

Strategic Plan

for the
Public Library of Charlotte
& Mecklenburg County
2009 - 2012





Darrel Williams
Chair, Library Board of
Trustees

A Message from Darrel Williams, Chair, Library Board of Trustees

This is an exciting time to be Chair of the Library Board of Trustees. As our world is transformed by new technologies and new ways for people to connect, the Library has an unprecedented opportunity to transform our services to meet our customers' changing needs.

Libraries have become much more than places to find information, though we still serve that important purpose. We are also twenty-first century gathering places, portals for access to technology, and advocates for literacy and lifelong learning. And to meet these needs, the Library is embracing innovation in many forms: providing new services, improving and evolving existing services, and aligning our resources to best meet the most pressing needs in our community.

As stewards of public resources in a time of changing economic realities, we understand how important it is to ensure that our stakeholders receive a strong return on their investment. That is why we have built strategies and measurements into this plan, to ensure that we are meeting the goals stated. We are also responding to a sharp upswing in library usage, as challenging times prompt people to rediscover their Library.

This plan represents many hours of hard work from a committee of stakeholders from the Library Board, community, and staff. And, just as it has taken the collaboration of a group to create this document, it will take the collaboration of a much larger group of diverse, dedicated stakeholders to lead our Library to the fulfillment of these goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrel Williams', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Darrel Williams, Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ON THE COVER

Two-time Caldecott Honor Award-winning author Kadir Nelson speaks with a young visitor at Wordplay Saturday in 2007.



Charles M. Brown
Director of Libraries

A message from Charles M. Brown, Director of Libraries

This three-year Strategic Plan, 2009-2012, for the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County represents another milestone in the Library's strategic reorganization process known as Imagine 2010. This is an exciting time for the Library as we move closer to our goal of being America's Best Public Library by 2010. We have also received a "Five-Star" rating, the highest possible, from *Library Journal*, the library field's leading professional publication.

This plan picks up from our previous Strategic Plan, 2005-2008, where we outlined our plans to reinvent, renew, and grow to provide the excellent library services that our community has come to expect. As we worked to accomplish the goals set forth in that plan, we identified the need to realign the Library's organizational structure with twenty-first century needs. The previous structure was based on needs that existed twenty years ago, in an era when organizations operated fairly independently from one another. The new paradigm is for governmental institutions to work collaboratively with community agencies to address social issues such as illiteracy and unemployment. For an organization like the Library to remain nimble and responsive to the needs of this community, it needed to evolve.

In our previous Strategic Plan, I stated that a great library system is vital to the continued development and enrichment of Mecklenburg County and its residents. Today, we have an organizational model that allows us to be more customer-focused, provide for greater community involvement, and be more responsive to employee needs. We have in place a four-person senior management team, focusing on the key areas of Library Experiences, Community Engagement, Research Innovation and Strategy, and Organizational Resources. Under their leadership, the Library is pursuing new ways of doing business that increase efficiency and self-sufficiency, promote literacy and cultural awareness, and improve access to our resources.

We now have the opportunity to formalize these changes with the creation of a new Strategic Plan – one with goals that are not only timely and relevant to the community, but also aligned with the strategic outcomes of Imagine 2010. And, much as we look back at our previous Strategic Plan to see how far we have come today, I anticipate looking back at this plan three years from now with the same sense of pride in what can be accomplished through collaboration and hard work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles M. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles M. Brown, Director of Libraries



A YOUNG GIRL
EXPERIENCES IMAGINON.
ImaginOn opened in 2005
as an amazing facility for
children and teens.
A collaboration of the
Public Library of Charlotte
& Mecklenburg County
and Children's Theatre
of Charlotte, it features
library resources, theatres,
classrooms, computer
labs and a teen center.

Contents



ABOVE
Books are enjoyed by all ages.

Preface

Messages from the Library Board Chair and Director

Section 1. Introduction

Stakeholders	2
Document Overview	2
Acknowledgements	3
Our Mission	3

Section 2. The Library and Community

Background and Fundamental Assets	5
Library Overview	6
Our Community	7

Section 3. Our 3-Year Strategic Goals: An Overview

How Our Goals Align With Outcomes	8-9
-----------------------------------	-----

Section 4. Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths

Overview of the Strength Goals	11
Specific Goals, Strategies and Measurements	12-19

Section 5. Goals for Investment in Areas of New Strategic Opportunity

Overview of the Opportunity Goals	21
Specific Goals, Strategies and Measurements	22-25

Section 1. Introduction

Stakeholders of the Library

Significant stakeholders and partners in the future success of the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County include:

Residents of Mecklenburg County

Global users of the Library

Personnel of the Library

County Commissioners and other elected officials

Board of Directors of the Library

Friends of the Public Library

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, private schools and others in the education community

Charlotte and Mecklenburg County's cultural community

Mecklenburg County's philanthropic community

Mecklenburg County's business community

The library profession and other library systems

Document Overview

This document represents the 3-year strategic plan for the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County (PLCMC), 2009 - 2012.

