

**Title:** INTERVIEW & PHOTO DOCUMENTATION REPORT

**Presented by:** Valerie MacDonald, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Spaces Intern Librarian  
Beth Wortman, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Spaces Intern Librarian

**Date:** March 29, 2012

---

## Introduction

As one of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Spaces Internship projects, interviews with customers were conducted to gain feedback about library spaces. The interviews were paired with the method of photo documentation. Photo documentation (or photo elicitation) was selected as a method as “photographs used in photo elicitation have a dual purpose. Researchers can use photographs as a tool to expand on questions, and simultaneously, subjects can use photographs to provide a unique way to communicate dimensions of their lives” (Stanczak 177). The interviews allowed for feedback from customers beyond the survey questions and for the interns to ask follow-up questions in collecting qualitative data. Interviews were conducted from January 30, 2012 to February 23, 2012 at five branches: Lois Hole (LHL), Stanley A. Milner (SAM), Strathcona (STR), Whitemud Crossing (WMC), and Woodcroft (WOO). Locations were chosen based on the number of volunteers for each branch, as well as for geographic diversity.

In order to explore how customers currently use and how they might like to use EPL’s spaces in the future the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Spaces internship is guided by four questions:

1. What are customers doing in EPL’s spaces?
2. How would customers like to be using EPL’s spaces?
3. What are current and future trends in library spaces and customer activities?
4. How could EPL’s spaces best meet the needs of EPL’s customers?

The method of interviews and photo-documentation was selected to help answer questions one, two, and four as it addresses:

- Customer activities in EPL’s spaces
- Customer perceptions of EPL’s spaces
- What customer needs are and are not currently being met

**Spread the words.**

## Methods

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with sixteen participants between January 30 and February 23, 2012 at five branches of EPL: LHL (3), SAM (4), STR (3), WMC (3), and WOO (3). Interview participants were recruited through the Library Spaces Customer Survey, with all survey respondents given the option of volunteering for a research interview (see Appendix A). In total, 155 customers volunteered to participate in interviews. Participants were contacted by one of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Spaces Intern Librarians and an interview appointment was scheduled.

Interns arranged with each branch for a private meeting space to conduct interviews. After meeting the interview participant, the participant was provided with an information letter and consent form (see Appendix B). The participant was then given the list of statements for taking photos (see Appendix C), provided with a digital camera, and then accompanied by the intern as they took photographs in the library. Afterwards, photos were uploaded to a computer for display to the participant. The intern then conducted the semi-structured interview, referring to the photos and using an interview guide (see Appendix D). Interviews were recorded using the AudioMemos app on the iPad. Following the interview, participants were given an EPL bag and water bottle as a thank you gift.

For the analysis process, participants were assigned a pseudonym to maintain their anonymity. Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed by the interns. Transcripts were then analyzed using thematic coding in Microsoft Word.

## Findings

The sixteen interviews ranged anywhere from just under 7 minutes to over 35 minutes, and totaled just over 4 hours and 13 minutes of recording time. Transcripts were coded for the following fifteen themes: space, other people/community, noise levels, collections, virtual space, technology, accessibility, facilities, aesthetics, furniture, children's, programming, safety, staff, and appreciation.

### Space

Comments were coded as being about space when the participant mentioned things like open spaces, increasing space for either a specific area or the library as a whole, and/or specific properties of spaces such as sightlines, nooks, and enclosed spaces like program rooms. Twelve of the participants discussed space in their interviews.

Several of the participants liked open space design in the library. As Katherine noted when discussing the renovations to the entrance area at WOO:

**“So this opened it up and it really [...] makes you feel like you can just wander anywhere. And I like the amount of space in the reception area, that is really important because you don’t feel [...] claustrophobic.”**

Myrna mentioned that her least favourite space was a large display wall at LHL. She disliked it because she felt it blocked all the natural light from the windows:

**“it’s a big wall that’s blocking the natural light comin’ into [...] the middle of the library. [...] And you could see out there if that wall wasn’t there.”**



Figure 1: Myrna - LHL

Participants placed particular emphasis on the importance of clear sightlines that allowed them to see large portions of or the entire library that accompanied open spaces. Sightlines were also appreciated for keeping track of the children of some of our participants or for the possibility of encountering people the participant knew. Open spaces were also valued for the better display of

collections. Additionally, within an open space, Laurence stated his appreciation for the section that he uses frequently, the computers, being in the centre of the library space at LHL.

However, while the participants were appreciative of open spaces there were also participants who expressed interest in enclosed spaces. As William stated about SAM:

**“I love the open design, I wouldn’t want to get rid of that but I’d love if there were more partition[s], [...] quiet reading areas, specifically reserved. Not closed off, you know, you can have glass walls for them. But, I think for socializing that’s what [...] the main open spaces are for.”**

However, William's views on space were particularly interesting as he not only desired enclosed spaces for quiet reading; when asked what he would like to do in the library that he could not currently due to space restrictions, he expressed a desire for a bookable room for small groups so that he and a group of friends could gather to play pen-and-paper role-playing games. As he explained:

**“frequently with my friends it’s hard to find a space. My apartment’s very small [...] most of us live in small apartments. Others have to come from far away. I found that downtown is an excellent place for us to congregate and meet. It would be great if we could have a room that [...] we could get for a few hours on a Saturday.”**

Humphrey from WOO also wanted access to an enclosed space in the library, although in his case it was for his Toastmasters' group. Interestingly, he put a greater emphasis on the increased visibility using the space in the library would provide for his group to the community at large, rather than the group's need for the space. James' discussion of enclosed spaces, was primarily oriented around his wish for the children's area at WMC to be enclosed in order to reduce the noise in the library in general.

The importance of enclosed program room space was emphasized by Audrey and Claudette, who both attend programs with their children. In both cases, however, they also noted that space within the program room could be limited. Claudette particularly desired either an expanded or additional program room at WOO as she felt programs she attended with her daughter were occasionally crowded. In Audrey's case, she mentioned that the biggest problem was the amount of space that strollers take up within the room at WMC. However, Audrey did explicitly mention that she had recently attended a drop-in program that was on the floor which did not work well for her as her son could run further whereas in an enclosed space, he could not get out of the program room.

Greta, in discussing library spaces, valued a sort of medium between open and enclosed spaces and in discussing her favourite space in the library stated:

**“it’s kind of secluded but not totally in a corner.”**

Additionally, when talking about group spaces in the library she mentioned:

**“I tend to gravitate towards coffee shops and [...] semi-public semi-private spaces.”**

These views blend well with Humphrey's, who values having a bit of personal space within the library where he can spread out and engage in the activities for which he comes to the library but does not want an entirely enclosed space. Vivien, likewise, uses the library as a productive space. She really emphasizes the importance of providing spaces suited for different activities in which customers engage, and for her personal use she desires a quiet space. As she describes it:

**“The study visit is very clear cut. There's my finding, kind of going through my list of places, trying to find a place with enough separation or at least people who are working, you know. And settling down, plugging in, finding my Hansard to put my mouse on. And then working away.”**

The concept of organizing the library space in order to suit specific types of library customers is also one that Rosalind articulated. She mentioned several times that collections and services that are used most frequently, like the Hits to Go, should be closer to the entrance for greater convenience. Rosalind described herself as a heavy library user but also noted:

**“I'm here a lot but I don't use the physical space that much, if that makes any sense.”**

Ensuring that this user group has a quick and efficient visit is something that she really emphasized.

