

Having Fun Can Be Very Hard When You've Got a Library Card

Arturo Ballesteros

Long, long ago, a young Arturo would rush home after school to turn on the TV and watch his favorite PBS Kids cartoon: "Arthur". "Having fun isn't hard," he would sing along, "when you've got a library card!"

Back then, going to the library was very much my idea of having fun because my cousins and I would go together all the time. We loved hanging out in the children's play area, acting smart as we walked through the different isles of books, and even playing games on the internet before any of us had computers and Wi-Fi access in our own homes. I remember feeling so grown up every time I used my library card- in a way, the credit card of my childhood- to check out as many books as I could carry.

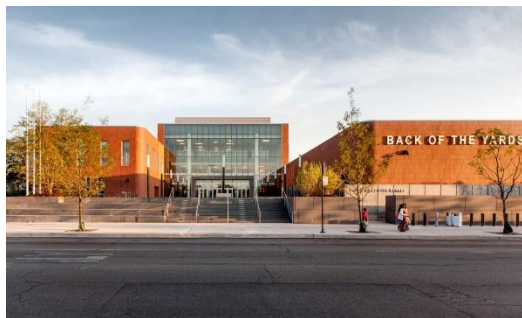
We would specifically go to the Back of the Yards Branch- a Chicago Public Library (CPL) that was located on 47th and Hoyne- because it was the closest library to all our homes, so our parents were able to walk us there. But although the fond memories stick with us, the library's place in our lives eventually washed away.



The old Back of the Yards Branch. Photo credit: <https://librarytechnology.org/library/13386>.

Literally.

In 2011, the [library was closed](#) due to flood damage, leaving the Back of the Yards neighborhood not only without a library, but also with the uncertainty of when the library would be reopened. Over two years later, in 2013, then Mayor Rahm Emanuel took an approach to the situation: co-locating the library *inside* the neighborhood's new high school, Back of the Yards College Prep (BOYCP), directly across 47th street.



Back of the Yards College Prep Entrance. Photo credit: <https://www.stlchicago.com/project/back-of-the-yards-school/>.

I must admit, when I first heard about this news, I thought the concept was pretty cool- having your high school and your library conveniently located in the same building. Soon after starting my first year at BOYCP, however, everything about that new library changed the way I replayed Arthur's nifty little library toon in my head.



Entrance to the new Back of the Yards Branch. Photo credit: <https://www.chipublib.org/locations/9/>.

“Having fun... can be very hard when you’ve got a library card... because- surprise, surprise- it turns out that you need an accessible, well-resourced library to use it in the first place.”

This new tune– this attempt at cramming all those words into such a short melody- doesn’t really work out. Yet, it pretty much sums up the relationship between the public library and the community members of Chicago’s Back of the Yards neighborhood: a library that became inaccessible to everyone it was meant to serve after it was crammed (sorry, I meant “co-located”) inside BOYCP.

Now, the City of Chicago has presented a proposal to relocate the Back of the Yards Branch in response to the library’s current inability to serve the community, but the question that remains is whether this proposal will fix this broken tune or simply put it on repeat all over again.

Wait, who still even goes to the library these days?

Actually, a lot more people than you might think. CPL has even seen a significant [increase in its yearly number of visits](#); from about 4 million in 2022 to about 5 million in 2023. So the numbers speak for themselves: libraries are not just obsolete relics of the past, despite the world of technology that we live in. Mitzi Santamaria and Marlene Flores, both BOYCP Class of 2020 alumni, can attest to the relevance of libraries. Having worked as a page at the Brighton Park Branch for the past two years, Mitzi realized that “libraries are places that we still need in society because they are places for more than just books.” Marlene also saw this point in action during her time volunteering at the Back of the Yards Branch as a BOYCP student. She recalls:

I mostly helped out in the Family and Children’s department, where we would often offer science experiments and craft activities for children. I remember once we had a guest Zoologist bring reptiles and insects for kids to touch and hold. More generally, the library offers a lot of resources to the community like free, and fresh, meals during the summer when school is not in session. The library also became a

safe space for some neighborhood children while their parents were working, an opportunity for kids not to be out on the streets. Many families would even meet with external social workers at the library, often in situations where their homes were maybe not a safe space for that.

