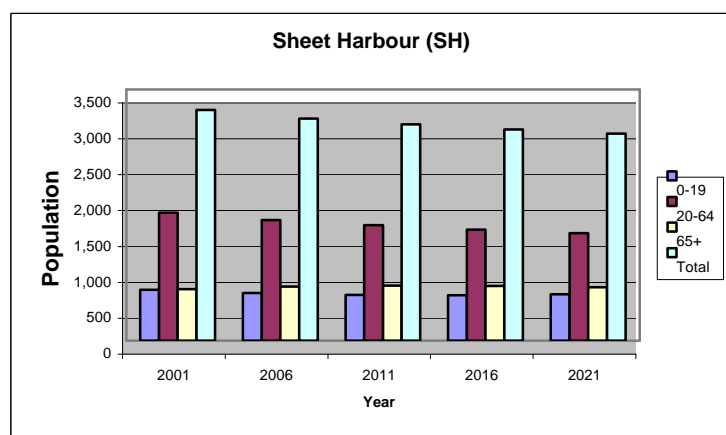
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	1,615	5,970	1,375	8,960
2006	1,597	6,080	1,256	8,933
2011	1,566	6,097	1,265	8,927
2016	1,479	6,037	1,365	8,881
2021	1,376	5,940	1,527	8,843



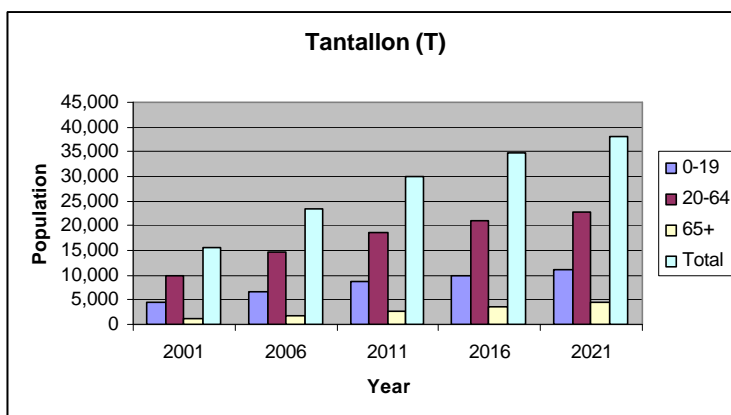
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	12,570	26,845	2,445	41,860
2006	11,228	26,137	3,485	40,851
2011	10,061	25,241	4,924	40,226
2016	9,205	23,933	6,440	39,578
2021	8,712	22,620	7,748	39,081



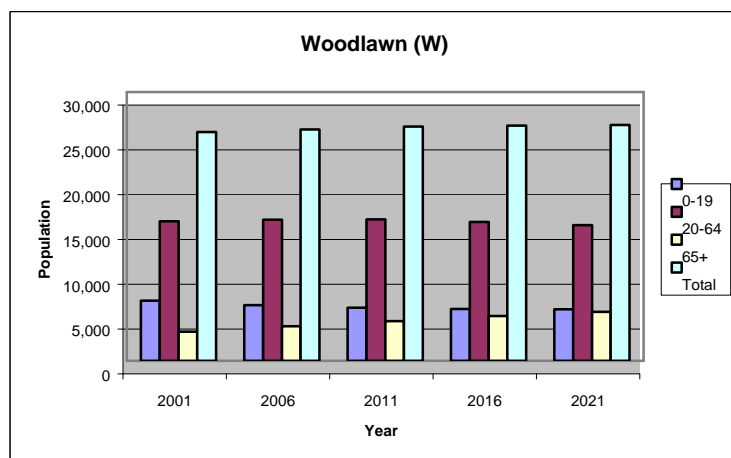
	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	8,365	35,410	7,835	51,610
2006	7,903	36,384	7,578	51,865
2011	7,695	36,515	7,915	52,126
2016	7,343	36,034	8,695	52,073
2021	6,919	35,369	9,722	52,010



	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	710	1,785	720	3,215
2006	664	1,680	751	3,096
2011	638	1,612	765	3,015
2016	634	1,546	762	2,942
2021	647	1,496	743	2,886



	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	4,410	9,985	1,245	15,640
2006	6,622	14,817	1,861	23,299
2011	8,585	18,690	2,657	29,932
2016	10,047	21,099	3,522	34,668
2021	11,093	22,652	4,415	38,160



	0-19	20-64	65+	Total
2001	6,705	15,585	3,240	25,530
2006	6,229	15,737	3,857	25,823
2011	5,939	15,776	4,433	26,148
2016	5,788	15,486	4,990	26,265
2021	5,749	15,136	5,454	26,339

3.4 Space Standards

Methodology

Many jurisdictions have established standards for library service provision and construction of library facilities. These standards are important considerations in determining space requirements.

3.4.1 Nova Scotia Provincial Standards

The reference for this section is The Nova Scotia Department of Education and the Nova Scotia Provincial Library “Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries,” 2nd edition, September 2001. The report provides information on expected branch library size in relation to population served and resulting level of service. A summary is provided in Table 3.4.1-1 below, with the following guidelines for interpretation:

- Level ‘A’ is the highest level of service corresponding to roughly 0.7 square feet per capita.
- Level ‘B’ represents a lower standard, generally between 0.5 and 0.6 square feet per capita.
- Level ‘C’ is the lowest service level corresponding to 0.4 to 0.5 square feet per capita.
- Level ‘U’ indicates "under serviced."

Table 3.4.1-1: Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries, 2001

Population	Library Area in Square Feet (m ²)		
	C	B	A
1,500 – 5,000	2,500 (225)	2,625 (236)	3,500 (315)
5,000 – 8,000	3,000 (270)	3,750 (338)	5,000 (450)
8,000 – 10,000	4,800 (432)	6,000 (540)	8,000 (720)
10,000 – 18,000	6,000 (540)	7,500 (625)	10,000 (900)
18,000 – 25,000	10,800 (972)	13,500 (1,215)	18,000 (1,620)
25,000 – 35,000	15,000 (1,350)	18,750 (1,688)	25,000 (2,250)
35,000 – 40,000	21,000 (1,890)	26,250 (2,363)	35,000 (3,150)
40,000 – 50,000	24,000 (2,160)	30,000 (2,700)	40,000 (3,600)
50,000 – 75,000	30,000 (2,700)	37,500 (3,375)	50,000 (4,500)
75,000 +	45,000 (4,050)	56,250 (5,063)	75,000 (6,050)

3.4.2 Halifax Public Libraries Standards

As a general rule, 0.7 square feet per capita is considered an acceptable standard for library services in most Canadian jurisdictions. Some proponents are encouraging a standard of 0.8 square feet per capita to accommodate more varied collections and the incorporation of computer equipment. The research process has identified standards as high as 1.0 square feet per capita as a desirable goal.