When asked what kinds of activities he wanted to engage in but could not because of the way the space was set up, Howard replied that he would like to see a speakers' corner at SAM. He wanted a space where people could come to discuss issues and express their opinions.

### **Other People/Community**

Responses were coded for other people/community if the participant mentioned people they come to the library with, how other people use library spaces, the use of library as a community space, as well as mentions of privacy or crowding. All sixteen of the participants discussed other people/community in their interviews.

Several participants mentioned that the library was good place for them or their children to interact with others. As Claudette noted when discussing the children's area at WOO:

**“I spend time with [daughter] there but now as she’s getting older I’ll just back away and it’s a nice opportunity for her to spend time with other kids. Without me right on top of her.”**

Claudette also stated that the children’s area was a great place for her to meet and interact with other parents. This was also mentioned by other participants, who found the program room, meeting rooms, or the children’s area to be ideal places to interact with others or for their children to interact with other children.

The community feel of library spaces, or of the library as a whole, was mentioned by several participants. For example, Audrey’s description of the program room at WMC:



Figure 2 Yul - LHL

**“it’s a neat little space, it’s at the library, so it feels community. Like a community space.”**

Greta specifically mentioned the “fun community stuff” that happens upstairs at STR, and found the community feel of STR as a whole to be very positive. The idea of the library functioning as a meeting place, to gather with friends, was also discussed by several participants. Howard stated that:

**“I’ll see people I know with whom I can have a quick, either go for a quick coffee or, you know. [...] Yeah, it’s a people place.”**

Katherine also found the gathering of the community that happened at WOO inspiring:

**“It’s a really good community, a place to get people together and interacting [...] The library can really serve as a social hub [...] A place where it’s non-commercial.”**

Specifically, Katherine would like to see the outdoor space at WOO be used for more community activities:

**“Would be good to use it sort of [...] for community orientation - like [...] maybe a craft fair or something, like people could sell crafts. Or fundraisers, something to do that could be outside. [...] But [...] the notion of [...] bringing people in and sort of maybe more community local oriented [...] sort of bring people in and get people to know each other. [...] Using the library as a hub.”**

Laurence also suggested that the library should pursue partnerships with Edmonton art galleries, allowing for the display of more art, and the building of more community relationships.

Additionally, participants touched on the feeling of being crowded in a library space. The DVD sections at both WMC and STR were identified as places where customers felt crowded due to lack of space, high traffic, and use from other customers. Greta felt that the DVD area at STR was:

**“A littler space so you’re kind of in people’s personal space pretty easily.”**

Privacy was mentioned in reference to difficulty finding private group spaces to hold conversations. Alternatively, some spaces were discussed in a positive light because they were places the participant felt provided privacy. Greta, for example, appreciated the basement at STR because it provided a space to work privately.

Several areas and seating arrangements were also identified as good places to have conversations with other people. Bette liked the fireplace area by the holds at STR because:

**“You can sit down and read. And the seats are comfortable. And you can have a couple of people there, I guess there are other chairs that you can pull up if you want to.”**

Howard liked the sitting area on the second floor of MNA as a place to sit and have a conversation, and also because he felt it was good for people watching. Laurence identified the computer pods at LHL as centrally located and a communal space; something he appreciated as it helped to facilitate conversations with people at other computers.

Children in adult spaces were mentioned by some participants as a negative aspect to library spaces. Participants indicated that they were very noisy and often running around. Yul found that at LHL children were often in the quieter areas of the library:



**“You know, the kids are always there. They’re making noise, they’re cluttering the place. Hard to move around.”**

However, in spite of finding the noise and movement created by children frustrating, Laurence stated his belief that everyone was entitled to the space.

**“It’s probably just me being crabby, but [...] parents [...], they’ll bring young kids down there and just let them [...] run and go nuts like it’s a daycare. And, I mean, it’s a public space everybody’s entitled to it.”**

The use of library spaces by a variety of people was also something that Vivien felt very strongly about. She discussed the importance of providing spaces for everyone; specifically emphasizing that the space needs to be available for the homeless population who have nowhere else to go. However, she did also mention the difficulty that the library has maintaining different cultures; people wanting to do different things that might conflict with one another. She felt that the tension this created between populations needed to be alleviated in order to maintain a comfortable space. She stated that:

**“I don’t think it helps with the people who come to hang out if they’re quietly resented. ‘Cause how can they not feel that?’”**

### Noise Levels

The theme of noise levels included any mention of noise or quiet in the library. Nine participants discussed noise levels in their interviews. The mention of noise by participants was usually either linked to noise created by other people, or noise enhanced by the acoustics of the library building. Many participants reported issues with the amount of noise they hear in the library.

Noise created by children was a common complaint. Laurence and Yul specifically mentioned children making noise outside of the children’s area as an issue for them. Humphrey reported that he uses the WOO library for work and felt frustrated by excessive noise while trying to work:

**“I like kids, don’t get me wrong. [...] I don’t like having to put earplugs in just to hear myself think.”**



Some participants reported that they simply preferred quieter spaces in the library to noisier spaces. William reported that he disliked the couches by the computers area at SAM because:

**“People congregate and talk very loudly.”**

Another source of noise mentioned by participants was linked to the acoustics found in library buildings. Three participants from three different branches discussed the negative effects that the acoustics have on their library visit.



Figure 3 James - WMC

Vivien discussed the echo of noise from the foyer to the second floor of SAM as something that disrupted her studies. James disliked that noise from the children’s section echoed throughout WMC. Laurence found the acoustics outside the washroom area at LHL to be problematic:

**“just the combinations of the washrooms being there, the hard stone floor, the curved ceiling. It [...] echoes and [...] you get the noise from the bathroom flushing and the people traipsing back and forth. It’s just sort of bad design [...] The building otherwise is beautifully thought out and that seems to be [...] kind of an afterthought.”**

One participant in particular was frustrated by the inability to find a quiet space to work. In her interview, Vivien stated many times that she has difficulty finding a quiet space to study at SAM that provides her with everything she needs to work:

**“Now, I don’t want to go back to the days where you know if you coughed you had somebody come up behind you and smack you.”**

**[...]There is no one place that I, that has the plug-ins, the assumption of silence, [...] all together in one place”**

Vivien was further frustrated by past occurrences where she was unable to find the quiet space she needed to work:

**“I was told once, during one infamous period, I settled, somebody moved in beside me to have a quiet place to have their cell phone conversation, so I gathered up, I moved to another place [...] And I settled and somebody moved beside me to [...] exchange news about the shelter [...]. And I went up and they [staff] said, ‘Well you know you can just continue doing that.’”**

