Ozark-Dale County Community Analysis & Recommendations

Prepared by LibraryMax, LLC Consultants For the Ozark-Dale County Public Library Board

GLOBAL LIBRARY CONSULTANTS

OUR LIBRARY

Our library shares a history
With a deep community pride.
It has a variety of assets
That we don't want to hide.

Our library consistently thrives,
With special projects and local drives.
The books, the budgets, the patrons in sight,
The staff and volunteers manage just right!

Our library serves by many gages,
With interest areas for all ages.
The meeting rooms and the artwork shown
Inspire the community in a positive tone!

Our original library building, now,
Is in need of serious repair,
With leaking roofs, crowded storage,
And repetitive maintenance care.

So let's do efficient planning
For citizens to unite,
In a design for the future
With facilities that delight!

Mrs. Jo-Ellen Mims Willis
March 15, 2016
Focus Group Participant

<u>**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**</u>
<u>**Ozark-Dale County Community Analysis**</u>
<u>**Prepared by LibraryMax, LLC**</u>
<u>**For the Ozark-Dale County Public Library Board**</u>

INTRODUCTION/OBJECTIVE:

The Consultants were charged with these primary tasks related to engaging with and understanding the Ozark-Dale County Public Library (ODCPL) community:
•Utilize existing planning documents to conduct an assessment of the community that represents the widest possible range of the county's diverse citizenry; and
•Gather and report public opinion regarding preferred library service priorities through community focus groups.

BACKGROUND:

The library board has been concerned about the deteriorating building, inadequate parking and the inability to deliver modern library service due to inadequate wiring for new technology. LibraryMax, LLC specializing in public library consulting was engaged to examine the existing situation, conduct a series of community focus groups, and to report the wishes of the citizens to the Board and to the elected officials.

PROCESS:

The consultants conducted a series of eight focus groups totaling over 100 citizens to determine the services citizens wanted in their public library. A focus group is a group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics, brought together by a moderator, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific or focused issue. The moderator creates a permissive and nurturing environment that encourages different perceptions and points of view, without pressuring participants to vote, plan or reach consensus. The consultants further gathered demographic data on Ozark-Dale County to better understand the community. Interviews were held with the Mayor of Ozark and the Chairman of the Dale County Commission as well as with the Director of the Ozark-Dale County Economic Development Corporation. All city libraries within Dale County were visited, and their library directors interviewed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Over 76% of the citizens said they wanted an improved library building from which to receive modern library services. This would either be a new building specifically designed as a library or an existing building retrofitted as a library. To deliver the library services the citizens said they want, it is recommended that the building size be between 1 and 1.5 square feet per capita. With a service area of 37,931 persons, this would require a building of between 37,931 and 56,897 square feet. In many cases adaptive reuse of an existing building can be a more cost-effective approach than building anew, and this has been validated by a recent architectural study of the Ozark Square Shopping Center.

2. To deliver the quality of library service the citizens said they want, the Board and the elected officials will need to work together to significantly increase the current $4.91 per capita funding for library operations.

3. Preserving the past by digitizing parts of its unique genealogy and local history collection signals the importance of the library institution. The library should continue its efforts to preserve and make available on-line this unique collection. The Alabama Public Library Service and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, specialists in digital genealogy, are good resources in this effort.

4. While the ODCPL building has significant structural deficiencies as defined by its citizens, the staff should consider providing assistance to the other city libraries within the county on an as needed/as funded basis at the ODCPL. This could be done by teaching staff of the other libraries how to use the various reference databases from the Alabama Virtual Library, and by sharing successful programming ideas.

5. The ODCPL library should budget for a theft detection system in which materials are 'targeted' so that an alarm will sound if not checked out properly. This should be pursued as a long-range capital goal once operational and staffing needs are met.

6. Overwhelming majorities of focus group participants see education as the foundation of libraries' mission. Some said that coordinating more closely with local schools in providing resources to children is something libraries should "definitely" do. There were comments that the library should do 'outreach' to the schools to provide such activities as story hours in school libraries, demonstrations in using the Integrated Library System, navigating the library's website, database instruction for both students and educators and field trips bringing students to the ODCPL for tours and instruction. While a laudable suggestion, ODCPL is only staffed for 41 hours per week, and visiting the schools on a regular basis is not in the budget.

7. One focus group expressed concern that the library staff was paid 70% less than similar Ozark employees and had no benefits. The Board should investigate whether this inequity exists.

The consultants wish to thank the Library Board, the staff, directors of

the city libraries and the elected and appointed officials of Ozark-Dale County, Alabama for their cooperation in the preparation of this study. In particular we would like to thank the focus group participants who each unselfishly donated two hours of time to help LibraryMax, LLC better understand the library and the community--all the while demonstrating the hospitality for which the South is so famous.

The Consultants were charged with these primary tasks related to engaging and understanding the Ozark-Dale County Public Library (ODCPL) community:
• Utilize existing planning documents to conduct an assessment of the

community that represents the widest possible range of the county's diverse citizenry; and
• Gather and report public opinion regarding preferred library service priorities through community focus groups.

A most important part of the consultant work plan for the ODCPL project was to obtain the thoughts, the ideas, the concerns, the complaints and suggestions of a sample of citizens. The consultants conducted eight focus group discussions (including the Smart Start committee), lasting 2 hours each, with over 100 participants.

The focus groups told the consultants that the following things were good about the ODCPL:
• Children's services (programming and collections).
• Library staff is outstanding.
• Genealogy collection and service.
• Library is integrated into the community.

The focus groups told the consultants that the following things needed improvement and were not good about the ODCPL:
• Inadequate amount of space.
• Better layout with good sight lines for visual supervision of public areas.
• A fully accessible facility for the physically challenged.
• Need food/café.
• More meeting rooms for small groups.
• Too few staff to help with research.
• Meeting rooms should be accessible after normal library hours.
• Additional restrooms.
• Lack large children's area with furnishings of appropriate sizes for different age groups, family restrooms, family reading area, craft room, story telling area, computers (15-30), a large storage area, space for homework assistance, wheeled book cases for flexibility.
• Dedicated and inviting teen area with computers, teen-friendly furniture, group study space, listening stations, and room for gatherings
• Energy efficient, green building.
• Not centrally located.
• Inadequate wiring for new technology needs.
• Poor annual funding.
• Leaky roof.
• Inadequate parking.
• More new books.
• More computers to meet high demand.
• Lack of public awareness and adequate publicity of services offered.
• Hours of service (not open on Sundays).