Halifax Public Libraries currently has 175,403 square feet of space in its 14 Branches (or roughly 0.488 square feet per resident), as counted by the 2001 Census with a population of the Halifax Census Metropolitan Area of 359,183. This space is considerably short of the ideal standard.

Table 3.4.2-1: Library Service Level by Catchment Area 2001 and 2021

Catchment Area	Branch Area (sq. ft.)	2001 Pop.	Current Service Level		2021 Pop.	2021 Projected Service Level	
			Standard 0.7	Standard (1)		Standard .7 (3)	Standard
Alderney Gate	32,510 (Branch)	29,345	1.1	A+	30,439	1.06	A+
Bedford	5,949	17,420	.34	-C/U	48,942	.12	-C/U
Books-by-Mail	n/a	2,310			2,073		
Capt Wm Spry	10,016	26,935	.37	-C/U	28,838	.35	-C/U
Cole Harbour	10,008	36,935	.27	-C/U	39,072	.26	-C/U
Dartmouth North	2,152	7,445	.29	-C/U	6,683	.32	-C/U
Halifax North	12,400 (Branch)	8,960	1.34	A+	8,843	1.4	A+
Keshen Goodman	25,000	48,050	.52	C	91,410	.27	-C/U
Mobile Library	n/a	37,533			34,741		
Musquodoboit Harbour	3,900	4,840	.8	A+	5,236	.75	B
Sackville	13,500	41,860	.32	-C/U	39,081	.34	-C/U
J.D. Shatford	2,700	1,555	1.73	B	1,396	1.9	B
Sheet Harbour	2,964	3,215	.92	B+	2,886	1.0	B+
Spring Garden Road (Central Resource)	38,000 (29,000 useable)	51,610	.56 (2)	-C/U	52,010	.56 (2)	-C/ U
Tantallon	12,064	15,640	.77	A+	38,160	.32	-C/U
Woodlawn	4,000	25,530	.16	-C/U	26,339	.15	-C/U
TOTAL	175,403	359,183	.55		456,149	.38	

1. Service level A, B, C, U - see table 3-1.
2. This assessment based on assumption of Spring Garden Road Library fulfilling the Central Resource Library role for HRM. Resource Library standard is 0.4 square feet per capita as per Ottawa Public Library 2003 standard.
3. Projected standard for 2021 is based on 2001 standards.

Interpretation for Table 3.4.2-1 is as follows.

- Level 'A' is the highest level of service corresponding to roughly 0.7 square feet per capita.
- Level 'B' is a lower standard, generally between 0.5 and 0.6 square feet per capita.
- Level 'C' is the lowest service level corresponding to 0.4 to 0.5 square feet per capita.
- Level 'U' indicates "under serviced."

3.5 Review of Library Models

Methodology

Several public libraries considered as “models,” or following “best practices,” were identified in Canada and the United States. Virtually all library systems face challenges in terms of balancing need with available financial resources. That being said, many libraries had significant building programs underway. A summary of these models is presented here.

3.5.1 Winnipeg Public Library

<http://wpl.winnipeg.ca/library/>

Facilities and Services

- 19 branches and a Central Library

Resources

- 1.6 million items

Building Program

- After six years of working with consultants’ reports, developing a business case, securing Council approval, undertaking a fundraising campaign, hiring an architectural firm and redesigning the building, construction is set to begin on the Millennium Library project.
- The original building is being closed primarily for health and safety reasons for staff.
- Interim measures include transferring a portion of services to other branches, expanding hours of operation in strategic locations, setting up a downtown “library depot,” and increasing the staffing complement at various locations to handle the anticipated increase in business.
- A significant partnership of the public and private sectors includes all three levels of government working together, with a sizeable investment from the private sector.
- On February 25, 2003, the Winnipeg Library Foundation launched its community campaign to raise \$3 million towards the Millennium Library project.

3.5.2 Vancouver Public Library

www.vpl.vancouver.bc.ca/

Facilities and Services

- A Central Library and 20 branches.
- Funded by the City of Vancouver, it is the second largest public library in Canada; origins of the library go back to 1869.

Resources

- Over 395,000 cardholders and more than 8 million items borrowed annually.

Central Library

- In November 1990, a referendum ballot addressed two questions to residents of Vancouver: was there a need for a new Central Library, and for a new branch in Renfrew/Collingwood. A total of 69% of the population favourably supported the building program.
- The cost of the Central Library, retail, daycare, and parkade: \$106.8 million Cdn. The cost of the Federal tower: \$50 million. The cost of the move to Library Square: \$300,000.

- Architects were invited to bid in a two-stage process. There were 28 expressions of interest, and 10 short-listed. Three from this list were selected to participate in an anonymous competition, each receiving \$100,000 to produce an “Expression of Vision” for Library Square. The winning team has worked on projects including the National Gallery of Canada, and the Ford Centre for the Performing Arts, among others.
- 2.5 million items are housed at the Central Library.
- The Central Library:
 - took 26 months to complete;
 - has 9 floors, 7 of which are used by the Library, and the rest by government, allowing for library expansion;
 - covers 398,000 square feet, of which 349,100 square feet are used by the Library;
 - has vertical and horizontal conveyors by Translogic to move books through the Library;
 - has a seating capacity of 1,200;
 - has 700+ parking stalls; and
 - required 600 truckloads to move materials to the new building.
- The Central Library has a daily average (2001):
 - Circulation: 6,968
 - Patron registration: 83
 - Traffic Count: 5,853
 - Reference Questions: 2,010

Budget

- For December 31, 2001: \$33.4 million (up from \$30.3 million in 1998). 2001 expenses total same amount.
- 2001 revenue includes funding from City of Vancouver (\$26.4 million) and Provincial per capita grant (\$1.0 million)

Foundation

- The Friends of the Public Library and Bookmark, the Library store, Vancouver Public Library Foundation, other donor opportunities.

