Rooms that Rock

Practical Tips for Library Space Planning
What percentage of the public thinks libraries are all about books?
(according to the 2010 OCLC Library Perceptions report)

- 50%
- 62%
- 75%
- 87%
Libraries are *mostly* about:

- Books & study
- Community events & making things
Library = book repository
A Bookless Library!
“People may go to the library looking mainly for information, but they find each other there.”

—Robert Putnam, Better Together: Restoring the American Community
IdeaBox at Oak Park Public Library

Photos from Oak Park Public Library on Flickr
“The learning and the satisfaction that takes place when you do it yourself is the whole point.”

—Jim Semmelroth
Makerspace: Westport Library

“Our whole library is a MakeSpace, but the 20' X 16' space in the middle of the library serves to SHOUT ‘Libraries are also about creating—not just consuming!’”

—Bill Derry
Building capacity for community engagement

“Explore the evolution of physical space and services in the library to create opportunities that connect people with the community.”

Pilot libraries:

- Bellingham Public Library (pop 82,000)
- Everson branch, Whatcom County Library System (pop 3,000)
SkillShare
Bellingham Public Library

READ LEARN MEET DISCOVER
Before SkillShare

“Are we really talking about DIY—it’s starting to feel like ‘do it together.’
Now what does that look like?”

—Beth Farley
Let the programs begin!

Tech coaching
Creative crafting
Qigong class
Nooksack Valley Heritage Center
Everson Branch
Whatcom County Library System
Before the Heritage Center
Patrons using the new NVHC
Explore your frontiers of space
Image credits (not otherwise credited)

- BiblioTech in Bexar County TX
  http://hutchandstuff.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/bookless-library-step.jpg
- IdeaBox: photos from Oak Park Library on Flickr
  http://www.flickr.com/photos/oppl/collections/72157630548314758/
- I Street Press photos from Sacramento Public Library
- FFL Fab Lab by Fayetteville Free Library
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/fayfreelibrary/9711111038
- Westport Library makerspace from Library Journal
- BPL photos by Beth Farley
- Everson photos by Eileen Shaw
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Changes that Invite the Community In
Color, Light, and Signage
First impressions

Corrales Public Library,
Albuquerque NM
First impressions

Acocks Green Library, Birmingham UK
Bold Color

Newcastle branch of KCLS (WA)
Natural Light

Low shelving and a variety of seating options

Sechelt Public Library, Sechelt BC
Natural Light, but...
Artificial Light

Lighting at Arabian Library

Lighting at Phoenix PL by Ellen forsythe on Flickr

Newcastle branch of KCLS
Artificial Light

Santa Fe Public Library, Santa Fe NM
Signage: why do kids and teens have all the sign fun?
Signage for grownups

Un-library like signage by The Shifted Librarian on flickr
Declutter and Diet
Too many choices
Too many choices?
5 items per square foot
Before ...
and after transformation
Flexible Use
Flexibility: removing barriers

Get rid of “Fort Circulation”

...and other immovable objects
Flexibility: multi-use space

The caster is your friend
Flexibility: wheels on everything
Flexibility: makerwagon
Flexibility: oh the noise and chaos
Technology is all about power

Data and electrical connections everywhere
What’s wrong with this picture?
Better?
But I don’t have the skills...

Your community is your resource
But I don’t have the money...
What do you need to let go of?

- “Fort Circulation” is necessary
- Activity and noise will disturb our patrons
- Projects get too messy and dirty
- Community events should be separate from the main library space
- The collection shall not be diminished
- No room to do anything new
- No money for innovation