Some participants suggested some level of enforcement for quiet spaces in the library. Signs were the most common suggestion. There was a feeling that if signs were present, library customers would have greater power in enforcing the quiet, or in asking staff to deal with a louder customer. Laurence stated that at LHL:

**“there is an area for the kids where they can do that and that is the quiet area and should probably be labeled as such.”**

Another idea that participants discussed was their perception of the library as a quiet space. These participant’s experiences with libraries was of quiet spaces where making noise was discouraged. Rita stated that she would not use the library as a meeting place because it is supposed to be quiet and she would not feel comfortable having a conversation. Yul explained his thoughts about noise and library space by saying:

**“I’m an old fashioned guy, my concept of a library is calm and quiet. I even don’t like to see people talking there [...] Pin drop silence.”**

However, there were also participants who felt that noise in the library was a positive thing. Bette mentioned noise at STR, but indicated that she was happy to hear it because it meant that younger people were making use of the library. Katherine stated that she liked that the library was more of a community space as opposed to the quiet space it once was:

**“it’s not the quiet hush hush place that it was, you know. It’s like people are giving tutorials to each other, people are just sitting in all the chairs. Like, well used space.”**

## Collections

Collections was a substantial theme in the interviews with fifteen participants discussing the topic at some point. Participants most frequently mentioned collections when discussing their typical visit to the library, with Greta's description being relatively standard:

**“A normal visit's pretty much dropping off books, picking up new things. So a little bit of browsing, seeing what's new especially. [...] I like going through the return carts and seeing what's come back through. And I usually have holds to pick up as well.”**



Figure 4 Laurence - LHL

While a few participants mentioned browsing other formats like CDs, DVDs, audiobooks, and magazines, the predominant format discussed was books. Howard's statement sums up the perceptions of many of our participants:

**“Books, books, I've always had a love of books.”**

Intriguingly, for two of our participants who were mothers with young children, they had two typical visits, one with their child(ren) and one by themselves. In both cases, the visits were collections oriented, but when they came with their children, they tended to browse more (in the children's area) whereas when they came alone it was just to pick up holds and then leave again.

Participants rarely mentioned the selection of materials, although interestingly two participants did mention that they frequently request materials to be ordered, with Rosalind describing this as a means of “working the system.” However, Laurence's discussion of his views on acquisitions is fascinating:

**“I really admire the acquisitions that are done for the library, they cover such a broad spectrum. And [...] I think that the library really has a place, not so much as being an arbiter of taste, but a guide**

**for people as to [...] what is interesting. [...] Because you are so overwhelmed with information now [...], there's all this superfluous stuff out there, and if a librarian or library can show you something that is critically acclaimed, or acknowledged as being worthwhile, [...] I enjoy that."**

This heavy emphasis on collections in discussions about library space may seem out of place, but the sentiments that Ingrid articulated on this topic potentially reflect the viewpoints of other participants as well:

**"I know that this focuses [...] on the spaces and everything, but for me the library is really primarily about the collection. [...] I kind of feel like that's starting to get undervalued in the libraries, and it's still [...] a main area of concern for me, and I guess I wanted to be able to [...] express that."**

Vivien, in discussing collections, expressed similar ideas. While she primarily reads electronically and rarely borrows books from the library anymore, she still describes herself as saddened to see entirely empty bookshelves in the library.

When discussing inspiring spaces, whether the participant took a photo or not, collections were often mentioned. Bette found the question about inspiring spaces particularly difficult as it was not a term she associated with the library and was unsure what EPL meant by it. However, in discussing the concept, she did state:

**"I think [...] a library's main function is to inspire people to read and to find out more."**

This frequent association of inspiration and reading cropped up several times. James' description of an inspiring space is really about books rather than any physical attributes:

**"it's [...] where I find something that I'm [...] not looking for. [...] But that's interesting anyway. So, I get inspired [...] when I stumble onto something that's [...] not my normal [...]. So far I go, 'Danielle Steele? Forget about that.' Maybe someday I'll read her and then maybe I'll like it, you know? [...] So I guess that's what inspires me [...] mostly is that non-fiction area."**

Rosalind, who as described in the Spaces section frequently comes to the library but does not use the physical space much, expresses similar ideas:

**“for me [the space is] not particularly inspiring, but what got me excited is seeing new books and new things and [...] having the access of, ‘Oh I’d like to see that movie’ or ‘Oh I’d like to see those.’ [...] and then just sometimes browsing downstairs will give me ideas or whatever.”**

When discussing collections, several participants mentioned organization of collections. Two participants described areas where they explicitly stated they found the organization confusing. Rosalind disliked the current way the CDs were organized and stated that it prevented her from browsing as she was unable to find the types of music she found of greatest interest. Claudette discussed disliking the non-fiction area, partially because of the Dewey Decimal system:

**“Kind of the numbering system I guess. I don’t quite understand how it works. [...] but like I said, it’s not like there’s anything really wrong with it. It’s just the lack of time I’ve had to look at that and then just because of my two year old.”**

Interestingly, Audrey mentioned genre as a means of organization for two different formats. When discussing the DVD area, she mentioned that she does not tend to browse much in that section but that if the collection were divided by genres, it would make it easier for her to select what interested her. She also mentioned that in talking about her participation in the interview with her husband prior to meeting with the intern, that he had said he missed the science-fiction and fantasy books having a separate section and that he found it difficult to locate items of interest to him.

Another topic that frequently came up when discussing the organization of collections was the importance of displays to participants. Audrey felt that DVDs should have displays similar to those currently done for books, giving the example of a DVD display related to Black History Month. Ingrid’s favourite space was the display shelving in the window wall of MNJ, and also mentioned she liked the new Hits to Go shelving at SAM. James and Rita both liked the new non-fiction display shelving at WMC for the serendipitous encounters with materials and subjects they would never intentionally go into the stacks to explore.

Almost all of the participants that discussed collections mentioned using holds. Katherine’s discussion of her views on holds is particularly interesting:

**“the books that I want are pulled from the shelves from all over Edmonton and brought to one location where I just come and pick them up. And that is so valuable. [...] I’m able to utilize the librarians’ ability to find the works, or the books, sometimes I can’t find them, and so it saves my time. And [...] then I come and I get them and I leave.”**

Several participants stated that they primarily came to the library to pick up holds and leave again, with a few describing themselves as heavy users of holds. Rosalind noted:

**“I’m one of those people who browse occasionally but generally, [...] I have a very set list of what I want and so it’s all the holds.”**

For further insights into the use of holds as a means of accessing the collections, see the Virtual Spaces section.