3-5.3 Seattle Public Library

<http://www.spl.org/index.html>

Facilities and Services

- Central Library and 22 neighbourhood libraries.

Building Program

- November 1998, voters approved the \$196.4 million “Libraries for All” bond measure to upgrade the Seattle Public Library with new facilities, technology, and books.
- Includes improvements to all 22 branches, five new branches, and the new Central Library.
- Central library, scheduled to open in 2004, includes: 1.4 million books and materials; 11 floors; underground parking; spacious areas; four-level book platform for non-fiction; auditorium; “mixing” area with information desks where patrons can ask librarians for help; multi-lingual areas; and café.

Statistics

- 6.1 million books and resources.
- 1.3 million reference questions answered; 1.2 million in-library uses of materials; 74,000 people attended 2,535 children’s programs.
- 637 staff members (460 full-time equivalents).

Budget

- \$34.1 million USD in 2001.

Government Environment

- Funding protected in Mayor's 2004 budget.
- \$34 million USD for library services, protecting basic levels of service.

Friends of the Library Membership

- Sponsors projects that extend "beyond the command of the ordinary library budget."
- Membership of nearly 5,000, annual dues \$15.00 per person or household.

Foundation

- Seattle Public Library Foundation.

3-5.4 Los Angeles Public Library

<http://www.lapl.org/>

Facilities and Services

- Multiple Branches and Central Library.

Building Program

- On November 3, 1998, 73% of the voters in Los Angeles passed a Library Bond Issue for \$178.3 million dollars to improve, renovate, expand and construct thirty-two branch libraries. Since the Program's inception, the Library Department and the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering have made progress in the design and construction of the branch library facilities. In addition, in April 2002, the Library Commission approved the addition of another library project, Harbour Gateway-Harbour City, to the Program's total scope.
- The 1998 Library Bond Program consists of the original 32 branch library projects and one newly added library with the following scope:
 - 17 Libraries Demolition of existing building and construction of new building with parking on the same site.
 - 9 Libraries Acquisition of new site and construction of new building with parking.
 - 4 Libraries Acquisition of new site and construction of new building with parking in communities that do not have library services.
 - 3 Libraries Renovation and expansion of existing building and parking.
- All 32 library projects in the original scope are scheduled to be complete within six years from November 1998, the date the voters approved the Bond measure. Currently, four and a half years since the Program's inception, 21 libraries are complete in construction. Of the remaining 12 libraries, 11 are in construction and one is in design. Land Acquisition is complete for all 33 projects.

Public Library Foundation

- Supports the valuable collections of books and materials, selected capital improvements, and expands services for the City's burgeoning population. Since its creation, the Library Foundation has raised more than \$40 million to support programs and services of the LAPL.

3.5.5 Brooklyn Public Library

<http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org>

Facilities and Services

- 60 locations and a Central Library for 2.5 million residents.
- 2002 Annual Report states objective to increase capacity of Central Library to effectively serve as flagship facility for BPL.

Financial

- \$4.3 million USD restored funding from New York City required. Since October 2001, BPL's budget has been reduced \$11.4 million USD.
- In response to budget cuts, the Independence Community Foundation has issued a \$100,000 challenge to replenish resources. Every dollar contributed to the Brooklyn Library Foundation will be matched by Independence.
- 2002 Annual Report states objectives including: significantly increase private funding to building endowment, increase earned income, and launch 10-year capital campaign; and aggressively seek government funding.
- For the FY2003, BPL has capital requirements of \$132 million USD. This is for a variety of needs, ranging from site acquisition, new design, refurbishment, deferred costs from funding cuts, and new equipment and furniture.

3.6 Community Consultation

Methodology

Focus Groups were held in each of the two catchment areas that emerged through research as priorities, specifically Spring Garden Road in Halifax and Woodlawn in Dartmouth. The purpose was to gain input from stakeholders on site selection preferences, and desired programs and services available in a new or expanded Library. An added goal was to gain buy-in and support from stakeholders as the Library moves forward with its planning process. Participants included Library clients and stakeholders, such as youth, parents, program participants, writers, and teachers. There was also participation from representatives of business associations, community groups, and organizations for the physically challenged.

Two sessions were held at the Spring Garden Road Library and three at the Woodlawn Branch. In the latter case, an extra Focus Group was held to ensure adequate representation from younger client groups.

A member of the Halifax Regional Library Board of Directors spoke at the beginning of each session to provide context and explain project objectives. No Board members or Library staff were present for the remainder of the Focus Group sessions. The Terrain Project Manager facilitated all Focus Groups. A copy of the Focus Group Moderator's Guide is included in Appendix B.

3.6.1 Spring Garden Road Focus Groups

Meeting Current Needs

Participants had mixed reactions when asked whether the Spring Garden Road Library currently met their needs. In many respects, it was meeting need. For example, participants could find the resources they needed. When books were not available, many participants accessed them through the computer database. Others indicated the collection at the Branch was outdated and books they are looking for are frequently lost.

Participants in all sessions had extremely positive comments regarding the Library staff, describing them as extremely helpful, always pleasant, knowledgeable in their field, and excellent in terms of client service.

Resources and Services for a New Library

When asked about suggestions on resources or services offered through a new Branch, participants had several suggestions. For example, expanding the collection was recommended. This included the reference section, particularly business and economic resources. It was suggested that a new Library, or Central Library, should be able to respond to the unique information needs within a community. For example, if there are current issues of interest to the community, such as current municipal planning and development processes, residents should be able to access resources on the subject. One participant acknowledged that reference librarians quickly assist with finding such resources. Resources to support literacy were also important.

Participants had suggestions on programs, although many are currently offered. These included: courses on job search techniques including use of computers and the Internet, general computer skills, search techniques, and others. Continually teaching skills in how to use a Library was seen as important. Other suggested features included automated checkouts and a drive-through book drop off.

