

New Central Library

WHAT WE HEARD

DIGGING DEEPER
Schematic Design Phase

Jun 1–25, 2021



**SASKATOON
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

THE DESIGN PROCESS

The design of the new central library will take about 18 months to complete. There will be a series of consultations at each key design phase, which will enable everyone in Saskatoon to help shape the new central library.

COMPLETE

Project Requirements | Functional Plan

The functional plan is a statement of building needs. It articulates the project vision and details the types of spaces needed and the size of those spaces. The functional plan was informed by community input, library best practices, benchmarking, building codes, accessibility standards, the City of Saskatoon's Plan for Growth, and SPL's Strategic Plan.

COMPLETE

Thinking Big | Concept Design Phase

In the concept design phase, the design team will determine the general approach to the building design, considering its size, scale, and location on the site. A concept design is "the big idea" about what the shape of the building will be. The result of the conceptual design process includes a site plan showing where the building will be located; a preliminary landscape plan; conceptual exterior elevation drawings illustrating the size and shape of the building; a summary of the design approach or philosophy behind the concept design; and a basic overview of the building's structural, mechanical and electrical systems.

CURRENT

Digging Deeper | Schematic Design Phase

In the schematic design phase, the design team will dig deeper into the detail of the building's interior and exterior spaces and the landscaping. In this phase, the design begins to take shape. Key decisions about building materials and mechanics are made. During this phase, floor plans will be developed and the description of room characteristics and requirements will be outlined.

UPCOMING – SEP 2021

Design Check-In

As the schematic design phase nears completion, there will be a checkpoint to confirm the design achieves the project vision.

UPCOMING – JAN 2022

Finishing Touches | Detail Design Phase

In the detailed design phase, all of the technical requirements and design decisions are finalized. The design team will take all of the input that they have received and will prepare all of the design drawings and detailed specifications. During this phase, the finishing touches will be decided with regards to furniture and equipment. The design team will produce detailed floorplans and exterior renderings of the building that show the building's finishes and detailed landscape design.

UPCOMING – SPRING 2022

Final Design Reveal

The final design of the new central is revealed to the community!

PHASE 2: SCHEMATIC DESIGN

Between Jun 1 and 25, we engaged the community in conversations for the schematic design phase of the new central library.

During public consultations for the schematic design phase, we solicited feedback on how interior library spaces can be designed to best meet patron needs and reflect the community as a whole. This feedback will help the design team develop floorplans and make key decisions about building materials and mechanical components. During this phase, some decisions about exterior spaces and landscaping will also be made.

During Phase 2 consultations, we also solicited feedback on the concept design of the new central library. The concept design of the library's exterior — which draws inspiration from traditional First Nation and Métis architecture, as well as Saskatoon's natural landscape — was informed by community feedback received during the Phase 1 consultations in early 2021.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all consultations were completed virtually or via paper responses delivered to the library.

Here's how we gathered input (so far)

We provided Saskatoon residents with many different ways to provide their thoughts and feedback, as follows. All feedback mechanisms were again hosted on SPLconnect.ca, and hard copies of the Kitchen Table Kits were available at all libraries.

Virtual Conversations with the Project Team

Residents were able to meet the design team via Zoom while taking part in guided workshops and conversations.

Kitchen Table Kit

Kitchen Table Kits allowed a small group of friends or family to get together and talk about the project in a comfortable and informal setting. Their thoughts were recorded and submitted to the project team.

Surveys, Activities & Discussions

Eight different online surveys allowed residents to provide feedback on the specific spaces that mattered most to them.

Resident Advisory Committees

Fourteen advisory committees have been established, each of which provide input on specific areas that will be critical to the new central library.

Summary of participation

- 122 participants in 14 resident advisory meetings.
- 33 people participating in virtual public meetings.
- 105 online surveys.
- 83 new registrations on splconnect.ca.

How will we use your input?

All of the feedback and input we received was shared with the design team and will be used to inform the schematic design of the new library. The design team received all the detailed comments and complete survey responses.

THEMES

Because Phase 2 consultations were primarily concerned with how the library's interior areas are designed, we created eight separate surveys to gather feedback on what matters most to patrons about specific spaces. We also solicited feedback on the concept design.

The following pages include summaries of the feedback we received about each area.

Concept Design

What do you like about the concept design?