Finally, a few participants discussed actually interacting with collections within the library space. Audrey mentioned that occasionally her young son brings her books that she then reads to him in the library. Both Laurence and William mentioned having areas that they preferred to go to in order to evaluate items they had picked up while browsing. William also stated:

**“when I’m not working I come [...] about daily by myself to find books and read and study.”**

In an interesting note, Vivien who primarily reads electronically mentioned that the selection of ebooks on mathematics (an area of interest for her) was slim, and thus described an occasional aspect of her library visits:

**“So I will be spending time dragging math books. Sometimes I borrow, more often I just sit at a table and read them right there.”**

Participants that mentioned reading in the library triangulates with observations from seating sweeps where 9.5% of customers observed were reading.

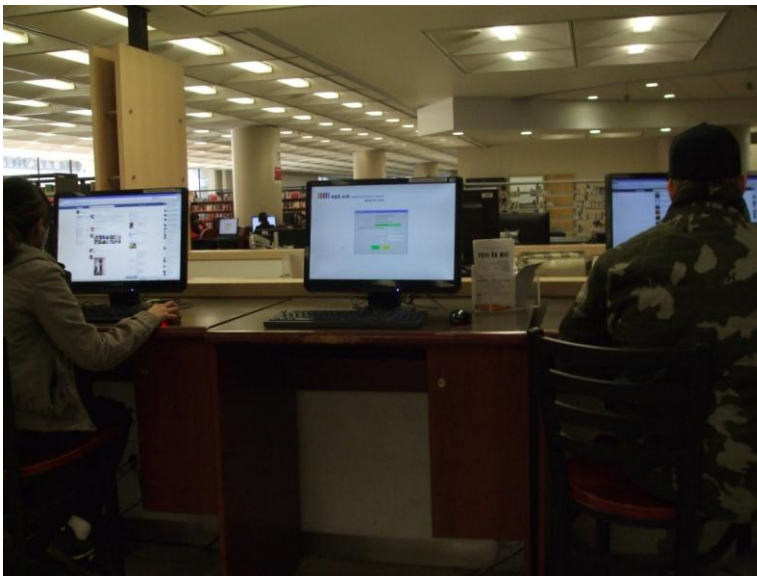
### Virtual Space

As a theme, virtual spaces included references to EPL’s website and the online catalogue. Six participants explicitly talked about virtual spaces in their interviews, however, it should be noted that almost all of the participants mentioned using holds, which implies use of the



online catalogue in-branch at least. All of the participants who mentioned virtual space were very positive about this option. Greta described herself as a heavy online catalogue user and is really appreciative of this option. William also discussed being an active user of online holds and getting email notifications about holds almost daily. Furthermore, Bette talked about being an active user of the online catalogue and stated:

**“the way I mainly use the library these days is to order up books from home on my computer and then come in and pick up my holds.”**



Yul made very similar comments:

**“I do lots of online stuff. You know because most of this stuff is not in the library so I just order it and when I get the notification I’ll come pick it up.”**

Figure 5 Howard - SAM

Laurence, who like the others uses the online catalogue quite frequently, talked explicitly about how the website has changed the way he uses the library and the physical space:

**“I find increasingly [...] the thing that’s had the most profound effect on my borrowing is computer access and the [...] wonderful website. You know, I can browse electronically and sort of pick what I’m looking for and either reserve it or find out where it is. And so therefore, I tend to [...] go in a[nd] get what I want and go again.”**

While most discussion about EPL’s virtual spaces was oriented around collections and placing holds, Audrey in her discussion about her experience with the drop-in program at WMC (see Programming section) mentioned that if there were a notation on the website stating that drop-in programs were held on the floor, it would have been very helpful.



## Technology

Responses were coded for technology if they contained any mention of technologies, such as computers, self check-outs, plug-ins, Wi-Fi, or handheld technology. Fifteen participants discussed technology in their interviews.

Many participants specifically discussed why or why not they choose to use EPL computers. Myrna and Claudette both selected the children's area as their favourite space and highlighted the children's computers as something their children loved to use. Claudette in particular stated that her daughter regularly uses the computers in the WOO children's area:

**“[daughter] loves to come in this area at the front where there's a computer with the games on them for the kids. Although she's still young to follow a game, but she goes on that computer in particular and tells me she's checking her email.”**

Audrey mentioned that her son was currently too young to use the computers in the children's area at WMC, however she was excited about the technology offered and thought it would be useful in the future:

**“he doesn't use the computers much because he's so little. [...] I can tell already that [...] it has lots of good games and stuff.”**

Several other participants talked about their computer use and that it is part of their regular visit to check email, use library resources, listen to music, or to surf the internet. Humphrey particularly mentioned that he would like access to colour printers at WOO, something that was included in the Final Site Inventory as it was mentioned by EPL staff at every branch.

There were also several participants who specifically mentioned that they do not make use of computers at the library. The most common reason given for this was that they preferred to use their own technology. Yul stated that:

**“I have an iPod and all that. I'm mobile.”**

Katherine also stated that she did not use the library computers much because she has access at home. However, she emphasized the important role she believed libraries play in offering technology for public use:

**“a lot of people have said to me [...] that the library must be impacted hard by the internet. But I’m like, ‘No way man, they just hopped on that train and ran with it.’ And probably helped shaped a lot of what is used and how it’s used. Because, free spaces for people to access computers [...] that’s really important. It’s sort of leveling the playing field a little bit, which I think is an important place for libraries.”**

The availability of plug-ins at SAM was an issue Vivien discussed repeatedly in her interview. She emphasized that her need for a quiet study environment that supports her technology needs was currently going unmet:

**“Plug-ins for some reason are a really scarce commodity here. Computers seem to be blooming everywhere, but plug-ins are a scarce commodity.”**

Vivien also discussed her experience using the Grant MacEwan library for study as a model that EPL could explore, as it has a study section with carrels that each have plug-ins. She further highlighted the current issue she has observed at SAM where customers are adapting their use of library space to accommodate the location of current plug-ins:

**“And they’ll be flopping out cause there’s plug-ins near there. You know, and they’ll be trying to work with their... we get quite ingenious, actually. There is a second sub-culture [...] we get really ingenious about where we can plug things in. And you have cords all over the place.”**

Participants also discussed their use of other technology in the library. Items such as the self-checkouts, catalogue stations, TV display screens, photocopiers, and listening stations were mentioned as positive additions to participant’s library visits.