Achieving the goals outlined in this plan requires effort and coordination between the Library and the Friends of the Library and the support of public and private funders.

Gathering input for the plan

Underlying research and community input for this plan was gathered over a 6-month period through telephone interviews, focus group sessions, and an online "Community Forum" blog.

Telephone interviews

600 phone surveys of randomly-selected households in Mecklenburg County were conducted October 14-20, 2008. Both library users and non-users were included in this survey. The data is weighted to ensure no gender, age, or racial group is over- or under-represented in the results.

Focus group sessions

Seven public focus group sessions were held at libraries throughout Mecklenburg County in July 2008 to gather input from members of the community. Additional focus group sessions were held to gather the input of library employees.

Online input

The community was also invited to contribute feedback online, through the library's "Community Forum" blog.

Acknowledgments

The document was created jointly by the personnel of PLCMC and a committee of Library Trustees, stakeholders and community leaders.

Committee Members

Rev. Dr. Gregory Busby, Pastor
First United Presbyterian Church

Astrid Chirinos, President
Diverso Global Strategies

Michael Devaul, Senior VP of
Organizational Advancement
YMCA

Belva Greenage, Trustee
PLCMC Library Board of Trustees

John McGillicuddy, General Manager
Mecklenburg County Government

Joan Martin, Trustee
PLCMC Library Board of Trustees

Bill Millett, President
Scopeview Strategic Advantage

Susan Patterson, Program Director
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Dr. Magdalena Maiz-Peña, Trustee
PLCMC Library Board of Trustees

Lynn Roberson, Director of Marketing
and Business Strategy
Queen Associates
(formerly CMS)

Harriet Smith, President
Friends of the Library

Elly Tomlinson, Library Manager
Morrison Regional Library

Bill Warren, Trustee
PLCMC Library Board of Trustees

Ex Officio Members

Charles Brown, Director of Libraries
PLCMC

Chris Bates, Senior Library Manager
PLCMC

Dr. Susan Harden, Focus Group
Facilitator
UNC Charlotte Crossroads Charlotte
Coordinator
The University of North Carolina at
Charlotte

Vanessa Work Ramseur, Senior
Library Manager
PLCMC

David W. Singleton (facilitator)
Director of Library Experiences
PLCMC

Karen Beach, Director of Community
Engagement
PLCMC

Brian Beavers, Director of
Organizational Resources
PLCMC

Frank Blair, Director of Research,
Innovation and Strategy
PLCMC

We would also like to acknowledge the support and contribution of the Trustees of the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County.

PLCMC Library Board of Trustees

Darrel Williams, Chair

Robin Branstrom, Vice Chair

Robert M. Bisanar

Magdalena Maiz-Peña

Joan Martin

Sally Robinson

Robert Sink

Belva Greenage

Charles Bowman

E. René Casali

William A. Warren Jr.

OUR MISSION

While PLCMC aspires to become America's best public library, it does so under the guidance of our Mission:

The Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County is ...

Expanding minds

Empowering individuals

Enriching our community



CELEBRATING A NEW BEGINNING

Pictured at left, Library Director Charles Brown, Commissioner Jennifer Roberts, and several young friends cut the ribbon for the re-opening of the Myers Park Branch Library. The 51-year-old Library closed for several months in 2008 for a complete renovation.

Section 2.

The Library and Community

Fundamental Assets

Our past success is largely due to three fundamental assets upon which we will also depend for our future success.

- **Close working relationship, advocacy and financial support from Mecklenburg County elected leadership and private funding sources.**
- **High level of leadership, passion and commitment from the Library Board of Trustees and Library personnel.**
- **An active and increasing involvement from the Friends of the Library, volunteers and community advocates.**

These fundamental assets have allowed the Library to develop into the nationally-recognized system it is today, reaching the citizens of our community in meaningful ways through 24 vibrant locations, an unparalleled online presence and knowledgeable, dedicated staff.

The Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County: On the heels of reorganization

Since its founding in 1903 as a Carnegie Free Library, The Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County has provided community learning resources to the citizens of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.

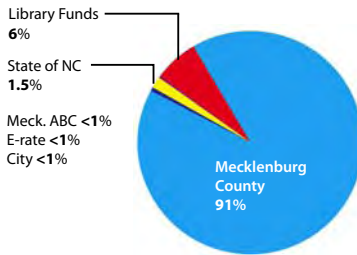
In 2007, a collaborative effort of library staff and members of the community created Imagine 2010, a vision to be America's best public library in service to our community, with strategic outcomes that include:

- To build a highly literate and educated community;
- To be highly accessed and cherished by our community;
- To contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community;
- To become a preferred employer in our community and nationally among libraries; and
- To be good stewards of the community's trust and resources

To achieve these outcomes, PLCMC created a revolutionary organizational structure, a cross-functional, matrix approach that eliminates many of the traditional silos in libraries, which is described on the following page.

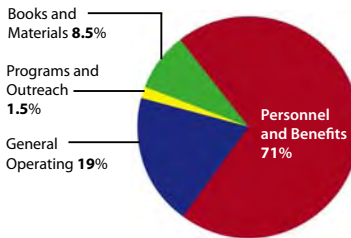
It is on the heels of this reorganization that PLCMC looks to its future, beginning a new era of strategic planning and service to the community.