Parking

There was interesting discussion surrounding parking. Participants wanted the Branch to remain in the Spring Garden Road area, implying that parking challenges were not overly significant. It was important to have parking for the physically challenged and seniors. Beyond that, providing a limited amount of parking, or relying on nearby private lots, were seen as reasonable approaches. Bicycle racks, preferably covered, were also recommended. It is worth noting, however, that some participants in the Woodlawn Focus Groups in Dartmouth viewed the parking availability at Spring Garden Road as a more significant challenge than those in the Spring Garden Road Focus Groups.

Accessibility

Accessibility issues were prominent in the discussion. In particular, accessibility for seniors was important. It was also recommended to work with associations such as the Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA) on accessible design for those with physical challenges. The CPA publishes accessibility standards that incorporate, and build upon, minimal requirements. Other factors to be taken into account include safe drop-off points for vans with automated chairs, sections of the building without stairs, washrooms, proper shelving height, policies for environmental sensitivities, and so on. Considerations for those with mental challenges should also be taken into account, for example, sufficient quiet reading space. The new Library should be highly accessible by bus. Buses should be re-routed to accommodate seniors and others when planning a new site.

There was some discussion on pedestrian traffic and safety. While one participant enjoyed the “cosmopolitan” nature of Spring Garden Road, others disliked being approached by young people and panhandlers.

Design Considerations

A well-designed children’s section, likely in a separate space, would be a desired feature. Adequate space for children’s programs, including the summer children’s reading program, was important. There was also an interest in more general reading space. It was further suggested that added program space could be used by partner organizations in the community.

Flexible space should be incorporated into the design of a new Library, such as a large program room that could be sub-divided into smaller rooms. Flexible design features would allow the facility to expand and adapt as the population changed.

The Library should maintain the sense of a “safe place” or “haven,” while not making sections so “closed-in” that security becomes an issue. Some participants had visited Central Libraries in major cities across North America. They were impressive from an architectural point of view, although there were mixed views as to whether such a large space created an “inclusive” atmosphere. One participant said, “Anyone should feel like they belong there. It should be the same place to everyone.” Another participant said, “Keep the ‘Public’ in Public Libraries.”

Some appreciated modern architectural design, while others said it could quickly become dated. Many participants expressed interest in indoor design that reflects the outdoors, for example, atriums and gardens. Natural light, proper air quality, ventilation, climate control, and updated washrooms were also important features. The exterior should allow for sufficient green space. One participant suggested incorporating design features that young people will associate with the Library, such as statues of lions at an entrance.

Other Amenities

There was mixed reaction to incorporating retail outlets in the Library. There are already several coffee shops in the area, and a concern was raised over competing with established vendors.

Partnerships

Participants recommended working in partnership with schools, particularly as resources within school libraries are notably lacking. An ongoing focus on marketing of Library programs was also suggested, such as the use of outdoor signage and cross promotion with other organizations.

Site Selection Considerations

Strong ties to the current Spring Garden Road building were evident among participants. The memorial building has long been regarded as an important community resource. Many participants wanted to see the Library stay in the current building. However, acknowledging this does not seem feasible, they would like to see the current building incorporated as a component of a new facility. For example, one could build a new Library but use the current building as a program centre or for housing archives. If the Library cannot use the current facility, participants strongly emphasized that an effort should be made to ensure the building is maintained as a community resource. The group responsible should be “extremely vigilant about what happens to the building.” They indicated a use should be found that is cost feasible, while maintaining the historical significance and ensuring repair and upkeep. Community groups should be involved in the process.

The general consensus was to maintain the Library in the downtown “core,” as opposed to a more broadly defined area on Halifax peninsula. Some participants referred to a current focus on “connecting” facilities in the downtown. “Throughput” of pedestrian traffic from other buildings to the Library should be supported, and multiple entrances would support this idea. This approach supports the sense of “community” or “village” in the downtown.

Preferred Sites

The two priority sites under consideration by the Library Board of Directors were presented to the groups, specifically Spring Garden Road at Queen Street and Queen Street at Clyde Street. The first preference among participants was Spring Garden Road at Queen Street, with Queen Street at Clyde Street being the next best option.

As noted, many expressed their first preference as continued use of the current site. However, most understood the Branch cannot stay within the current facility. Alternatively, there was a definite interest in having a new Branch located within very close proximity of the current site, specifically one or a few blocks. Many saw the Library as a key component of Spring Garden Road, along with the Public Gardens and various amenities. One participant referred to the Library as being an “anchor” in the community.

One participant suggested establishing a complex, incorporating a new Library building, the current building, and affordable housing, adding there may be access to federal funding for such an initiative.

Apart from these two sites, another alternative was the Halifax waterfront. While no specific locations were suggested, participants noted the waterfront is in close proximity to major office buildings, and within general walking distance although primarily for older children and adults. Pier 21 was mentioned, although it was considered outside of reasonable walking distance.

3.6.2 Woodlawn Branch Focus Groups

Meeting Current Needs

Participants had mixed reaction as to whether the current Branch met their needs. In many respects, their requirements were met. However, they believed that the limited space meant a limited collection was available. It was noted that students often have difficulty finding resources. Participants acknowledged they could access greater resources through the Library computer system. However, some said that when children have school projects they cannot get books in a timely manner. Students can go to Alderney Gate Library, but access is more difficult and it is not within walking distance from the catchment area.

As in the Spring Garden Road sessions, participants had very favourable comments about Library staff. They were considered very knowledgeable and helpful, despite the space constraints they encounter in the current Woodlawn Branch.

Relationship to Central Library

Some concerns were raised as to whether a Central Library would be established in Halifax at the expense of smaller Branches. A member of the Board of Directors made opening remarks at subsequent sessions, indicating the Board’s policy places priority on both a Central Library and Branches. A Central Library strengthens the Branch network and achieves efficiencies.

Resources and Services for a New Library

Participants agreed that more resources could be offered at an expanded Branch. The space would allow for additional shelving and general room. More books could be displayed “face out,” which attracts the attention of young people. A larger Branch would offer expanded room for programming. There could be more public computers available, possibly located in a separate section.

Participants said subject matter being covered in schools cannot be adequately supported with school library resources, for example, health and medical issues. It was suggested libraries have a section where young people can feel comfortable accessing such resources.

