Libraries in the Future

By: Elizabeth Decker, Jack Garvey, and Jessica Wicker

Governor's Scholars Program

ABSTRACT

Libraries play a critical role in society by providing many services for the public to have access to. The funding for libraries has significantly decreased in the past decade. Cafés can be constructed into libraries to act as a source of revenue. The purpose of libraries can be expanded by providing new and developing technologies for the public to access. By providing new and advanced technology, offering fine art classes, technology check outs, and book trailer contests, libraries can become more eye appealing and serve as a new and improved way of learning.

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 17th century, libraries have impacted the American public. These early institutions were founded to provide resources for people to further their education, to enjoy a shared wealth of knowledge, and to serve as a foundation for democracy. In recent times, many of the "old ways" of libraries are being replaced with new technological advancements. Where before there were long rows of thousands of books, now there are computer stations and digital literacy workshop classes. For future generations, we want to see libraries stay committed to providing access to new technology, to offer creative ways to keep kids involved in library activities, and to still preserve traditional aspects libraries are known and loved for.

TRENDS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT

Technology is always improving, and as it does, libraries are trying to keep up with it, providing the best and newest devices, including virtual reality.

There is an increased demand for more advanced classes like coding to be taught at libraries, along with other more basic learning opportunities.

Libraries are being expected to establish platforms on social media to update their user base on happenings in the library.

PROPOSED IDEAS

In order to adapt to the changing times, libraries need to:
1. Be leaders in providing access to new technology. One way to do this is by having a laptop or iPad checkout, where library members can sign out a laptop or iPad for a day. Also, libraries need to have a large space with computers, and if the library can afford it, a technology support booth.
2. Become once again the community centers that they are known for. The best way to accomplish this is to place a cafe in a central area of the library. Cafes give users a nice area for group work, an area for people to just be social, and they also double as a way for libraries to generate revenue.
3. Offer more classes in a variety of subjects. Many people today would have loved to take certain classes throughout their lives, but their circumstance inhibited them from being able to do so. For example, some high schools are designed in ways that fine arts classes will not fit easily into students' schedules. Libraries can help counteract these situations by offering a variety of workshops and classes open to the public.
4. Be a fun place for children. A large area dedicated to children will expose younger generations to libraries, and can help to ensure that they are valued later on in life.
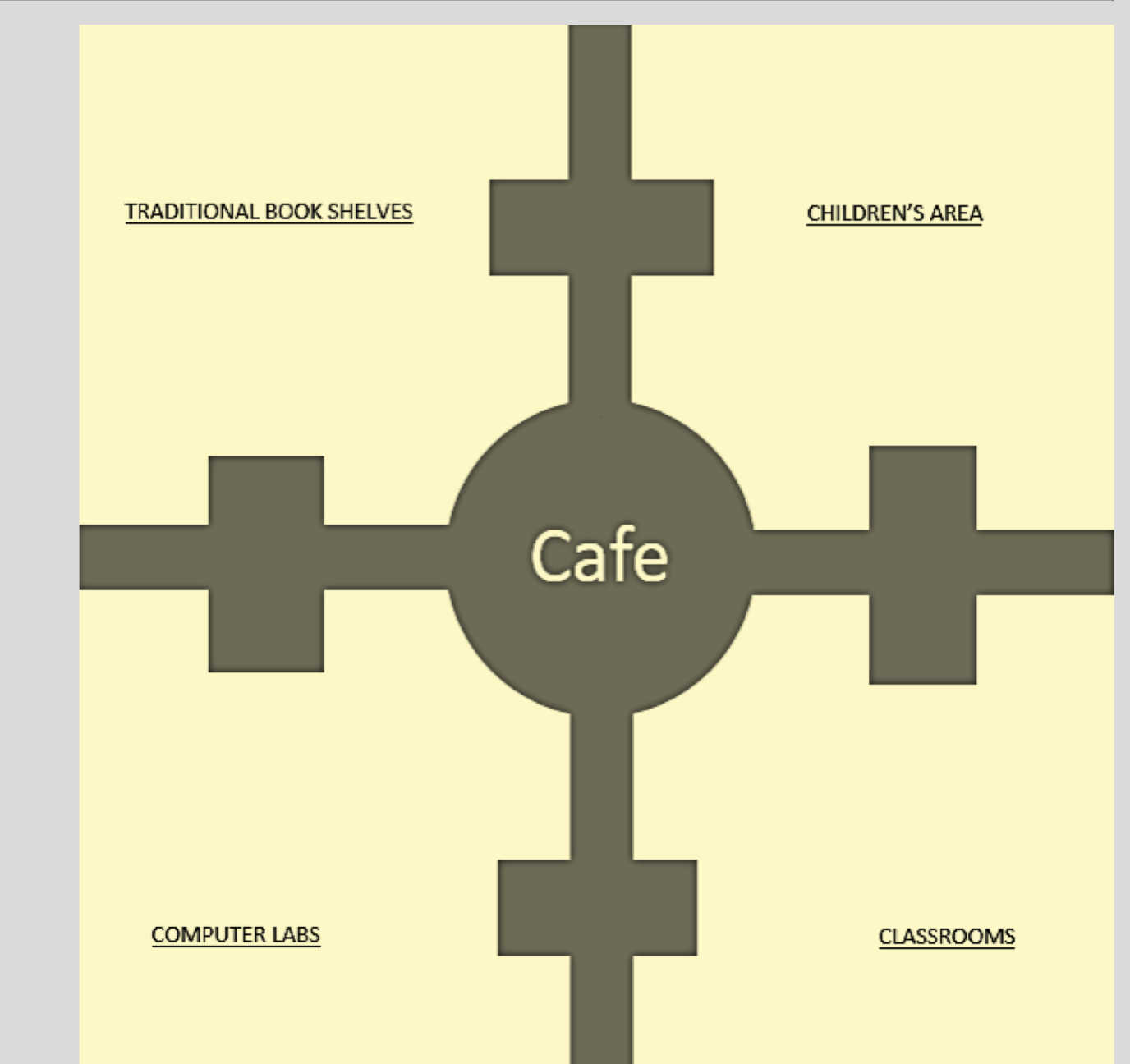
LIMITATIONS

Libraries cannot provide services at any given time. Libraries cannot guarantee a good quality internet access and speed because of the number of users and the applications being operated.

The library is not responsible for any theft or loss of any kind of equipment that is checked out by a user.

CITATIONS

RESEARCH

- Funding for libraries has declined rapidly over the last few years, and the 2020 Presidential budget proposes eliminating certain federal funds entirely.
- Overall government support for libraries has been decreasing.
- Digital media libraries have increased by 50% since 2014.
- 84% of libraries offer technology training programs to people in computer software.
- Changing technology is expected to help shape libraries of the future.

TRADITIONAL BOOK SHELVES | CHILDREN'S AREA | Cafe | COMPUTER LABS | CLASSROOMS

CONCLUSION

Libraries have been a cornerstone of America since its inception. They have long been community centers of knowledge, and while their appearances may change with time, their value remains. Libraries are invaluable because of the stores of books and history they preserve, the access to today's new technologies they provide, and the community spirit they foster. Without them, the American democracy will crumble and fail because every building without a cornerstone is doomed to collapse.