REVENUE SOURCES, FY 08-09
(as of July 1, 2008)



Mecklenburg County	\$ 36,666,543
Library Funds	2,469,000
State of North Carolina	600,000
Meck. ABC Board	230,000
E-Rate Reimbursement Program	170,000
City of Charlotte	2,500
Total	\$ 40,138,043

EXPENDITURES, FY 08-09
(as of July 1, 2008)

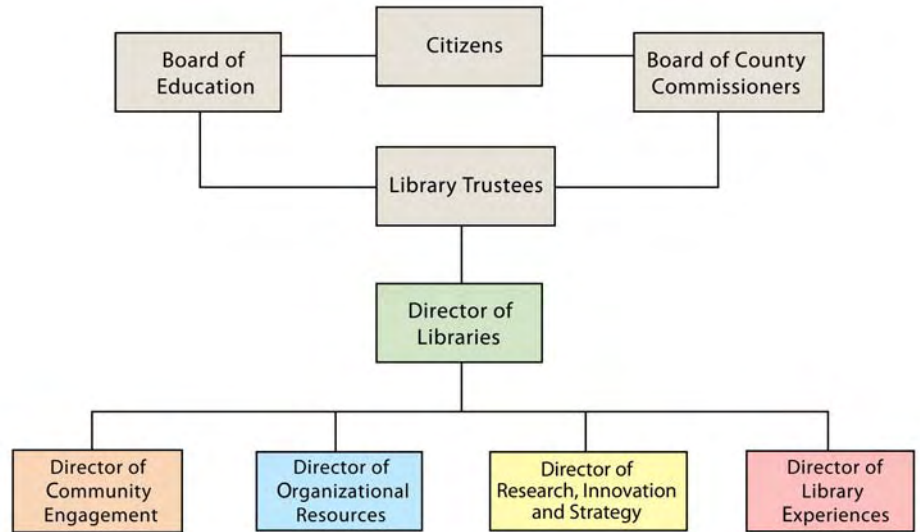


Personnel and Benefits	\$ 28,425,125
General Operating	7,609,666
Books and Materials	3,442,952
Programs and Outreach	660,000
Total	\$ 40,137,743

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Funding received from Mecklenburg County supports the library’s basic operational expenses, including salaries, building maintenance, utilities, and a portion of the books and materials budget.

Other funding sources, including private contributions and grants, support library programs for all ages and resource enhancements, plus a sizeable portion of the books and materials budget.



Library Overview

While the library receives much of its funding from Mecklenburg County, PLCMC is proud of its status as a separate, independent entity with its own governing body, the Board of Trustees. The Director of Libraries, Charles M. Brown, reports to the Board of Trustees and provides leadership and vision for PLCMC.

The new organizational structure of PLCMC is based on a collaborative approach of four CORE focus areas, each with leadership that reports to the Director of Libraries (shown in the illustration above).

Community Engagement (partnerships, fund-raising, volunteers, outreach services, Novello Festival Press, community events)

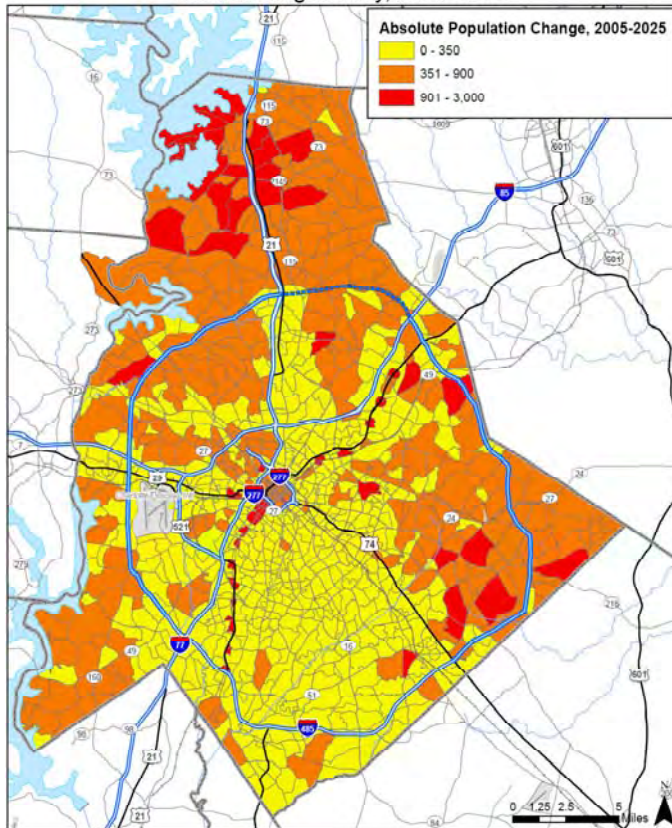
Organizational Resources (human resources, business services, facilities, logistics, technical services, security)

Research, Innovation and Strategy (technology, communications, innovation, measuring results, planning)

Library Experiences (public services, programming for all ages, collections, literacy, lifelong learning).

