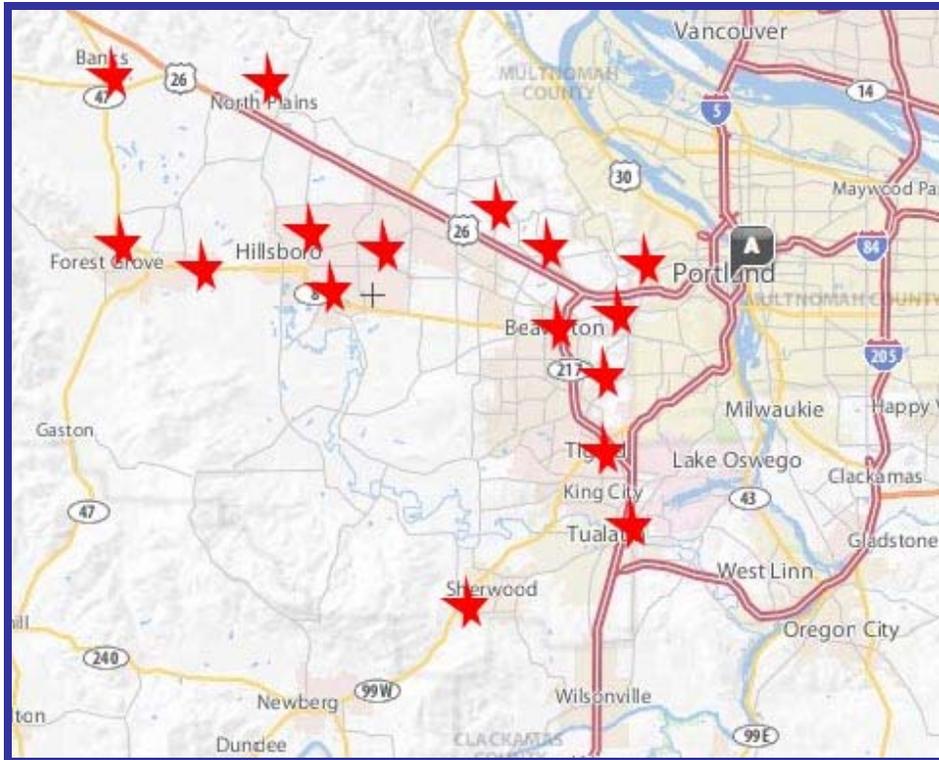


Final Summary Report

WCCLS Strategic Plan: A Shared Vision of Excellence



Presented by Consensus
to the WCCLS Executive Board
and Policy Group,
May 2009.

For more information:
Consensus
www.consensuskc.org
816.531.5078

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A plan shared by all

If all the libraries in Washington County could create their future together, what would it look like? That's what we discovered over the course of meetings in 2008 and 2009.

In the past, WCCLS and its member libraries had created strategic plans that had one set of goals for central services and other goals for member libraries. The 2008-2009 process marked a break from the past, as libraries created county-wide goals that would involve everyone working together. The libraries set out to identify changes that would be the centerpiece of the next local option levy campaign in 2010.

Development of the strategic plan included several steps. They were:

1. Telephone interviews with half of the members of the Executive Board and half of the members of the Policy Group;
2. Research on how Washington County's libraries stack up against the nation, state and Oregon Library Association standards;
3. Online surveys completed by the public and library staff members;
4. Meetings with library staff and volunteer leaders at all Washington County libraries and WCCLS; and
5. A three-hour session with members of the WCCLS Policy Group, which includes all library directors.

This report includes high points from each of these steps, as well as new research conducted on the goal areas selected by WCCLS and its member libraries: technology, accessibility, children's reading, adult services, diversity, and the library as community center.

What did library leaders tell us?

Consensus conducted telephone interviews with library leaders using a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) format.

What does your library do better than its competitors?

These responses were mentioned by at least two persons from either leadership group.

- Be a community center and community builder
- Provide excellent customer service
- Provide free services
- Serve the community
- Provide access to computers and the Internet
- Provide a breadth of resources
- Provide early childhood services
- Offer strong collections

What does your library do worse than its competitors?

- Operate like a business
- Provide easy access to information, particularly online
- Provide a great physical plant
- Promote our services
- Provide reference services

What are the three major external threats facing the libraries of Washington County?

Again, these responses were mentioned by at least two persons in either the Executive Board or Policy Group.

- The local option levy
- Population growth
- The economy Catch-22 (the worse the economy, the greater the demand and the lower the funding)
- Paying to provide good facilities
- Stable funding from city government

What do you see as the three major external opportunities?

- Population growth
- Lots of friends who fund libraries
- Libraries as community centers
- Expansion of library facilities

How do WCCLS libraries compare to the state, the nation & OLA standards?

The most recent national data are for 2005, which was a low-funding year for WCCLS after the failure of a local option levy in 2002, so we also provide 2008 WCCLS figures for comparison.

Library-by-library breakdowns are available in the earlier report, *An Exploration: How should the libraries of Washington County be funded and governed?* It is important to note that the range varies widely from library to library. For example, for 2008 the range of per capita materials expenditure was from \$2.14 in North Plains to \$7.18 in Tualatin, and visits per capita in 2008 ranged from 13.6 in Garden Home to 3.2 in Cornelius.

| | National avg. 2005 | Oregon avg. 2005 | WCCLS avg. 2005 | WCCLS avg. 2008 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Expenditure per capita | \$30.11 | \$40.25 | \$40.11 | \$43.83 |
| Materials expenditure per capita | \$3.99 | \$4.96 | \$4.03 | \$5.04 |
| Volumes per capita | \$2.8 | 2.9 | 2.1 | 2.2 |
| Expenditure per circulation | \$4.34 | \$2.75 | \$2.88 | \$2.62 |
| Visits per capita | 4.6 | 6.1 | 6.6 | 6.9 |
| Circulation per capita | 6.9 | 14.6 | 13.9 | 16.8 |
| Visits per hour | 36.6 | 43.7 | 93.6 | 91.5 |
| Square feet per capita | 0.58 | N/A | | .51 |

Oregon Library Association (OLA) standards provide three measures of a library's quality: threshold, adequate and excellent. Meeting those standards is voluntary and there is no consequence for not meeting them. The county's libraries are below OLA standards for adequate staff, buildings, materials and hours open.

Consensus suggests closing the materials gap by buying (at \$35 each) enough extra materials in a 10-year period to meet the adequate standards. The 2007-08 materials spending was just short of \$2 million, so adding \$609,809 annually would be a major expense. Current staff costs are about \$15 million, so the added \$802,047 for basic level staffing, while substantial, is less an impact than the materials changes. The largest cost would be capital. We calculated 4.5% bonds over 25 years and the standard size building for each community. We also used a very modest \$175 per-square-foot building cost. The total of estimates for meeting standards is more than \$6.5 million per year.

What trends will have the biggest impact on libraries in Washington County?

During a two-week site visit early in 2009, Consensus met with groups assembled by 12 libraries and WCCLS. Each group contained 10-16 persons and typically included the library director, board and Friends members, the mayor and/or city administrator, patrons, and city councilpersons. Each meeting lasted three hours. We began by asking the group to create a mind map of trends that would affect their ability to provide excellent library service to Washington County in 2020. Then they voted on the most important trends. The group then divided into small groups to develop goals and objectives for the three or four trends that got the most votes.