The ODCPL's weaknesses targeted by its citizens are a serious matter. These hit at

the heart of the educational offerings citizens have at their disposal. The three factors of money, size, and materials are interdependent. Without money, adequate space and access to technology cannot be provided. Without space, the number of books cannot be increased. Without books, the reading and study support will decline. And without adequate annual operating funds, facilities cannot be maintained, refreshed, or modified to reflect the ever-changing needs of the citizens. To deliver the quality of library service the citizens said they want, the Board and the elected officials will need to work together to significantly increase the current $4.91 per capita funding for library operations. A review of <u>Alabama Public Library Service Statistics Summary for FY 2014</u> will provide similar libraries for benchmarking.

A major impediment to the continued growth and evolution of library services in Ozark-Dale County is the building which was designed to support library services of generations past, which had a print-only collection and services focused on "checking out" books. To support the evolving model of cultural and intellectual service center in the community with service focusing on physical and virtual "visits" more than just circulation of physically archived materials, providing "a place away from home" for community residents, will take a larger facility with more flexible space.

Within Ozark-Dale County, there are relatively active users who hope libraries will maintain valuable legacy functions such as lending printed books. At the same time, there are those who support the idea that libraries should adapt to a world where more and more information lives in digital form, accessible anytime and anywhere. Regardless of format issues, citizens of Ozark-Dale County remain steadfast in their beliefs that libraries are important to their community, their family and themselves. People are at the center of the library's mission to inspire and cultivate learning, advance knowledge and nurture and strengthen communities.

The Mayor of Ozark Billy Blackwell and the Chairman of the Dale County Commission Mark Blankenship were interviewed for this study. While there is not a collective vision for a new library, both agree that the library is an extremely important educational, cultural and social institution for the Ozark and Dale County community. Both see the public library as uniquely positioned to provide access, skills, context and trusted platforms for adapting in an information age, and both are keenly aware of the physical limitations of the existing building.

With Ozark-Dale County still coping with the after effects of a severe economic downturn that began around 2007, jobs and business creation remain ever present for many citizens. The upshot is that citizens say that public libraries should "definitely" create services or programs for local businesses and entrepreneurs.

No longer a simply nice-to-have amenity, the public library is a key partner in sustaining the educational and economic wellbeing of the community during a time of dramatic change. Public libraries inspire learning and empower people of

all ages. They promote a better-trained and educated workforce. They ensure equitable access and provide important public space for advancing literacy and the common good. Public libraries are engines of economic development within their communities.

Public libraries are also vital hubs that provide access to public access technologies and digital content. Community and individual success requires a comprehensive approach to creating digital inclusion that ensures opportunity for all communities and individuals regardless of geographic location, socio-economic status, or any other factor. As Internet-based education increases, the poor often have no way to acquire the digital literacy skills that are the foundation of knowledge creation and social participation in an information-based economy—not without the Ozark-Dale County Public Library.

The rise of the knowledge economy, the growing imperative to learn and the proliferation of educational platforms have combined to make America a nation of learners. Overwhelming majorities of focus group participants see education as the foundation of libraries' mission. Some think that coordinating more closely with local schools in providing resources to children is something libraries should "definitely" do. There were comments that the library should do 'outreach' to the schools to provide such activities as story hours in school libraries, demonstrations in using the Integrated Library System, navigating the library's website, data-base instruction for both students and educators and field trips bringing students to the ODCPL for tours and instruction. In order to provide this type of educational outreach, the library will require additional budget increases in staffing and increased use of dedicated trained volunteers. Library funding should be commensurate with the essential nature of the services provided by the ODCPL as a vitally important civic and educational institution.

Also expressed was that the ODCPL should "definitely" offer free early literacy programs to help prepare kids for school, and most think the libraries are effective in promoting literacy and love of reading among people. Pre-school story hours and summer reading programs were repeatedly praised as key tools in fostering the love of reading and literacy within the community.

People see libraries as more than places to enhance educational and economic opportunities. They also see libraries as important parts of the community fabric in other ways that serve key groups in the community and help those who are not yet fully literate about technology.

When people go to the library, many do so explicitly for educational advancement. Among those who went to the library and used library computers, the Internet or Wi-Fi, most have used those tools to do research for school or work, and some have used them for taking an online class, completing an online certification or for completing a job application. In addition, a number did so to attend a program.

Focus group participants repeatedly mentioned programs in the meeting rooms as

an important part of public library service. Several had begun coming to the library for the programs, and discovered additional services the library offered. One tutor suggested that more meeting rooms of various sizes were needed. Also mentioned was the need for a separate gallery so local artists could have one-person shows, or so the library could bring in traveling exhibits from around the U.S. The meeting rooms could serve as a way to draw in non-users to experience other library services.

The community dimension of inclusion is captured in attitudes of veterans, entrepreneurs and retirees. Participants say that creating programs or services for active military personnel and their families or for veterans and retirees is something libraries should "definitely" do. Furthermore, a majority say that libraries should "definitely" create services or programs for local businesses or entrepreneurs. Having one or more 'business incubators' within the library was suggested as a way to demonstrate the importance of creating jobs, and as a way to foster and support the entrepreneurial spirit within Ozark-Dale County.

In an interview with Veronica Crock Executive Director of the Ozark-Dale County Economic Development Corporation, she was impressed by the 21st century library model that includes such services as eMedia, electronic databases and computer access. She thinks libraries can play an important role in bringing people together and improving the lives of Ozark and Dale County citizens. Director Crock talked with pride about the Dale County business incubators and the benefits they have provided to the County. She was very receptive to working with the library to provide programming to the incubator entrepreneurs.

Beyond technology access, people see libraries as places where they can cultivate digital skills. Some say library staff go out of their way to help people learn how to use new technologies. Many say the library helps "a lot" in helping people learn new technologies. A very strong majority say that libraries should "definitely" offer programs to teach people how to protect their privacy and security online.

In a similar vein, users also turn to ODCPL for help with digital applications that pertain to institutions they encounter – such as government, banks, schools or other businesses.

At a time when the knowledge economy represents the best opportunity for coming generations, education is a community asset worthy of significant investment.

