

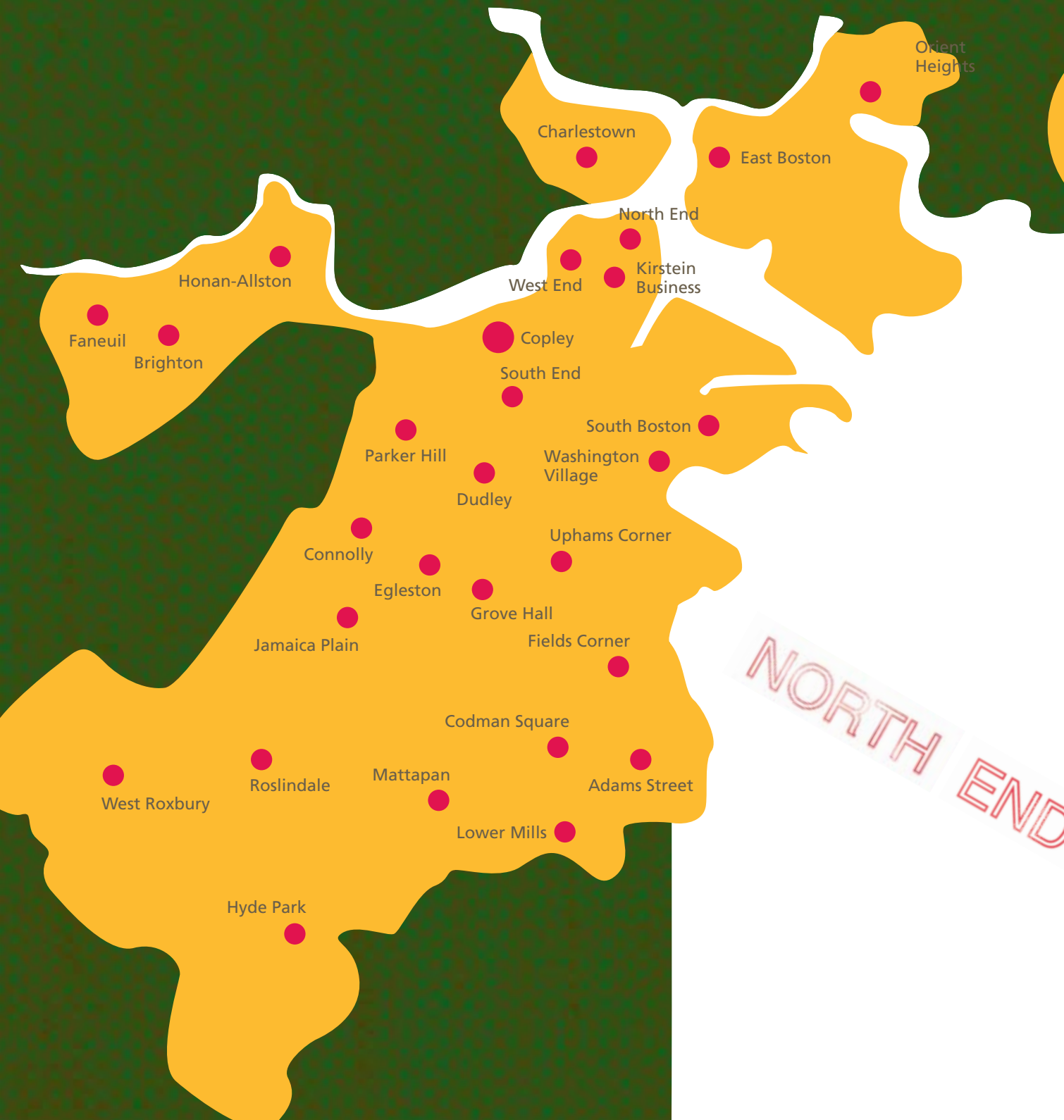


**Boston Public Library
Neighborhood Services Initiative**

MATTAPAN

DUDLEY

EAST BOSTON



A Word from the Chair

The BPL Trustees' Neighborhood Services Committee has been privileged to have a broad view of the extraordinary work of the Boston Public Library in its branches across the city. The vitality of the library's intellectual, social, and cultural engagement, across boundaries of age, location, and background, is a tribute to the dedicated BPL staff, hard-working volunteers, and library users. But all that has gone before to make the branches strong is mere prelude to the coming renewal of neighborhood services, as innovation and improvement take fresh hold. Transformations in technology have spawned revolutions in the way humans take in information. The arrival of immigrants has reinvigorated Boston, and brought the far world near. A shrunken globe expands the meaning of literacy. The book, which, from the Latin gives us the word "library," remains central, but now it symbolizes an imaginative cosmos – audio, video, digital – making the BPL more precious than ever, and more challenged. The Neighborhood Services Committee, representing each of the library's constituencies, has listened and learned. A new vision has come into focus. And now a forward-looking commitment is being made. The future is here. The committee's work, represented by this statement, is just the beginning. But because that work has been so good, the promise that is made in what follows is already being fulfilled.

James Carroll

Trustee
Chairman, Neighborhood Services Committee
Boston Public Library

Planning Process

The Trustees' Neighborhood Services Committee was established by the Board of Trustees in the Fall of 2006, and the Internal Staff Neighborhood Services Committee began its work in August 2007. Both Committees have worked independently and collaboratively with an outside facilitator. For the first few months the committees spent their time reviewing Boston Public Library historic branch documents, Boston Redevelopment Authority demographic reports, professional library association reports on branch libraries, and strategic plans for other urban branch systems across the country.

Other documents completed over the past year are:

- Individual Branch profiles – providing an overview of current branch facilities and services
- A Day in the Life of a Branch Librarian
- A Day in the Life of a Branch Library Assistant
