

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

The first words spoken at the initial Focus Group discussion, when responding to facilitator's initial question, What are the strengths of the Venice Public Library? was, to quote:

*Great staff. They provide attention to human details. They are knowledgeable and professional.*

The second strength stated was the location, the accessibility, walkability, and bicycling.

Both of these strengths were consistently mentioned throughout the four days, covering 13 separate discussions.

The Venice Library was, and will again be, a "social hub" of the community. It should be technologically sound AND have an ample supply of books (print-on-paper) for all ages.

Other comments related to a new library for Venice that were often mentioned include:

### Meeting Space

- State of the art meeting room holding 120 people, near front or separate entrance, with full technology capabilities;
- Conference rooms;
- Large children's area with room for programs;
- Hearing loop in the large Meeting Room;
- Area to view movies or small performance (permanent stage area – with a grand piano), with a catering (although frequency is little) perhaps a small kitchen area – a multi-purpose room; and
- Tutoring rooms.

### Organization of Space

- Interior spaces separated by age groups but not necessarily by walls;
- Numerous small tutoring spaces with visual privacy;
- Accessible shelving, not so high top one or two shelves hard to reach;
- Provide no shelves higher than 72 inches. The bottom two shelves should be angled. Provide 48" clearaisles;
- Display space for local artists;
- Quiet reading room, no electronics;
- Genealogy section popular, but it could be larger;
- Drive through book drop and check out;
- Dedicated Teen area, with possibility of a "Junior" Friends Council for teen members;
- Children's reading area with window seats;
- Increased clearance between aisles and book stacks;

- Prefer the circulation desk and reference desks to be separate;
- The Bookstore should be larger than the existing bookstore;
- Teaching opportunity to quiet the children and teach them control – safer at the back of the building;
- Provide space for YouTube and snap chat for teens to share their experience;
- Collaborative space;
- Check-out desk in Youth Area; and
- Teen and children’s area separated, but not too far from each other.

### Technology

- Computer area that is glare proof and centered (meaning together, not scattered throughout the building);
- More catalog stations (online catalog);
- Provide WiFi, good computer access, and the ability to print;
- Charging stations for patrons who bring their own devices into the library – laptops, iPads, iPhones, etc.; and
- Computer lab with laptops and more classes for patrons.

### Outside Space

- Outside space, i.e. a reading garden, reading porch;
- Covered and ample bicycle parking area;
- Space for demonstrations, i.e. freedom of speech;
- Outdoor movie wall/screen;
- Provide Florida-friendly landscaping;
- Perhaps an outside, screened area with fans
- Ample parking; and
- Golf cart parking.

### Staff Space

- Staff Room conveniently located near a back entrance; and
- Administration semi-closed, but open and accessible.

### Other

- Wayfinding in layman’s terms;
- Map in the front with a pictogram to help those identify where to go – perhaps a “yellow brick road’ leading to the children’s center;
- Consider labels in English and Spanish;
- Restrooms including special for children and family assist;
- Restroom(s) in the youth department – and hi-low water fountain;
- Daylighting;
- Maker space (Lego building, 3D printing) – cooking – water/electric, venting – suggested a space for a cooking class;

- Starbucks incorporated into the library;
- As few permanent walls as possible;
- Bathrooms not right by circulation desk;
- Workout room – small, like Selby;
- Provide adequately sized space for the Friends of the Library;
- Provide automatic doors into the Friends Bookstore area;
- Adaptable space where walls can be moved;
- Boutique style cafe where you can have a cup of coffee and a snack;
- Sheltered bus stop;
- Shaded parking, possibly with solar panels;
- Youth dept. needs better and more easily accessible storage;
- An aquarium (partner with Mote) “I don’t see how we can do without it;”
- A Maker Space meets the needs for many people; and
- Provide greeters at front of Library.

### “I Want My Library to ...”

During the discussions the facilitator asked each participant to complete a survey that consisted of 17 services that are provided by public libraries to varying degrees. The list, compiled by a committee of librarians convened by the Public Library Association, was designed to gather public and staff opinion regarding which of the 17 services the local library should focus on. See pages 4 and 5 for a description of the 17 services.

Each participant was asked to rank their top five services that they believed the Venice Library should focus on via a 5-point scale -- #1 with a 1, #2 with a 2, etc. They were also asked to indicate two of the 17 services that they believed were not needed at all with a X.

The facilitator then developed a “score” sheet for each group, giving all #1s five points and #5s one point, etc. The Xs were tallied but no points were subtracted.