The trends selected as having the biggest impact on the ability of libraries to provide excellent service were:

- New or increasing technology (10 meetings)
- Increased role of library as community center (10 meetings)
- Increasing diversity of all types (4 meetings)
- Increasing pace of change (2 meetings)
- Increased expectations of what libraries provide (1 meeting)
- New ways to get information (1 meeting)
- Increase in children's reading (1 meeting)
- Increased services to the poor (1 meeting)
- Greater need for marketing (1 meeting)
- Accessibility in terms of the number of library buildings and where they're located (1 meeting)

Consensus documented the meetings and provided the goals and objectives to WCCLS.

The public and staff members weigh in via an online survey

Consensus created an online survey that asked people two types of questions: 1) about the values and considerations involved in changing how libraries are funded and governed; and 2) about the ideal role of libraries in Washington County.

We posted one survey for members of the public and another for library staff members. The public survey drew 1,192 responses. Anyone could take the survey; the respondents do not represent a random sample of Washington County residents. The staff

survey drew responses from 81 of the nearly 300 staff members of WCCLS and its member libraries. Again, any staff member could take the survey so the respondents do not represent a random sample of staff members.

Of the members of the public who responded, 73.5 percent were women and 87.3 percent reported their race as white or Caucasian. Asian/Pacific Islanders made up 5.7 percent of respondents and Hispanic/Spanish or Latino included 1.5 percent of the total. Asked where they live, 58.6 percent said in an incorporated city and 31.4 percent said in an unincorporated area. The percent reporting that they visited each library most often was roughly the same as the percent in each library’s service population. About three fourths (76.5 percent) said the library they visited most often was very important to their personal or work lives.

The employees who responded had worked at the library an average of 8.70 years. The majority who answered the survey had been employed five or fewer years, although several reported having been employed more than 20 years. All types of staff members responded: four library directors, 46 other full-time employees, six temporary or substitute employees, and 25 part-time employees. Asked where they lived, 25 percent said unincorporated Washington County, 38.8 percent said an incorporated city, and 35 percent said outside Washington County. The vast majority of respondents said they were white/Caucasian women. The average age was 43.34 years old.

| Which TWO of the possibilities below BEST describes the ideal role of a public library today? | Public Percent (Number) | Staff members Percent (Number) |
|--|--|---|
| Provides online resources and databases | 23.7% (275) | 23.5% (19) |
| Place to check out reading materials | 85.8% (994) | 82.7% (67) |
| Place to do research | 19.8% (229) | 24.7% (20) |
| Place to find entertainment, like music and movies | 22.3% (259) | 13.6% (11) |
| Place to study and read | 12.1% (140) | 14.8% (12) |
| Place to attend programs and cultural events | 8.0% (93) | 17.3% (14) |
| Place to come to community meetings | 2.0 (23) | 1.2% (1) |
| Place to spend time with friends | 0.3% (3) | 0 |
| Place to take my children for events or reading materials | 22.3% (258) | 19.8% (16) |
| None of the above | 0 | 1.2% (1) |

| If you were designing a library for the Washington County of 10 years from now, what would be the most important features for you to include? Please pick the FOUR you think are most important. | Public Percent (Number) | Staff members Percent (Number) |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Entertainment, like music and movies, to check out | 40.1% (461) | 44.4% (36) |
| Reference librarians to answer my questions | 35.8% (411) | 58.0% (47) |
| Online electronic databases | 44.2% (508) | 44.4% (36) |
| Books to check out | 87.2% (1002) | 77.8% (63) |
| Children's play area | 10.4% (120) | 7.4% (6) |
| Viewing and listening stalls for music and movies | 2.0% (23) | 2.5% (2) |
| Places to study and read | 40.1% (461) | 34.6% (28) |
| Places for cultural events and community meetings | 28.7% (330) | 48.1% (39) |
| A space designed specifically for teenagers | 10.7% (123) | 17.3% (14) |
| A coffee shop | 5.7% (66) | 3.7% (3) |
| Small-group study space | 7.1% (82) | 9.9% (8) |
| Self-check feature | 22.0% (253) | 12.3% (10) |
| Check-out of electronic book readers like Kindle | 11.4% (131) | 2.7% (3) |
| Digital access to books | 28.1% (323) | 16.0% (13) |
| Digital access to Washington County historic materials | 10.7% (123) | 7.4% (6) |

| While every library provides some of the same services, like books to check out, libraries can also specialize. Please select the FOUR roles of those listed below that you think are most needed in Washington County. | Public Percent (Number) | Staff members Percent (Number) |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Literacy center, helping people learn English language skills | 42.3% (498) | 58.0% (47) |
| Cultural center, where people can talk about books, art and music | 35.8% (421) | 34.6% (28) |
| A friendly, neutral place for the public to discuss controversial issues | 19.4% (228) | 11.1% (9) |
| Technology center, providing tools people can use to create video and music content | 16.3% (192) | 25.9% (21) |

| | | |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Resource center for small-business owners and entrepreneurs | 20.3% (239) | 9.9% (8) |
| Workforce training center with classes in things like marketing, job searching and presentation | 28.2% (332) | 45.7% (37) |
| Health resource center, with information, flu shots and health fairs | 9.5% (112) | 11.1% (9) |
| School-readiness reading instruction for preschool children and parents | 46.1% (542) | 54.3% (44) |
| Children's center for school-age children | 34.5% (406) | 21.0% (17) |
| Teen center, where teens can get homework help, gather, and play games | 35.0% (412) | 46.9% (38) |
| Community center, with free space for meetings and events | 41.4% (487) | 43.2% (35) |
| Social center, with a café and lounge-like atmosphere for socializing | 14.3% (168) | 9.9% (8) |
| Center for preserving local history | 25.9% (304) | 18.5% (15) |

| What do you consider the one main competitor for libraries? | Public Percent (Number) | Staff members Percent (Number) |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Search engines like Google | 27.8% (321) | 37.5% (30) |
| YMCA, churches or other community organizations | 1.0% (11) | 1.3% (1) |
| Bookstores, video and music stores | 26.6% (308) | 28.8% (23) |
| Online sales and rentals like Amazon and Netflix | 18.3% (211) | 15.0% (12) |
| Online downloads like iTunes | 1.2% (14) | 0 |
| Coffeeshops or other places with Internet access where you can work | 4.2% (48) | 5.0% (4) |
| I don't know | 21.0% (243) | 12.5% (10) |

What should the strategic plan include?

In March 2009, Consensus met with Policy Group and WCCLS staff members to create a strategic plan. Participants selected the trends to address, and split into small groups to create plans for four trends. In each small group, participants reviewed the goals and objectives created during the earlier site visit, looking for themes. They discussed what the trend area would include, described what victory would look like if they successfully dealt with that trend, and created goals and objectives.

Trends

The group voted on nine trends from the earlier site visit, and added one new one.

| Trend | Policy Group | WCCLS staff |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| Technology | 8 | 3 |
| Accessibility (siting, urban unincorporated, more bldgs.) | 7 | 3 |
| Children's reading | 5 | 3 |
| Adult services (new) | 5 | 3 |
| Diversity | 4 | 3 |
| Community center | 3 | |
| "Virtual assistance" and "New ways to get information" were moved to technology | | |

The group said it would deal with the library as community center at a later time, and that it would ask the Youth Services Committee to address the trend of children's reading.