Figure 6 Rosalind - STR

Howard stated that the TV display screens have become part of his regular visit to SAM:

**“that TV when you walk in. I like to quickly read the bottom and then check some of the programs [...] That’s become something I take notice of [...] Yeah, I guess I’m greeted by that. And there’s information which I can, you know. Either use or not use.”**

Audrey mentioned that her son was a big fan of the listening stations near the children’s area at WMC:

**“we do actually spend a fair amount of time ‘cause he wanted to listen to stuff on the headphones.”**

Three participants made suggestions for technology they would like to see in their library spaces. Laurence suggested a digital media wall as a way to combine technology and the display of art or information:

**“the idea of perhaps having a media wall. [...] where you could display works of art, photographs, authors, pictures of people of interest [...] topical interest of the day [...] political figures. Anything that [...] you might find information about in a library could be displayed there for both aesthetic value, for its [...] intellectual curiosity [...] you could have the image and then something about it in a smaller screen and perhaps referencing to a work in the library [...] The idea of [...] sort of passive education [...] as well as art [...] Much like you have a picture on the wall [...] Plus it’s instantly changeable [...] it’s a way of providing diverse content [...] Not so much an electronic billboard but something that can provide [...] information that can provide beauty [...] Sort of a nice blend of art and information and communication.”**

Bette discussed her interest in using an iPad or similar technology instead of a computer; a technology sandbox of sorts. She also mentioned the need for furniture that supported this use of technology, as well as learning support (see Programming section):

**“I’d like to sit down with an iPad and surf the web rather than sitting at a big computer which is clunky and hard. [...] I’d like to**

**borrow an e-reader, [...] because I have a Kobo at home but I [...] gather that they're Sony e-readers and I'd like to test them [...] I'd like to maybe take a course or demonstration on how you download onto e-readers and [...], how you find ebooks particularly because, while I've read all the [...] stuff on the web, it really isn't that simple to do if you haven't done it the first time."**

Audrey was inspired by the theatre space at WMC and was interested in watching movies in this space. However, she also went on to discuss the possibility of creating movies rather than just watching them:

**"I don't even mean to just to watch movies but [...] if people made their own movies or because so many people are making their own movies or even, like I know my son loves to watch videos of himself. So even just little videos like that."**

### Accessibility

Responses were coded for accessibility if participants discussed the physical accessibility of library buildings in terms of location or the accessibility of the inside of library buildings (e.g. accessibility for strollers, items on lower shelves). Seven participants discussed accessibility in their interviews.

Several respondents appreciated the location of the library buildings. William found the downtown location convenient and central for meeting with friends. Greta found STR well located and easy to get to. Katherine really appreciated the location of WOO, and went so far as to mention that the location of the library was a factor in her choice of places to buy a house:

**"it's a good, it's like the whole location of it in relationship to the Westmount family centre and the mall is really good [...] one of the reasons I moved from another place to this one [...] I wanted to be close to the library[...]. Because I use the library a lot [...] So I think I will always structure my life around where the library is in relationship to the house, because it has to be easy [...] You know all those core things. So the library [...] is very important to my life. And so that's why I place it as a very high priority."**

Several participants also discussed accessibility within the library. Rita and Bette had issues with the accessibility of holds shelving. Both participants had trouble finding their holds if they were located on the bottom shelf. Bette stated that:

**“Inevitably my holds are always on the bottom shelf**



Figure 7 Rita - WMC

**[...] and with trifocals that's not an easy place to look for them.”**

In terms of making the holds shelves more accessible Rita suggested that:

**“I think that maybe in this section the bottom two shelves maybe shouldn't be used. It's just too hard to see them.”**

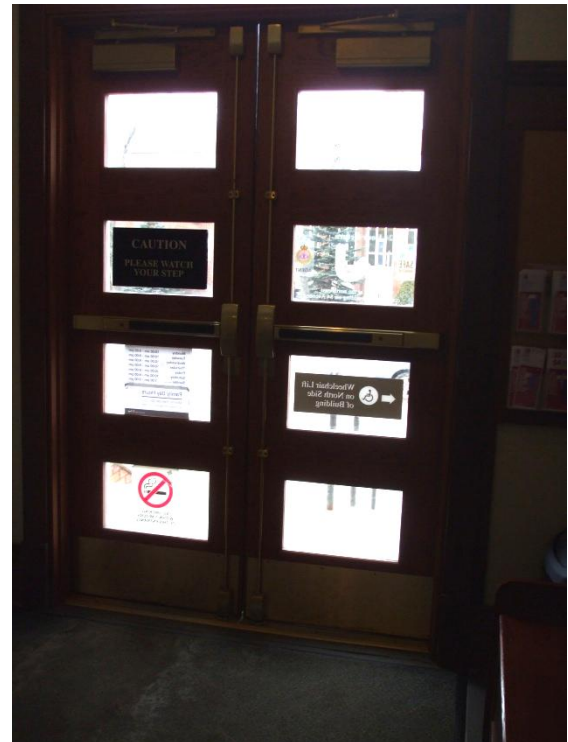
Audrey and Myrna articulated that they had difficulty fitting a stroller through the aisles at their respective branches. Myrna mentions that she faced many obstacles at LHL when she tried to use her stroller:

**“So in the children's section to get between [...] the spaces between the fish tank and the pillars and the fish tank and the display wall. And there's the photocopy machine. I mean, stuff like that you have to look at. And then they have book racks. So the spacing between so you can get a stroller through there. Yeah. They could space it out better.”**

Bette had problems with the accessibility of the front entrance at STR. She found the doors to be too heavy for her to open and often had to rely on other people to get into the library:

**“there’s a step directly in front of them, which is tricky. [...] And, the doors are heavy [...] unless there’s [...] a helpful person there, I sometimes have difficulty negotiating them. Especially if you’re holding a cane in one hand and a bag of books in the other.”**

However, Bette felt that the accessibility of STR had improved greatly with the addition of the elevators. She relayed experiences she had using the stairs before the addition:



### Figure 8 Bette - STR

**“you did have to make the choice of which child you would leave behind as you hauled one up the steps and then you’d have to go down and fetch the other one and hope the other one didn’t try and come down the steps after you. It was [...] one of those *Sophie’s Choices* thing. So I’m glad for people who are disabled but also for mothers with young children, that [...] Strathcona has moved into the modern age.”**

## Facilities

The theme of facilities included references to cafes (or similar spaces), features, hours, outdoor spaces, parking, washrooms, and various other physical features of the building. Thirteen participants discussed facilities during their interviews. The range of elements included in this theme results in a diverse range of comments from the participants. Howard discussed how he highly valued bulletin boards, noting:

**“It’s a source of information. And so is the library.”**

Laurence would have liked if a cafe were included in the space at LHL, as originally appeared in the plans. Bette, Ingrid, Katherine, and Myrna all discussed features in their interviews. Bette appreciates the fireplace at STR, especially during the winter. Ingrid,



Katherine, and Myrna all discussed features in children's spaces. Ingrid, in talking about her children and the fish tank, said:

**“They have [...] their favourite fish in there and they frequently go and watch him.”**

Katherine mentioned her son loved the ship in the children's area at WOO and Myrna discussed her son loving the train at MNJ and wishing there were one like it at LHL. Myrna also mentioned the positive reactions to the Lois Hole statue on the bench near the entrance.

External item returns were mentioned by several participants. Bette and Yul both liked the convenience of the external item returns at their branches. On the other hand, James and Rita both mentioned issues with the external item return at WMC. As James described it:

**“it sucks but it works.”**

Bette and Humphrey both discussed issues surrounding parking at their branches and describe it as limited. In relation to other outdoor spaces, Katherine feels the outdoor space at WOO is underused while Myrna was under the impression that the reading garden at LHL had not been instituted as originally proposed in the designs. In the transition space between outdoors and indoors, Bette also discussed the doors at STR and noted:



Figure 9 Humphrey - WOO

**“The front doors are tricky. [...] the way close, if you're not careful in the winter, they don't close properly. And I have this thing about energy conservation, so they end up with cold, really cold air coming in.”**

See the Accessibility section for more of Bette's comments about the doors at STR.