- Community Resources – contact information for schools, service agencies, cultural and civic institutions located in each branch service area.

This document completes the first phase of a multi-faceted planning effort. Beginning in the fall of 2008 further definition of the next steps, defined goals and objectives, and an implementation plan based on the needs described in the initiatives and the standards will be developed and completed in 2009.

GROVE HALL

LOWER MILLS

Vision for Neighborhood Services

The Boston Public Library will be an innovative leader and community partner in providing outstanding library services that connect people, information, and ideas. Neighborhood libraries will serve to bridge the digital divide, connecting Boston residents with the broader global community.

All Boston Public Library branches will provide a robust set of services to their communities, one that encourages lifelong learning and supports the year-round educational, cultural, and recreational needs of their unique neighborhoods. Library programs and services will be delivered by a highly-trained, customer-focused staff that is fully integrated into the life of the community.

These services will be provided throughout the day and evening. Customers of all ages will have the opportunity to participate in engaging educational programs and to have the advantage of the many services and collections offered by the library. Through strong relationships and collaborations with community stakeholders including schools, businesses and merchants, neighborhood groups, non-profits, and others the neighborhood branches will continue to occupy their spaces at the heart of Boston's diverse neighborhoods.

CHARLESTOWN

ROSLINDALE

Neighborhood Branch Initiatives

Items 1–3 are essential to the success of the Neighborhood Services Initiative. Their completion will pave the way for the successful completion of the remaining Neighborhood Branch Initiatives

1 **Comprehensive Review, Renovation, Refurbishment of all Branches**

A comprehensive survey of BPL facilities will be conducted by an outside agency. The Library will create a set of facility standards to inform future building projects, and the renovation of current facilities. Facilities will be renovated or refurbished according to need in order to bring them into compliance with city, state, and federal codes and regulations and with the principles of universal design. Each branch facility will reflect the diversity and uniqueness of its community.

