
Subject: Public and Public-School Library Facility Standards
Effective: August 2015
Revised: November 2022

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the facility standards for the establishment, renovation, or expansion of libraries.

2.0 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all public and public-school libraries whether they are stand-alone facilities or in multi-purpose buildings or whether the building is owned or leased by the municipality (or an association of persons acting as a municipality) or a school district.

This policy does not explain library funding responsibilities of the provincial government, municipalities (or association of persons acting as a municipality) and school districts (in the case of public-school libraries). For this information, see [NBPLS Policy 1005 – Establishment of Public and Public-School Libraries](#).

3.0 DEFINITIONS

None.

4.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

[New Brunswick Public Libraries Act](#). Government of New Brunswick.

5.0 GOALS / PRINCIPLES

5.1 The mandate of the public and public-school library is to facilitate life-long learning for the public and the school population (in the case of public-school libraries). Public and public-school libraries provide services and resources to help meet the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of its clientele.

5.2 Library buildings are well-planned and efficiently organized for use by patrons and staff, offering a welcoming atmosphere that will encourage use by a wide segment of the population.

6.0 REQUIREMENTS / STANDARDS

6.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1.1 NBPLS (via the Regional Director) is responsible for preparing library feasibility studies or needs analyses that include (but are not limited to):

- the vision for the library in the community;
- community needs analysis / use projections (library activities and population growth);
- site analysis / locale in the community;
- library space requirements and service areas (collections, programming, public seating / meeting spaces);
- staffing levels and workspace;
- evolving technology and electrical requirements;
- public and staff computing;
- furniture and equipment.

6.1.2 Municipalities and School Districts (in the case of public-school libraries) are required to work directly with NBPLS staff to ensure that library construction, expansion and renovation projects result in a facility that is functional from a service and operational/human resource point of view. As a result:

- The library construction/renovation/expansion team must include the Regional Director;
- The Municipality, School District (in the case of public-school libraries) and the Regional Director must agree with the library facility plan (after consultation with the Executive Director of NBPLS) prior to any renovation or construction project begins;
- The Regional Director must review all tenders. This includes shelving and furniture tenders;
- For all computer or technical equipment and electrical and cabling plans, the Municipality, School District (in the case of public-school libraries) and Regional Director must consult with the NBPLS Provincial Office for approval prior to any tendering or purchasing commitment. For information on standards relating to computer

and technical equipment, refer to [NBPLS Policy 1093 – Computers and Technical Equipment in Libraries](#);

- At the discretion of the municipality, representative(s) from the local library board may be asked to participate on the library construction/renovation/expansion team as community advisors;
- As a jointly funded public service, responsibility for library construction/renovation/expansion projects rests with the municipality (or association of persons acting as a municipality), school district (in the case of public-school libraries) **with the approval of the Regional Director (after consultation with the Executive Director of NBPLS).**

6.2 FACILITY PLANNING

- 6.2.1** Library construction/expansion or renovation projects must include building structure and floor plans.
- 6.2.2** All library building plans must be in compliance with the latest edition of the **National Building Code of Canada**.
- 6.2.3** Plans for new library construction or additions to existing buildings are designed by an Architect that holds a certificate of practice as issued by the Architects' Association of New Brunswick.
- 6.2.4** Engineers involved in construction projects are certified to practice in New Brunswick.
- 6.2.5** Barrier-free design must be followed in the construction and renovation of library facilities. Refer to the latest edition of the **National Building Code of Canada** and the **Canadian Standards Accessible Design for the Built Environment** for minimum standards.
- 6.2.6** The latest edition of the **Illuminating Engineering Society's Lighting Handbook** (English only) will be used to determine lighting standards in libraries.
- 6.2.7** For specific facility standards relating to size, location/environment, collections, technology, and designated library spaces, refer to Policy 1003 – Appendix B: Facility Standards Checklist
- 6.2.8** In the case of **public-school libraries**:

- There must be one public entrance that is well-marked and welcoming that does not require entering the school. This ensures the public has direct access to the library. It also encourages public usage during school hours and reduces distractions for students during school instruction;
- There must be an internal door from the school to the library that can be locked by library staff for security purposes;
- There must be staff and public washrooms inside the library that do not require entering the school.
- There must be adequate space, furniture and equipment necessary for its efficient operation and implementation of its services and programs for both the school and the community;
- All construction and renovations to the facility, regardless of funding source, must be planned and undertaken in consultation with the Educational Facilities & Pupil Transportation Branch, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and with the authorization of the Minister through that Branch;
- Where a library already exists, the additional area required to bring the library size up to standard as a public-school library is calculated by adding on the requirements of the new partner, less the areas for any of the possible duplicated facilities;
- The layout of the library should maximize the capability of carrying out class instructional activities (e.g. reading, research, viewing and instruction) without disturbing the activities of other users.

7.0 GUIDELINES / RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 FACILITY SIZE

7.1.1 The minimum recommended size of a library with a census population under 4,000 is 5,500 square feet (511 square meters)

7.1.2 For libraries with a census population over 4,000, the minimum size is based on the total calculated space requirements determined through the feasibility study/needs analysis.

8.0 REGIONAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

None.

9.0 REFERENCES

[New Brunswick Public Libraries Act](#). Government of New Brunswick.

New Brunswick Public Library Service. Policy 1001 - Standard Classification of Libraries.

Sources / Recommended Reading

Brock University. (2014). **Facility Accessibility Design Standards. 2nd edition**. Retrieved Dec 11, 2017, from <https://brocku.ca/accessibility/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2014-Facility-Accessibility-Design-Standards.pdf>.

Canadian Library Association (CLA), Accessible Collections and Services Network. (2016, Jan). **Guidelines on Library and Information Services for People with Disabilities**. Retrieved Dec 11, 2017, from Canadian Federation of Library Associations: <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/guidelines-and-position-papers/guidelines-on-library-and-information-services-for-people-with-disabilities/>

Canadian Standards Association. (2012 Reaffirmed 2018). **B651-12 (R2017) - Accessible design for the built environment**. [Toronto]: CSA Group.

Government of Manitoba. (2012). **Municipal and Regional Public Library Standards and Guidelines**. Retrieved Dec 11, 2017, from Government of Manitoba: https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/pls/pdf/librarystandardsguidelines_e_web.pdf

Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. (2011). **The Lighting Handbook : Reference & Application** (10th ed.). New York, NY: Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.

National Research Council Canada. (2015). **National Building Code of Canada**.

Sannwald, W. W. (2016). **Checklist of Library Building Design Considerations** (6th ed.). Chicago: ALA Editions.

10.0 CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION

NBPLS Provincial Office, (506) 453-2354