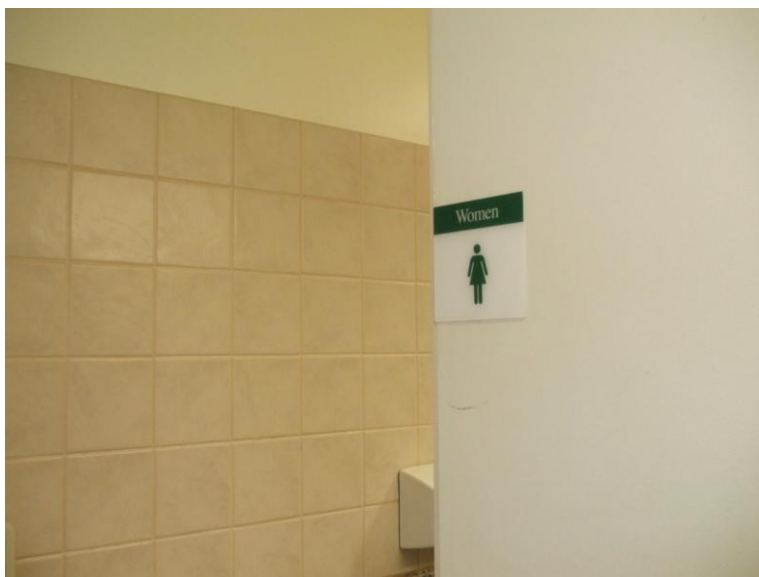


Figure 10 Katherine - WOO

Howard discussed the importance of having access to water fountains in the library, especially given their increasing rarity downtown. Myrna appreciated having access to a washroom in the library, while Humphrey and Katherine both expressed concerns about washrooms. Humphrey wanted paper towels in the washroom rather than air dryers, for greater convenience and

sanitary concerns. Katherine's issues with the washroom were more complex. As she describes it:

**"I find that the washroom is creepy. But I don't know what it is. I think it's the narrow spaces [...] not as open. [...] the needle dispenser freaks me out too. I don't like that it, it [is] just a real visceral discomfort. [...] I would like maybe go to something like what some of the malls are, [...] they're making it a little bit more [...] definitely prettier, aesthetically pleasing, and kind of like higher end."**

Vivien appreciated the hours of the library, in contrast with those provided by some of the university libraries. Greta and Rosalind both expressed liking the building in general, with Greta saying:

**"I mean just walking past [this building], it always makes me smile."**

### Aesthetics

The theme of aesthetics included references to colour, lighting (often in association with windows), artwork, posters, and general visual appeal. Ten of the participants discussed topics related to aesthetics in their interviews. A few of the participants mentioned a general satisfaction with the aesthetics of the library building or library space. Audrey, in discussing the DVD area at WMC, and Katherine, in discussing the holds area at WOO,

describe these spaces as functional but not really aesthetically pleasing and both women think the spaces could be improved. Other participants discuss appreciating the natural light and outside views through windows. Greta, in particular, emphasized the importance of natural light throughout her interview. In talking about her favourite space, which she does not use personally but likes the aesthetics of, she stated:

Figure 11 Greta - STR



**“it’s kind of serene, [...] it’s comfortable, there’s light.”**

Several participants mentioned colour in their interview, either appreciating the colours currently being used or requesting more colour in the library space. In particular, colour was a topic that recurred frequently in Ingrid’s interview. Her favourite space in the library is the window wall in MNJ, which she appreciates for the colour, light, and collections available. Similarly, colour is also a factor she discusses about her least favourite space:

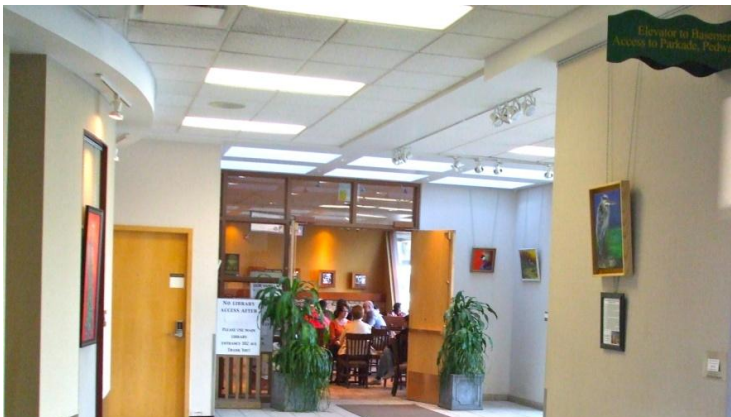
**“I don’t know if they pick those colours because they don’t show dirt but at [...] the same time they end up just looking permanently dirty. Like, that’s kind of the impression I get when I walk in is like of permanent dirtiness.”**

She expresses similar sentiments later in her interview, when making her own suggestions about the library space:

**“if they could find some way to combat like the kind of general feeling of dinginess.”**

A few of the participants mentioned artwork in their interviews and both Laurence and William mentioned the gallery at SAM, which William described as “intermittently inspiring.” Laurence’s views on art in the library are particularly fascinating:

Figure 12 William - SAM



**“I was saying I liked the idea of [...] art and photography being displayed in the library. I think a library and a gallery for me kind of have something in common. And I think it’s a very good venue to**

**display public art. And also, perhaps it will expose people to art that would never go to a gallery otherwise. So you know, you may arouse interest that way. I think it’s also very important to [...] inspire our young people so they can [...] go on [...] and produce their own great stuff. Whether it’s, you know, art or literature, or whatever.”**

It is interesting to note that while the participants have an overwhelmingly strong emphasis on collections and, in several cases, spend very little time in the library, the aesthetic appeal of the library is still an important factor in their perception of the spaces and the institution.

### **Furniture**

Comments were coded for furniture if they included mention of current furniture at EPL, including staff desks, as well as furniture participants would like to see. Eleven participants discussed furniture in their interviews.

Many participants mentioned furniture at EPL that they really like. Items such as child-sized furniture, soft furniture, large tables, and work carrels were mentioned. Many participants mentioned soft furniture as a favourite place to sit, especially if it was located next to natural light or a fireplace. However, one participant did mention her concern about bedbugs present in soft furniture. William noted that the soft seating at SAM was one of his favourite places to read:

**“I do like the chairs, those are [...] the most comfortable couches in the library and I like to go and read there.”**

Humphrey emphasized that work carrels were always his first choice when he needed to get work done:

**“Yeah, if I really need to get it done, that’s where I wanna head. When they’re all occupied then [...] I will go to a table. But it’s preferable to have one of those [work carrel].”**

Conversely, Audrey found the carrels at WMC to be claustrophobic and not furniture she would like to use. Katherine also mentioned that the new smaller staff desk at WOO makes her feel comfortable:

**“I mean it really has. [...] I just noticed [I] gain more visceral feeling. You come and you feel really [...] comfortable.”**

Rita really appreciated the stand up catalogue stations at WMC as they were at eye level and provided her with space to put her things and to write.