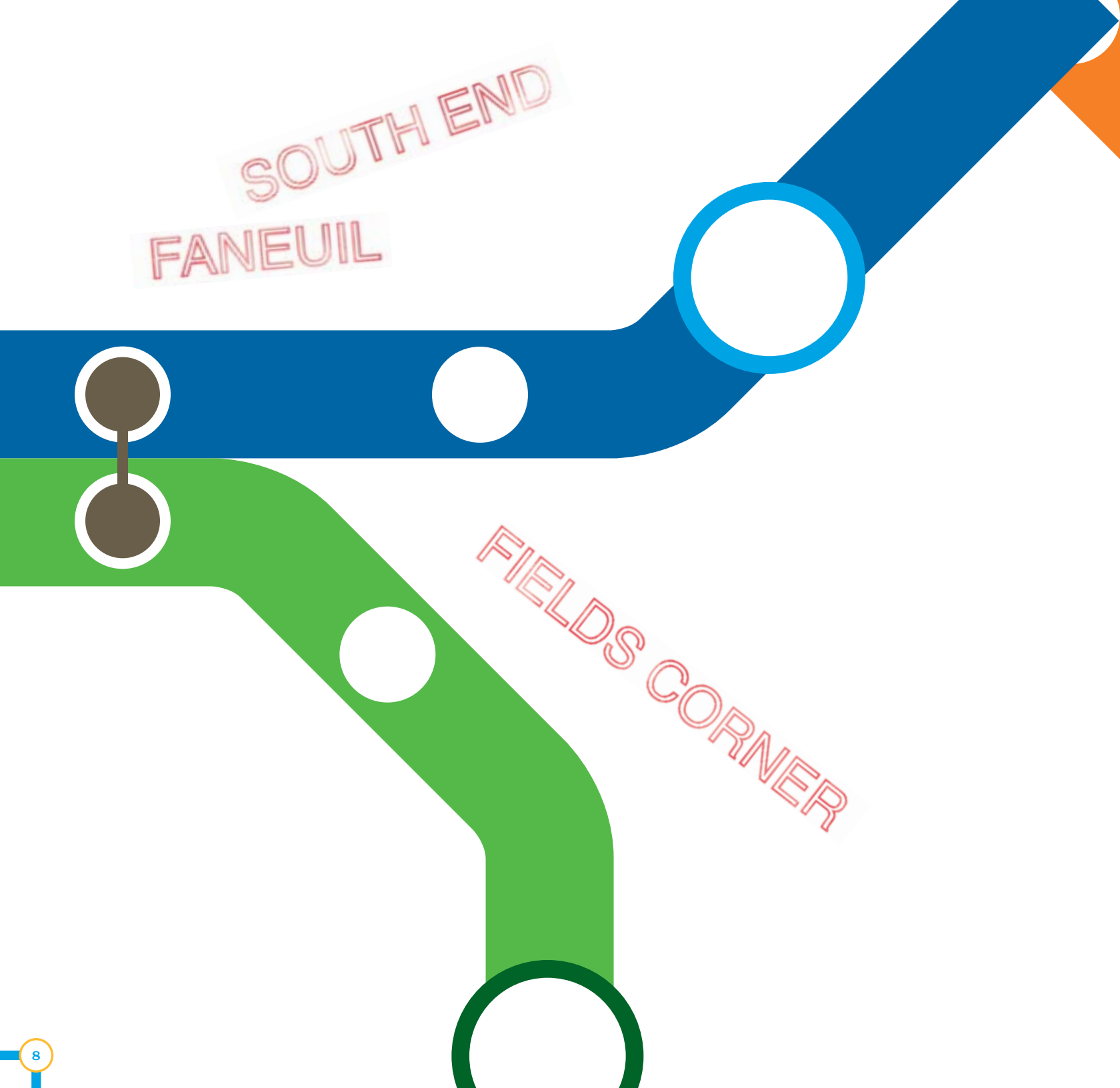
2 **State of the Art Technology**

The Boston Public Library will play a significant role in bridging the digital divide in Boston neighborhoods, providing much needed access to technology for library users. The infrastructure of all BPL facilities will support the state-of-the-art technology that Library users and staff rely on and expect. The Library will develop neighborhood Media Labs where users can engage in a broad range of technology driven work, including developing websites, creating audio and video recordings, and engaging in desktop publishing activities. The library will develop and institute a replacement and upgrade plan for all library technology

3 **Professional Development**

The BPL will develop and implement a robust recruitment process that will broaden the diversity, language skills, and experience of its workforce. The Library will seek to retain and promote current staff, by investing heavily in their continuing education, encouraging them to learn a second language, and requiring them to meet new competencies around technology and the changing role of libraries. Staff at all levels will receive training to develop an institutional culture that recognizes the importance of excellent customer service, and honors the diversity of the city's residents.