Technology

Themes from library meetings in January 2009

- People want both old and new (technology and books)
- Disintermediation technology: Haves versus have nots
- Expanding access through technology
- Materials handling technology
- Anticipating change
- Library technology (technology used to access library services)
- Public technology (technology public wants to access through library for other-than-library services)
- Instruction in technology

What does victory look like?

- Experience is seamless and consistent
- Heightened self-service
- Filling need/request on demand
- Ongoing education element for teaching technology skills
- Libraries expose communities to cutting-edge technologies
- Staff have time/energy to learn new technology
- Technology services are individualized for each patron
- Staff has time/expertise to serve technology needs

The following chart shows the goals and objectives for this trend.

Technology goals and objectives

| Goal | 2010-2012 | 2013-2016 | 2017-2020 |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p><i>Goal One</i> Haves and have-nots have sufficient access to technology</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install wireless in all libraries • Laptops and other devices available for checkout • Explore thin client applications • WCCLS and individual libraries create technology plans • Add more desktop computers • Training for patrons in individual libraries • Trainer who goes to libraries | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vendor negotiations | | |
| <p><i>Goal Two</i> Seamless online catalogue experience</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online catalogue looks the same from home or library • Federated search • FEBR | | |
| <p><i>Goal Three</i> Training needed to help public</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for central staff • Training at library levels | | |
| <p><i>Goal Four</i> Automated materials handling</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely return to shelves • Get agreement from everyone | |
| <p><i>Goal Five</i> Patrons are more self-sufficient</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrons handle holds online • 60 percent of patrons use self checkout, renewal, pay fines online | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 percent of patrons use self checkout, renewal, pay fines online |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <i>Goal Six</i> Reduce barriers to social technology (so that libraries can blog, etc.) | | | |
| <i>Goal Seven</i> Pipeline for seamless provision of cutting-edge technology | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build out technology infrastructure• Provide ways for have-nots to get technology• Become “public broker” of content |

Research resources related to technology

Technology has become an integral part of how libraries do business today. Staying on top of technology requires both a commitment on the part of staff and on the part of the funding sources in the community. An interesting point about this was found in the MIT Libraries Annual Report FY 2007-2008, Technology Planning and Administration [<http://libraries.mit.edu/about/annual/ar08/technology.html>]. The report says that staying ahead of all this change is no longer possible, but becoming more flexible and responsive to it is.

Is there a good planning model for changing technology?

There are many excellent planning models available that could be easily adapted to be used as a planning model for changing technology or any other planning focus that WCCLS might choose. In addition to the planning models that are part of the PLA *Planning for Results* series, research turned up interesting methods used by Polk County in Florida and the State of Pennsylvania.

Polk County – budgeting for outcomes

The Polk County process is detailed in *A Model for Engaging Citizens in Choosing Budget Priorities: Budgeting for Outcomes to Managing for Results*.

Property tax reform in the State of Florida brought with it many challenges for local governments across the state. Within Polk County, legislators and citizens told county officials that they wanted property tax relief. For the County, this meant a projected loss of \$74 million in revenue over two fiscal years.

Polk County took this challenge seriously and researched ways to balance the budget while balancing the needs of the community with reduced revenue. They found that that some budgeting techniques, such as across-the-board cuts, were not practical for them. Because the reductions in revenues and associated cuts were permanent, reducing all services did not make sense. To handle program/service reductions, they needed an innovative approach that focused on prioritizing the services provided to citizens.

Research led Polk County staff members to budgeting for outcomes (BFO). The concept was almost too simple. Set the priorities of government and buy the results that citizens value (at a price they are willing to pay). The Florida legislature initiated property tax reform and citizens voted for the reforms, which dictated the price citizens were willing to pay for government. The local government was responsible, then, for establishing the priorities of government and then “buying” the results that offered the biggest bang for the buck based on the desired outcomes.

BFO provides for a transparent budgeting process which truly involves citizens in each step. [Source: Alliance for Innovation – a program being offered at their 2009 conference. See their website www.transformgov.org/]

Additional information about budgeting for outcomes can be found on the following websites:

www.psg.us/reinvention/pogbforeinvent.html

www.dlc.org/ndol_ci.cfm?contentid=252574&kaid=125&subid=162

The State of Pennsylvania

The State of Pennsylvania has developed a workforce development planning model (*A Planning Model for Workforce Development*) that can be adapted. See: Case Study: Pennsylvania's Changing Workforce: Planning Today with Tomorrow's Vision. by Helton, Kimberly A., Soubik, John A., Public Personnel Management, 00910260, Winter 2004, Vol. 33, Issue 4.

Some of the review steps used in the model are

1. Analyze agency mission, goals and initiatives;
2. Determine future work requirements;
3. Analyze current resources and projections;
4. Perform high-level workforce gap analysis;
5. Develop proposed organizational plan;
6. Perform detailed skill gap analysis;
7. Create workforce solution action plan;
8. Implement workforce solution action plans;
9. Measure workforce-planning results and recommend improvements.

Additional readings

- *Challenges and strategies for evaluating networked information services: introduction by Charles R. McClure.* The Library Quarterly, Volume 74 Number 4 (October 2004): 399–402.
- *The New Planning for Results: a streamlined approach* by Sandra Nelson. ALA Editions, 2001.
- *Inside, Outside, and Online: Building Your Library Community* by Chrystie Hill. ALA Editions, 2009.

What would be the benchmarks for victory in this area?

There are many methods for analyzing issues and developing the needed benchmarks. A couple of examples are easily available to WCCLS, including:

- *Managing for Results: Effective Resource Allocation for Public Libraries* by Sandra Nelson, Ellen Altman & Diane Mayo.
- An excellent benchmark report generator on the State of Oregon website could be easily adapted to this topic. The generator can be found at <http://benchmarks.oregon.gov/>

What are good models for training staff and the public?

There are several models for training staff members and the public in use of the latest technology. Among them are:

- WebJunction (www.webjunction.org.) has a variety of training opportunities for staff. The organization is surveying librarians to evaluate their current competency level with technology. WCCLS should be alert to the results when they are published.
- The Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County in North Carolina has developed several training modules, which they have generously shared with other libraries. Information about this can be found in the article “The C’s of Our Sea Change: Plans for Training Staff, from Core Competencies to LEARNING 2.0.” by Helene Blowers and Lori Reed in the February 2007 issue of *Computers in Libraries*.
- Several articles in the April 2006 Public Services Quarterly are germane to this topic. They included “Library Staff Competencies” by Beth Thomsett-Scott, p197-198, which provides information on the web site Library Staff Competencies, and “Changes in Library Technology and Reference Desk Statistics: Is There a Relationship?” by Beth Thomsett-Scott and Patricia E. Reese, p143-165, 23p.
- The March April 2007 issue of Library Technology Reports, volume 43, focused on evaluating staff competencies in using technology.
- *Core Technology Competencies for Library*, a new publication from Neal-Schumann, edited by Susan M. Thompson, is the 15th publication in the Library and Information Technology Association (LITA) Guide series. That series focuses on the core technology skills necessary for librarians and aims to aid libraries in evaluating their employees in this area. The beginning of the book addresses general competencies for all library staff members, with later sections focused on skills for library technical managers. The final portion of the book contains three case studies of academic and public libraries, with appendices providing core

competency lists, personnel assessment checklists, job descriptions, and training curricula.