Several participants made suggestions for furniture they would like to see. Greta wanted more workspace seating by the basement windows at STR. Myrna really liked the child-sized furniture at LHL but thought more was needed:

**“I like the miniature kids’ furniture, but they only have, like, one table and if kids are sitting there, that’s it [...] My son likes to sit there but a lot of times he can’t get a seat.”**

Vivien discussed the need for furniture that accommodates her study and technology needs. Specifically, she mentioned a dislike for the black wooden chairs at SAM:

**“Those chairs are garbage [...] they’re low. ‘Can I get a booster seat please mommy?’ [...] I like those leather chairs [...] they don’t make my backside fall asleep.”**

Figure 13 Viven - SAM



She also discussed a need for work tables at SAM that do not have shiny surfaces as they prevented her optical mouse from working:

**“See that table there. See how it shines? See those white books back there? My ritual is to come in, grab a white book, put it on the table ‘cause that’s the only way my optical mouse will work [...] But I tell you, the Hansards make wonderful mouse pads.”**

### Children’s



Figure 14 Audrey - WMC

collections and other aspects of the space such as computers, toys, features, and socialization with other children. For example, in discussing the children’s space at WMC, Audrey made the following comment about her son:

**“he really likes the house when he comes and there’s [...] a frog in there with a puppet thing that he really, really likes. He always brings it over to me even though it weighs half as much as him.”**

Interestingly given the heavy emphasis on collections for all of our participants, very few of the mothers mentioned their children interacting with the print collections. This could be because for several of the women, their children were quite young. However, Ingrid mentioned that she was the primary browser for books for her children whether they came to the library with her or not. As she noted:



**“If I have my kids with me then it would involve a lot more browsing in the children’s section, ‘cause I’ll spend more time browsing while they just play with stuff.”**

While it is possible to speculate as to why these women do not discuss their children interacting with collections for the most part, it serves to emphasize the need for consultation with children and teens on their library spaces.

The remaining three participants that discussed children’s areas were all non-users of these spaces. As mentioned in the Noise Levels



Figure 15 Ingrid - SAM

section, James dislikes the children’s area for the noise associated with it. However, in discussing the subject he described himself as being “cranky” on this topic and recognized the reality of children’s spaces being louder. Interestingly, Vivien selected the exterior of MNJ as one of her favourite spaces, because while she was sure that there was a great deal of noise in the space, it did not carry into the rest of the library. Rosalind discussed children’s spaces twice in her interview, once discussing the better functionality of having the children’s space near the back of STR as it prevents children from dashing out the door. She also discussed how much she appreciated that young adult fiction was in an area separate from the children’s space as it made the fact that she was going into the separate teen space “no big” as she described it.

### Programming

In the course of their interviews, ten participants discussed programming. Audrey and Claudette both attend programs with their children which they are very positive about, with minor exceptions. Audrey finds programs out on the floor difficult as she spends more time chasing her son than actually attending the program and Claudette has encountered issues getting into programs due to the demand. Nevertheless, Claudette was very positive about programs:

Figure 16 Claudette - WOO



**“they run such a variety of programs here [...] not only for kids but for adults. And [...] up until a couple of years ago I didn’t realize how much the library did actually offer. And at no cost. I mean that’s just a huge bonus for us right now [...] so it’s tremendous.”**

Katherine was very positive about the Lego program that her son attends at the library and Myrna spoke positively about musicians playing in the library at LHL.

Bette and Yul both discussed programs that they would like to attend at the library. Bette was interested in a more instructional session on how to download materials onto an ereader as she finds the process difficult for a first timer (see Technology section). Yul spoke positively of talks and seminars that happen at SAM and wished they could happen at LHL although he feels that the space does not currently support such events.

A few participants do not currently attend programs but are appreciative that they are available for other library users. Greta, who has an irregular schedule because of her profession, expressed a wish that she could attend some programs but is not currently able to because of her hours. Ingrid, in talking about the display cases outside of the A/V section at SAM as her inspiring space also mentioned programming in association with them:

**“I like when they sometimes tie them in to [...] events that are happening or courses that you can take. ‘Cause I always think that if I could find more free time then sometimes I might jump on one of those.”**

### Safety

Comments were coded for safety if they included mention of feeling safe or unsafe, isolated, or talked about security. Three participants discussed safety in their interviews, with two of those participants discussing it at length.



Katherine's least favourite space was the washroom at WOO and she cited feeling unsafe as a major factor due to the small space and variety of people she could encounter:

**“For some reason I don’t get that sense of safety [...] with the variety of people who access it people’s comfort levels might be reduced [...] they might not feel as comfortable going into a space where there’s maybe more of a gambit of unpredictable people [...] I often have a feeling of trepidation of going into the washroom.”**

Vivien discussed experiences at SAM that had made her feel unsafe. In the past she had witnessed arrests in the foyer that had made her feel “uneasy.” However, she also indicated that she feels the situation has improved with the addition of peace officers:

**“just the presence of people with uniforms. Like they still have a job to do, I still see an arrest every two or three weeks, you know, somebody being tackled on the ground. [...] it’s not like the book mobiles I used to go to. But it’s not a big thing.”**

Despite her misgivings about safety in the washrooms, Katherine also discussed how staff influence the feeling of safety. She states that they were a reason she felt comfortable allowing her son to take his first trip to the library by himself:

**“I sent him for the first time by himself to the library. He’s nine, so I thought, ok, going to the library. [...] if any problems arose, he would have a friendly adult to go to. I know he would feel comfortable approaching any adult here. So yeah, I do feel that there was a safety factor and a comfort level, and a good place to start.”**

## Staff

Comments were coded for staff if the participant discussed EPL staff members. Nine participants mentioned staff in their interviews.

Comments about staff were overwhelmingly positive. Participants discussed staff friendliness, knowledge, and willingness to help as something they greatly appreciated during their visit.

Several participants indicated that chatting with staff is part of their regular visit that they really enjoy. Claudette discussed the positive effect staff members have on her visit:

**“A lot of them I’ve come to know on a first name basis, which is lovely. You know, and I feel very, very welcome here [...] A lot of them have seen [daughter] go from a little baby to a toddler, right. So there’s a real personal connection.”**

Katherine talked about staff as something positive the library has to offer:

**“Relationships are developed with staff [...] We’ve developed a relationship with Rod, one of the staff. So we chat every time we come and we touch base and stuff. [...] so there’s a bit of a social aspect.”**

Staff knowledge and friendliness was another aspect that participants appreciated. Several participants mentioned their appreciation of staff picks and stated that they would like to see more of these. Claudette stated that:

**“I know that if I have any questions or anything about the library - I’ve never had a question not answered [...] I really appreciate the friendly staff and the knowledge and their willingness to help us with whatever we seem to need.”**

### Appreciation

Comments were coded for appreciation if participants discussed how much they valued EPL. Eight participants made comments that were coded for this theme.