HONAN-ALLSTON



Neighborhood Branch Initiatives *continued*

Programming & Partnership

A set of programming and partnership standards is in development to ensure that all neighborhood branches provide a broad range of entertaining, educational programs and opportunities for library users of all ages. The plan will draw from the strengths of the city's diverse neighborhoods and include programs created by library staff, as well as those that come from partnerships with schools, community organizations, city agencies, museums, performers, authors, musicians, artists, and local businesses.

Collections for Communities

Each neighborhood branch will have an up-to-date collection of circulating materials on a diverse range of subjects for users of all ages. World Language collections will be strengthened and available in the neighborhoods. Youth collections will encourage children to develop a love of reading, and will support their educational needs. Data about neighborhood collections will be monitored centrally so that additional copies of titles/languages may be purchased when need and interest are strong. Community history and interests will be reflected in the neighborhood collections.

Focus on Target Populations

The Library has identified the following five underserved target populations for improvements in service:

- **Early Childhood**

To complement the city-wide "Thrive in Five" initiative, the Boston Public Library will use its popular Reading Readiness and toddler story times to provide informative and educational information to parents and caregivers. Additional programs will be developed and implemented to serve children ages birth–two. The Library will explore partnerships that support early childhood initiatives.

- **Teens and Young Adults**

The Boston Public Library will significantly improve and diversify services to city youth. As a partner in the Mayor's Community Learning Initiative, the Library is a key stakeholder in the City's plans to provide comprehensive out-of-school-time and summer opportunities for Boston youth and teens. To that end, the Library will develop programs and form strategic partnerships and seek grants to provide programming that supports ACES (Arts, Citizenship, Education, and Sports & Recreation). Such programs include opportunities to participate in art, science, and music programs, media and technology opportunities including web and video design, creative writing and poetry workshops, contests, and publications, and GED, SAT, college search, and job skills resources.

- **Education, ESL, and Life Skills Programs**

The BPL will identify a slate of "life skills" programs. Services will include regularly scheduled GED classes, English as a Second Language programs and support, and Job search and resume writing workshops. Programs and services will be deployed to various neighborhood locations and partnerships with other City departments and nonprofits will be leveraged to broaden the array of services provided. Qualified volunteers will be recruited to support these efforts.

- **Differently-Abled Individuals**

The BPL will evaluate its neighborhood services to differently-abled individuals. Adaptive technology, ADA compliant facilities, and special services will be developed to better meet the needs of these customers.

- **Boomers and Beyond**

The BPL will identify ways to engage Baby Boomers and other retirees as they leave the work force and search for meaningful involvements in their communities. Program series on topics of interest to this group will be developed. Volunteer opportunities will be created to tap into this group's wealth of experience and knowledge.

Marketing & Branding

In conjunction with the Trustees' Marketing Task Force, plans will be developed to brand and market the neighborhood branches. A planned overhaul of the Library's website (www.bpl.org) will result in intuitive access to neighborhood information. Signage – interior and exterior, in multiple languages – will be addressed. Library information (brochures, calendars, and website) will be made available in multiple languages.

Neighborhood Branch Standards

Core Customer Services

- A system-wide standard of customer service that makes customers feel welcome and valued.
- Up-to-date collections of circulating materials that cover a wide range of interests.
- Reserve services that allow customers to place holds on items from across the network and have them sent to the Boston Public Library location of their choosing.
- 24/7 virtual access including branch program information, online reserves, virtual reference, online databases, and downloadable content.

WEST ROXBURY



Core Customer Services *continued*

- Request for purchase and Inter Library Loan services that allow customers to ask the library to purchase or borrow from other libraries any materials that it does not currently own.
- Reader's Advisory services that connect customers with books and other materials based on their needs and interests.
- Reference services that range from simple ready reference questions that can be answered at any branch, to reference referral services that send more complex questions to the Central Library to be answered.
- Document delivery services that allow a customer to receive a copy of a magazine article via email, fax, mail, or mobile device.
- City services referrals that connect customers to the broad range of services and programs offered to residents by the City of Boston.
- Community service referrals for a broad spectrum of services including: home-buying, employment skills, college financial aid, ESL and ABE, child care, health, housing assistance, and others.