Mitzi also brings up that these library resources are extremely important for many library patrons because they are completely free. In fact, she has noticed that students, homeless people and, more recently, migrants increasingly frequent libraries because they are some of the few spaces where people can go without having to spend any money. “[CPL] as a whole aims to create safe and welcoming spaces in its libraries,” she says, “if we dismiss libraries as irrelevant, we marginalize people from low-income and minority communities who rely on libraries a lot.”



Programming at the Back of the Yards Branch. Photo credit: <https://www.facebook.com/chipublib/posts/back-of-the-yards-branch-is-hard-at-work-as-the-virtual-school-year-really-kicks/10158913566687454/>.

The Back of the Yards neighborhood and its library are no exception. The neighborhood has a rich history, named for its proximity to the [Union Stock Yard](#) and adjacent packing plants– the largest livestock yards and meatpacking center in the country until the 1950’s. The neighborhood was immortalized by Upton Sinclair’s 1906 novel *The Jungle*, which exposed the harsh conditions and exploitation that immigrants in the area experienced. Over 100 years later, Back of the Yards harsh conditions and exploitations still mark the experiences of the community. According to a [report](#) by the UIC Institute for Research on Race and Public



One of Back of the Yards’ vibrant community murals. Photo credit: <https://southsideweekly.com/best-back-yards-2019/>.

Policy, the vast majority of residents in this neighborhood are Latin American or African American, with a third of its households earning an income below the national poverty line. Moreover, barely 5% of the neighborhood’s residents who are 25 years or older have a bachelor’s degree. On top of that, local food banks like [Casa Catalina](#) are seeing a surge in the number of families relying on their services due to food insecurity. Most heartbreaking of all, is the neighborhood’s struggle with crime and gun violence. This spring, a [shooting in the area](#) left an innocent 9 year-old dead, and 10 other innocent people injured.

In the face of all these different struggles, it's clear that Back of the Yards is a community in need of the support, resources, and opportunities it has historically been deprived of. And although libraries might not be the end-all-be-all solution to this injustice, Mitzi and Marlene point out that libraries are some of the only places that alleviate the burdens of the people– the heart– of communities like Back of the Yards. Think about it for a moment: what other kind of place offers such a wide variety of resources from free educational materials to fun experiences to food to safe spaces?

It's not so much the libraries themselves that are becoming outdated for they too are evolving with the times. It's rather people's perception of what the modern library can offer to the community that's outdated.

So, what's the deal with the Back of the Yards Branch

Despite their potential, the reality is that many libraries in low-income and minority neighborhoods in Chicago often fail to reach their full potential. The Back of the Yards Branch, for instance, has faced a lot of challenges that limit its ability to serve the community ever since its co-location into the high school.

The thing is, the original intent of the library's co-location sounded really great: unifying Back of the Yards Branch, Back of the Yards neighborhood, and Back of the Yards College Prep all in one shared space– basically the holy trinity of Back of the Yards. Rahm Emanuel pointed out that "Libraries and schools have a strong connection as places of learning and community anchors," and then CPL Commissioner Brian Bannon seconded that "This location allows us to offer Back of the Yards residents a full service 21st century library in order to better serve the needs of patrons in this community." However, this vision turned out to only sound great on paper, because once the library reopened, the negative side effects of the co-location started to take a toll on each part of the Back of the Yards trinity.

Back of the Yards Branch:

One of the most noticeable consequences of the co-location for the library was a reduction in space. The library currently has an area of 8,300 sq ft, and although I haven't been able to find any information on the area of the library at its previous location, Mitzi recalls, "my sisters and I would visit the old library frequently, and I remember the library was at least twice as big."