- Appreciate the meaningful inclusion of the First Nation tipi and Métis log cabin architecture.
- Focus on energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.
- Accessibility standards.
- Lots of windows for lots of light, and the idea that it will glow like a beacon through our long, dark winters.
- Reflection of and integration of nature in the design.
- The use of mass timber on the interior.
- Location of café along 2nd Avenue.
- Ample room for outdoor greenspace.
- Architecturally unique, it will stand out as a landmark.
- The idea of indoor living-plant walls.
- The views for the public have the prime real estate.
- The separations between components, quiet spaces, noisy spaces and creative spaces.

What would you change or modify about the concept design?

- Add more bike parking.
- Make the washrooms gender-neutral.
- Find ways for greater integration of indoor/outdoor spaces to maximize the use of this space for programming and a public plaza/greenspace.
- Ensure that The Gallery is still prominent.
- Make sure Local History is large enough.
- Continue to focus on accessibility and how people with invisible disabilities will use the library.
- Make sure it is easy for people to find employees when they need help.
- Focus on making the building even more sustainable.
- Make sure there are lots of forward-facing books, especially in children's, teen and new/high-demand areas.
- Don't make it so fancy that it doesn't feel welcoming to everyone.
- Make sure art is incorporated everywhere.

"I really love the blend of traditional with the modern. It feels like a dynamic space. It feels like you've listened to your stakeholders."

"A big wow. It's terrific. I'm thrilled that Saskatoon will have this library."

"I can't wait to see more of the interior. I'm excited for what comes next!"

"Just beautiful. Gorgeous."

"I love the incorporation of the natural environment."

"People will call this building home."

"Keep the focus on the people who are using the space and you'll get it right—you're doing a great job so far—keep putting the community first."

What do you want us to remember about your needs when we design the children's area?

- Make sure the storyroom sparks imagination and inspiration.
- Include lots of hands-on entertainment options like toys, puzzles and games.
- Make sure there is a barrier so that kids can't run out to the elevators or the stairs.
- Provide spaces that allow and encourage kids to be active.
- Include cozy and private seating areas and spaces to sit and eat snacks.
- Please make sure the kids don't have to walk by the video gaming to get to the children's area.

"I would limit the technology readily available in the children's area and encourage free play and imaginative spaces."

"Ensure that doorways and spaces allow for movement with large strollers."

"More quiet places for reading and snuggling with a book."

What do you want us to remember about your needs when we design the teen area?

- Provide specific areas for both studying and casually hanging out and/or meeting in group settings.
- Provide sound dampening in group/gathering areas so others are not disturbed.
- Provide more public computers and laptop bars with lots of electrical outlets.
- A gaming area (for both video and board games) would be popular.
- A robust browsing area with greater variety of authors/genres.

"(Including) ample sound-dampening partitions (will) prevent inevitable noise from spilling into other areas."

"More browsing space for graphic novels."

"A hangout space would be cool — like a couch away from others where people could talk without being disruptive."

What do you want us to remember about your needs when we design the theatre, programming and meeting rooms?

- Clear signage/wayfinding is important.
- Make sure all spaces are welcoming and accessible for everyone.
- Have projectors and microphones available for patrons who are booking rooms and make sure all the technology available is easy to use.
- Ensure spaces are flexible and can be easily configured to fit the type of meeting, event or program taking place.
- An app/website that allows people to book rooms online would be helpful.
- Make sure there is space outside the rooms where people can mingle before and after programs and events.
- Sound insulation for meeting and programming rooms is critical.
- Add a fire feature in the centre of the Storytelling & Learning centre, with two-tiered seating to accommodate both kids and adults.

"(Ensure) flexibility to tailor the space according to the type of meeting."

"Ensure there are washrooms (including family friendly washrooms) close to the programming rooms."

"Some individuals have mobility challenges and/or may require the assistance of a care partner to get around. Ensuring that the rooms are accessible is important."

What do you want us to remember about your needs when we design the creation spaces?

- Provide clear instructions and/or training on how each space is to be used, and how to use the equipment and technology.
- Ensure spaces can be used without disturbing others.
- There needs to be good soundproofing between spaces.
- Include spaces and equipment/technology that can be used by people of all ages and ability levels.
- Make spaces suitable for individual use but also large enough for groups.
- Technology is constantly changing; make sure the spaces can be flexible over time.
- Consider adding virtual reality and 3D printing.

“Children of varying ages and abilities must be able to participate.”

“Surround these spaces with adequate soundproofing so that the inevitable chatter/laughter erupting among the creators/innovators would not disrupt users of the adjacent quiet spaces.”

What do you want us to remember about your needs when we design for accessibility?