Collections

- Popular collections on a broad range of topics, in print, audio, video, and digital formats.
- World language collections that meet the diverse needs of customers in the city's neighborhoods.
- Children's collections that engender a love of reading in children of all ages, and support the educational needs of students.
- Literacy/ESL collections to help customers build their English and ABE skills.

Technology Based Services

- Internet/email assistance by appointment for customers who need a librarian to help them navigate the Internet.
- Assistance with web-based resume and job search needs.
- Branch-specific web pages that list upcoming programs, library hours, directions, and community information.

Programs

- Individualized neighborhood-based programs to meet community needs.
- Educational and entertaining programming for adults on a broad range of topics, including: home-buying, investing, job skills, resume-writing, college financial aid, and computer/Internet skills.
- Music, dance, movie, and art programming for all ages.
- Author and illustrator appearances.
- Family literacy programming that encourages entire families to explore books and literature.
- Inventive block programs for children that educate, entertain, and reflect the diversity of the city.
- Summer Reading activities for children, teens, and adults.
- Regularly scheduled story hours and Reading Readiness programs to build pre-literacy skills in children ages birth-five that support the goals of the Mayor's Thrive in 5 program.
- Homework Assistance Program (HAP) to provide support to elementary and middle school students who need after-school and weekend tutoring. Tutoring services will include evening and weekend online homework support in English and Spanish.
- Programming for middle and high school age students that meets the ACES (Arts, Citizenship, Education, and Sports & Recreation) standards as described in the Mayor's Community Learning Initiative.

Partnerships

- City agencies.
- Leaders and representatives of community organizations and non-profits.
- Local businesses and merchants.
- Educators from neighborhood public and private schools and the city's many colleges and universities.
- Grant partners and outside agents who are involved in local and system-wide collaborations at the BPL.
- Central Library departments and services that extend the resources available to customers in the branches.
- The Boston Public Library Foundation, The BPL Associates, The BPL Young Professionals, Friends of the Library groups and other library affiliates.
- Other libraries, library associations, and agencies.