- *Competencies: Do We or Don't We?* in Library Tech Reports, March – April 2007, pp. 14 – 19, (www.techsource.ala.org) discusses the benefits of core competencies and training for library staff.

One unanswered question for WCCLS as well as all public libraries is, as the public becomes more sophisticated in the use of technology in their daily lives, how will the library know that a public training component is no longer needed?

What community partners currently exist to help the library achieve these technology goals?

Possible partners include adult basic education groups, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, AARP and other retiree organizations, sororities and fraternities, companies and government agencies that encourage community service, and high-school students performing community service as part of their curriculum.

In the February 2008 Computers in Libraries, pp. 32-34, Rachel Singer Gordon and Jessamyn West’s monthly column “Tech Tips for Every Librarian” contains excellent information on helpful community partners.

Another source of good information is Chapter 10 of the *Staying Connected Toolkit* available from WebJunction. Here is an example from the toolkit:

| Organization | Benefit to Organization | Benefit to Library |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Kiwanis Club | Use of library facilities for meetings or events. | Members provide volunteer support to the library and approach local officials on behalf of the library. |
| Community College | Space provided for distance learning classes or library posts information about courses. | College coordinates student volunteers to help patrons with computers. |
| “Adopt a Computer” | Library displays the business name and/or logo on the computer. | The sponsoring business funds necessary upgrades for the computer that it adopts. |

A number of libraries have used community partners to analyze and develop library technology or to train staff members and the public. In particular, they have involved computer companies and four-year and community colleges.

Accessibility

Themes from library meetings in January 2009. What does “accessibility” mean?

- Buildings
- Service delivery
- Hours
- Outreach
- Bookmobile
- County-wide
- Market penetration
- Technology – wireless and 24/7 delivery
- Libraries or library services where people are

What does the victory for accessibility look like?

- All of Washington County residents know about library services and have easy access to them.
- Market penetration reaches 70 percent or grows by X percent.
- Kids in rural areas can get to the library or bookmobile every week.
- Kids in migrant camps can get to a library.
- Early literacy
- Adults find materials to help them do things like get jobs or fix their cars.
- Majority of residents think of the library as the first place to go for information and entertainment.
- Language is not a barrier to using materials or services.
- Disabilities are not a barrier to using materials or services.
- Transportation is not a barrier.
 - There is a library or outlet within walking distance
 - There is a library or outlet within 15 minutes
 - Convenient public transit to get to the library
- Delivery options for homebound and child care centers
- Mail service for a fee (as a convenience service)
- Access 24/7 online
- Hours – open 7 days a week with hours convenient to users

Accessibility goals and objectives

| Goal | 2010-2012 | 2013-2016 | 2017-2020 |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <p><i>Goal One</i> WCCLS and member libraries use the levy campaign to increase awareness of current and future services.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the newsletter, which is mailed to all. • Use market data to customize articles for the newsletter. | | <p><i>The goal is achieved...</i></p> |
| <p><i>Goal Two</i> Libraries have materials and staff members who provide services in the majority of languages spoken by people in the service area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Census data to find out about patrons. • WCCLS – budgets for materials. • Get support from decision-makers to serve ESL folks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have diverse staff members countywide. | |
| <p><i>Goal Three</i> People in rural and currently underserved areas have regular access to library services.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options for collections in rural areas, such as fire stations and with community agencies. • Explore ways to reach rural, etc., areas electronically. • Increase the use of downloadable books, movies, etc., and rent devices that use them. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a bookmobile, mail, library kiosks at transit stations and shopping malls. | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p><i>Goal Four</i> People who have trouble getting to the library (disabled, child care users, homebound, migrant families, people without transportation options) will have access to library services.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create deposit collections for child care facilities. • Provide training and programs for child care facilities. • Identify agency partners. • Lobby for transportation options. • Increase marketing of homebound services to residential and health-care facilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use bookmobiles to provide service to migrant camps. • Use school buses to bring children to libraries. • Create agreement with TriMet – kids can use the library card to get on a bus. | |
| <p><i>Goal Five</i> County-wide plan for siting new facilities so that Washington County residents fit the OLA standards for distance to a library.</p> | | | |
| <p><i>Goal Six</i> Library space is available for meetings and socializing.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for warehousing and storing materials, freeing up space for programs. | |
| <p><i>Goal Seven</i> Every library meets OLA standards for excellence in terms of hours open.</p> | | | |

Research resources related to accessibility

Questions about how best to serve the rural areas of Washington County, especially children and workers living in migrant camps, arose frequently during the onsite discussion with Consensus. The Consensus research team conducted research in an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are some models for providing library services to residents, especially children, in rural areas and migrant camps?
2. What best practices exist for eliminating mobility barriers for library service?
3. Beyond the traditional options for overcoming mobility barriers, what methods should WCCLS use to identify and analyze other kinds of options not currently listed?

Two organizations can be useful sources of information for WCCLS, including the American Bookmobile and Outreach Services Association, which merged several years ago with the Association of Rural Libraries, and the Office of Literacy and Outreach Services of the American Library Association, which tracks how other communities are providing services in rural areas.

Overall, though, information was difficult to find. Our research did unearth some interesting ideas for WCCLS to consider, including:

- Providing service to rural areas via a bookmobile is becoming less popular in the United States as libraries examine the cost of operating the service in the face of budget cuts, but is an increasingly popular way of providing service in nations in Africa and Eastern Europe where library service has been rare or nonexistent.
- LISNews, a blog of news information about libraries (www.lisnews.org) is an excellent source of information from news articles and blogs about bookmobile and rural library service. An interesting example of the links is this one about the BiblioService Bus in the Netherlands.

From Bookmobile to BiblioServiceBus

April 28, 2006 - 2:39am — birdie

Anonymous Patron writes "Libraries and other services are having a hard time keeping up their service levels. The BiblioServiceBus is a Dutch initiative whereby a number of organizations and services joined forces to offer the inhabitants a much wider service than just borrowing books. From banking services to health information to reporting small crimes to the police. It's all part of the BiblioServiceBus."

Adult Services

At its March 2009 planning session, the Policy Group added the new category of adult services. This category includes:

- Educational classes
- Cultural programs
- Coffee talk – book discussions
- Continuing education and life-long learning
- Collection development
- ESL language learners
- Reference and readers’ advisory
- Gathering place for civic engagement
- “Boomer” program – older adults in transition
- Meeting space
- Large print and other materials for older folks
- Volunteer opportunities
- Technology
- Recreational – fun stuff

What does victory for adult services look like?