Interior of the Back of the Yards Branch. Photo credit: <https://www.pbcchicago.com/projects/back-of-the-yards-branch-library/>.

Another consequence is that the current library has a very narrow and awkward floor plan– it feels more like a hallway or corridor rather than a space where a full-service public library should be. "Other libraries have a much more open space, which makes layout much easier," Marlene says. The children, young adult, and adult sections are all separated by only a few bookshelves, which can be distracting for adult patrons.

Back of the Yards Neighborhood

The most devastating effect of the co-location on community residents is that they were left with a library that is inaccessible and unpleasant to visit.

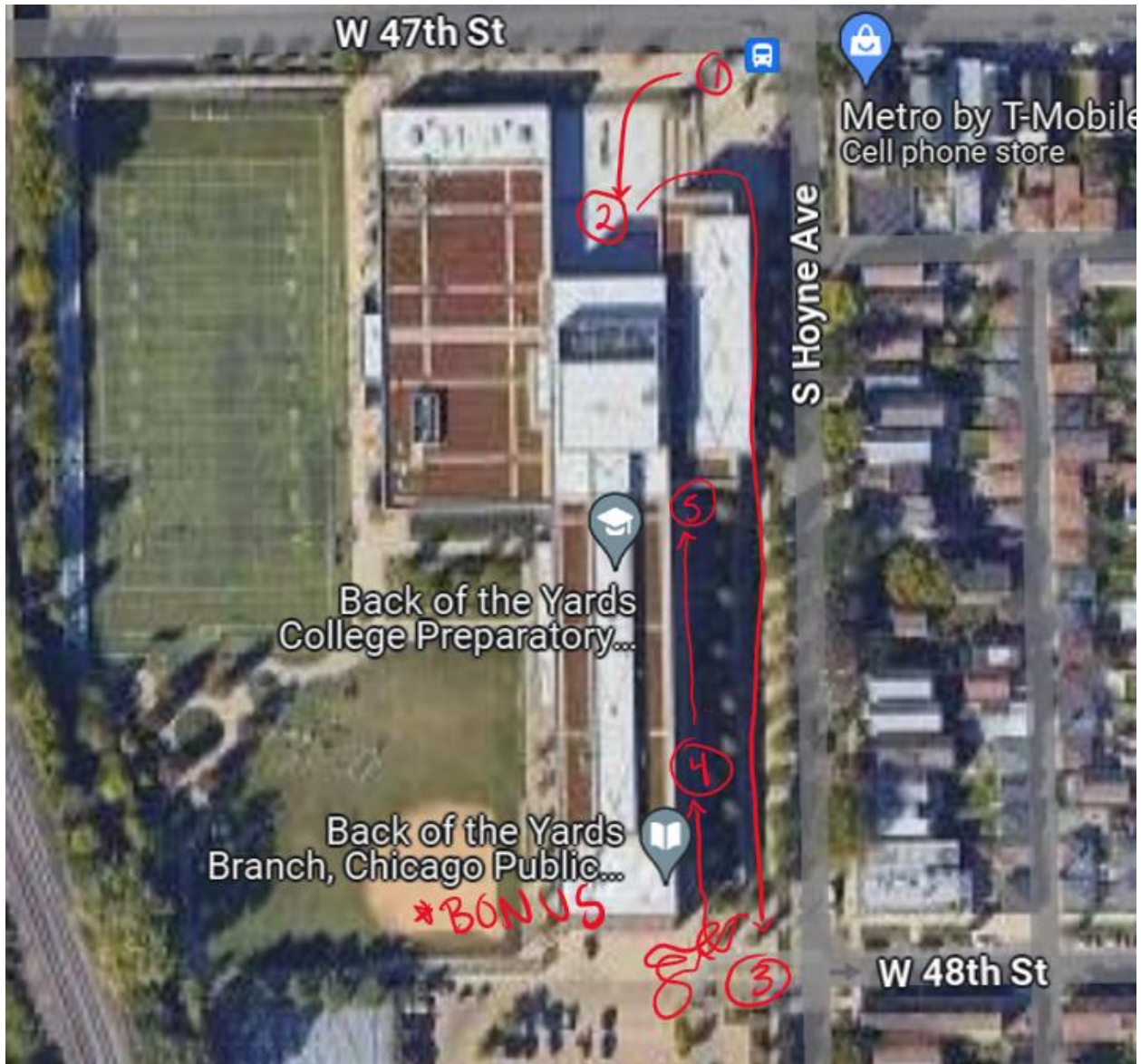


The Yards Plaza. Photo credit: <https://www.commercialsearch.com/commercial-property/us/il/chicago/the-yards-plaza-outlot-1/>.

For example, Marlene remembers that "the librarians would tell me that the previous location was much more visible." The high visibility of this location was due to the fact that it was right on 47th street, one of the main streets that runs through Back of the Yards. Moreover, this previous location was part of The Yards Plaza, the largest shopping center in the neighborhood. The architectural design of the high school's building,

however, has made the library entrance confusing for patrons to find after the co-location. Now, if you try to visit the Back of the Yards Branch for the first time, chances are these are the trials and tribulations you will have to go through: Step 1) see the grand BOYCP entrance on 47th street and assume that's the library entrance. Step 2) walk into the high

school only to be told by security that the library entrance is a whole block down the side of the building. Step 3) slightly irritated, you now walk down the block only to find the school's parking lot. At this point, you might also realize that Google Maps doesn't even have the correct pin location for the library's entrance. Step 4) if you have not given up yet, you wander around for a bit and you find that sketchy looking ramp that leads to the library entrance. Step 5) congratulations! You found the long-lost library of Back of the Yards.



