

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD

Tuesday, September 24, 2002

1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT FORT WORTH?

Family-oriented city

People are friendly

Easy to get around – the traffic is manageable

Best-kept secret in the area

Very culturally oriented. Strong cultural base.

Strong heritage system; our backgrounds are important

Incredible base of generous people – truly remarkable.

- Strong volunteer base
- People generous with time and money

Lots of resources--shopping, medical, entertainment, etc. We're just the best place in Texas.

Manageable traffic

The city is growing

- We have to continue to grow, we can't stagnate.
- The expanded tax base which helps fund city services better.

2. WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT FORT WORTH?

The city is growing

- Growth expands the tax base, also expands pollution, traffic jams, infrastructure.

Crime.

Power cliques retain too much control

- Too exclusive
- No way for new people to participate
- We have less of a problem w/that than some other cities, but still a problem.

Some parts of Fort Worth don't get the Fort Worth paper; they get a different edition with no Fort Worth government news

We are segmented as a community

3. WHAT NEW OR EXPANDED CITY SERVICES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

Some areas that are underserved by the public library

- There are neighborhoods that need branch/areas that need regionals

Increased code enforcement

Mass transportation--light rail, etc.

Parking in cultural district, downtown

- This is a huge problem and it going to get worse
- There has already been a major drop in available parking with the building of the new Radio Shack HQ and the closing their parking lot.
- Lack of parking is having a negative effect on downtown library and other downtown services

Need to activate plans in place to develop neighborhoods/urban environments

- Mixed use development housing
- Mom-pop businesses

Retain and maintain parks and build more

Provide multi-service delivery sites for a variety of city services (a library in a park or code enforcement and police facility out of one location)

Plan ahead to improve the infrastructure

4. WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR INFORMATION?

Friendly public library

Internet (3)

Newspapers

Media/TV

News magazines

5. HOW DOES THE LIBRARY FIT INTO THE CITY AND THE SERVICES IT OFFERS?

Adult education: GED, ESL.

- Know that other agencies offer these services but they are hard to access
- Library has had a unique role over the years: library is a place that people feel comfortable going--no threat, no religious requirement--just walk in the door.
- The library role in adult education is changing; more partnerships

Support for students with the their assignments

- Moving to more online support

Lifelong learning

Information services

Video library, entertainment, read for recreation, books on tape.

Community meeting site

6. DO YOU USE THE LIBRARY, IF SO HOW?

Check out books to read--mostly fiction and NF, recreational reading

Reference services

Recreational reading; includes biographies

Call the reference desk for ready reference

Audio books because I drive a lot

Check out all of my videos

I read a lot; I am working on a book list of classics with family so we're getting them from the library

7. WHAT DOES THE LIBRARY DO WELL NOW? WHAT ARE THE LIBRARY'S STRENGTHS?

Library has one of the finest genealogy collections in the country

Staff

- Very helpful
- Very qualified

Access to disability support services

Inter/intra library loan

The Friends and the Foundation are strengths; we've been able to do some monumental things thanks to them

Library facilities are user-friendly and welcoming

- Not cold
- Also safe

Collection is huge

- Interlibrary and intralibrary loan help

Branch staff are active in and support the neighborhoods they serve

Strong partnerships with schools

Computers are used heavily

Computer classes are well-attended

8. WHAT ARE THE AREAS IN WHICH THE LIBRARY COULD IMPROVE?

Branches need to be open on Sundays and later on evenings

- If we say we need Sunday hours, we have to say we need staff
- Most of our families have two working parents

Collection is huge but there's a lot of deadwood that needs weeding out and updating

- Some facilities have some major structural needs
- Aging set of branches
- Some of them are incredibly heavily used and are tiny.

Parking, particularly for the central library

There is an ongoing battle for funding from both the city and the state

More classes in general at branches.

- Genealogy classes at branches

There are too many restrictions on the circulation of media

- Loan period too short
- Restriction on number of AV items that can be checked out at one time

9. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO TELL US?

Library has strong children's service

- Story readings, tellings
- Children's services could grow even more
- Growth will be affected by staff available to do them and to some extent by funding.
- If we had budget for visiting authors that would be really cool; we've been able to do that because of help from the Foundation.

Lots of neighbors who have lost jobs recently

- Library is a resource for job finding and resume preparation
- We have let people know that
- Statistics show that where you have employment problems, you have increased library usage.

The library rents library space but the prices are way too high

- Community wants places to meet for cheap or free.

Who did the yard signs for the community meetings?

- Did we get much feedback?
- It had a phone number, but they didn't say anything about the plan-- people didn't know why to call that number.
- Nice looking, easy to read from both sides