The first focus group-the Smart Start Committee-discussed the library building options available to Ozark-Dale County: 1. Do nothing 2. Renovate the existing library building 3. Renovate an existing building within the community or 4. Build an entirely new library building.

The committee agreed that options 1 and 2 were non-starters. Options 3 and 4 were discussed in great detail. The consultants believe that both options have merit, with the final decision factor being what the community can ultimately

afford.

The consultants visited an Option 3 existing building of 43,000 s.q. ft. at 270 Union St., the Ozark Square Shopping Center. The board has done some exploratory work with an architectural firm for utilizing a portion of the space, but suggestions from citizens point to a need to program for the full use of the space. Some focus group participants expressed concern with leaks in any structure with a flat roof. The consultants believe that this issue should be directed toward architects to find a solution involving either a modern coating that would have an extended warranty against leaks, or by adding a peaked roof.

For purposes of this report it might be helpful to outline attributes the Board should consider no matter which option is ultimately chosen.

The following is a list of overall goals that should be considered for both renovation/remodeling, and for new construction library projects:
•The ODCPL will be a central reference and resources library with administration, materials processing, reference materials, technology, and program spaces.
•A location more central to the City center would likely be beneficial to the citizens of Ozark and Dale County, and would also contribute to downtown revitalization with easier access and plentiful parking.
•The library will be designed as the "cultural and intellectual heart" of Ozark-Dale County—symbolizing the community's values and aspirations. Where logical and appropriate, the local community culture and history should be incorporated into the design of the library.
•Although books and appropriate seating will define each library's primary personality, computers are playing an increasingly important role in the lives of Dale County residents. We recommend that a balance between print and digital resources be carefully discussed and realized. Achieving this balance will help ODCPL become cutting edge technologically, while honoring the traditions of the library.
•Adequate directional signs are an important feature in any modern library building. Both passive and digital signs should be incorporated.
•Wherever possible, incorporating a dedicated learning center (both instructional and hands-on for technology and non-technology) will help library patrons stay up-to-date and learn new skills for precise information retrieval.
•The library should have a dedicated teen area, making the library a hip place to hang out. This goal reflects the fact that over 7% of the service population is within this age group.
•The library should have a meeting room equipped to hold multimedia, distance learning, live performances, and special events. All meeting rooms should allow maximum flexibility. The Alice Daughty Room is available and used after hours and on weekends by a number of organizations. It has a handicapped entrance, but the restrooms are not handicapped equipped. It should be noted the Library has secured grants from the Wiregrass United Way, and despite the severe physical limitations, has added two handicapped entrances and converted two restrooms for handicapped access.

•The library should have adequate on-site parking for library users and staff.

•ODCPL is fortunate to have a very hardworking and active group of volunteers in the Friends of the Library. They are key stakeholders in a new library. To support and expand their fundraising through book sales, the Friends need a dedicated sorting and storage area for gift books received from generous donors. Since the Friends Book Sale Room is the only bookstore in Dale County, they also need a highly visible area to display their sale books within the library; thus encouraging visitors to browse and to buy. The Friends should investigate "Print On Demand" in the form of The Espresso Book Machine. By using digital files to produce physical books, and by matching supply to demand at point of need, the Espresso Book Machine (EBM) enables retailers and libraries to sell (or lend) more titles without the extra inventory, eliminates supply-chain costs, and opens up a new market for retail self publishing. With the push of a button, the technology prints, binds, and trims a bookstore-quality, perfect-bound paperback book, in any language, with a full-color cover in minutes while the customer waits.

•Collaborative workrooms for community groups and children to do group homework assignments should be incorporated.

•Separate spaces for pre-school, elementary, and pre-teen areas, including a children's computer workroom if at all possible, should be included. At the very least, children, teens, and adults should have separate computer areas.

•Study rooms that can be used for homework, book clubs, and literacy tutoring should be included.

•Public art display, with an emphasis on local and regional artists, should be incorporated.

•Exhibit/Gallery space for local displays and for national and regional traveling exhibits should be provided.

•The library should provide inviting reading areas, including traditional quiet rooms.

•Special features and equipment for individuals with physical limitations should be provided.

•Libraries should have state-of-the art technology, including wireless, downloading of audio books, media content creation, and user laptop connections. Where possible, the building should include battery-charging stations. The Library currently has 35 public access computers and Wi-Fi access for its patrons.

•The library should provide ease of access to materials (e.g. lower shelving, better lighting, face-out display of materials, and wider aisles). Whenever the use of retailing techniques is employed, the evidence points to higher circulation rates.

•The physical condition of each potential space should be evaluated and improved to ensure that the building envelope's integrity and systems are compliant with current standards for efficiency.

The Library and Technology

Today's new and renovated libraries are being planned to be flexible and will accommodate technology that is up-to date. Of course, the very nature of technology means that it is out-of-date very soon after being installed. However, if

the building is designed flexibly, then the ODCPL can make adjustments on-the-fly, budgets permitting. The technologies available will enable the library to meet growing demands for learning, literacy, and language access.

Technologies that are possible include:

•Adaptive technologies for visually impaired.

•Self-checkout of materials for adults and children.

•Separate computers for children, teens, and adults with specifically tailored software, table heights, and seating.

•Wireless access points both inside and outside the library and its immediate surrounding area.

•Multimedia computers for individual or group design and media production (e.g., video production and workrooms for producing oral histories and multimedia homework reports by school children).

•Podcasting workspace.

•Multilingual interactive language computer/software stations.

•Touch-screen learning kiosks that can be linked to content from local museum and educational partners.

•Webcasting of events, lectures, and learning programs.

•One focus group mentioned the concern that multiple entrances allowed for materials to be removed without being checked out. A single entrance is recommended, and the library should budget for a theft detection system in which materials are 'targeted' so that an alarm will sound if not checked out properly. This should be pursued as a long-range capital goal once operational and staffing needs are met.

•Print on Demand makes a paperback book in minutes, at point of need. Through a digital catalog of content, books can be printed and bound with a full-color cover in minutes onsite at libraries while the patron waits. Over seven million in-copyright and public-domain titles are available on the network. The technology is also ideal for self and custom publishing.