In many ways, CORE is a holistic approach to services and programs.

Forecasted Absolute Population Growth by TAZ
Mecklenburg County, 2005-2025



GROWTH & CHANGE

Red indicates the areas in Mecklenburg County projected to experience the largest changes in population.

Source: Charlotte DOT and Centralina COGi

Our Community

The PLCMC library system serves not only the City of Charlotte, but also the towns of Matthews, Pineville, Mint Hill, Davidson, Cornelius and Huntersville – all located in Mecklenburg County.

This inviting atmosphere of Charlotte continues to attract newcomers. Charlotte ranked as the number 1 moving destination in 2004, based on data from the American Movers and Storage Association (AMSA). Charlotte has been rated as one of the top places to live in America based on many quality of life factors, the variety of housing options and affordability.

This quality of life is attractive to newcomers from all over the world. “According to the Migration Policy Institute, immigration grew 54.8% in the 100 largest metro areas of the U.S. between 1900 and 2000.” This growth presents challenges and opportunities for the Library, including the need to remain visible and accessible to people of all ages, income and education levels, cultural backgrounds, and disabilities. The library will need to balance that need with the reality of remaining effective and efficient with its funding resources.



CHARLOTTE SKYLINE

Photo by Brad Kuntz, courtesy of the Charlotte Chamber.

Charlotte: A ‘Pre-Emerging Gateway’

“Charlotte is designated a ‘Pre-Emerging Gateway.’ Trend trackers are watching these communities for the next wave of immigration. As in re-emerging gateways, new arrivals tend to come from Mexico or Asia, have lower incomes than the native population, low levels of English proficiency and lower rates of citizenship.”

Framework developed by Audrey Singer, The Brookings Institution, 2007

REMAINING ACCESSIBLE

“In a 2006 national survey, 70% of people using computers in libraries reported the library was their only way to get on a computer.”

Hart Research, 2006. *Public Access Computers in Public Libraries*. Study commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Section 3.

Our 3-Year Strategic Goals : An Overview

About Our Goals

Based on extensive feedback from the community and staff, the library has identified six over-arching Strategic Goals. Four of these Goals are for continued investment in the Library's strengths, and two are for investment in areas of new strategic opportunity.

Under each of these Strategic Goals are more *specific goals* that are aligned to support *Strategic Outcomes* in our community.

Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths

1) Personal, Exceptional Service

2) Encourage the Love of Reading and Learning

		Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths	
		1) Personal, Exceptional Service	2) Encourage the Love of Reading and Learning
Strategic Outcomes	Build a highly literate and educated community		2a) Targeted literacy efforts to residents who cannot read or who have reading challenges . (p. 14)
	Be highly accessed and cherished by our community	1a) A new service model, with basic services available from any service point. (p. 12)	2b) Library programs that are cohesive and effectively promote the library's collections. (p. 15)
	Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community		
	Become a preferred employer in our community and nationally among libraries	1b) A dedicated and well-trained staff that reflects our diverse community. (p. 12)	
	Be good stewards of the community's trust and resources	1c) Customers will benefit from increased self-sufficiency options providing staff more time to address growing needs of customers. (p. 13)	

Goals for Investment in Areas of New Strategic Opportunities

3) Accessible Services and Collections	4) Provide Exceptional Library Facilities	5) Create Cultural and Global Awareness	6) Communicate the Impact of the Library
<p>3a) Expanded outreach and partnership efforts for residents with disabilities. (p. 16)</p>			
<p>3b) Expanded services and technologies for residents with disabilities. (p. 16)</p>	<p>4a) Schedule routine facility maintenance to ensure facilities are clean, safe, updated and desirable. (p. 18)</p>	<p>5a) Library services, programs and collections that reflect the increasing diversity of the community. (p. 22)</p>	<p>6a) Greater visibility of the library throughout Mecklenburg County. (p. 24)</p>
<p>3c) Increased access to print and digital materials and technological resources. (p. 17)</p>	<p>4b) Continue to explore options for the future of the Main Library that will benefit the community. (p.18)</p>	<p>5b) Children will benefit from a multi-cultural center that celebrates diversity. (p. 22)</p>	<p>6b) The business community will recognize the library as a critical component of the region's knowledge and economic infrastructure. (p. 25)</p>
	<p>4c) Develop a plan for library facilities. (p. 19)</p>		<p>6c) Greater understanding of the value and impact of library services in Mecklenburg County. (p. 25)</p>

READING ALL SUMMER LONG

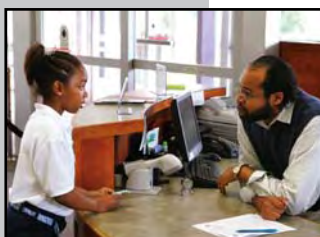
Each year, thousands of parents sign their children up for the library's Summer Reading literacy program



Section 4.

Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths

The Library is committed to continued investment in areas in which we are strongest.



