A campus steering committee has selected a preferred renovation scenario for Pollak Library that includes making it a cultural and social hub for students, as well as a one-stop shop for faculty teaching and technology needs.

Gili Meerovitch, an architect with Pfeiffer Partners Consulting, the architectural firm on the project, said the damage sustained by the south side of the library after the 2014 earthquake was a key consideration during the planning process.

Under the proposed plan, the first phase would renovate the first, fourth and fifth floors of the south library building and open them along with the south entrance in 2017. The existing architectural footprint of the library will remain intact, without any expansions.

For the past several months, committee members Meerovitch; task force co-chair Amir Dabirian, vice president for information technology; and Interim University Librarian Scott Hewitt have led focus groups and open forums to solicit feedback on the renovation plans. Feedback is still being sought.

“What we really want is for the library to be a social, cultural and technological hub for our students,” Hewitt said. "We have increased the student reader space and collaborative areas, as well as added increased faculty space. This is the most cost efficient and best use of space, and more importantly, allows us to do a faster renovation because we are not trying to expand the building outward at all."

Hewitt said other key elements of the plan include a faculty commons area that would create spaces for instruction and research. The process has already begun on the second floor where the Faculty Development Center, Online Academic Strategies & Instructional Support, and the Academic Technology Center have been relocated to create a one-stop shop for faculty.

The library also is retaining as much of its collection as possible, while reducing its square footage. "While we have reduced the square footage of the collection, we have increased the amount of compact shelving and will have higher density on all of our shelves," said Hewitt.
In addition to seeking further feedback, a cost analysis is expected in the next few months before securing funding for the project. Dabirian said $6 million is expected to come from the California State University Chancellor’s Office to assist with the earthquake repair.

The task force began a visioning process in 2013 based on goals from the CSU Libraries of the Future Task Force and feedback from the campus community. The systemwide initiative is aimed at leveraging technological advances to transform the CSU’s library services. The initiative includes renovating facilities and determining the best use of space.

A Library of the Future website (http://itwebstg.fullerton.edu/loft/) includes the presentation that highlights the work of the committee, the three scenarios that were considered, footprints for each floor renovation and what’s next with the plan.

"The goal is to get the word out to the campus and get as much feedback as we can about the proposed renovation plan," Dabirian said.