CONNOLLY
CODMAN SQUARE

WEST END

UPHAMS CORNER

Facilities

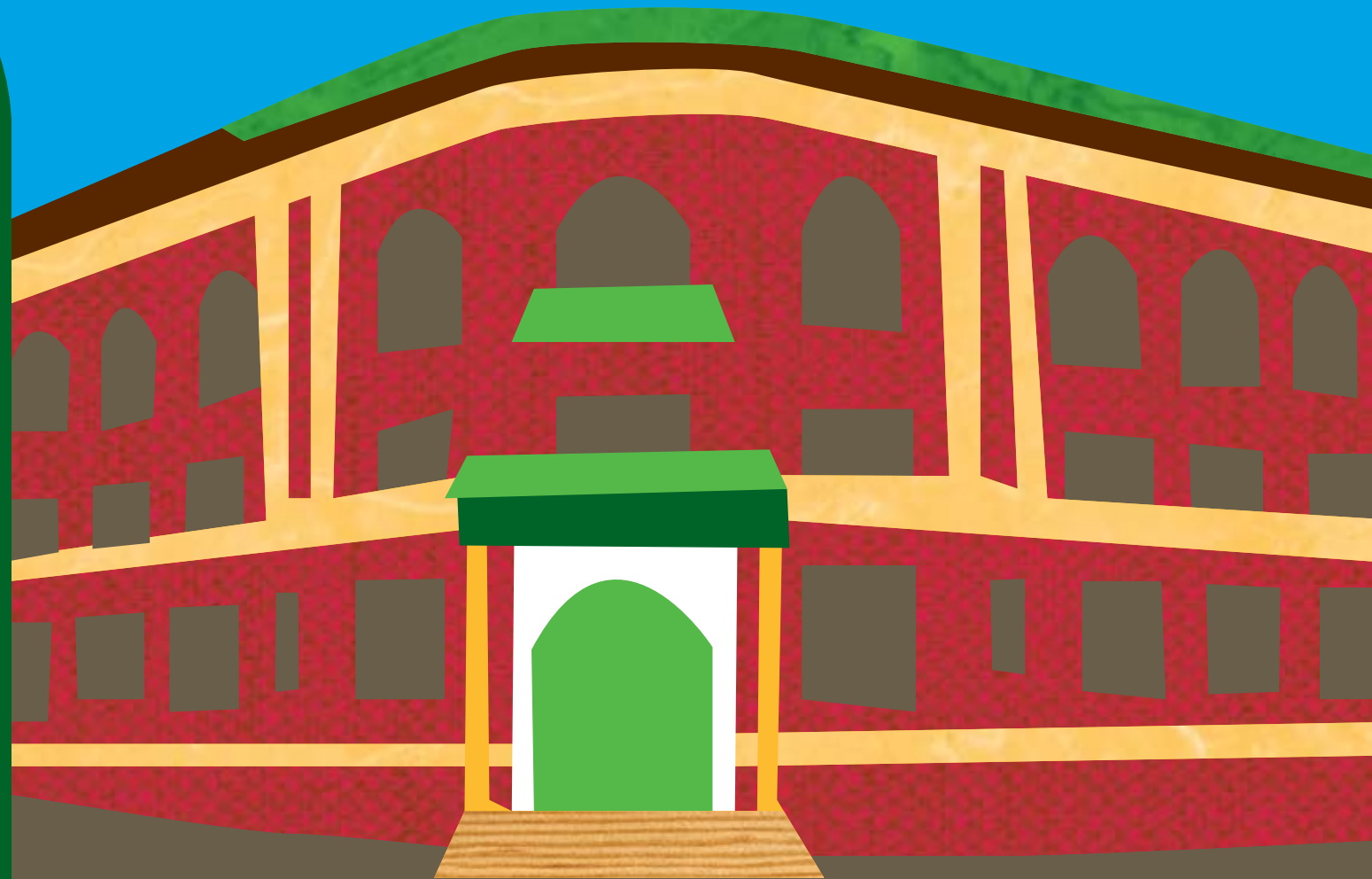
- Clean, safe, and welcoming buildings that are the pride of their neighborhoods.
- Clear exterior signage to improve branch visibility.
- Clear, attractive, interior signage to assist customers in navigating the library building. Signage will be provided in multiple languages where appropriate.
- Exterior book drops for after hours book returns.
- A clear reporting process to ensure adequate ongoing maintenance and to attend to facilities issues in a timely manner.

Technology Infrastructure and Equipment

- Self-checkout machines.
- Library Kiosks at high-traffic city locations.
- Standardized equipment and software for ease of use for both customers and staff.
- Appropriate electrical and data wiring to support the computing needs of the staff and the public.
- Media Labs where users can engage in a broad range of technology driven work, including developing websites, creating audio and video recordings, and engaging in desktop publishing activities.
- ADA compliant software and hardware.
- A clear reporting process to ensure that technology is maintained and updated on an ongoing and timely manner.

Hours

- Library hours will be evaluated regularly and modified or expanded to meet community needs.
- Include at least two evenings/week.
- Include year-round Saturday hours.
- Include Sunday hours during the school year (larger branches).