1) Personal, Exceptional Service



2) Encourage the Love of Reading and Learning



3) Accessible Services and Collections

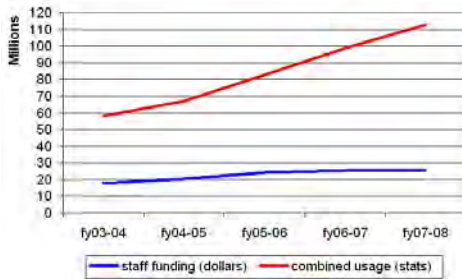


4) Provide Exceptional Library Facilities



Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths

1) Provide Personal, Exceptional Service to Our Customers



PERSONNEL FUNDING VS. LIBRARY USE

This chart compares increases in library use to increases in funding for personnel. This illustrates that while demand for services increases, resources do not increase correspondingly, resulting in the need for new service models and increased customer self-sufficiency.



STAFF ARE OUR MOST CHERISHED RESOURCE

1a) Customers will benefit from the convenience of a new service model in all library locations, with basic services available from any service point.

Strategy: By September 2009, all library locations will fully implement Unified Services to provide basic library services from any service point or desk.

Measurement: Basic services will be available from every service point or desk by Sept. 2009. Unified Service performance will be measured through:

- Customer satisfaction survey
- Decreases in number of customer referrals
- Reduced number of customer complaints
- Increased number of holdings circulating
- Increased in-house use of materials
- Decreased instances of inefficient practices (pre-shelving)

Supports Strategic Outcome: Be highly accessed and cherished by our community.

1b) The community will benefit from a library system that is a preferred employer, with a dedicated and well-trained staff that reflects our diverse community.

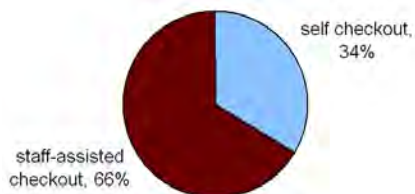
Strategy: The library will implement a program that supports the development of a highly-skilled, collaborative and competent workforce.

Measurement: Implementation of all phases of the Human Resources Program shown in this time line:

- Jan-09** Deploy HR on-site visits
- Mar-09** Establish and use Learning Council, integrate the benefits process into HR, develop "hiring for system" approach, establish common review date
- Jun-09** Create training studio, launch telecommuting program, FMLA communication packet, increase the Library's presence at job fairs, implement diversity program, redesign HR/Training pages on intranet
- Sep-09** Train for synchronous learning platform, update competency expectations for staff, revise scheduling processes, review Policies and Procedures Manual
- Dec-09** Improve performance management, establish learning objectives for all staff, develop leadership competencies, conduct benefits/retirement fairs

Supports Strategic Outcome: Become a preferred employer nationally and among libraries.

SELF-CHECKOUT VS. STAFF-ASSISTED CHECKOUT (FY07-08)



This pie chart shows the proportion of self-checkout to staff-assisted checkout from July 2007 - June 2008. By promoting customer self-sufficiency, the Library will continue to increase the proportion of self-checkout.



RFID MEANS FASTER PROCESSING.

Radio frequency identification (RFID) has many library applications that can be highly beneficial, particularly for circulation staff. Since RFID tags can be read *through* an item, there is no need to open a book cover or DVD case to scan an item, and entire piles or shelves of books can quickly be scanned.

1c) Customers will benefit from increased self-sufficiency options in our libraries, providing staff more time to address the growing needs of customers across a growing number of communication methods

Strategy: By 2010, the library system will streamline user processes to allow increasing self-sufficiency and convenience for our customers.

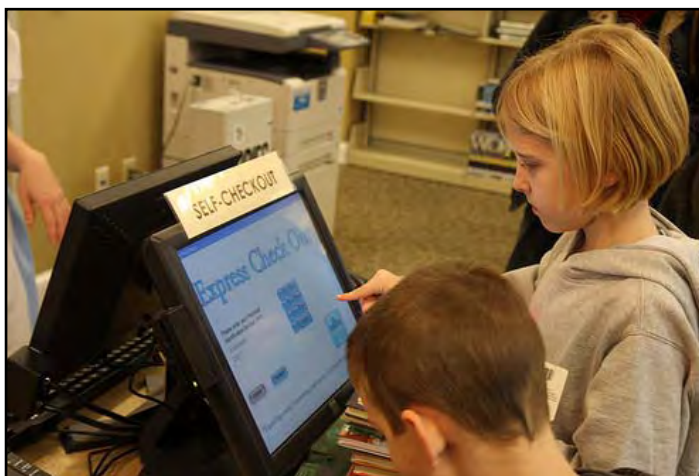
Measurement: The library will be able to meet increased demand with minimal increase in personnel. Performance will be measured through:

- Number of customer self-sufficiency options
- Increased number of holdings circulating
- Instances of team/customer service training
- Number of non-managerial staff leading/serving on teams
- Number of cross-training opportunities
- Number of staff participating in outreach literacy initiatives

Strategy: By January 2010, the library will develop a proposal for implementing radio frequency identification (RFID) tagging of all collections to allow ease of checkout and security.

