



## Check list for new library buildings:

You have the go-ahead to build a new library facility. Before the panic sets in, here is a check list to help you get started with the planning and to help steer your way through till opening day and beyond.

### What:

- Find out how the library building relates to your Long Term Community Plan.
- Check out the Funding Programs and Calendar of important dates for funding rounds at Department Local Government Planning Sport and Recreation - <http://www.lgp.qld.gov.au/?id=57>;
- Read the Guidelines and Standards for Queensland Public Libraries – located at <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/publib/policy/guidelines>;
- Check out the mandatory requirements – factor in 10 year population growth; be aware of minimum floor space requirements – are you building a main library or a branch library?
- Check out the Library Building and Design pages on the State Library's website – located at <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/publib/build>;
- Gather as much information at the local level before proceeding further;
- Conduct a community survey – what are its needs? – How can they be met in the new library design?
- Consult widely across the community – Indigenous and multicultural groups/schools/rate payers/community groups. Conduct focus groups;
- Complete an audit of your community's facilities – what is missing? Can the new library building help fill the gaps?
- Plan for a meeting room/s with external after hours access;
- Think of the library as the “Community's Living Room”, or the “Community Hub”. Libraries are more than books! Check out the following website for more ideas:
  - [http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/about/information/publications/policies\\_reports/plu\\_lbc.html](http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/about/information/publications/policies_reports/plu_lbc.html);

## Where:

- Where is the best place in town for the new library? Keep it central but keep in mind the parking requirements;
- Ensure easy access including disabled access;
- Is the library best positioned with another Council or community facility – e.g. Tourism office/Art Gallery/Museum/Heritage building/Rural Transaction Centre/Education centre/ Health centre/Post Office/Café; this list is not exhaustive.

## How:

- Conduct research into the latest ideas on library building design;
- Plan physical visits to other Shires/cities with newly built libraries – contact Public Library Services, State Library of Queensland, for suggestions. This is critical to the success of your new library. Learn from the mistakes of others!
- The State Library of New South Wales building pages are certainly worth checking out.
  - [http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/library\\_mgt/lib\\_management\\_docs/peopleplaces\\_2ndedition.pdf](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/library_mgt/lib_management_docs/peopleplaces_2ndedition.pdf)
- Develop a 'wish list' for the new library – identify the 'must haves' from the 'would likes';
- Design for flexibility and expansion (North Mackay library is a great example of design flexibility);
- What are the givens in the new design? Eg. adequate display space, adequate room for internet terminals, future installation of self-check out machines, reading areas; young peoples spaces; community meeting rooms, staff meeting rooms and facilities;
- Consult extensively with the library manager and library staff – find out their needs – what works and doesn't work in the current premises?
- Discuss how the current design can be improved in the new building. Don't forget the library staff and the community have to work with the finished product!
- Choose your Architects wisely – do they have previous library design experience or have you seen their recent designs?
- Include the interior design in the Architect's brief – don't skimp on the 'interiors' essentials' of shelving, layout, colours, natural lighting and signage;
- Investigate funky furniture and design concepts, especially in the young peoples and children's areas;

- Don't forget the landscaping – include an outdoor reading/children's activities area;
- Allow the architects to take a holistic approach – you won't be disappointed!
- Do you need to relocate the current library while the new facility is built?
- Build in a contingency plan for temporary premises and allow for cost over runs - you never know when another Cyclone Larry is going to appear!

## **When**

- Plan for the opening day from the start – make it a real community celebration!
- Is the opening to be on a week day or a weekend – what is the best time for your community to gather?
- Who will open your new facility? Ensure they are available well ahead of time;
- Don't forget to invite the whole community – schools, community groups, youth groups; retired citizens, etc;
- Invite the school and/or community band to play at the opening;
- What exhibitions, displays are required?
- Do you have a local history collection or local historian to draw on – don't forget the resources of the State Library's Heritage Collections <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/services/coll/jol/photo> and
- Picture Queensland <http://pictureqld.slq.qld.gov.au/>;
- Set up a time capsule of life in your community at the time of opening;
- Is the library to be named after a prominent citizen, past or present?
- Ensure their descendants or family are on the A-list!

## **Planning for the future**

- Plan for a refurbishment within 5 years – include it in the Library's Strategic Plans;
- Keep in touch with new library development - check the State Library's Building and Design pages regularly for new ideas;
- Always visit other libraries when the opportunity arises (especially when on holidays).

## **Most of all**

- Make the new facility a show piece for your community – the building should be environmentally sustainable.
- Ensure the end result compliments its surroundings;
- Be adventurous and bold in the planning;
- Make the most of a once–in-your-working-lifetime opportunity to get it right for your community!