Ozark-Dale County Public Library and The Community

Successful libraries respond to their communities, creating services that are specifically tailored to their needs. As institutions, they are reasserting themselves as important centers of learning and community focus. It is clear that
the ODCPL staff are much admired and respected for all they do with what they have to work. The library's staff anticipates individual and community needs and connect people to available resources, both locally and globally. As the library's roles change and expand, library staff have refined and broadened their skills to meet new needs and to define the library's continuing value to the community. Staff serve many roles-as coaches, mentors, facilitators, technology experts and teachers more than as sources of information.

As the only institution in the County that serves the mind of the entire population one individual at a time, the library can enhance its service to the community with changes to its physical structure and an increase in operational funding. The library, its board, and staff actively seek input from its patrons. From this

information, the library strives to keep its services and materials as tuned-in as possible to the needs of the community. It is this proactive relationship with its patrons that distinguishes the library. ODCPL listens to its patrons—yet is constrained in providing world-class services by the physical and fiscal limitations. With adequate space, the ODCPL can contribute to building a good community through:

•More space for materials, programs, and training options for patrons.
•Breaking down boundaries between the haves and have-nots—thus leveling the playing field.
•Signaling that the City of Ozark & Dale County governments value the individual and the educational needs of its citizens.
•Nourishing creativity through spaces that encourage interaction and hands-on teaching and learning. This is especially critical for program spaces for children.
•Opening minds by providing, in a neutral setting, materials that individuals can use to discover new worlds and possibilities for their work and family life.
•Returning high dividends on the investment. This includes the economic benefit of a better-educated citizenry with increased skills to discover new job opportunities, learn to read, or expand their awareness and horizons. What better place for school age children to hang out than at the local library—a place that is safe, fun, and educational?
•Making ODCPL friendlier through community events and designs that encourage family participation in learning activities.
•Offering sanctuary from troubled home situations. While not exactly a social service agency, the library and the staff do play an important role by providing space in which people can spend time with their neighbors and families. It is an excellent space for after school activities and completing homework assignments.
•With expanded space and resources, programs and hands-on tutoring can be expanded to meet the growing needs of the community.
•Preserving the past by digitizing parts of its unique genealogy and local history collection signals the importance of the library institution.
•Offering a content-rich collection that is inclusive of the needs of all citizens—not just a select few. Doing this requires space.
•While the ODCPL building has significant structural deficiencies as defined by its citizens, the staff should consider providing assistance to the other city libraries within the county. This could be done by teaching staffs of the other libraries on an as needed/as funded basis at the ODCPL how to use the various reference databases from the Alabama Virtual Library, and by sharing successful programming ideas. This will foster a spirit of cooperation and resource sharing among the library staffs.

Library Service

The traditional purpose of a library is to serve the people in their own community. Historically, the way the library served its customers was based on a more academic and national model. This reliance on national models does not serve the library well in the 21st century. Everywhere, our society is witnessing the advantages of going local. Whether it is buying from the local farmer to driving less by shopping at the neighborhood market, going local is a sustainable model that

works perfectly for the library. A library has traditionally served the information needs of its customers. Throughout time, libraries have attempted to supplement the traditional information needs with added services that reflect the needs of the time. For example, at the turn of the 20th century, many Carnegie libraries offered English classes for new immigrants in the communities. During the Depression, many libraries worked to assist their communities with job placement and learning new skills through educational materials. At the beginning of this century, libraries once again are evolving to serve the continually changing needs of the community. The adjusting of services and materials offered, highlights the important role the library plays as the main institution that can facilitate community building and the creation of social capital. *Social capital* is an economic idea that refers to the connections between individuals and entities that can be economically valuable. By working with community members and adjusting their services and material offerings, libraries can play an important role in building social capital in Ozark-Dale County.

A new or renovated library building will allow the ODCPL to tailor services to the Personality of its community. For example, at the focus group meetings, the residents clearly stated that they wanted a library that celebrated the importance of reading, would encourage families to come together, and would provide spaces that could be used differently throughout the day with lots of technology, and plenty of books. It will be a meeting place, learning resource center, and a comfortable place to relax alone or visit with a friend, meet a group, teach a child, learn a new skill, research a stock or business, get a document notarized, write a resume, find a car to buy, learn a new language, apply for jobs, apply for admission to schools, colleges and training programs, renew car registrations, research health issues, find tax and other government forms, take online courses, do homework, and communicate with family, friends and employers.

The Library as Place

Notwithstanding numerous predictions of the demise of the library as a place, and reports of deserted libraries, Dale County citizens are using libraries more than ever. Routinely patrons stand in line at ODCPL to gain access to a computer, and once a patron gains access to a computer, staff has to limit time allowed to use a computer because of public demand.

Libraries fill a vital human need for community in association with ideas and learning. When designed with the community in mind, the physical library serves as a vital change-agent in community building—bringing people together and promoting and protecting a community's civic and educational values.

Communities have reawakened to the importance of the place-making role of the library building. Libraries are reasserting their role as welcoming, attractive, and fun physical destinations for their patrons by demanding from architects buildings that are both aesthetically pleasing and highly functional physical spaces for

creating a sense of a community of learners.

A library gains character and appeal through its resources (human and collections), programs, local traditions, and unique art and artifacts (i.e. the elements that reflect the spirit of a specific place or community). Libraries reinforce the fact that people genuinely like being in the presence of others while learning and while at cultural events. Why else would over three times more people come to the Ozark-Dale County Public Library than attended events at the Civic Center?

In a talk at Simon Frazer University in 1988, the writer Ralph Caplan eloquently summed up the role of design: "Yet one of the principal uses of design is the articulation of difference. Design is both a way of making distinctions and a way of eliminating those that are not useful." By knowing the community, the design of the ODCPL library can reflect its community through key elements of place-making, including: a) integration of activities, b) supporting the serendipitous nature of library use and the range of choices available, c) vigilance in upgrading and changing space to reflect the changing needs of the patron, and d) building on existing traditions. Successful place-making includes: a) creating a design from the character of the existing community, b) co-locating library and other educational uses, and c) integrating non-print content (people want more than books in a library).

Given the variety of activities that take place in a library, a key challenge in library planning and design is achieving a balance among an apparently opposing range of functions and needs. Some examples include: solitude/interaction, quiet/noise, conservation/food and drink, order/mess, existing physical barriers/barrier-free, durability/comfort, openness/security, and limited hours/24 x 7 expectations.