Design Considerations

Participants suggested that an ideal space would include a “series” of rooms, in other words, separate spaces for pre-schoolers, children, seniors, and others. There should be areas tailored to different client groups and accommodating different noise levels. Creating space that was “kid friendly” was important. The Branch should also have public meeting space, which is apparently in short supply in the community. Schools differ in terms of whether they make space available, mainly due to the cost of having staff on site.

Expanded work areas for the public were also requested. One participant had to regularly take books home due to the lack of workspace, although this is not possible with reference sources. This group also suggested a flexible use of space as being practical and financially viable from a cost perspective. An example would be sliding doors. Many participants liked the fact that Woodlawn Library is on one level. One participant noted there should be a “careful” use of open space. Expanded washrooms were a desired feature.

Partnerships

As in the Spring Garden Road sessions, participants emphasized a strong relationship between the Library and schools. One participant who is involved in the school system mentioned a prevalence of poor reading skills among students, adding school libraries do not have resources at appropriate reading levels. The participant said some Libraries have resources these students can use that are not obvious by the cover that they are written for a lower reading level. Again, participants emphasized the importance of reading skills that young people learn at the Library, which they take through life. It was suggested to consider ways of creating linkages to school curriculum. There was a suggestion of attaching new libraries to new schools.

Partnerships could be formed or strengthened with other community organizations. For example, the YMCA could offer courses through expanded Branch facilities. Leveraging partnerships to raise awareness was also recommended. For example, families take children to lessons at Cole Harbour Place or the YMCA, offering opportunities for cross promotion of Library programs.

Parking

Parking was a very important factor for participants in the Woodlawn Focus Groups. The available parking was a valued feature of the current site. Using meters at Branches such as Alderney Gate can be inconvenient, and not affordable to some clients.

Site Selection Considerations

Ease of access of the current Branch was cited as an important feature of the current site. The location of the Branch should be “central” within the catchment area. As one participant said, “Going to the Library should not be an excursion.” Most participants liked the fact the Woodlawn Library was in a mall, indicating they made multiple stops. The location in a mall increased the frequency of visits. A few participants indicated they would “go to the Library anyway” and the nearby amenities did not make a difference. Participants wanted external access and did not want to go through a mall to enter the Library.

New construction for the Woodlawn Branch would not be appropriate. It was suggested to do ongoing research to understand the Woodlawn Branch client base, for example, tracking postal codes.

Site Preferences

- Current site in Staples Plaza

The first preference for the Woodlawn Library site was the current location in the Staples Centre. Ease of access and ample parking were priorities. The Branch is accessible to all Clients, including parents, seniors, and youth. It is well positioned for pedestrians. In two of the three Focus Groups, there was a strong preference expressed for the current site. However, the majority of these participants were generally 50 years of age or older and admittedly preferred little change to their routine. In the third Focus Group that involved younger parents and school representatives, the first preference was also for the current site. However, they showed more flexibility in terms of considering other locations. As one participant mentioned, “If nothing changed, I would keep coming.”

There was definitely a stated need for expanded space if the Branch remained in the current location. Reference was made to the dance studio next door, as that space had changed hands several times in the recent past. Options included acquiring space adjacent to the Library, moving to a different location in the mall, or even expanding upwards if possible.

One participant suggested the Library should “keep its options open.” If the surrounding commercial district continues to grow, it may make the area overly congested and difficult to access.

If it was not feasible to remain in the current location, alternatives for sites were identified. The locations are listed in general order of priority, although each presented advantages and disadvantages.

- Penhorn Mall, Portland Street

This site offers the convenience of a mall. Some clients like to “multi-task” and run errands when going to the Library. The mall is on several major bus routes. However, it presents drawbacks for pedestrian traffic, especially due to the bridge over the Circumferential Highway. One participant noted that following a major snowstorm earlier in the year, the sidewalk was not cleared and snow banks were higher than the guardrail protecting pedestrians from the highway below. Participants considered Penhorn Mall a “kid friendly” mall. There is a popular “children’s play gym” and movie theatres. One of the Focus Group participants managed the theatres and said it is the number one children’s theatre destination in Canada on a per capita basis. It was suggested that management at Penhorn Mall should make it financially attractive for the Library to locate there, given the Branch would draw significant clients.

- Tacoma Drive

This area is accessible and offers various amenities. Its location is more central in the catchment area. However, there were no clear suggestions on the exact building in which to locate the Branch. One suggestion was the mall in which Canadian Tire established a new store within the past few years. The area is somewhat congested with traffic.

- Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Akerley Campus

This is a central location, which has a reasonable access and is nearby a junior high and high school. There are other organizations in the current site, including the YMCA and a Culinary School, offering the potential for program uptake and cross promotion.

- Atlantic Superstore Mall on Portland Street

While less central, the site may have adequate space available. A Zellers store moved out in the past few years and it was understood that a fitness centre took only a portion of the space. The mall offers other amenities including a grocery store. Bus service would have to be rerouted to the mall. The location presents challenges in terms of pedestrian accessibility, as Portland Street is busy and potentially hazardous. Another drawback is that the Library would be less central in the catchment area and in fact much closer to the Cole Harbour catchment area. One participant indicated there were complexes for senior residents being planned for construction in the immediate area.

One site that did not merit consideration was Mic Mac Mall in Dartmouth. Focus Group participants saw it as outside the catchment area and not convenient.

4 Recommendations

In consideration of the findings from the research phases described earlier in this report, the following is a brief overview of a suggested capital improvement program.

4.1 Recommendations for Years 0 – 5 (2004 – 2009)

1. First Priority: Spring Garden Road Library/Central Library

It is recommended that a new Library be established on Spring Garden Road, or in the immediate vicinity in Halifax, and that it serve as both a Branch to the immediate catchment area and the Central Library for the Region.

Rationale

The peninsula will continue to experience population growth, although not at the same rapid rate as experienced within the last ten years. The projected population within the peninsula, and particularly the southern end of the peninsula, indicates that the Spring Garden Road Library requires an increase to available floor space. Repair and maintenance of the current building is becoming cost prohibitive. Previous studies have indicated that expansion could be achieved effectively and cost-efficiently through the development of a new branch facility on the peninsula.