Measurement: Presentation of the proposal as part of the FY11 budget cycle.

Supports Strategic Outcome: Be good stewards of the community's trust and resources.





Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths

2) Encourage the Love of Reading and Learning



BOOKS ON WHEELS
The Library’s mobile literacy vehicle visited targeted neighborhoods in Summer 2008.

2a) Residents who cannot read or who have reading challenges will benefit from the library’s targeted literacy efforts

Strategy: By September 2009, library staff will be identified to coordinate the library’s learning and literacy efforts for all ages.

Strategy: By March 2010, the library will foster partnerships with community agencies that support literacy.

Measurement: Identification of literacy and learning coordinators and increased number of partnerships with agencies that support literacy.

Supports Strategic Outcome: Build a highly literate and educated community.

THE FACTS ABOUT LITERACY AND LIBRARIES

Nationally, just under half (47.8%) of children between birth and age five are read to every day.

Reading Across the Nation: A Chartbook, UCLA Center for Healthier Children, 2007

“Early literacy programming in public libraries contributes to elevating young children’s levels of literacy and engagement in learning, thereby contributing to school readiness and school success. Public library literacy programs reduce the cost of doing business for area agencies by providing free staff development opportunities and in some places, certification credits.”

Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development, Urban Libraries Council, 2007

“Public libraries contribute to long-term economic productivity primarily through literacy programs.”

Liu, Lewis G. 2004. “The contribution of public libraries to countries’ economic productivity: a path analysis.” *Library Review*. 53:9, 435–441.



FOCUSED PROGRAMMING

The library has identified three focus areas for programming and is in the process of developing a strategic approach to programming for all ages.

2b) Library users of all ages will benefit from library programs that are cohesive and effectively promote the diverse collections of the library system.

Strategy: By December 2009, the library will develop a comprehensive approach to library programming for all ages.

Measurement: Development and implementation of new library programming model.

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Story times for children encourage the love of books, and introduce young learners to basic concepts of reading.



Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths

3) Provide Accessible Services and Collections

Here are just a few library partners for reaching underserved and non-traditional users:

- A Child's Place
- Bright Beginnings
- Carolinas Medical Center
- Carolinas Rehabilitation Hospital
- Catholic Social Services Refugee program
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
- Child Protective Services/Charlotte Police Department
- Community/Neighborhood Centers
- Department of Social Services
- Florence Crittenton (Teen pregnancy services)
- International House
- Latin American Coalition
- Mecklenburg County Jail
- Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Department
- More at Four
- Presbyterian Hospital
- Senior Centers
- Smart Start
- Urban Ministries
- Women, Infants, and Children
- YMCA

According to 2005 census data, 19% or nearly one in five U.S. residents reported some level of disability. These 54.4 million Americans are roughly equal to the combined total populations of California and Florida.

Americans With Disabilities: 2005, US Census Bureau, 2008

3a) Underserved and non-traditional library users in Mecklenburg County will benefit from expanded outreach and partnership efforts with other agencies.

Strategy: By 2009, PLCMC will explore new service models to reach underserved and non-traditional users, based on feedback from a randomized survey that includes library non-users. As part of the library's strategy, we will identify community partnerships that will enable these new service models.

Measurement: Identification of partnerships and service models by 2009.

Supports Strategic Outcome: Build a highly literate and educated community.



OUTREACH
The Library's Outreach department provides services to individuals who cannot use the library in a traditional manner.

3b) Residents with disabilities will benefit from the library's expanded services and technologies that are welcoming and inclusive for all ages.

Strategy: By January 2010, the library will develop a plan for further expansion of services to residents with disabilities, with the goal of exceptional library experiences for all users.

Measurement: Development of plan by January 2010.

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.

3c) Library users will benefit from increased access print and digital materials and technological resources.

Strategy: By December 2009, the library will develop a strategy for increasing the accessibility of digital and technological resources available for customers, including materials that are owned by the library system.

Measurement: Development of strategy by December 2009.

Strategy: By December 2010, identify options for improving the technologies and processes used to find and circulate materials in ways that make services and collections more accessible and intuitive to the customer.

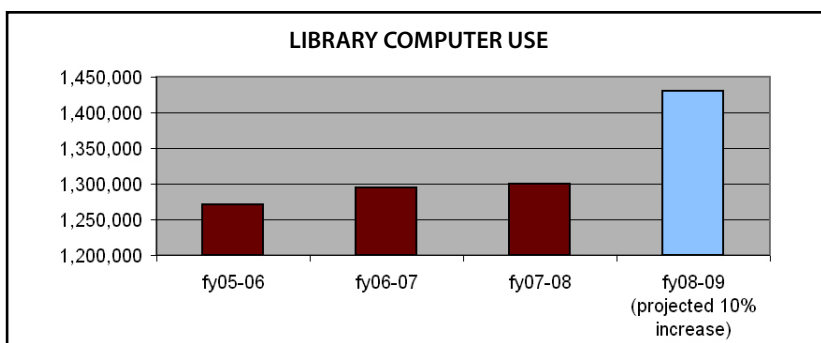
Measurement: Develop plan for implementation by December 2011.