The successful library meets all these needs through a careful process of consultation, compromise, and design. What is required is nothing less than holding on to enduring values, while also demonstrating a genuine openness to listening to constituents, considering new ideas, and trying different approaches that accentuate the community-building role of the library.

Conclusions

Participants in all the focus groups were enthusiastic about the Ozark-Dale County Public Library and about what the library means to the community. They were vocal in their praise of the library and its staff as well as having a number of suggestions for improvement, indicating a strong sense of ownership in the library. Many expressed appreciation for being asked to participate in the focus groups and are interested in receiving information about the results. The library would benefit

from ensuring that all participants receive a copy of the final document, or at a minimum posting the document on the library's web site. All the groups discussed as a priority, the importance of publicizing the great services the library has to offer and concerns for the current economic situation of the community. There is clearly a lack of understanding within the community of the library's dire financial situation and space constraints. Perhaps the greatest challenge facing ODCPL today is to transform its service model to meet the demands of the knowledge society while securing a sustainable funding base for the future.

APPENDIX A

Focus Group Responses

Staff Focus Group Notes

(Why Do I Work Here?)
The staff focus group began with the question, "why do I work here."
Responses included:
- Community service
- Love to read
- I feel at home here
- I was called by Sandra out of the blue
- I am a creative person
- It started as temporary work, but I'm permanent
- I love it!
- I like people
- I appreciate the library's materials
- I started as a volunteer, then I got hired
- The good leadership
- The library has "taken off like a rocket"
- I love libraries
- I like the people who work here
- I loved libraries as a kid
- I get to meet nice people
- I get to work with kids, kids are the future
- Libraries are safe
- I love books
- I've used the library for 50 years
- This is my library
- I have an interest in genealogy
- I like helping people
- My community needs help
- The library is like family to me
- The library is in the center of town
- I love the patrons!

(Staff Frustrations)
The conversation moved on to the question, "what are your frustrations?"
Responses included:
- A poor inventory and security system that results in library items going missing and patrons not returning checked out items. Staff wonder if grant money could help pay for a better security system.
- Staff and volunteers shelve books.
- The building has leaks that have caused damaged items.
- The library has a pervasive mildew smell.
- Most of the library's electrical outlets have 2 prongs, making connecting new equipment difficult.
- Fires have been caused by the building's older electrical system.

(Building)

Continuing on the subject of the current ODCPL building, the staff was asked to consider various options:

- Do nothing. The only positive comment was about the convenient location of the current building.
- Retrofit the existing building. The staff expressed concerns over the parking situation, the repair costs, and whether the existing building had enough room to grow.
- Build a new building. One staff member thinks any new building should be stand alone, and not attached to another building. A new building would also give staff members a better view of the entire floor area which would make supervision easier. The staff is confident they know what their patrons want in a new building.
- The question of renovating another building into a new ODCPL was not brought up.

(Problems with Existing Building)

The staff was asked about specific problems with the existing building:
- Wiring, related to fire hazards and two-pronged AC outlets.
- The shortage of free, private meeting rooms for the community. Currently, organizations such as churches and the Civic Center provide meeting spaces but these organizations can be expensive.
- The lack of a designated media room with a projector, audio equipment, a strong Wi-Fi connection, and adequate electrical outlets. The staff felt children and teens in particular would benefit from a media room.
- Lots of foot traffic through limited walkways.
- Noise.
- Small children's services area.

(Advice to Board)

The staff offered the following advice to the ODCPL Board on what a new building should be:
- The new building should not have a flat roof.
- The Board should keep the public's needs in mind.
- The new building should have a glassed-in children's area so staff and parents can more effectively monitor the children.
- The Board should listen to the staff's suggestions when planning the new building.

(Alabama Virtual Library)

The next topic for discussion was the Alabama Virtual Library (AVL), a collection of online databases provided by the State of Alabama to its citizens.
- The staff said AVL's resources were poorly understood and they received no training in how to search AVL databases.
- The staff praised Learning Express Library, a database of sample tests, though this is not an AVL database.

- Although the staff is proud of their work with schools, some schools are difficult to get into. Maybe some schools offer AVL training for their students.
- AVL pamphlets that explain AVL's databases would be appreciated.
- Homeschoolers were mentioned as other possible users of AVL.
- Not related to the AVL, but some staff members thought a "makers' space" would appeal to teens and adults.

(Programming with Schools)
The AVL discussion let to a conversation about ODCPL's school programming:
- The Big Read is a big programming event.
- A program that examined 1930's activities was also very popular.
- Connecting with the teachers so ODCPL receives reading lists has been very difficult. Receiving the teachers' reading lists ahead of time would enable ODCPL staff members to make sure books of a specific subject are available when students need them.
- Many of the local school libraries are poorly developed. This puts additional responsibilities on ODCPL.

(What ODCPL Did Poorly)
The staff was asked what ODCPL did poorly in the past year:
- The building is old and the roof leaks. This prompted the question of whether it would be cheaper to build a new building rather than continuously repair the existing one.
- Would a model of having a new ODCPL building act as a "headquarters" and building smaller buildings throughout Dale Co. dedicated to after school reference work? The staff seemed to think the idea is worth examining.

(Magic Wand)
If the staff could wave a magic wand and all of ODCPL's problems would be solved, what would they ask for:
- First impressions at the current location are terrible. Some staff have noticed patrons looking unhappy when they first walk into the library. Either improve the front of the existing library or build a new one that is attractive to patrons.
- Modernize the library's technology. A media room is one way to do this, but the electric system must be brought up to date or the entire library should be replaced.
- A café and/or seating area where customers can relax with library materials and a beverage. Much like Starbucks.
- Most of the staff are in favor of eBooks, but many think ODCPL must balance the eMedia with traditional print materials.

(Final Advice)
The staff was asked whether they had any final advice for the consultants and the Board:
- The library must change in order to grow.
- Should materials for minorities be placed in a separate section or labeled in a way to indicate their subject matter? This was perhaps the most contentious question of the day. The staff was divided on this point.

- Some staff members recommended a new online cataloging system.
- When told of the other future focus groups, the staff told the consultants to make sure frequent library users, and non-users, were included.
-The staff understands that any future building will require staff and community involvement.
- The final point the staff wanted to make was that a new library would help Ozark and Dale County grow.

