

# Barradas and Partners Architects \_ Clarkson University Library Strategy

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Barradas and Partners Architects have carefully considered the needs and the dreams of the University and we have identified three main goals.

They are: clearly expressing Clarkson's Identity, exploring the idea of Library as Path, and maintaining the ERC's role as a Hybrid Library.



## University Identity

- The new ERC Library should be uniquely Clarkson and communicate those qualities to building users and University visitors.

As stated at [www.clarkson.edu/facts.html](http://www.clarkson.edu/facts.html)

“we are one of the smallest nationally ranked research institutions in the U.S”.

Clarkson's size promotes:

- Interaction between students and faculty
  - Collaborative research across disciplines
  - Flexibility in programs
  - A friendly campus atmosphere
- The current library experiences something of an identity crisis. On the outside it does not communicate that it is a library, much less the library that an institution like Clarkson should have. On the inside it fails to inspire.
  - A library that is an architectural expression of Clarkson would aid in Fund Raising in two ways:  
It would appeal to donors for the library specifically as something uniquely worth

supporting for the University, and worth being remembered for supporting.

It would also appeal to Alumni in the future by promoting awareness of a valuable shared experience at Clarkson, which should be continued.

- Clarkson is a school that values excellence and teamwork. The library should reflect this by promoting interaction between students, faculty and staff in the space of the centrally located Library. The development of an active streetscape in the building will foster the friendly atmosphere that already exists at Clarkson.
- We believe that the library should be designed in such a way to allow the building to be open and lively 24 hours a day, even after the library “closes”.
- Designing the library so that the emphasis is on the exchange of ideas and on continuing the groundbreaking tradition of the electronic hybrid library will increase its ability to portray Clarkson’s identity (a.k.a. “to say ‘Clarkson’ loud and clear”).
- Rather than having a library that makes the University wince, a commons, streetscape centered library would provide a warm place for the campus to gather as a whole, to cross paths, to meet, to browse, to study, to research, to eat, and to socialize.
- The location of the current ERC makes it even easier to promote this library building as an iconic piece of architecture. Sitting at the crossroads of many paths through the campus, it will be seen, passed through and utilized by the entire campus.



- We propose the addition of a 4-part tower to mark the point where the main paths meet the largest of the quads. This would create a stronger sense of the quad as a space, and increase the visibility of the building from around the campus.
- The 4 parts of the tower allow it to frame the meeting of paths in the building without blocking them. Additionally a tower of 4 separate elements allows for a new tradition in library clock towers. Clarkson is a great university and has grown to hold its own against larger institutions. While developing its image, an appropriate balance should be maintained between the clock towers common at other old schools, and something, which can become as recognizable but remains uniquely Clarkson. The 4-part tower allows us to use the imagery and iconography of the clock tower, and to create a distinct identity at the same time.
- The oculus in the tower leaves a void – clear space for the human to view what is normally occluded by the structure of the tower. Thus the architecture speaks of the goals of a science and engineering Research University, which also seeks clarity and openness in that which was formerly opaque.