Boston Public Library Branches

Adams Street

690 Adams St.
Dorchester, 02122
617 436-6900

Brighton

40 Academy Hill Rd.
Brighton, 02135
617 782-6032

Charlestown

179 Main St.
Charlestown, 02129
617 242-1248

Codman Square

690 Washington St.
Dorchester, 02124
617 436-8214

Connolly

433 Centre St.
Jamaica Plain, 02130
617 522-1960

Dudley/ Dudley Literacy Center

65 Warren St.
Roxbury, 02119
617 442-6186
617 859-2446

East Boston

276 Meridian St.
East Boston, 02128
617 569-0271

Egleston Square

2044 Columbus Ave.
Roxbury, 02119
617 445-4340

Faneuil

419 Faneuil St.
Brighton, 02135
617 782-6705

Fields Corner

1520 Dorchester Ave.
Dorchester, 02122
617 436-2155

Grove Hall

5 Crawford St.
Roxbury, 02121
617 427-3337

Honan-Allston

300 North Harvard St.
Allston, 02134
617 787-6313

Hyde Park

35 Harvard Ave.
Hyde Park, 02136
617 361-2524

Jamaica Plain

12 Sedgwick St.
Jamaica Plain, 02130
617 524-2053

Kirstein Business

20 City Hall Ave.
Boston, 02108
617 523-0860

Lower Mills

27 Richmond St.
Dorchester, 02124
617 298-7841

Main Library

700 Boylston St.
Copley Square
Boston, 02116
617 536-5400

Mattapan

10 Hazelton St.
Mattapan, 02126
617 298-9218

North End

25 Parmenter St.
Boston, 02113
617 227-8135

Orient Heights

18 Barnes Ave.
East Boston, 02128
617 567-2516

Parker Hill

1497 Tremont St.
Roxbury, 02120
617 427-3820

Roslindale

4238 Washington St.
Roslindale, 02131
617 323-2343

South Boston

646 East Broadway
South Boston, 02127
617 268-0180

South End

685 Tremont St.
Boston, 02118
617 536-8241

Uphams Corner

500 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, 02125
617 265-0139

Washington Village

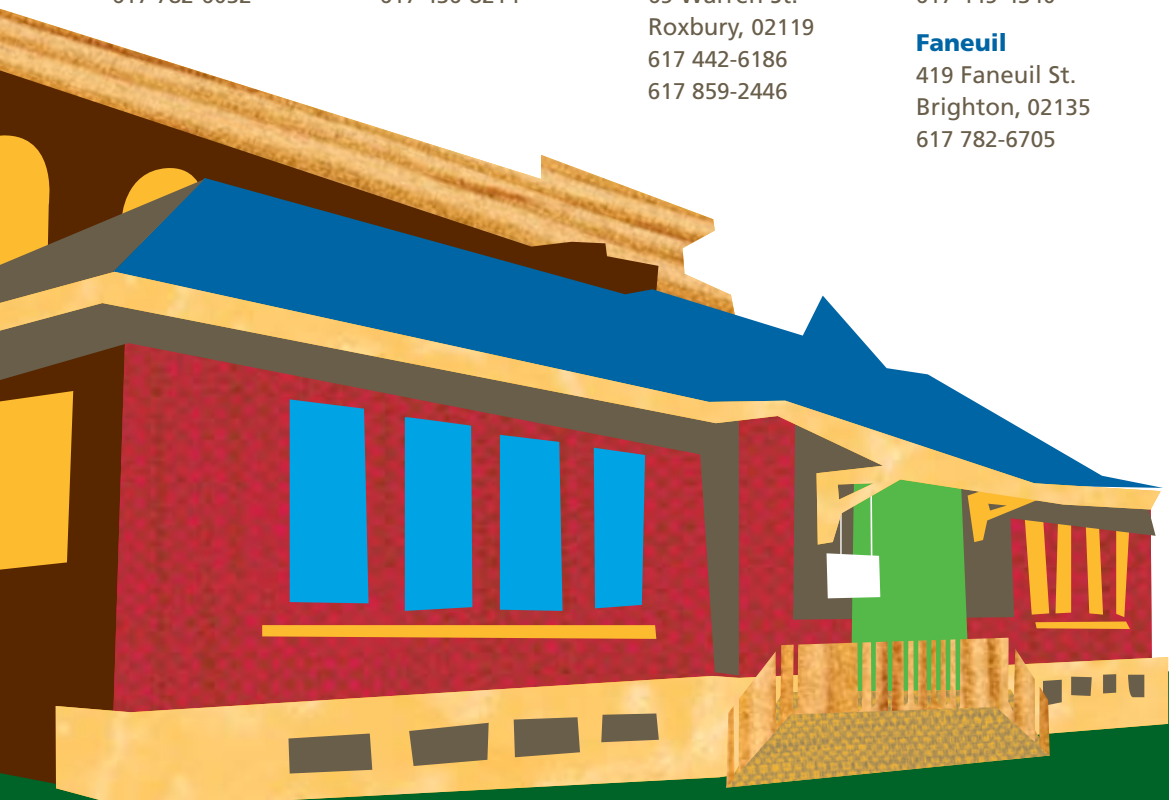
1226 Columbia Rd.
South Boston, 02127
617 269-7239