As highlighted in A.J. Diamond, et al., Central Library Project Study for the Halifax Regional Library, 1998, working with the current Spring Garden Road site presents challenges. Renovation on the current site involves high costs, it would not accommodate the space needs for a Central Library and even if so, would not result in cost savings. The report further indicates that demolition and construction on the current site is more expensive than construction of a new building on an adjacent site because the Library would have to relocate for two years and move twice, incurring additional costs of up to \$1.8 million.

A Central Library consolidates services and employees, providing centralized services from a strong core. It houses specialized collections and resources, supports branches, and makes the overall system stronger through efficiencies. A Central Library on Spring Garden Road would be in proximity to stakeholder organizations, including HRM City Hall and universities. A new Central Library presents an opportunity to feature a flagship design building in the HRM downtown core. It offers an advantageous operating environment for Halifax Public Libraries, as the current scenario of providing central services from multiple Branches is less than fully efficient. Finally, a modern Central Library will make a strong statement of the commitment to literacy and learning, and their role in building a strong community. As stated in the Strategic Interviewing process, “Great cities have great libraries.”

In the consultation process, many stakeholders expressed an interest in having the Central Library in downtown Halifax, the commercial, cultural, and educational centre of HRM. The current Spring Garden Road Library serves the largest catchment area within Halifax Public Libraries’ system with a population of over 50,000, and as stated, is the core area within the Region. There are challenges related to parking at Spring Garden Road that should be addressed in the project design.

Most stakeholders recognized the importance of a Central Library representing the Libraries’ leadership role in supporting literacy and life-long learning. Some concern was expressed in a Focus Group that a new Central Library would be achieved at the expense of smaller Branches. However, the Board of Directors assigns priority to both, as a Central Library supports and strengthens the Branch network.

Focus Group participants were asked about preferences for site selection. Their first choice was the Spring Garden Road at Queen Street site, which may incorporate some of the former Halifax Infirmary. A close second was the Queen Street at Clyde Street. It was important to have a new Library in very close proximity to the current Spring Garden Road Library.

There are strong emotional and historical ties to the current Spring Garden Road building owned by HRM. There was interest in having the current building being incorporated into a new Library, for example, for archives or programming. If not, a concerted effort should be made to ensure the building remain as an historical and cultural centre of the community with adequate maintenance.

While consultation was completed during this project, Halifax Public Libraries will continue these efforts as they select a site and engage clients and stakeholders in establishing a new Library.

2. Second Priority: Woodlawn Library/Cole Harbour Library

The second priority is to address the space constraints and location of at Woodlawn Library in Dartmouth. This can be achieved either by expanding in the current location in the Staples Plaza, or by establishing a new Branch in one of a number of potential sites in malls and commercial centres in the immediate area. The recommended second option is to locate on Tacoma Drive.

Rationale

The Branch could be reasonably expanded from its current size of 4,000 square feet to at least 12,000 square feet, based on standards accepted by Halifax Public Libraries. This expanded square footage also aligns with the Nova Scotia Provincial Library, “Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries,” 2nd edition, September 2001. Based on these standards, the Woodlawn Branch currently has an “under serviced” rating.

Continued development will occur in the Portland Estates/Portland Hills area, and there is also potential for additional development in the Shearwater area. The Shearwater development is totally dependent on the future of the airport and the speed with which lands may be declared surplus, and thus should be closely monitored. Lands controlled by the base combined with privately held lands could generate an additional five to ten thousand (5,000-10,000) people. Because of this, there is a demonstrated need for increased Library square footage in the area. This can be achieved through expansion of Woodlawn Branch given its close proximity to this area, or some combination of expansion for floor area of the Woodlawn Branch and the Cole Harbour Branch to support this population growth. Growth has also been seen in the Keystone area. It is a reasonable expectation that further growth will occur in the Port Wallace area. While it is likely this will occur within a 10-year time frame, taking this into account in space planning is nonetheless valuable at this time.

In terms of usage, the Woodlawn Library ranks seventh in circulation among the Halifax Public Libraries’ 14 Branches, behind Keshen Goodman, Spring Garden, Alderney, Cole Harbour, Sackville, and Tantallon. Woodlawn Branch also has the fifth highest circulation per capita at 13.2 items per catchment area population. Woodlawn has the highest circulation per square foot in the Region at 84.06.

In terms of site selection, there is strong preference for remaining in the current site within the Staples Plaza and expanding the existing space. Focus Group participants cited ease of access was the most important consideration, as the Branch is easily reached by pedestrians, and by car or bus. Parking was very important to clients. Many clients liked the convenience of the Branch being in a mall. Clients roughly 50 years of age or older who have been using the Woodlawn Branch for many years expressed the strongest preference for remaining in the current site. Younger clients shared this view although were somewhat more open to alternate locations.

It is recommended that the Woodlawn Branch remain where is in the Staples Plaza and negotiate now for additional space. A location in the mall that offers greater visibility, possibly in a corner of the building, is preferred. Another option is for the Library to expand to two floors if mall management would complete the necessary capital improvement, however the Branch should not lose its street level access.

If remaining in the current site and expanding the space was not feasible, Focus Group participants suggested other sites, pending availability of space, including Penhorn Mall, Tacoma Drive, and the Nova Scotia Community College Akerley Campus. The recommended second option is to locate on Tacoma Drive. The Branch would be more centrally placed within the catchment area and be well served by bus routes. The Branch could relocate to an existing building. Alternatively, Halifax Public Libraries could negotiate a 20-year lease that may allow for property owners Plaza Group to construct a new building. There is plenty of extra parking space for the Canadian Tire store and attached mall, and buildings have been torn down at this site. Given the option for a new, appropriately sized facility, clients may welcome this location as opposed to the current one in Staples Plaza.

In terms of desired features for an expanded Branch, more room for programming was the most popular feature. An expanded children's area, sections tailored to client groups, and more public computers were also of interest.

As mentioned in the case of Spring Garden Road, Halifax Public Libraries will continue consultation efforts with clients and stakeholders and they continue to plan for a new or expanded Branch.

4.2 Recommendations for Years 6 – 10 (2010 – 2014)

3. Third Priority: Bedford Library/Keshen Goodman Library

Due to population growth in Bedford South, within five years or less, space constraints at Bedford Library and Keshen Goodman Library will become more significant. Consideration should be given to acquiring more space at a new Bedford Branch, potentially located in Bedford South.