- 80% of adult user population in Washington County uses the library for themselves.
- More adults vote for the levy.
- Libraries develop services to fit the Boomer lifestyles.
- Libraries have resources available in formats adults need.
- Quality of life
- Wait less time for popular books – 3 weeks, not 6 months
- Library is a gathering place.
- More than just books
- Nontraditional reasons to visit the library, such as...
 - Social events that draw people who’ve never set foot in a library
 - Music and movies and authors
- Partner with local agencies
- Use technology to reach adults, such as user-friendly websites with appropriate content.
- In-house readers’ advisory

Adult services goals and objectives

| Goal | 2010-2012 | 2013-2016 | 2017-2020 |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <p><i>Goal One</i> Every library has accessible meeting and social space.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find meeting space near the library (to supplement space available in a library). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use warehousing to free space for meetings. • Meeting spaces equipped with technology. | <p><i>The goal is achieved.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Goal Two</i> Know what adults want by conducting market research.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop range of adult services. • Develop means to evaluate services. | | |
| <p><i>Goal Three</i> Readers' advisory services are available at every library.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members are trained to use readers' advisory tools. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a group that communicates about adult programs, like there is for youth services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Investigate shared programming. ○ Libraries provide administrative support to program coordinators. ○ Investigate county-wide programs, like summer reading (but less intensive). | |

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| <p><i>Goal Four</i> Libraries provide the resources and tools that individuals need to pursue their own continuing education.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide classroom instruction on the latest technology. • Provide interactive test materials for practice and for job-seeking skills. | | |
| <p><i>Goal Five</i> Libraries offer as many adult as youth programs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out what programs adults want. • Find out what programs are available in the county. | | |
| <p><i>Goal Six</i> Libraries offer websites that adults are comfortable using, and can find what they need within two levels.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redo countywide website to make more intuitive for users. | | |
| <p><i>Goal Seven</i> The increase in adult users translates to increase in advocates for libraries.</p> | | | |

Research related to adult services

Like children's services, there is a body of literature and practice about public library services for adults. Recently, the literature has emphasized service to older adults, new immigrants, the homeless, the business community, and the unemployed. The types of services often provided are programming focused on cultural and literary topics, including book discussion groups, film and musical presentations, and author visits.

Sometimes libraries have partnered with groups in the community to provide expanded programming on topics like gardening, financial investment, and home repairs. Today, technology is an important component of programming, with libraries taking the literary offerings to their webpage via blogging, video streaming and OPAL, to name just a few examples.

WCCLS and its member libraries will want to consider how to answer several questions related to adult services.

What tools can WCCLS use to measure success?

Several models mentioned earlier would be helpful to WCCLS in measuring the success of library services to adults. An additional resource to consider is *The Evaluation and Measurement of Library Services* by Joseph R. Matthews. Libraries Unlimited, 2007.

What are best practices for library services to adults?

Several examples include partnerships:

- **Laramie County Library System, Wyoming**, was *Library Journal's* Library of the Year 2008. Some of the many agencies and organizations with which LCLS has formed alliances include the Wyoming State Museum, Old West Museum, Laramie County Head Start, Stride Learning Center, Cheyenne Animal Shelter, YMCA, Cheyenne Boys and Girls Club, Cheyenne Lions Club, Cheyenne Rotary Club, Cheyenne Eye Clinic, Starbucks, Cheyenne Women's Civic League and Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Online profiles of *Library Journal's* libraries of the year show that what they have in common is great collaborations as evidence of a strong and valued community library.
- **Nashville Public Library** and its community partners provide a constant stream of programs in literacy, culture, public affairs, education, design and local history. Partners include the Vanderbilt Symphony, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Nashville Kurdish Association, the Women's Bar Association and the Intermuseum Council. To educate the community about the significant role that Nashville citizens played

in the civil rights movement, the library built a Civil Rights Room and presents programs with the National League of Cities, Fisk University, the First Baptist Church, the First Amendment Center and the Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation. According to the Tennessee state librarian, the Nashville Public Library is “a diverse and welcoming activity hub and a center for public discourse...The library is committed to building strategic community partnerships and responsive public programs that enhance the lives of all residents of the Nashville community. It demonstrates the power of libraries to inform and bring communities together.”

- **The Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library** was recognized by IMLS for its Books to Go project, which delivers books monthly to more than 7,000 preschool-aged children through Head Start programs and other similar venues; its extensive menu of monthly special events featuring presentations by historians, novelists, economists, and journalists; and its kid-friendly Once Upon a Time exhibit and related programming that took place in winter 2008. (www.kclibrary.org)
- **The Princeton Public Library** in New Jersey is known for its out-of-the-box approach to partnerships. Janie Herman of the staff shared some of their ideas as part of a WebJunction discussion on unconventional partnerships. One of the partnerships is with local theaters to provide previews and pre-performance lectures or “meet the cast” sessions prior to the show opening. The library has teamed with the local arts council to create an art gallery in the reference section. They change the installation every three months and feature the works of two artists per show. When the installation is complete, the library hosts an Art Talk with the artists — the library provides food, the arts council brings wine and it is, according to Herman, a classy night. Another unique partnership is with a local Italian restaurant, which pays the public performance rights for the library’s Italian film series and then hosts a reception at the restaurant after the films, a popular series with Princeton’s large Italian community.
(www.webjunction.org/partnerships/)

Two more resources worth pursuing:

- **Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki.** This wiki was created to be a one-stop shop for great ideas and information for all types of librarians (www.libsuccess.org).
- **Best Practices for the Customer-Focused Library.** The Metropolitan Library System in Illinois, in partnership with four member libraries, wrote an

LSTA grant to bring in a nationally recognized retail space-consulting firm to help understand the changing needs of library patrons. The report can be found at www.webjunction.org/interpersonal/articles/content/8052613 .

Should partnerships be formal or informal?

Public libraries have a long history of creating informal partnerships and are very comfortable doing so. Most articles and information sources do recommend a more formal relationship that spells out the expectations for both parties. Again, WebJunction has excellent information about the “hows” and “whys” of forming the partnerships (www.webjunction.org/partnerships/). Some of the recommendations include:

- Conduct a needs assessment. It is important for you to really examine your community and see how the library can best meet the needs of its members. Evaluate your library and community goals, and incorporate existing strategic plans based on community needs. Envision what your library could be in the future to consciously make the choices to get you there.
- Examine the opportunities to see what is working well and what services are most used and valued by your community. For example, are there long lines for computers or people wanting to share computers, such as teens or families? What could be done to support this service?
- Build sustainability to support your programs and projects into the future.
- Look locally for partners that will help make an impact.
- Determine if there is strategic alignment. Will the collaboration help fulfill the library’s mission and goals? Find common ground between the library and community organizations that can help with implementation of library services and goals.
- Focus on the cause and the people — whether it concerns literacy, children, unemployment, etc. Be careful to not get caught up in focusing on how the individual organizations could benefit, but on what you can accomplish together to serve your community members.
- Specify shared goals and rewards that your partnerships will foster.
- Use open communication; share timetables and have periodic meetings to share information with your partners.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities in any collaboration.
- Ensure the ability to make necessary decisions for situations that arise.

- Consider what your library has to offer and how you can better reach out to your community.
- Complete a SWOT analysis. Determine the library's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the threats and opportunities in the community.
- Examine the implications of sharing resources.
- Consider the chances of success for each partnership.
- Create a memorandum of understanding for collaboration that clearly communicates what is expected of the collaboration and what the responsibilities are. Use a detailed, signed agreement that confirms expectations in writing.