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.



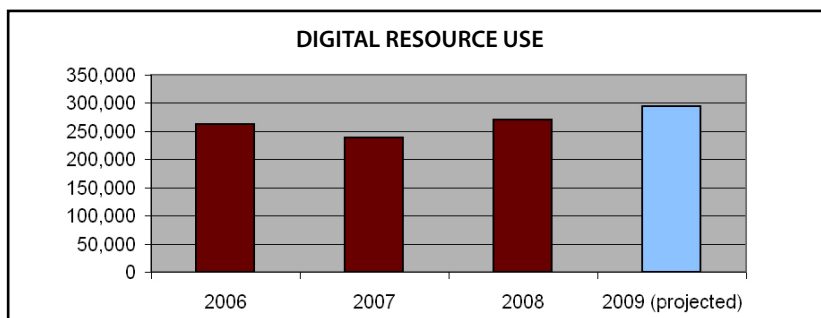
LIBRARY COMPUTERS ARE THE ONLY COMPUTERS FOR MANY INDIVIDUALS. In a 2006 national survey, 70% of people using computers in libraries reported the library was their only way to get on a computer.

Source: Hart Research, 2006. Public Access Computers in Public Libraries. Study commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



ABOVE: The increase in use of library computers from 2005-today, with projected use through FY08-09.

BELOW: Use of digital resources from 2006-today, with projected use through 2009.



In a 2008 survey, those who rated access to the Internet in the library as important, 50% felt the service provided at their location was “very good,” 84% said “very good/good.”

Source: PLCMC Community Survey, Clark & Chase, 2008

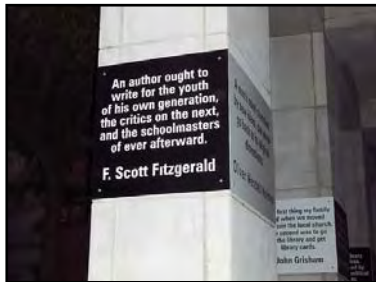


Goals for Continued Investment in Our Strengths

4) Provide Exceptional Public Library Facilities

Of 600 Mecklenburg County residents surveyed by phone in 2008, 96% felt that it was somewhat or very important that libraries inhabit a physical space.

Source: PLCMC Community Survey, Clark & Chase, 2008



THE FUTURE OF MAIN LIBRARY
In city after city, new downtown libraries are followed by an immediate and sustained boost in circulation and library use. The Denver Public Library, which finished the expansion of its downtown library in 1995, saw the number of daily visits double from 1,500 to 3,000. The Seattle Public Library, which opened in 2004 draws 8,000 visitors a day, twice the circulation of the old central library facility.

Source: *Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development*, Urban Libraries Council, 2007

4a) The community will view our facilities as premiere locations; to that end, we will schedule adequate routine facility maintenance to ensure that facilities are clean, safe, updated, and desirable to Mecklenburg County residents.

Strategy: PLCMC's libraries are among the most visible and heavily used services supported by Mecklenburg County. In order to properly maintain buildings, we will work with Mecklenburg County to develop and fund a formula for annual maintenance of facilities.

Measurement: Development of formula for annual facilities maintenance.

Strategy: Library staff will participate in training that provides techniques for preventing and dealing with security and safety issues.

Measurement: 50% of staff will complete training by June 2010.

Supports Strategic Outcome: Be highly accessed and cherished by our community.

4b) We will continue to explore options for the future of the Main Library that will benefit the community.

Strategy: The Library will continue to re-imagine the use of space and services offered at the Main Library to meet the needs of the 21st century

Measurement: Plan for future of Main Library.

Supports Strategic Outcome: Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.

4c) The community will benefit from service excellence as we develop a plan for library facilities.

Strategy: By Fall 2009, the library will complete the County-funded public library Facilities Master Plan for Mecklenburg County. This plan will identify community needs and make recommendations, with building and operational cost estimates, for the next 15 years.

Measurement: Completion of the Facilities Master Plan by Fall 2009.

Strategy: As funding permits, the library will complete the following facilities projects during the next three years:

Myers Park Library renovation/expansion by January 2009.
(completed)

Roof replacement at Independence Regional Library in 2009
(completed).

Hickory Grove Library replacement by Fall 2010.

Beatties Ford Road Library renovation/expansion.

Scaleybark Library replacement.

Carmel Library replacement.

Measurement: Completion of these projects, as funding permits.

Supports Strategic Outcome: Be good stewards of the community's trust and resources.



LIBRARY BUILDING PROJECTS

The new Facilities Master Plan will support the Library's strategy for capital projects that meet the needs of current and future generations of citizens.

Top: The Hickory Grove Library is scheduled for completion in 2010.

Bottom: A proposed rendering for a teen space in the Beatties Ford Road Library renovation.

Lullabies and Gentle Game



LEARNING ABOUT LULLABIES IN OTHER CULTURES

Children participate in "Día de los niños, día de los libros" ("Children's day, book day"), an annual celebration of books, stories and culture.