West End

151 Cambridge St.
Boston, 02114
617 523-3957

West Roxbury

1961 Centre St.
West Roxbury, 02132
617 325-3147



Jamaica Plain Branch

JAMAICA PLAIN

ADAMS STREET

Trustees' Neighborhood Services Committee

James Carroll

Trustee and Chairman
of the Committee

Anne Barron

West End Branch Friends

Jane Bickford

Boston Public Library

Dr. Frances Burke

Boston Public Library Friend

JoAnn Butler

Boston Public Library

Jean Capizzi

City of Boston

Patricia Carrington

Grove Hall Branch Friends

Helen Dajer

Boston Public Schools

Dr. Karin Kell Deyo

Boston Public Schools

Robin Hadley

City of Boston

Alice Hennessey

City of Boston

Mimi Jones

Dudley Branch Friends

Michael J. Kineavy

City of Boston

Alyce Lee

City of Boston,
Boston Public Library Friend

Edward D. Maheigan

Boston Public Library

Carol A. Mahoney

Boston Public Library

Bernard A. Margolis

Boston Public Library

Jamie McGlone

Boston Public Library

Daria McLean

Boston Public Library
Foundation

Mary Frances O'Brien

Boston Public Library

Dale Paterson

Boston Public Library
Foundation

Laura Pattison

Boston Public Library

Joseph Rull

City of Boston

Pamela Seigle

Former Boston Public
Library Trustee,
West Roxbury Friends

Sarah-Ann Shaw

Dudley Branch Friends

Rubi Simon

Boston Public Library

Koren Stembridge

Boston Public Library

A. Raymond Tye

Trustee Boston Public Library

Meredith Weenick

City of Boston

Erica Yearwood

Boston Public Library

Maureen Sullivan

Associates

Facilitator

The committee members represent a total of eight branches and cover a wide geographic area of the city.

Jane Bickford

Branch Librarian, Connolly Branch

Janet Buda

Branch Librarian, North End Branch

Cathy Davidson

Branch Library Assistant, Roslindale Branch

Paul Edwards

Branch Library Assistant, Washington Village Branch

Margaret Kelly

Branch Librarian, Orient Heights Branch

Carol Mahoney

Neighborhood Services Manager

Sarah Markell

Branch Librarian, Honan Allston Branch

Rubi Simon

Assistant Neighborhood Services Manager

Sara Slymon

Branch Librarian, Mattapan Branch

Koren Stembridge

Associate Neighborhood Services Manager

Tracy Wiggins

Branch Library Assistant, Parker Hill Branch

Maureen Sullivan Associates

Facilitator

WASHINGTON VILLAGE
PARKER HILL

Boston Public Library

700 Boylston St. • Boston, MA 02116 • www.bpl.org

July 2008

Graphic Design by Neva Corbo-Hudak

HYDE PARK
EGLESTON SQUARE



- *The Boston Public Library, Its System of Branch Libraries*
Boston Public Library Board of Trustees, 1941.
- *Boston's Branch Library System*
Boston City Planning Board, 1955.
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Boston Redevelopment Authority, www.cityofboston.gov/bra/
- *Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public and Leadership Attitudes about Libraries in the 21st Century*
Public Agenda, 2006.
- *The Engaged Library: Chicago Stories of Community Building*
Urban Libraries Council, 2005.
- "Our Kind of Town" *How the Chicago Public Library is Changing the City*
Peggy Barber and Linda Wallace, *American Libraries*, April 2007, 57–62.
- "Place and Possibility, Chicago PL Showcases Vibrant Neighborhoods"
Urban Libraries Council Conference, *American Libraries*, January 2006, 26–27.
- *Baltimore County Public Library Strategic Plan VII, FY2007–2009*
Baltimore County Public Library, 2005.

ORIENT HEIGHTS



SOUTH BOSTON

BRIGHTON



Boston Public Library

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