Businessperson Focus Group Notes

LibraryMax, LLC conducted a focus group with members of the Ozark and Dale County business community. These notes are a transcription of the group's thoughts, opinions, and suggestions for Ozark/Dale County Public Library (ODCPL).

The moderator asked the question, "What was your first use of a library?" The group answered:
- I have no childhood memories of using a library. My first library use was in college.
- I read "Hardy Boys" books in the summer reading club.
- My mother was a volunteer in our local Pennsylvania library. I got into books on UFOs.
- I first used the old library in downtown Ozark.
- I received art lessons from local artist Claude Peacock in the Library at age 11.
- I first used the bookmobile because I lived in a small town.
- I used the Library's summer activities. I loved checking out books.

The group was asked, "Are libraries an essential function to the community?" The replies included:
- Absolutely!
- I do think so now that I have one available to me.
- Not as essential as utilities such as water, and electricity, but any significant community *needs* a good library. It is essential like schools are.
- Libraries are very important but not essential.
- Yes, because libraries have many other activities than just books.
- The more services libraries provide, the more positively the community leaders will view it.
- The Library's free meeting rooms are important because there is a shortage of free meeting spaces in the community.
- The Library must be a center of the community if it hopes to bring the community into the Library.

The focus group was asked what is good about ODCPL:
- The genealogy was praised.
- Why did Dothan's public library donate most of their genealogy collection to Ozark, a much smaller library?

Database use among the surveyed group members was low, though some seemed interested in business databases that could help them create lists of competitors and potential customers and do industry research.

The group thought that ODCPL's marketing efforts were not effective enough (more on this later).

When asked about ODCPL's downsides and limitations the group offered:
- Limited parking and no playgroups for children.
- The "chopped up" layout of the collection that a group member feels is not handicapped accessible.
- The current building's flat roof.
- Because of the Library's location, and the changing of the neighborhood from residential to more commercial, reduces the number of pedestrians who visit the Library.

The businesspersons were offered a magic wand to fix all ODCPL's issues. Here is how they would use their power:
- Have a more effective marketing campaign and make better use of the free marketing opportunities that are available.
- ODCPL needs to do more with various social media tools.

The members pointed out that ODCPL had other uses that elected officials may not recognize, such as:
- Free Internet for those in the community who cannot afford internet access.
- ODCPL provides help for patrons who are filling out online job applications.

The group returned to the topic of now ODCPL could improve their marketing efforts. Their advice included:
- Don't rely on the local newspaper. Fewer and fewer people read it.
- Does ODCPL market to schools, churches and nursing homes in the area?
- The Library may be off many people's radar.
- ODCPL should have street signs on busy streets to direct patrons to the library.
- The neighborhood around the Library has changed since it opened and is less busy these days.
- The Library must redefine itself.
- ODCPL should ask itself, "What do we do that other local libraries do not?"

Talk of the neighborhood brought up the following comments:
- Highway 231 divides Ozark. This has become somewhat of a psychological barrier that many residents do not like to cross.
- The need for directional street signs pointing to the library was mentioned again.
- The genealogy collection is very good. That should be promoted.

The members were asked what ODCPL does not do well:

- The Library needs to advertise on multiple media outlets. The Dothan Eagle should be used more frequently for "local interest" stories.
- Outreach to schools should be increased. Database research classes for area schools would be a good idea.

So how do we raise the Library's community awareness:
- ODCPL should be seen as a source of information.
- Some children don't know the Library is available to them. Marketing to kids should be increased.
- Many local kids go to college and never return.
- The Wiregrass region has failed to find alternatives to Ft. Rucker.
- The Ozark school populations and graduation rates have declined in the past 10 years.
- Enterprise, AL has done a better job of marketing itself to the Ft. Rucker community.
- Ozark *is* embracing Ft. Rucker but it could do a better job at it.
- Ozark would be devastated if Ft. Rucker were to close. Enterprise would be hurt worse because of that community's stronger connection to the base.
- Ozark's schools are not getting as many Ft. Rucker students as in the past.

What to do about the building came up next. When asked, "What are the advantages of staying the current location?" the group responded:

- It may be cheaper to stay than to build a new building.
- Residents already know the current location.
- None.
- It might be cheaper to rebuild the current building than to rebuild another existing building.

Related to the building topic, the group was asked, "Who uses the Library?"
- If the Library is intended as a resource for the less fortunate, can lower income people even get there to use the materials?
- African-American residents use the PCs heavily.
- The most common users are the very old, the very young, and a few middle aged people.
- Kids are the future of the Ozark community. Their needs must be seriously considered in this process.
- What services does Dothan's public library have that Ozark could offer?

The inevitable topic of money came up during the building discussion:
- Many Ozark community resources are old, such as the Library.
- How was Dothan able to afford to build a new library?
- If the community wants to have a new library built, it must make its demands known to their elected officials.

- Would the Wiregrass Foundation cover one half of the construction costs of a new building?
- The people *must* consider building a new library to be important if they want the building built.
- Leadership is important. What other sources of funding are available?
- LibraryMax, LLC was asked to provide a list of funding options.
- The community and political leadership must be *educated* on the benefits of the Library, not merely informed.
- One method of emphasizing how heavily the Library is used would be to compare ODCPL's gate count or circulation statistics to other community resources like City Hall or a ballpark.
- The Library must show that libraries are not passé.
- Popular Library programs must be promoted and repeated.

When asked, "How can ODCPL improve its relationship with the local schools," the group made these suggestions:
- Host field trips so schools can bring multiple classes to the Library. Once there, the staff can show the students relevant resources.
- Host school study groups so students can study together in a centralized location, rather than in students' homes.
- Many residents are low income and the Library is a good place to meet.
- Train high school students to become Library advocates to their peers.

Staying with the teens topic, the group offered:
- Start stimulating younger kids' interest in libraries; don't wait until kids become teenagers.
- Reach out to the area high schools' internship programs. Maybe some kids would like to intern at ODCPL.
- Simply ask teens, "Why do (or don't) you come to the Library?"

Finally, the businesspersons focus group recommended these changes for the ODCPL Board:
- The Library is an essential part of my life. Please make it better.
- Why has the Board silently allowed the current Library situation to become the standard?
- The Board needs to educate the Ozark community why they need a new library.
- The Library Director and Board Chair need to be more visible in the community, especially at City Council and County Executive meetings.
- Library leaders need to meet with elected officials more than once a year, and these meetings need to be scheduled.