A first-timer's visual guide to finding the Back of the Yards Branch's entrance. Photo credit: <https://www.google.com/maps/@41.8076692,-87.6771095,330m/data=!3m1!1e3?entry=ttu> (screenshot taken from Google Maps, the red drawings were made by the author)

At this point, some of you may be wondering: sure, there's a bit of a learning curve to finding the library entrance, but there shouldn't be much of a problem left once people actually know where it is right? And that's a valid question, but the answer is just not as straightforward as it seems.

Mitzi shares that in her experiences interacting with library patrons, there are many reasons why people, especially adults, are hesitant to visit libraries. One reason is that some adults "see the library as a secret or selective club, despite the huge Chicago *Public* Library signs on the outside of most CPL buildings. Like people will shy in and ask, 'I don't have a library card, am I allowed to come in?' And I'd have to be like 'mam, this is a public library of course you can come in, you just need a library card to use certain resources here.'"

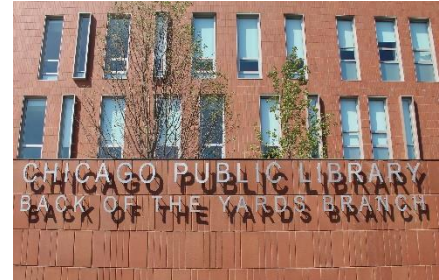
A second reason Mitzi noted is that it's often difficult for adults to take time out of their busy day-to-day schedules to visit libraries in general. "You're used to going [to the library] as a kid," she says, "it's part of your normal life because oftentimes your parents would take you or drop you off. But as an adult, it's hard when you have so much other stuff going on in life, that you don't usually make time."

Marlene shares that another reason people might hesitate to visit the Back of the Yards Branch specifically is that "many students and families are afraid of the ramp area... it's secluded and dimly lit at night. There are also many places for people with bad intentions to hide and jump out of, so people would literally run down the ramp to not risk any danger. I would even wait until my father would pull up to the side of the library to pick me up before leaving for the day."