Diversity

Themes from library meetings in January 2009:

- Raising awareness of culture
- Interaction between patrons
- Language services
- Disabled-special needs
- Diverse staff
- Serving low-income and at-risk populations
- Anticipate growing need
- Different needs of aging
- Diversity within groups (varying needs of seniors – some like technology and others don't)
- They come to us AND we go to them
- Education about libraries
- Countywide plan for responding to at-risk populations (homeless, parolees, incarcerated, at-risk teens)
- Other agencies recognize the library as part of the solution
- Staff is prepared to handle diversity

What would victory in the area of diversity look like?

- Increased market penetration across diverse groups
- Staff at every library reflects the diversity it serves
- Collection reflects diversity
- Cultural interaction and learning is taking place
- Distance to a facility is not a barrier
- Libraries have technology needed for use by special needs populations who use libraries
- Successful marketing campaign – culturally tailored, wide awareness
- Tech savvy and non-savvy folks are all comfortable

Diversity goals and objectives

| Goal | 2010-2012 | 2013-2016 | 2017-2020 |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p><i>Goal One</i> Diverse staff</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with community groups for recruitment • Cross-train current staff • Give more weight to language in hiring – adjust selection criteria (for all libraries) | <p>(short to long term)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring • Encourage diverse library school entrants • Educational support for advanced training |
| <p><i>Goal Two</i> Diverse programming for all ages</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate diversity through programming • Tailoring programs to diverse groups • Build partnerships with community • Recruit volunteers • Market opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build sustainability through staff, dedicated funding | |
| <p><i>Goal Three</i> Begin planning for a county plan for diversity</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to social service agencies about needs • Train staff on how to work with a diverse population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plan (after levy) | |
| <p><i>Goal Four</i> Different needs of the aging</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encore careers • Programming that targets aging • Quality volunteer opportunities | | |

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| <i>Goal Five</i> Countywide plan for special needs | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff training• Adaptive equipment• Marketing• Outreach to assisted care, etc. | |
| <i>Goal Six</i> Interagency cooperation –partnership with social service and justice agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referrals to other agencies | | |

Research related to diversity

In a preface to their report *Cultural Diversity: How public libraries can serve the diversity in the community*, authors Jens Ingemann Larsen, Deborah L. Jacobs and Ton van Vlimmeren opened with this thought: “Cultural diversity is a rapidly growing aspect of society all around the world. It also creates a great challenge for libraries that must adjust their services to meet changing patron groups and demands.” That statement has become even more true since the report was published in 2004.

Are there existing models in the library community that could be adapted to Washington County?

The September 2008 issue of *Criticas* reports that a “Study of Latinos and Libraries Suggest Ways to Draw More Users” by Norman Oder, p.66. According to the study, “More Latinos than previously assumed use public libraries in the United States, according to a new study, *Latinos and Public Library Perceptions*, sponsored by WebJunction in partnership with 40 state libraries and conducted by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI). It also recommends how to draw more Latinos to libraries.”

Three of the study’s recommendations have relevance to other non-English speaking populations and are worth considering by WCCLS. “While Latinos in the United States generally hold positive perceptions of libraries and value the availability of Spanish-language materials, more important is service. *Latinos and Public Library Perceptions* recommends that library workers get to know the local Latino community, to understand demographic diversity. Also, advertising in Spanish or via Spanish-language media should stress that the library is a place to learn English, via English-learning materials and children's programs....Since only 47 percent of Latinos who use the library for Internet access have such access at home or work, the availability of public access computers should be stressed. Finally, given that foreign-born Spanish-speakers – about half the adult Latino community – may worry that libraries reveal personal information, the report advises libraries to stress confidentiality in library public relations materials and also in Spanish-language signs and posters.”

Are there existing programs for achieving diversity of staffing and services in a library environment?

Although the focus of the research is academic libraries, *Culturally conscious organizations; a conceptual framework*, by Paula M. Smith, is worth reading. It suggests that libraries that are aware of cultural differences are able to provide more effective service. “Without effective skills for communicating and partnering across differences,

organizations tend to marginalize the people who are most different from the dominant group." Cultural competency is needed so that diversity can be understood, accepted, and respected. (Smith, P. M. (2008). [Culturally conscious organizations: a conceptual framework](#), a copy of which can be found on the Project Muse website at <http://muse.jhu.edu/>)

What strategies for recruiting a diverse staff do other libraries use?

One good source for information is the Diversity Blog at <http://dtui.com/diversityblo>. In addition, the Center for Cultural Diversity in aging (www.culturaldiversity.com) lists a number of recommendations on their website worth noting, among them:

- Consider the cultural and linguistic needs of your service recipients and the demographics of the community when recruiting new staff.
- Ensure that the recruitment policy promotes cultural diversity and the recruitment of culturally and linguistically diverse staff.
- Ensure the recruitment process and the selection criteria as documented in the position description do not discriminate against or disadvantage people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Consider a flexible approach to the recruitment process to engage a broader range of applicants.
- Demonstrate a commitment to cultural diversity in all position descriptions.
- Advertise vacancies in ethnic media and disseminate through community organizations via their leaders, members and venues.
- Invite community representatives to participate in the recruitment process.
- Ensure all staff responsible for recruitment and who sit on interview panels are trained in cultural awareness, appropriate communication and non-discriminatory recruitment practices.

The Center also lists education and development recommendations for current staff:

- Provide all staff and managers with ongoing development opportunities to enhance their knowledge of culturally inclusive practices and their responsibility in implementing culturally appropriate services.

- Regularly assess the knowledge and skills of staff in relation to the provision of culturally appropriate services, and use this assessment when developing a training plan.
- Include a cultural diversity component in all staff orientation.
- Integrate cultural diversity training into existing training programs.
- Encourage staff to learn a second language as part of their education and development program.
- Review training and assessment programs for cultural bias.
- Ensure that all staff is trained in cultural awareness and appropriate communication.

The Library as Community Center

At almost every meeting in the community, people said they wanted their libraries to be community centers. They talked about the physical space and the role that libraries play in the civic, social and economic life of the community. While there was not time in March for the Policy Group to create a plan for this strategic area, we wanted to provide background information that would be useful when the Policy Group addresses it.

How can libraries build up the “third place” aspect of libraries?

Participants in our discussions in Washington County repeatedly told us they saw the potential for libraries to act as “third places” in their communities. By this, they generally referred to Ray Oldenburg’s concept of a place outside the home and workplace where people gather informally to have conversations and feel part of the community. Since Washington County residents show a great desire to add third-place qualities to new libraries that many be built in the future, it’s educational to look at some of the research and anecdotal evidence about how a library could maximize its potential to serve this vital community role.

What a third place is, and is not

Although many people believe libraries serve as third places already, by Oldenburg’s precise definition most fall short. Oldenburg’s classic third places – coffee shops, pubs or Main Streets – are places where people can relax, socialize and learn about local events. While libraries do put an emphasis on housing meetings and hosting events, they less often encourage the type of informal and even boisterous atmosphere Oldenburg finds critical to a successful third place.

This is, in part, because many of the older libraries in our communities were not built to encourage either conversation or informality. Early libraries in Europe and the United States were built as “temples of scholarship,” according to Geoffrey Freeman. Designers used stained glass, curved oak and marble statues to invoke an atmosphere of quiet thought and individual reflection. When we were children, librarians told us to be quiet in the library. How, then, can we create modern libraries that really do have the potential to become third spaces in their communities?