Educators Focus Group

LibraryMax, LLC conducted a focus group of Ozark and Dale County educators. In addition, other interested community members joined the discussion.

The educators were asked about their first memories of using a library. Their responses included:
- My father took me to our local library in Virginia.
- I participated in the summer reading program at age 7.
- I was a senior in high school. It was easier to use the public library than my school library because the hours were more convenient and it was open on Saturday. We also had a set of Random House encyclopedias.
- My family lived in the County. I used my high school library and the Ozark public library to do research for my papers.
- I used the elementary school bookmobiles. Those were exciting times!
- We used the bookmobiles because my family lived far out in the County.
- I participated in Ozark-Dale County Public Library (ODCPL) summer reading program.
- Books were limited in my small town growing up. I read whatever I could find; I especially loved my brother's collection of western novels. More recently, my family had bought more books than we checked out.
- I lived in Georgia growing up and I didn't use a public library. I did use the Army's libraries wherever in the world I was posted. As an African-American, I wasn't allowed to participate in public library services when I was young.
- My mother was a school librarian so I learned to love reading.
- I first learned to use libraries in elementary school in Florida.

Fort Rucker is in Dale County and very close to Ozark. The group members were asked about Ft. Rucker's influence on the region:
- Without Ft. Rucker, Ozark would disappear or dry up.
- Back in the 1970's, the Federal Government allocated ½ million dollars in aid to the region's schools to offset the costs of educating Ft. Rucker's children. Today, very little Federal money is received.
- I used the Ft. Rucker library for my research needs. It was almost always full.
- When I worked at Ft. Rucker, I used their library.

The group was asked about the positive aspects of ODCPL:
- I really like the children's activities. The Library should pass out flyers to advertise them.
- ODCPL has the best genealogy research facilities in the area. It is much better than the State's resources.
- Ms. Rayford (in the Genealogy area) is outstanding!
- The ODCPL has genealogy material that Ancestry.com doesn't have.
- This collection is so good that regional African-American families have donated their genealogy records.
- The Library desperately needs to store its genealogy collection in a temperature-controlled environment.
- The collection should also be digitized.

After talking about the positive aspects of ODCPL's genealogy collection, the conversation moved on to other areas where the Library does a good job:

- The staff is very dedicated, they get paid 70% of what other City employees make, and they don't receive benefits.
- The Director and staff are open to new suggestions and actively seek outside opinions on how to improve service.
- Many copies of bestsellers are provided and the holds system is very good.
- The interlibrary loan system helps me find the books I want to read that aren't available at the Library.
- The eBooks are all I read, they are great for trips and my kids love them.
- I prefer print books to eBooks because of the tactile feel of holding the book.

The group talked a bit about ODCPL's relationship with the schools:
- In local schools, classroom teachers teach research skills, not the school librarians.
- The Alabama Virtual Library is sometimes used.
- In some private schools, every child is issued a tablet or laptop. In public schools, many families buy these devices for their children.
- Many students who do not have Internet access to home use the Library's Wi-Fi.

With the good must come the bad and the educators had much to say on this subject:
- The building is dark, dated, dirty and depressing.
- Some students refuse to study at the Library, but they would probably study in a newer, more attractive location.
- Some adults would rather buy books than check them out at the Library.
- The Board should not renovate another existing building. They should either build a new building or renovate the current building.
- The educators thought the area around the current building is safe but lighting is inadequate.
- Parking is also inadequate, especially for older people.
- Renovating another existing building would be good if done right.
- The computers take up too much room in the center of the Library. They should have their own supervised room.
- The electrical system is out of date with numerous 2-prong outlets.
- The Daleville Library was purpose-built.
- Considering today's electronic libraries, would a smaller Internet-based library be a good idea to replace the current building?
- It will be very difficult to raise money for a new building in Ozark.
- More money is spent on jails than libraries because there are more people in jail than those who read books.

The discussion shifted back to the deficiencies of the current building and how to address them in a new structure:
- ODCPL should move to a busier area of Ozark.
- The current layout is atrocious.
- The Library and Board should go after grant money more forcefully.
- A new building project must have local funding as well as money from the Wiregrass Foundation and other non-Ozark and Dale County sources.

- Some people who do not use the Library don't know where it is.
- The Library must not be just a destination. If it were in a busier area more people would use it.
- Some people will object to moving out of the current building.
- What other funding options are there along with the Wiregrass Foundation?
- There will be huge problems if ODCPL buys an existing building and tries to refurbish it.
- The residents of the City of Ozark and Dale County need to have a say in the future of their library system. Attempts to force one idea on the community will not work.
- How much would new library construction cost? The Library and Board need to excite the community on the prospects of a new library.
- The Library and Board need to engage their elected officials and tell their story. Interested community members need to attend City Council and County Commissioners meetings and voice their desires for a new library. This process works most of the time.
- The Library and Board need to educate the community about how/why a new library can benefit everyone.
- The Library's new services should be marketed better.

Finally, the educators were asked what advice they would give to the ODCPL Board:
- What research has the Board done to explore building a new building, renovating another existing building, or renovating the current building?
- How much funding research has been done?
- The Board needs to do the legwork and create a presentation for the City and County elected officials that will convince them to help fund a new building.
- What is the timetable for Phase II of LibraryMax's proposed plan?
- Dothan has a higher tax base and can afford a larger library.
- How do we motivate the community?

Friends of the Ozark-Dale County Public Library Notes

LibraryMax, LLC interviewed members of the Ozark-Dale County Public Library (ODCPL) Friends organization.

The Friends were asked to describe their first library experiences:
- I first used the bookmobiles, but my mother would also check books for us out of the "real" library. I don't remember attending a story hour.
- I am a Washington, D.C. natives and I never went to a library until elementary school. I didn't go to story hour either.