Two different views of the ramp area before the Back of the Yards Branch entrance. Photo credits: (Left) <https://www.mapquest.com/us/illinois/chicago-public-library-back-of-the-yards-368410170>. (Right) <https://www.pbcchicago.com/projects/back-of-the-yards-branch-library/>.

Still think there's not much of a problem left? The thing is, if someone is already hesitant to step into a library to begin with, why would they want to go to a library where they need a whole treasure map just to get to the entrance? Where they may fear for their safety, when libraries are supposed to be safe spaces? Where a giant wall stands in the way of the space that is supposed to be welcoming to them? They just wouldn't. In fact, Mitzi shares that some patrons at the Brighton Park Branch have told her that they would rather travel to a different library than go through the hassle of getting into the Back of the Yards Branch. Instead of wondering how community residents can overcome the obstacles that block their access to the library, we should be wondering why– in the 13 years since the library's co-location– the City of Chicago and CPL has done so little to remove those obstacles when Back of the Yards already faces so many other struggles. Let's leave the treasure maps for the fiction books.



The wall that obscures the library entrance to the public. Photo credit: <https://www.pbcchicago.com/projects/back-of-the-yards-branch-library/>.

Back of the Yards College Prep

With regards to BOYCP, the co-location of the Back of the Yards Branch ended up leaving the high school's students without much needed study spaces and resources. Like most of my classmates, when I started my freshman year at BOYCP, I thought I would be able to access the library from inside the high school *during* school hours. Imagine my surprise when I found out that the doors connecting the high school and the library remained closed 24/7. Dr. Brekke, BOYCP's principal since it opened in 2013, shares that "[BOYCP] tried to reach an agreement with the library so that students would be able to use the library exclusively in the mornings, before the library opened to the general public, but it just wasn't possible." She explains that the library union's policies along with Chicago Public Schools' stringent policies on limiting students' contact with the general public during the school day conflicted too much to make that happen.

According to Dr. Brekke, the original plan for the space that currently houses the Back of the Yards Branch was for BOYCP to have its own separate school library. But because of the co-location, if students want a quiet space to go study or do homework during lunch, they really only have the Media Center- the school's mini, makeshift school library the size of a classroom. "The media center is not a quiet space, though, it's more of a hang out space," Dr. Brekke says, "it would be nice to have a school library for students to have that quiet space much like a college campus." Fitting, considering how "College Prep" is literally in the school's name.



BOYCP's Media Center. Photo credit: Natalia Ballesteros, BOYCP class of 2024

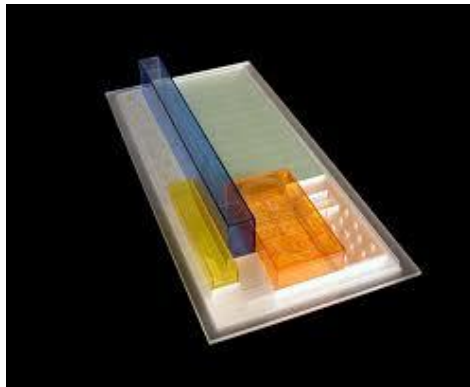
Speaking of college, without an accessible school library, many BOYCP students graduate without knowing how to navigate a campus library or use its resources. When the Back of the Yards Branch was first co-located, [Rahm Emanuel](#) envisioned that "this innovative approach provides... students the critical resources needed to reach their full potential in the digital age." That vision, however, has been anything but realized. Dr. Brekke recalls that, "One year, [an alumni] came back to speak to BOYCP students and they advised students to learn how to use a library because they felt so lost when they got to their campus library, they just had no idea what to do."

Diana Lopez, a current junior at BOYCP and Back of the Yards resident, feels that students would also benefit from having somewhere to go "after school if they need the environment/space to do any of their work. Dr. Brekke seconds this sentiment, sharing that an advantage of having a separate school library is that the school would be able to leave that space open for students to use after school hours. "Right now, you know, students just sit in that corner by the front if they have nowhere to go right after school," she says.