Seven participants commented on how much they enjoy and appreciate the library:

**“mostly I want to say, ‘Yay for this library!’ It’s just, it’s a happy space. And compared to other branch libraries that I’ve been to in town and in other cities, this is one of the nicest ones.” – Greta**

**“I love the library. You probably hear that a lot.” – Ingrid**

**“I mean I really, I love the library.” – Katherine**

**“I’ve always enjoyed the library so much and [...] I would like to see it thrive.” – Laurence**

**“I like this library, it’s beautiful. Beautiful.” – Myrna**

**“I’ve lived in like five different Canadian cities and EPL has one of the best libraries in the country.” – Rosalind**

**“To have that much knowledge available here for us, to enjoy it. So I just cannot describe it to you.” – Yul**

One participant noted that he thought it was good that EPL was doing the spaces research projects. He thought that customer feedback was very important and stated that he would like more opportunities to give feedback. Most participants also showed interest in the details of the spaces study and inquired where they might find the results.

### Limitations

The data collected through qualitative interviews does have some limitations. First, while data saturation for qualitative interviews is generally accepted to occur with approximately twelve interviews (Most 95) and the project included sixteen interviews, that only allows for data saturation for EPL as a whole and not for each of the selected branches. Second, due to various constraints, interviews were only conducted at five branches of EPL which meant issues specific to other branches were excluded from the findings. Third, findings are specific to EPL and are not generalizable to other library systems.

### Acknowledgements

A huge thanks to all our wonderful interview participants who were so generous in volunteering their time and opinions to help us. Thanks to Soleil Surette who provided helpful insights during the planning phase and in conceptualizing the analysis process. Thanks also to the managers and staff at LHL, SAM, STR, WMC, and WOO for providing us with space to conduct the interviews and being so enthusiastic about the project.

### References

Foster, Nancy Fried and Susan Gibbons. ed. *Studying Students: The Undergraduate Research Project at the University of Rochester*. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2007.

Hobbs, Kendall and Diane Klare. “User Driven Design: Using Ethnographic Techniques to Plan Student Study Space.” *Technical Services Quarterly* 27.4 (2010): 347-363.

King, Nigel and Christine Horrocks. *Interviews in Qualitative Research*. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2010.

May, Francine and Fiona Black. "The Life of the Space: Evidence from Nova Scotia Public Libraries." *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* 5.2 (2010) 5-34.

Most, Linda R. "The Rural Public Library as Place in North Florida: A Case Study." Diss. The Florida State University College of Communication and Information, 2009.

Stanczak, Gregory C. *Visual Research Methods: Image, Society, and Representation*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2007.

Warren, Carol A.B. and Tracy Xavia Karner. *Discovering Qualitative Methods: Field Research, Interviews, and Analysis*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Online and Print Interview Recruitment Forms

#### EPL Library Spaces Survey

[Exit this survey](#)

Please complete the following form and we will contact you to set up an interview as soon as possible. Personal information is collected under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Section 33c and will be used to administer the EPL library spaces interview.

First name:

Last name:

Phone number:

Preferred branch location for interview:

Preferred time for interview (morning, afternoon or evening):

[Prev](#)
[Done](#)

## INTERVIEW RECRUITMENT

Would you be willing to participate in a 30-45 minute interview to further discuss your views on EPL's library spaces? Please complete the following form and we will contact you to set up an appointment as soon as possible.

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred branch location for interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred time for interview (please circle one):

Morning    Afternoon    Evening

Personal information is collected under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Section 33c and will be used to administer the EPL library spaces interview.

EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  **epl.ca**

## Appendix B: Information Letter and Consent Form

As a participant in this study you will take photographs and then participate in an interview. We will ask you for your opinions about and experiences with EPL's spaces and how you would like to use those spaces in the future. The interview will last 30-45 minutes and will be audio recorded. The information we gather in this study may be used for EPL reports, conference presentations, and journal publications.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You can choose not to answer any questions during the interview. You are also free to stop the interview at any time.

Any photographs you take for the interview will become the property of EPL. A transcript will be made from the audio recording of the interview and a pseudonym will be assigned to you. Both the transcript and the recording will be securely stored and will only be accessed by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Spaces Interns and the Manager, Assessment and Research. Transcripts and recordings will be kept indefinitely. All information that you disclose during the interview will be kept confidential and we will not reveal your identity. Personal information is collected under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Section 33c and will only be used to administer the EPL library spaces interview.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to take part in an interview that will explore my opinions and experiences with EPL's spaces and how I would like to use those spaces in the future.

I agree to participate in this interview under the following conditions:

1. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that my identity will not be revealed.
2. I have the right to stop the interview at any time for any reason.
3. The information gathered from this interview will be used only for EPL reports, conference presentations, and journal publications.

I agree to these conditions:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Should you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact us.

Valerie MacDonald, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library  
Spaces Intern Librarian  
Edmonton Public Library  
[vmacdonald@epl.ca](mailto:vmacdonald@epl.ca)  
(780) 442-0241

Beth Wortman, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library  
Spaces Intern Librarian  
Edmonton Public Library  
[bwortman@epl.ca](mailto:bwortman@epl.ca)  
(780) 495-9876

## Appendix C: Photo Statements

Please take photos of the following (in order):

1. Your favourite place in the library.
2. Your least favourite place in the library.
3. A place in the library in which you like or would like to spend time with others.
4. Somewhere/something in the library you find inspiring.

## Appendix D: Interview Guide

*Display first photo to participant.*

Let's talk about (can you tell me about) why this is your favourite place in the library.

*Potential topics to touch on or bring up based on the photo/discussion: furniture, people typically found in that area, lighting, noise level, activities participant typically does there*

*Display second photo to participant.*

Now let's talk about (can you tell me about) why this is your least favourite place in the library.

*Potential topics to touch on or bring up based on the photo/discussion: furniture, lines of visibility, people typically found in that area, lighting, noise level, perceived level of safety, navigation issues*

*Display third photo to participant.*

Is this a space you currently like to spend time in with a group or one where you would spend time with a group if the need arose? Tell me about why you do/ you would choose this place for doing things in a group.

*Potential topics to bring up based on the photo/discussion: furniture, access to technology, noise level, activities group typically engages in*

*Display fourth photo to participant.*

Tell me about why you find this space inspiring.

*(If participant did not take photo)*

Tell me about the kinds of spaces that you find inspiring.



*If necessary, refer to dictionary definition as prompt to discussing inspiring spaces. May also want to give specific building examples of spaces that may be considered inspiring (See second page).*

Let's talk a little bit about the things you typically do in the library (*refer to list from survey if necessary*). Are there things you'd like to do in the library that you can't do right now? What could the library do to make the space more accommodating for those activities?

Is there anything else you'd like to share about EPL's library spaces?

Thank you!