- Make sure there are open sightlines.
- Include lots of signage and an intuitive floorplan.
- Include multiple accessible washrooms.
- Have a loading and unloading space near the entrance.
- Pay attention to the entrance and make sure that the pathways will be easy for people year-round.
- Shelving needs to be accessible for everyone.
- Be careful about large open spaces — background noises and echoes are hard for people with hearing impairments.
- Pay attention to flooring surfaces/glare and how this impacts people so that it doesn't look slippery.
- Make sure that the elevators are large enough for larger wheelchairs to go in and turn around as well as navigate throughout the building
- Considerations for the hard of hearing such as FM system in the theatre and programming rooms.
- Go beyond building code minimums. Make accessibility a priority.

“We need inclusive furniture for invisible disabilities.”

“Please realize that some people have multiple disabilities, and that some disabilities are not visible.”

What do you want us to remember about your needs when we design the adult collection areas?

- Include lots of spaces that can be used by individuals.
- Include cozy seating areas throughout.
- Add more public computers and bookable tablets that can be taken throughout the library.
- Include lots of clear signage and make spaces easy to navigate.
- Make materials accessible to people of all heights and abilities.
- Make sure there are lots of places to sit down as you make your way around the library so you don't have to walk too far as you get to your destination.

“I'm short! Please don't make it hard to reach the top shelf.”

“Include cozy seating areas all over the place to read instead of all around one big circle.”

What do you want us to remember about your needs when we design Local History & The Gallery?

- Make sure the spaces are accessible and easy for all users to navigate.
- Include private spaces in Local History that people can use to consult with employees and do group work.
- Make it easy for users of all abilities to get to these spaces on the fourth floor.
- Add lots of table space for people to work.
- There needs to be a focus on making sure that Local History is accessible for everyone.
- Include more Indigenous historical resources in Local History.

“Ensure that some seating is provided along the length of the Gallery room, please.”

“Hopefully the library considers the need for web development in addition to physical space and document archival (which are also important).”

“I hope that there will be much more space allocated to Local History’s collection so that all of the back issues of the telephone directories and Henderson Directories will be readily available.”

RESIDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES

To help ensure the new central library achieves its vision to be a welcoming and accessible place for everyone who calls Saskatoon home, SPL developed 14 advisory committees. The mandate of each committee is to review concepts, ideas and plans, providing feedback to the design team as requested.

Each committee consists of up to 20 members comprised of community leaders, advocates, experts and other residents with lived experience in the committee's focal area. In addition to the many residents who applied to serve on these committees, we would also like to thank the many local organizations who graciously agreed to have an employee representative serve on the committees, as follows:

Accessibility

- Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Inc.
- Barrier Free Saskatchewan
- Inclusion Saskatchewan
- SaskAbilities
- Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission
- Spinal Cord Injury Saskatchewan Inc.

Business

- Broadway Business Improvement District
- Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District
- Tourism Saskatoon

Creation & Innovation

- Canada Learning Code
- Chokecherry Studios
- Saskatchewan Writers' Guild
- Saskatoon Community Youth Arts Programming Inc. (SCYAP)
- SUM Theatre
- The Sound Lounge
- Word on the Street

Employment & Education

- Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools
- Quint Development Corporation
- READ Saskatoon
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic
- Saskatoon Public Schools
- Spinal Cord Injury Saskatchewan Inc.
- University of Saskatchewan

Inclusion

- Global Gathering Place
- Le Federation des francophones de Saskatoon
- OUT Saskatoon
- Saskatchewan Intercultural Association
- Saskatoon Open Door Society

Local History

- City of Saskatoon Archives
- Genealogical Society
- Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre
- Saskatoon Heritage Society
- U of S Archives & Special Collections
- Western Development Museum

Poverty & Homelessness

- Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre
- Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership
- Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership
- STR8 UP
- The Bridge
- United Way of Saskatoon and Area

Public Health & Safety

- Population Health
- Prairie Harm Reduction
- Saskatoon Police Services - Community Support
- Saskatoon Community Clinic
- Student Wellness Initiative Towards Community Health

Program & Service Partnership

- CHEP Good Food Inc.
- Frontier College
- Law Society of SK
- Nutrien Wonderhub
- Parks Canada
- Saskatchewan Environmental Society
- Saskatchewan History & Folklore Society
- Saskatchewan Family Justice Service

The following advisory committees are comprised solely of individuals with no direct links to organizations:

- Children & Caregivers
- Teen
- Older Adults
- Knowledge Keepers

CONTACT US

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