Of course, some BOYCP students do go to the Back of the Yards Branch after school, but that creates a whole other issue. “When BOYCP students would come to the library to use the computers, other people at the library would come up to us– the library staff– and tell us ‘I’ve been waiting for like an hour for a computer can’t you just kick some of the students off the computer?’” Marlene recalls. “I would just have to say, “I understand your frustration, but we can’t just kick people off the computers.” So even though the co-location of the Back of the Yards Library was meant to create a shared space between the high school and the community, the library has become a battleground between students and community residents over the limited number of resources that the library can offer due to its small size.



Limited technological resources at the Back of the Yards Branch. Photo credit: <https://www.pbcchicago.com/projects/back-of-the-yards-branch-library/>.



Urban Model High School Design. Photo credit: <https://www.jrarch.com/urban-model-high-school-prototype>.

Diana put it best when she said, “A community library is more open to everyone, not just students; it provides resources to the community as a whole, while having a school library could focus on resources and needs of the school and the students.” Take Eric Solorio Academy, for example. Solorio is another high school on the Southwest Side of Chicago that actually shares the same architectural design as BOYCP; both schools were built using the [Urban Model High School Design](#). A big difference between these two schools though, is that Solorio does not have a CPL library co-located inside of it. Instead Solorio uses that space for its own

[Solorio Library](#), which offers a suite of resources tailored specifically for students and teachers.

Although the original intention behind the co-location seemed like a great idea for the community, it has since become clear that the library, community, and high school would all benefit from having a public library separate from a school library for BOYCP.



Solorio Library interior. Photo credit: <https://pbcchicago.com/projects/eric-solorio-academy-high-school/>.

Not all CPL libraries are created equal

The Back of the Yards Branch's struggle to serve its community to the fullest extent is not a unique experience among CPL libraries on Chicago's South and West Sides— areas of the city which also tend to have communities with the highest concentrations of [minority and low-income residents](#).

Mitzi points out that CPL has “81 branches, at least one for every Chicago community area.” She herself works in the Brighton Park library on the Southwest Side of Chicago, though she likes to visit other CPL branches across the city as an avid library patron herself. She has noticed that “There are huge differences between libraries on the North and South sides of the city... libraries in the North often get access to new resources, technology, and money first, way before any of that reaches libraries in the South.” In a sense, libraries on the South side are like the younger sibling, always getting stuck with the hand me downs. “The branch I work at was severely understaffed when I first joined,” she continues, “other libraries on the Southside are just way too small, or they're located in old buildings.”

Perhaps one of the most striking and easily observable differences across CPL libraries that Mizti points out is the sizes of different library buildings. Take a look at the [Edgewater Branch](#), for example, which is located in the Edgewater neighborhood on the North Side. The original Edgewater Branch was about 11,000 square feet, though in 2011 it closed down as a \$13.7 million project to build a new building for the library was in the works. In 2013, the new two-story, 6,300 square foot Edgewater Branch opened, boasting a “dividable community room, two smaller study rooms offer flexible uses, from study groups to meeting space for small businesses,” as well as an increase in public technology from 10 computers to 50 desktops and 4 laptops.



Exterior and interior of Edgewater Branch. Photo credits: (Left) <https://pbcchicago.com/projects/edgewater-branch-library/>. (Right) https://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/chicago-public-library-chicago-30?select=KviPpqK7mqGmE8arBChxA.

But what did the Back of the Yards Branch get in 2013? Where was the 6,300 square foot expansion? Where was the \$13.7 million investment in the Back of the Yards Community? Where were the new meeting spaces and the technology that the community desperately needed? All Back of the Yards got was a mediocre, band-aid solution disguised as an “innovative approach;” a quick fix that merely shoved the closed library in a space half as small so that it could be out of sight and out of mind for the City and CPL.