Section 5.

Goals for Investment in Areas of New Strategic Opportunities

The Library has identified two areas of new strategic opportunity, in which the citizens of our community may benefit.



5) Create Cultural and Global Awareness



6) Communicate the Impact of the Library



Goals for Investment in Areas of New Strategic Opportunities

5) Create Cultural and Global Awareness

According to the Migration Policy Institute, immigration grew 54.8% in the 100 largest metro areas of the U.S. between 1900 and 2000.

Source: Ray, Brian. 2003. The Role of Cities in Immigrant Integration. Migration Policy Institute: Washington, D.C.

OUR COMMUNITY IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY MORE DIVERSE.

More than 12% of the people who live in Mecklenburg County were born outside of the United States, and there are 83 different languages spoken by students attending Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Source: International Facts about Charlotte, Mayor's International Cabinet. www.charmeck.org

5a) The community will benefit from library services, programs, and collections that reflect the increasing diversity of the community.

Strategy: By March 2009, the library will form an International Advisory Committee of citizens to advise the library on services, programs, and collections that reflect global awareness and the diversity of cultures represented in the community.

Measurement:

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Build a highly literate and educated community. Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.

5b) Children will benefit from a multi-cultural center that celebrates diversity.

Strategy: By September 2009, the library will develop and implement a plan for a children's center located in an existing library facility (ideally ImaginOn) that celebrates cultures represented in the community.

Measurement:

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Build a highly literate and educated community. Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.

ENGLISH TUTORING PROGRAM
GRADUATION DAY
Photo taken during a celebration
of English Tutoring Program
graduates and the launch of new
language learning software in
the World Language Center at
Main Library.





Goals for Investment in Areas of New Strategic Opportunities

6) Communicate the Impact of the Library



IDENTIFYING LIBRARIES

Making sure that all residents can find libraries and know how to use them will be desired outcomes of enhancing the visibility of the library system, facilities and Web sites. The Library has already selected an easier-to-remember name, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

6a) All residents will benefit from greater visibility of the library throughout Mecklenburg County.

Strategy: In November 2009, the library will begin implementing an initiative to better identify the library system, our facilities, and our Web sites.

Measurement: Funding permitting, the library will continue with the following timetable for implementation of this initiative.

July-08	Selection of new, easier-to-remember name, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (complete)
Jan-09	Final logo/color selection (complete) Exterior branch signage specifications (complete)
May-09	New color palette and stationery system
Jul-09	Exterior signage package book
Aug-09	PR and marketing methodology
Sep-09	Branding standardization guidelines Graphical theme concepts
Oct-09	Publication system & templates
Nov-09	Begin implementation



BEING INVOLVED

Library staff who are engaged in community organizations have more opportunity to help tell the library's story.

Strategy: By December 2009, the library will develop a marketing and communication plan that builds on the library brand and ties return on investment (ROI) and stories of impact to the library.

Measurement: Funding permitting, completion of an ROI study and development of a marketing and communications plan.

Strategy: By July 2010, staff will be increasingly engaged in community organizations throughout Mecklenburg County.

Measurement: Staff community involvement through membership and participation, as well as outreach efforts.

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Build a highly literate and educated community. Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.

“With an increasing number of local training partnerships, library resources and facilities are reducing the operation costs and broadening the outreach of other local workforce development agencies, contributing to a stronger community network for job readiness and worker ‘retooling.’”

Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development, Urban Libraries Council, 2007



OUR STORY IS EVERYWHERE

Even a laundromat can offer an opportunity to share the library's story with members of the community.

6b) The business community and stakeholders will recognize the Library as a critical component of the region's knowledge and economic infrastructure.

Strategy: By December 2010, the library will develop and implement a plan for expanded outreach to the business community.

Measurement: Development and implementation of expanded outreach plan.

Strategy: By July 2011, stakeholders surveyed will indicate that the library is a valuable economic resource in areas of business and workforce development.

Measurement: Stakeholder survey results.

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.

6c) The community will benefit from a greater understanding of the value and impact of library services in Mecklenburg County.

Strategy: By December 2009, the library will conduct a return on investment (ROI) study of the value of public library services.

Measurement: Results of ROI study.

Strategy: By July 2010, the library will investigate and implement new ways of gathering stories of impact from the public, and find ways to share these stories throughout the community.

Measurement: New methods of gathering stories of impact implemented. Results of community net promoter survey.

Strategy: By December 2009, the library will create and implement an overall plan for involving members of the community as partners, donors, volunteers and advocates to increase resources available to support library services.

Measurement: Increased funding and volunteer utilization.

Supports Strategic Outcomes: Build a highly literate and educated community. Be highly accessed and cherished by our community. Contribute to the economic health, cultural and social capital of our community.

Strategic Plan

for the

Public Library of Charlotte
& Mecklenburg County

2009 - 2012



Questions?

**For additional information
about the Strategic Plan
of the Public Library of
Charlotte & Mecklenburg
County, please visit
www.plcmc.org or call
704.416.0600.**



310 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, North Carolina 28202