Other considerations include possible expansion to Keshen Goodman to alleviate increasing space constraints. Also, a second Branch could potentially be established in Bedford North, specifically in the new development Northgate, which would also serve Fall River.

Rationale

Within years 5 to 10, the Bedford South and Bedford West developments will be well underway and receiving the majority of new development activity and growth within all of HRM. This growth will put a substantial strain on the available square footage within the Keshen Goodman Library given the existing location of the Bedford Branch being on the more easterly end of Bedford and not in close proximity to the Bedford South or Bedford West land developments. Consideration should be given in the near term to securing a site, with development or construction following, as the population increases in this area. Approximately 35,000 new residents are projected for Bedford South and West together, and a new interchange on the Bicentennial Highway will “kick-start” growth. Halifax Public Libraries should begin negotiations now for a new site in Bedford South prior to proposed interchange being built.

Expansion at Keshen Goodman is physically possible and could be considered as a short-term measure given the Branch is currently facing some space constraints. Population growth in the area over the next 3 to 5 years will have an impact on space constraints.

Following this, Halifax Public Library could consider a second facility in Bedford North, new Northgate. Given the potential for new development in the Rocky Lake area, the extension of Burnside Drive, and a shifting of traffic patterns to that area, consideration should be given to a second new Branch in this northern section of Bedford. This area is intended to be utilized as a major recreational and institutional site, along with new residential and regional commercial uses forming a new node within the metropolitan region. There is less immediacy to this recommendation, which could be pursued in the 5 to 10 year time period. A new Branch would present an opportunity for enhancing service to Fall River, Sackville, Waverley and new area of Bedford. Fall River and Waverley communities will be seeing some level of increased development in this time period.

The current site does not offer high visibility and profile. The situation of the existing Branch should be monitored over this time period. However, if Branches were established in both Bedford South and Bedford North, the existing Branch could realistically be closed over this 10-year time frame.

4. Fourth Priority: Middle Musquodoboit, Musquodoboit Harbour and Eastern Rural HRM

Middle Musquodoboit area meets the benchmarks for a rural level branch at this time but should continue to be monitored to ensure growth patterns remain consistent while the first three priorities are being addressed.

The Musquodoboit Harbour Branch should remain in its current leased location until growth patterns in this area become clear. The Porter's Lake population does not warrant a branch. No significant growth expected in Porter's Lake over the near term. It will see definite impact from the HRM growth management policies and there are few projects are in line for approval. Residents tend to use the Cole Harbour Branch. Usage patterns should be monitored in relation to overall usage at Cole Harbour.

4.3 Areas for Monitoring

Fall River should be monitored if a future branch in Bedford North area does not service it.

Serving Eastern Passage may impact the Cole Harbour Branch; this needs addressing in suburban service delivery plans.

Given the increase in population in the Tantallon catchment area, it is also recommended that the Tantallon Branch be monitored. The Tantallon area will continue to see growth a reasonably high rate given the extent of the supply of vacant lots in the area as well as the applications for new development in the system before the growth management policies were introduced. Once this supply is exhausted the population will stabilize and possibly decline. Any potential decline will be outside the study time frame.

It is also recommended to maintain Branches at their current size and monitor growth in the following catchment areas: Captain William Spry, Halifax North, Dartmouth North J.D. Shatford, Sackville and Sheet Harbour.

4.4 Ongoing Maintenance

The Facilities Inventory completed by Halifax Public Libraries and HRM staff in 2002, identified the need to refurbish a Branch once a year based on identified criteria.

Halifax Public Libraries needs to maintain Branches as safe, pleasant, accessible and efficient facilities for clients and staff. Maintenance requirements should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. It should be noted that if a decision is not made to go forward with the building of a new Spring Garden Library, major funds would need to be invested in the existing building.

Appendix A
Strategic Interview Guide

STRATEGIC INTERVIEW GUIDE

On Behalf of the Halifax Public Library

PREMISE

Given strong demand for library services and changing dynamics in its community base, the Halifax Public Library (HPL) has initiated a Needs Assessment and Master Facilities Plan. Terrain Group Inc. of Bedford, Nova Scotia has been engaged to complete this assignment.

Library services are a very important community resource. Various factors have impacted HPL operations, including population growth, changing demographics, shifts in urban and rural development, and commuter patterns.

A primary objective of this study is to identify those areas within HRM with the greatest priority for library services, and determine how best to address those needs over both the short and long term. Further goals include balancing community needs with financial realities, and evaluating the development of further branch facilities in conjunction with a central library.

Following our needs assessment, our team will deliver capital development options, related costing, architectural concepts, and identification of funding sources and partnership opportunities.

As a stakeholder for the Halifax Library system, your input to this process is being requested. We would like to conduct a brief interview with you lasting about 20 to 30 minutes by telephone (or in person).

The focus of our questions will not be solely related to library facilities and locations. Instead, we will take a more broad perspective by asking your views regarding overall objectives for the library system and its network of branches. This will include the primary role of the library in the community, key audiences, critical products and services, and so on. (Some Interviewees will have provided input on these questions through their role on the HPL Board, in staff positions, and so on, so we will move forward from this point.) This type of information will provide valuable directions with respect to decisions about facilities. Of course, your views on the priorities of locations are also requested.

Your input will remain confidential. We will not identify respondents in our reporting to library staff. We also want to stress our questions are not related to any specific planned changes to facilities, staff roles, and or service offerings. As referenced, the information is being collected as part of a Needs Assessment aimed at improving HPL's understanding of relative priorities for facilities and services.

Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Library System Level

I would like to start at the highest level by asking your views on the library as an overall organization in the community. Questions will focus on the overall objectives of the Library and its role as a key community resource.

1. At the broadest level, what do you think are the primary objectives to be fulfilled by a library?

Prompts: promote literacy and learning; make information available to all segments of society; complement and support the educational system; broaden options for young people; encourage life-long learning; offer a range of programming to support important social objectives such as education, health, activity, culture, etc.

2. I would now like to ask you about the key audiences, or client groups, a library system should serve. To provide a sense of priority, respond in terms of primary audiences and secondary audiences.

Who are the primary clients that a library should serve?