I must admit, until I started writing this piece, I never really questioned why the space that originally housed the Back of the Yards Branch wasn't just repaired after it had flooded. I guess I just assumed that the space was damaged beyond repair or that repairs would have somehow cost more than relocating the library. But just the other day, I walked past the Planet Fitness gym that now stands in the library's exact original location, and I stopped dead in my tracks with the biggest “wait a damn minute” look on my face. You see, that gym has actually been standing there since *at least* 2016. The flood damage clearly must not have been all that devastating if the space could support the full weight of a gym for nearly a decade. I'm not saying that this is a classic case of the City's divestment in the Southwest Side, but that's exactly what I'm saying.



Planet Fitness where the old Back of the Yards Branch used to be. Photo credit: <https://www.homes.com/chicago-il/neighborhood/back-of-the-yards/>.

Relocating the library

Fed up with the injustice Back of the Yards was facing with its library, community members and parents banded together to form [Luchando por la Biblioteca](#) (Fighting for the Library), an advocacy group meant to do just that. In 2020, the group presented Back of the Yards' need for a stand-alone library to Illinois State Representative Theresa Mah, who secured [\\$15 million in state funding](#) for the library. With these funds, City and CPL leaders began looking for a suitable site for a new Back of the Yards Branch, seeking to [engage the community](#) along the way through surveys and neighborhood roundtable meetings. None of the potential sites, however, satisfied the City's latest [requirements for new library locations](#)– the space would have to be at least 16,000 square feet, have space for parking, be near public transit, and not disrupt existing businesses.



Luchando por la Biblioteca with Theresa Mah at a community meeting at Davis Square Park.
Photo credit:
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=3350203531968550&set=g.4362832160460232>.

Stumped by this obstacle, the City and CPL left everyone who eagerly awaited a proposal for a new library in the dark for over a year. [Alma Sigala](#), a parent of the community, shared, “I feel this community is apart. Like forgotten.” [Consuelo Martinez](#), another Back of the Yards parent, expressed, “I’m frustrated all the time... I don’t feel part of this project sometimes.” Sentiments contrary to what city leaders would say about their efforts to involve the community.

This radio silence turned out to be the quiet before the storm. In 2022, the City announced plans to co-locate the new Back of the Yards Branch into the former [Aronson Furniture site redevelopment](#)– a mixed-use development called [Rooted and Rising](#) that the City is supporting to help revitalize the community.

What a genius idea, right, why didn’t we think of co-location before?



Proposed mixed-use development for 46th and Ashland. Photo credit:
<https://chicago.urbanize.city/post/rooted-and-rising-receives-we-rise-together-grant>.

Well, the City and CPL reason that this new co-location will bring a [myriad of benefits](#) to both the library and the community. For one, the site is near 47th and Ashland, so its centrality in the Back of the Yards neighborhood will make it easier for more people to access. Moreover, because the new library will be about 16,000 square feet, the library will have much more “open space, and dedicated parking spaces... [it] will provide a full set of programs and offerings, and will be physically separated from the rest of the development.” Additionally, the mixed-use development includes space for local nonprofits, a theater, and affordable housing units and “mixed-use means more users and activity, which improves safety.” According to [Craig Chico](#), Back of the Yards Neighborhood



Proposed design for the interior of the new Back of the Yards Branch. Photo credit: <https://blockclubchicago.org/2023/04/28/chicago-is-getting-3-new-public-libraries-in-woodlawn-back-of-the-yards-and-humboldt-park/>.

Council (BYNC) President and CEO, the new library would be fully funded if it's included in Rooted and Rising; a stand-alone library would require more financing. Dr. Brekke also believes “the idea of having a community hub in one location is beautiful to me. All of that is missing right now, due to disinvestment in our community.”