To meet Oldenburg’s criteria, libraries will need to be built to attract a crowd of regulars who come together day after day (or, more importantly, night after night) to share boisterous conversations, engage in political debate and act more like the customers of Cheers, the bar, than the stereotypical silent library user.

Many library staff members may be comfortable with the concept of a library as a community living room, or a place where books are collected and individuals come to read and conduct research. But many experts on public space and librarians who hope to make their facilities the center of community life envision a different role – the library as the front porch. There are several steps libraries can take to perform as informal community centers.

Redefine the role of the library in your community.

Most likely, as the community begins to discuss renovating or building a new library, there will be those who say libraries are no longer needed. We now have the Internet and online bookstores and Google searches, so the need for a physical place called a library is eliminated. Each community will need to have this conversation, as so many have over the past ten years.

Part of the redefinition requires that, to become a true third place, a library will have to find ways to encourage informal gathering and discussion. They can do this in the following ways:

- Many libraries are incorporating coffee shops into their buildings to provide a warmer and more informal atmosphere.
- Libraries that strive to become third places will become less focused on housing books and spend more time developing flexible, comfortable spaces where people can gather and talk.
- Think about how the library can house space vital to your community. In Kentucky, a new library might also become a gathering spot for local quilters who are preserving a tradition. In Nashville, musicians might gather for jam sessions. In Washington County, high-tech workers just moving to town might find a coffee shop where they could meet their counterparts. Or libraries could host monthly gatherings of entrepreneurs who want to share ideas with fellow inventors.

Give the community a key role in designing the library.

Bring library staff, planners and patrons together to share ideas about how to use space.

- If you really want to foster community communication, think about housing a local radio station or building a studio where your patrons can create local content for a television public access channel. Some libraries have incorporated art-house movie theaters or theater spaces into their new designs.
- When your building committee starts its work, get local input early and often. Hold public meetings and offer the community opportunities to submit ideas

- online. Interview all key stakeholders to get the overall picture of how your library can serve your community.
- Bring the business community into planning. Some libraries are developing retail spaces within their walls, which can drive traffic to the library. Also think about what services the library can provide to people looking for jobs, or small businesses operating in your community. By incorporating their needs into your new space, you amplify your new library's role as a business hub.
 - Work with your city to build in the type of meeting space that will foster connections with local political and civic issues.

Locate the library in a place that is centrally located and easily accessible.

Cities across the nation have begun to understand the role of libraries as economic development tools. They want facilities to be designed to provide community meeting spaces, and areas where businesses, jobseekers and various political interests can come together. Library planners are thinking about how the library can become a physical gathering place and community anchor.

- Libraries are incorporating lively gathering spaces into new design. These include spaces for public proclamations, celebrations and festivals.
- Libraries located near and even incorporating museums, public art spaces, historical and cultural exhibits and performance spaces foster further nearby economic development, which will attract more potential library patrons.
- Libraries in cities with light rail or other popular transit systems are making sure new facilities are sited along transit routes. As cities focus on walkable and bikeable environments, your building committee will also want to think about where to locate new facilities to serve these purposes.

Make sure the new building meets the needs of community organizations.

If you want to bring the community into the library, make sure to include community organizations, city officials and educational leaders in planning for a new building. They can help your building committee focus in on how to create meeting spaces, display areas and other features that will ensure your library will be a key space where people will want to gather.

- The new informal and collective style of education requires students to have access to rooms where they can create multi-media projects, yet few communities have this type of space available. A new library with this type of meeting space would be a big draw for high school and college students. Draw from the examples of academic libraries that are developing "Information Commons"

- where students can work on group projects, check out projectors, white-boards, and other equipment to help them prepare presentations and develop proposals.
- Community organizations are often desperate for informal meeting spaces where larger groups can meet and break down into smaller groups for productive discussions. Planning for this type of activity can position a new library as a frequent destination for involved citizens.
 - Pay attention to acoustics. Meetings become unintelligible in reverberant rooms, which will frustrate the growing numbers of active older people who might otherwise use the space.
 - When they designed their new public library, Salt Lake City planners located it right next door to City Hall, both a symbolic and physical connection between civic life and the library.
 - Information about health care draws many infrequent library users into your building. Think about ways to design space where health care providers can present informational seminars and conduct support group activities. Partner with a health care provider to host regular blood pressure checks, flu shots, blood drives, etc.

Plan for adequate virtual space for community development.

Any new library building committee should consider the technology requirements for creating a thriving virtual community space. As social networking becomes increasingly popular and successful in building online communities, your future plans should incorporate strategies for fostering a rich virtual environment for expanding local social capital.

- When thinking about building new library space, make sure you have a committee study and make recommendations for how blogs, wikis, local user feedback and user reviews can build up your virtual local communities. Also think about how you can use your library's social network power through Facebook and other channels to build networks through your library's website.
- Be sure to include space on your website for patron-created content such as local wikis, archives of local history and even audio and video tapes of local interviews.
- Find ways to develop "local content experts" who can comment on your collections, share their advice and reviews, and draw users into the new library by pointing out the resources available there.

- Your library will attract users to its informal spaces if it has adequate WiFi service coupled with comfortable spaces, inside and outside, where users can gather.

Create fresh new spaces for showcasing civic information.

Think about the possibilities of creating dynamic multi-media display areas where thought-provoking materials about important local issues can be showcased in your new library. If you have the opportunity to design new space, you can think beyond the traditional bulletin board or display case.

- Provide a location where short videos can be shown, allowing community organizations to showcase their work and discuss local issues.
- Many new libraries are designed to be cultural anchors and attract visitors because of their architectural qualities. If your new library will be an unusual building, think about incorporating permanent exhibits about its historical location, architecture or unusual energy-saving features, in order to attract local and out-of-town visitors to view the building.
- Optimize opportunities to create vital and significant programming by building spaces where citizens are comfortable coming together for large and small group discussions of civic events. Make sure furniture in meeting rooms is easy to move, so that large or small groups can be formed around different configurations of tables, and that refreshments can be nearby.

Let the library spill out of its building into the community.

Create spaces inside and outside the library for informal gathering.

- Some cities are incorporating farmers' markets, open-air book markets or art markets to their outdoor space. Your building committee may find ways to make sidewalks, parking lots and other outdoor areas serve dual purposes and attract more gatherings.
- Explore the opportunities to cluster outdoor food vendors in the area around the library.
- Think about moving your used book sales outside in good weather. It not only saves space in the library, but livens up your outdoor space.
- New libraries should be as inviting and attractive outside as they are inside, and the outdoor space should flow to the indoors so that people are encouraged to come and gather in both.
- A playground attached to a library is a great way to bring families in your doors.

Consider making your library a small-business and job-search hub.

Libraries already fill many vital roles in supporting small businesses and job searchers. As you think about developing facilities, consider the opportunities for creating even greater connections with your local business community.

- Set aside space where small business people can access computers, make phone calls and access important databases.
- Plan for flexible spaces that can be used for job club meetings, practice interview sites and meetings with career counselors.
- Many community organizations provide job training classes. You might be able to serve a vital role by offering them permanent space.

Make sure all library space is flexible enough to meet changing demand for informal gathering.