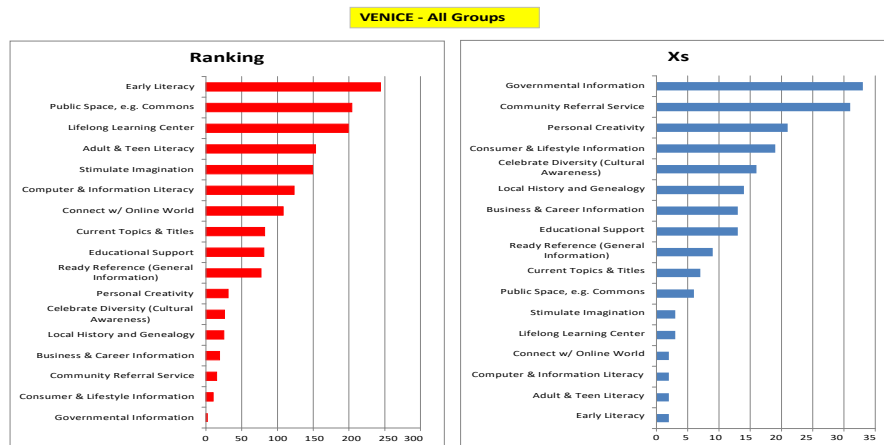
For Venice the top five services and the top two Xs were as follows:

1. Early Childhood Literacy -	244	Governmental Information -	33
2. Public Space, e.g. Commons -	204	Community Referral Services -	31
3. Lifelong Learning Center -	199	Personal Creativity -	21
4. Adult & Teen Literacy -	153		
5. Stimulate Imagination -	149		

In addition to the “scores” for all 13 groups there were “scorecards” developed for the nine groups that were various public segments, e.g. Parents, Literacy Volunteers, Business and Chamber, etc. And, the four groups that represented the Library were also scored as a one group.

For Venice the top five services and the top three Xs were as follows:

1. Early Childhood Literacy -	244	Governmental Information -	33
2. Public Space, e.g. Commons -	204	Community Referral Services -	31
3. Lifelong Learning Center -	199	Personal Creativity -	21
4. Adult & Teen Literacy -	153		
5. Stimulate Imagination -	149		



For the nine public discussion groups the top five services and the top three Xs were as follows:

1. Early Childhood Literacy -	182	Governmental Information -	19
2. Public Space, e.g. Commons -	135	Consumer & Lifestyle Information -	17
3. Lifelong Learning Center -	124	Community Referral Services -	15
4. Adult & Teen Literacy -	117		
5. Stimulate Imagination -	96		

For the four library related groups:

1. Lifelong Learning Center -	75	Community Referral Services -	16
2. Public Space, e.g. Commons -	69	Governmental Information -	14
3. Early Literacy -	62	Personal Creativity -	10
4. Stimulate Imagination -	53		
5. Computer & Information Literacy -	52		

The scores for each individual groups are found in the Appendix (see attached PDF).

### I Want My Library to...

Here are the 17 service responses the Focus Group Discussion participants rank. The general order follows.

...offer services that support and improve **adult and teen literacy**.

...provide **business and career information**, including services related to job-seeking, personal finances, and entrepreneurship.

...serve as an inviting **public space** to help people meet and interact with others in the community.

...provide technology and space to help residents **connect with the online world**.

...create young readers by offering programs and resources aimed at **early childhood literacy**.

...act as a **community referral service** by matching patrons who require services with local agencies and organizations

... help residents express their **personal creativity** by providing the print, viewing, and listening resources required to generate and share creative content.

...provide **consumer and lifestyle information** to help residents make informed consumer and health decisions.

...**celebrate diversity** by providing programs and resources that explore a variety of cultures.

...focus on **current topics and titles** that reflect popular culture and social trends, including library programs that provide a satisfying **recreational experience**.

...offer **educational support** to students who are enrolled in a formal program of education or who are pursuing their education through a program of home-schooling.

...provide **ready reference** answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school, and personal life.

...help people participate in the democratic process by offering **governmental information** about local, state, and federal governmental agencies.

... offer **computer and information literacy** services that build skills related to finding, evaluating, and using information and technology effectively.

...serve as a **lifelong learning center**, addressing the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

...offer **local history and genealogy** services that help patrons explore their personal or community heritage.

...provide a wide variety of print, digital, and media-based materials that **stimulate imagination** and enhance leisure time.