Now for the elephant in the room. By far the biggest pushback from the community is that co-locating the library in Rooted and Rising would simply repeat the same kind of issues that the library faced while it was in the high school. Based on her experience seeing how people sometimes mistakenly see public libraries as a secret, exclusive space, Mitzi is concerned that community residents may think that the library is only for the people who will live in the development's residential units and will therefore hesitate to visit. Dr. Brekke also made the point that “there's gonna be a lot going on in that building. [City leaders] have to make sure people feel safe going there, or people are just not gonna go to the library. Safety is always a concern.” On that same note, Back of the Yards resident [Linda Coronado](#) shared that she had trouble accessing the Little Village Branch— another CPL library on the Southwest side— which was also connected to a public housing development. She was also concerned that there had even been a [shooting](#) in that development just a month before the proposal for the new Back of the Yards Branch was announced to the community.

Jasmin Pizano, another Back of the Yards resident and *Luchando por la Biblioteca* member, called attention to the fact that community members worked hard for years to secure the money for the library, so they deserved to be heard and have an independent space for

their library. Even with Craig Chico's comment that having a stand-alone library would require more funding, *Luchando por la Biblioteca* members said they were "willing and ready to find the rest of the funds for an independent library.

11 years in the making *y los que faltan* (and those left to come)

Despite the community members' determination to find a way to get a stand-alone library. The City and CPL left them high and dry for another two years, once again. Back of the Yards would not receive any updates on its library until Wednesday, April 17th, 2024, when the City hosted its final Back of the Yards Roundtable Meeting at the BYNC office on 46th and Ashland. *Luchando por la Biblioteca* members, among many other community members, eagerly attended the meeting to hear updates on the library.

Nolan Zaroff, Lead Planner for Chicago's Department of Planning and Development, Patrick Molloy, CPL Director of Government and Public Affairs, and Matt Mosher, representing Rooted and Rising, lead the section of the meeting on the library. They delivered the news to the community that the City and CPL are officially going through with plans to co-locate the library in Rooted and Rising. They expect the library to be completed by the end of 2025.

"No way." "Absolutely not!" "That's ridiculous!" "There's no way you're going to finish the library in that timeframe," the crowd roared.

After much back and forth between the meeting leaders and community members, a disheartened *Luchando por la Biblioteca* member asked, "So there is no way we can push for a stand-alone library at this point?"

Patrick Molloy responded that the City CPL does not want to delay the project any further. Interesting how they don't want any further delays when it's convenient for them— how they don't want any further delays after delaying their response to the community for over a decade.

A heavy sense of betrayal lingered in the air. The community was ready to continue the fight for a stand-alone library, yet the City and CPL didn't even bother to give them a chance. Another reason why community members felt so alienated from the fruits of their labor, despite the City and CPL's claims of community engagement.

So here we are now: On the one hand, the community was finally getting relocated. On the other hand, the library was simply moving from one co-location to another, like a hermit crab after it outgrows its shell. Only time will tell whether the library has found a permanent home in the community, or whether it will outgrow the new location as well. In the end, I left that meeting holding back a tear or two myself. This was due to the frustration I felt at the City and CPL for continuing to undermine the needs and potential of our community. But mostly, this was due to the intense passion that the *Luchando por la Biblioteca* members brought to the room. Consuelo Martinez de Ferrer has been at the forefront of the fight for a stand alone Back of the Yards Branch from the very beginning, and she made sure to raise the community's voice until the very end.

“¡Pareanse mamás del Barrio!” (“Rise mothers of the community!”)

Over half of the room now stood proudly donning their *Luchando por la Biblioteca* t-shirts.

We are the moms of the neighborhood, with students in different schools: Seward, Hamlin, Daley, Back of the Yards, all the schools. Mr. Patrick, since 2019, we were promised \$15 million for this library. Where are they? Halted! Things happen in our neighborhoods. Crime, violence, fear, we want a safe space for our children. NOW! A place where they can play, learn, and be children so they can be happy. What more do we have to do for the City to heed our calls? The City must turn and face us now, the money is there, put it to work now!

To be continued...



Consuelo Martinez (sitting down, second from the left) and other *Luchando por la Biblioteca* members. Photo credit: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=3350203771968526&set=g.4362832160460232>.