In multiple studies and planning groups, library patrons have talked about their desire for different types of spaces: comfortable reading nooks, children's play areas and group study rooms.

- Great libraries are built with flexible spaces that can be changed as the needs of the community change.
- Incorporate strategies for reassessing community needs on a regular basis to make sure your library remains vital to constantly changing community needs.

Make the library available to people when they want to gather.

Many studies have shown that today's university students want to use the library between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m., precisely the time when the doors are usually locked. And those folks who gather regularly in Oldenburg's third places often drop by a diner or pub after work. As communities consider building new libraries, they might consider whether it makes sense to redefine operating hours to make sure libraries are living up to their potential as informal gathering spots.

Children's reading

After the Policy Group discussion in March, the WCCLS Youth Service Committee gathered to complete the same process for the topic of children's reading.

Themes generated by the Youth Service Committee

- Early literacy
- Parent / caregiver training
- Outreach to care providers
- Interagency cooperation (e.g., Head Start)
- Summer Reading
- Youth services includes teens
- Literacy in all shapes and sizes: media literacy, technology literacy, information literacy
- Early numeracy
- Multilingual services, staffing, programs, and collections
- Grouping of thematic resources
- Importance of play – interaction
- On-demand services
- Organized voice for teens
- Targeted programming for different age groups
- Budgetary support
- Political support for literacy
- Visibility within social service agencies
- Electronic promotion of services - experimentation
- Services and programs
- Collections
- Collaboration with schools
- Role of school libraries
- Staff training
- Special needs children – training and services
- Parent information
- Share resources (e.g., storykits)
- Economy of scale
- YS strong history of cooperation
- Support for small libraries
- Need for staff up-to-date with technology
- Getting to “where they are”

What does victory for children's reading look like?

- Countywide bookmobile for use at care centers
- Youth services is so established in the community that nobody questions its presence, value, existence, etc.
- Multilingual services and resources are available to those who need them
- Rural and isolated children have services
- Every library supports every age group with an efficient staff for support
- Summer Reading reaches 50% of the kids in the County
- Every child enters kindergarten with early literacy and early numeracy skills necessary for success
- We are the first place parents look for information
- New parent program for all new parents
- New resident packets available
- More branches exist, within easy walking, biking, transit distance of County residents
- Library users understand information literacy and evaluation of materials
- We are partners with schools to reduce the dropout rates
- Effective collaboration with teachers
- We offer a welcome orientation for new residents/new immigrants – explaining what libraries are and what we have to offer
- Technology leads and support
- There is no waiting for popular titles
- Libraries are the first thing people think about regarding literacy and reading
- All libraries have technology available for use, checkout, etc.
- We have a countywide “One Book” program for families
- Summer Reading is not just in the summer
- We offer family reading and intergenerational reading programs
- There are multiple service delivery options, outside of the bricks and mortar structures – including kiosks and deposit collections
- We own reading

Children’s reading goals and objectives

| Goal | 2010-2012 | 2013-2016 | 2017-2020 |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p><i>Goal One</i> Increase delivery mechanisms to get materials and services to residents (ages 0-18).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a bookmobile to better serve children who live too far from a library to walk or bike there safely. • Develop centrally available tubs of “great” books for checkout by childcare/Head Start, preschools, etc. • Develop a checkout method /card for providers to remove access barriers; deal with the loss rate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Library Take Out” or “Branch in a Box” – small, mobile collections for integration into community events, farmers’ markets, etc. Including easy checkout, card registration, etc. • Add a second bookmobile. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a third bookmobile. |
| <p><i>Goal Two</i> Increase library resources to fulfill community needs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify whether staffing and collection standards exist. If not, draft some. • Increase staffing to better than “adequate” (based upon standard) at every library. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure every library has excellent staffing levels. |
| <p><i>Goal Three</i> Continue/expand shared resources.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand age range for shared resources (ages 0-18), including information, performers, trainings, and traveling experts. | | |

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| <p><i>Goal Four</i> Remove barriers for obtaining and using library cards.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify countywide policy for library cards for all ages, and allow card access for all ages. • Allow user-defined user name and password for online access. • Allow patron-defined borrowing privileges, especially cards for providers, classrooms, and other groups. • Provide a live online library card application. • Allow multiple forms of ID for library card issuance. • Address issue of fines for children and teens, or for juvenile materials. • Wipe kids' cards clean. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement “new parent” packets for <i>all</i> new parents (using birth and adoption records). • Formulate a plan for alternative delivery outlets – kiosks, branches, etc. Ensure that they are within easy walking/biking distance of neighborhoods. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a central pool of multilingual staff for programming, collection development, welcome orientation sessions, embedded in the community. |
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| <p><i>Goal Five</i> Provide resources and services in the major languages spoken at all libraries.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that every library has mined the Civic Technology data to identify and locate language and ethnic groups. • Prioritize language skills when recruiting new staff (over degrees/formal education). • Increase recruitment of volunteers from bicultural/bilingual groups. • Translate basic library print and online materials into languages other than English and Spanish. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local library staffing reflects diversity of the local community (age, sex, ethnicity, languages spoken). | |
| <p><i>Goal Six</i> Libraries own reading.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a multigenerational community-wide reading campaign. • Address local IS/IT policies that are barriers to staff use of technology and social networking software. • Training staff to write/use/exploit social media. • Share technology and media expertise with each other. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Read to Your Baby” campaign – partnering with social service agencies. • Integrate use of social media, take advantage of media to promote “reading lifestyle,” librarian expertise, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get 50% of kids participating in summer reading programs. |

Appendix A

WCCLS & Consensus

WCCLS Executive Board (and alternate participants):

Christine Fore, Banks (resigned)

Stephanie Jones, Banks

Mayor Rob Drake, Beaverton

Janice Deardorff, Beaverton

Peter Leonard, Cedar Mill

David Waffle, Cornelius

Michael Sykes, Forest Grove

Robert Goetz, Garden Home

Sara Jo Chaplen, Hillsboro

Don Otterman, North Plains

Jim Patterson, Sherwood

Kristen Switzer, Sherwood

Craig Prosser, Tigard

Liz Newton, Tigard

Sherilyn Lombos, Tualatin

Becky Clark, West Slope

Robert Davis, Washington County

Rob Massar, Washington County

WCCLS Policy Group:

Denise Holmes, Banks

Ed House, Beaverton

Peter Leonard, Cedar Mill

Rita Rivera, Cedar Mill

Karen Hill, Cornelius

Colleen Winters, Forest Grove

Cooky Abrams, Garden Home

Mike Smith, Hillsboro

Aaron Schmidt, North Plains

Linda Landi, North Plains

Pam North, Sherwood

Margaret Barnes, Tigard

Abigail Elder, Tualatin
Veronica Eden, West Slope
Eva Calcagno, WCCLS manager

WCCLS staff:

Karen Crawford, Administration and Courier
Barbara O'Neill, Reference and Interlibrary Loan
Stephanie Lind, Outreach and Youth Services
Sylvia Lee, Automation
Jodi Nielsen, Publicity and Promotions

The Consensus team:

Therese Bigelow
Mary Jo Draper
Tom Hennen
Martha Kropf
Jennifer Wilding

For more information about Consensus, see www.consensuskc.org.