Prompts: society in general; youth; seniors; families; those somehow marginalized in society; job seekers, others – elaborate. Alternative: the broad public.

Who are the secondary audiences a library system should serve?

Prompts: society in general; youth; seniors; families; those somehow marginalized in society; job seekers, others – elaborate. Alternative: the broad public.

3. Now I would like to talk about resources a library should provide. Your response can be provided at a broad level.

What are the key resources a library should provide?

Prompts: Standard monographs (fiction and non-fiction books – classics, bestsellers, educational), periodicals, audio/visual; programming; cultural and literacy-related programs; youth-related resources, other - elaborate.

4. Are there any socioeconomic trends or issues that you think the library should play a role in addressing?

Prompts: Literacy; IT skills development; supportive initiatives for youth; job searches; diversifying employment opportunities; outreach to special needs groups (seniors, disabled), multicultural awareness; others not currently addressed - elaborate.

Branch Network Level

I would now like the discussion to be slightly more specific and focus on the network of library branches in HRM. (Individual branches will be addressed in the next section.) There are needs for library services throughout HRM. In particular, there are some “hot spot” areas where decisions need to be made in the relative short term with respect to facilities (e.g., Spring Garden Road, Woodlawn, others). As referenced in our introduction, an objective of this study is to understand those needs and identify those areas with the greatest priority in both short and long term horizon.

5. In your opinion, what area, or areas, within the system have the greatest priority with respect to need for library facilities and/or services? Why (please elaborate).

Prompts: Spring Garden Road, Woodlawn, Musquodoboit Harbour, Chester, Hubbards, others – elaborate.

6. Next, I would like to briefly discuss the role of the central library as an integral component of the library system. As you know, the HPL is working toward the establishment of a new or upgraded central library, and this planning stage provides an opportunity to consider ideas and insights.

What key role(s) should a central library fulfill?

Prompts: Reference material, unique journals, administration and related services, service to business, government, and other areas; representation within the community of the important role of the library; new features/services; expanded role; other – elaborate?

7. Now I would like to move to the other branches that comprise the system.

With respect to future development planning, what emphasis should be considered with respect to branches?

Prompts: There should be continued/greater emphasis on branches in communities, facilities/infrastructure are important in the community; maintain status quo or reduce emphasis on facilities; add facilities in high growth areas; keep current facilities but increase programming, services, and outreach.

8. I would now like to talk about delivery mechanisms for library products and services. The growth of the Internet has clearly changed the way people retrieve information.

What delivery mechanisms should the library be using? For what services?

Prompts: Facilities/infrastructure will always be important; facilities are important but place increasing emphasis on on-line services and booking (e.g., online discussion forum for youth, on-line catalogues); have the right balance of both and market each to different audiences, elaborate.

9. Still on the topic of service delivery, what service standards do you consider to be most important for the Library?

Prompts: Professional, courteous service; knowledgeable and experienced professionals; one-on-one interaction; accessibility (hours, on-line service) speed of access (on-line, in-branch searching), other.

10. What should be the priority in developing the branch network in circumstances of limited financial resources, to provide a broad array of library services from a smaller number of facilities, to increase the number of branches to reach more communities but with a narrower range of services, or an alternative approach?

Prompts: Does the library system have too many or too few branches? Are there existing branches that should be closed? Specific areas where branches should be built? Note: Do not force response.

Individual Branch Level

We're close to the conclusion of the interview, and at this time I would like to focus the discussion more specifically on individual branches and the programs, services, and resources they offer. We won't ask your opinion on all the resources and programming, just those where a priority need may exist.

11. Of all the resources available at library branches, what do you consider to be the most important, and why?

Prompts: Core collections, including books (fiction and non-fiction), research material; journals, newspapers, videos, music, resources not currently available.

12. In your opinion, are there any key resources that would be valuable to library clients that are currently not available? What are they? What are the associated challenges?

Prompts: Computer programs, games, databases; CDs; videos; other.

13. I would now like to address the same types of questions with respect to programs and services.

Of all the resources available at library branches, what do you consider to be the most important, and why?

Prompts: Programming – speakers and presentations on different cultures/nationalities; new books; summer reading/summer camps; crafts; preschool activities (puppet shows, story time) other youth programs; profile new authors/readings; IT/Computer training; CAP (Community Access Program) Site; women's groups/special interest groups, other leisure and special interests.

14. In your opinion, are there any key services or programs that would be valuable to library clients that are currently not available? What are they? What are the associated challenges?

Prompts: Computer training; Internet reference support; other.

15. Are there any specific branches that, in your opinion, need to add programs or services? Please specify the branch(es) and required services.

Prompts: Branch in their area; previously identified hot spots. Note: do not force response.

That brings us to the end of our discussion. Before we conclude, do you have any further comments, or wish to emphasize any points, with respect to the library system, the network of branches, or the individual branches within the network?

Thank you for your input.

Appendix B

Focus Group Moderator's Guide

MODERATOR'S GUIDE

Focus Groups
Halifax Public Libraries
March/April 2004

1. Does the Spring Garden Road Library (or Woodlawn Branch) currently meet your needs? Why or why not?

Prompts: Space (program, reading); facilities (condition of building, equipment, furniture); technology (number public computers, accessible, up-to-date); resources (printed, other media); programming; access (wheelchair, other); other?

2. If it was possible to have a larger branch for Spring Garden Road Library (or Woodlawn), what could be provided that currently is not provided?

Prompts: act as a Central Library, larger rooms (program, reading); modern facilities (equipment, furniture); technology (number public computers, up-to-date); resources (printed, other media); programming (new, expanded); other?

3. What factors should the Library take into account when selecting a site for a new facility? Which have the highest priority?

Prompts: Co-location (with other community resources, shopping); proximity to other amenities (businesses, schools); parking; pedestrian traffic; bus routes; accessibility (wheelchair, visually impaired); other?

4. Based on these criteria, do you have any suggestions for a location for a new Spring Garden Road Library (or Woodlawn Branch)?

Prompts (Spring Garden Road): Downtown Halifax; other?

Prompts (Woodlawn): In general proximity of current branch; more central in catchment area; close to major shopping centre and other amenities (e.g., Tacoma Drive, Penhorn Mall); other?