- My family lived in the country, and there was no public library to visit. I loved the smell of the books.
- I was an Army brat who first used the library for a summer reading program. I don't remember ever not reading. My mother and grandmother took me to the library in 1963. We sometimes lived outside of the US and the first library I used was in Fort Rucker.
- Growing up in FLA, we had grand libraries like the Mellon Library. I first used the library when I was 8 or 9 and my home library was so small I had library card # 336. I read through the children's collection and I worked in the library as a teenager. We need a newer, bigger library in Ozark because the Library's needs have outgrown the building. The Library needs to be a strong presence in Ozark life.
- I used the first Ozark Library and the bookmobile. The Library is a great help to the community. A new library is needed. Could the old Van Heusen shirt factory be renovated into a new library?
- I was a good student but I talked too much in school. I read the encyclopedias. I am now a book collector and I don't like eBooks. Kids need to be exposed to libraries. Our library is a great place, but it has poor parking. Ozark used to be active but now the City has no initiative and the Civic Center is barely used. There is no place to shop and few restaurants.

Ozark's decline led to discussion of how any why it happened:
- Ozark is dying. The computer access is one thing that brings people into ODCPL.
- There are no jobs in Ozark other than fast-food.

The friends moved on to the topic of the current demographic situation:
- We can't do nothing. That happens too many times in Ozark.
- Some people think, "Why do we need a new library? We can't afford it."
- There is nothing for younger people in Ozark. We have to build for the future. Ozark started stagnating in the 1950s. Members of the Ft. Rucker community told soldiers not to move to Ozark. Enterprise, AL gained Ft. Rucker's support. There is a leadership vacuum in Ozark, but most of the wounds are self-inflicted.
- Ozark high schools used to produce scholars. Now, this seldom happens due to too many demographic changes from public housing. Some families don't value education and have lost control of their kids.
- Another friend thought public housing wasn't the problem, saying if nothing is put into the community, nothing will come out of it.
- Too many kids graduate from high school in Ozark, then go off to college and do not return because there are so few opportunities for them here.
- The best kids go to private schools.
- Outside corporations who are considering moving into a community look closely at the local schools and libraries.

After talking about some of the negative aspects of the region, the Friends moved on to the positive aspects of the Library:

- The staff is superb! They go the extra mile for patrons. ODCPL does genealogy better than any other library in AL.
- The kids programs, including Pokemon, are very good.
- I attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings at the Library.
- The book selection is great, especially the bestsellers, DVDs and audiobooks.
- I like the computers and computer classes.
- The Library is a good outlet for the elderly.
- The Director is conscientious and has a genial personality.
- The staff supports internship programs with the local high schools.
- ODCPL has a good booksale room.

The conversation drifted back into negative territory:
- Some elected officials have said openly they are opposed to the Library.
- We must remember that ODCPL is supported by the City and the County.
- The City and the County have divided priorities.
- Some elected officials are trying to make things better.
- There is no money spent in Ozark.

The Friends were then asked what they didn't like about their library:
- The building is all chopped up and has no flow. It is not open, and visibility is poor. A separate computer room is needed. The inside is dark and the outside needs better lighting.
- Elected officials would not want to take visitors to this library.
- The building is not really handicapped accessible.
- Parking is limited.
- A new library should have an area to display art. More different types of meeting rooms should be included in a new library.
- A new library should have its shelves on rollers.
- I didn't know we had a notary on staff. That should be better advertised.
- Library marketing is poor. There are too many "we didn't know" statements about Library services.

Comments about ODCPL's subpar marketing efforts brought these comments:
- The Library needs to advertise better in the newspaper.
- The Library's newsletter should be sent to schools.
- ODCPL is connecting well with the schools.
- When surplus books were made available to schools only 1 teacher came.
- Most area teachers don't live in the region.
- Bainbridge, GA has an excellent high school library.
- ODCPL should work better with the Boys and Girls Club and the Housing Authority.
- A new library should be more centrally located.
- A new library should be about the basics. We don't want the services cut.
- A new library must be able to expand.
- The Library is one of the best places for meeting rooms because meeting room access is limited throughout the region.

The new library theme extended into a discussion about what building options are available:
- No Friends thought the current building should be kept and only minimal repairs should be made.
- Some liked the idea of renovating a current building. The former Van Heusen building came up again, but the Friends couldn't determine the building's status.
- No flat roofs!
- Would a new building be affordable?
- Could the new library have a playground?

The Friends offered the following advice for the ODCPL Board:
- Consider the former shopping mall across from City Hall. That renovated building could offer everything Dothan's libraries have. It would be less expensive.
- The shopping center location is great. If there is grant money to build parks, why not libraries?
- The shopping center location has no windows, aside from the storefront.
- I see only 3 options: a new free standing library; a library in a strip mall; a totally new structure.
- The Board must plan for the future, as it may be another 60 years before another library is built.
- The Board must give the public what they want.
- Wherever the new library is built, pedestrian access is very important.

Military Focus Group Notes

LibraryMax, LLC interviewed members of the Ozark and Dale County military community. Some other local residents who may not have been military but who were able to attend were also included.

When asked about their earliest library memories, the group members offered:
- I used the bookmobile and participated in the summer reading program in the 1950s.
- I remember the Brown family donation for the current library. I did research and encouraged the kids I taught to use the library.
- I use the library for genealogy research, Ozark history research and AA meetings.
- Ozark-Dale County Public Library (ODCPL) helped me trace my family tree using Ancestry.com and the US Census records.
- I went to D.H. Smith High School and was a part of the Navajo reading club. I returned to Ozark in 2010 and I spend a lot of time in the Library.
- My mother took me to the library at Tuskegee University.
- I first went to the Library with my mother and brother and I grew up loving libraries.
- I remember the card catalogs, but I now use eBooks.
- Why do we fund the building of jails but not libraries?

- I don't like eBooks because I like to hold books.
- Kids today have no time to research at school.

The mention of research brought up the topic of schools. Here is what our group had to say:
- There are no more card catalogs!
- Today's technology is so difficult to use that my grandkids have to help me.
- Many schools don't issue books anymore- they give kids laptops.
- I grew up in a small town with no library. I didn't use a library until I was in the 7th grade. Because of that, I was always behind the other students in school. ODCPL does a great job for kids.
- I went to a private school that had no library.
- Many parents cannot read and are also computer illiterate so they cannot help their children. The Library helps fill this role.
- Some homeschool parents use ODCPL.
- Meeting rooms in the community are very limited.
- In the 1970s the Adult Education Program helped fight illiteracy.
-Why does the City and County buy houses while improperly funding the Library?
- Kids are our future. Their needs must be taken seriously.

Group members were asked, "How important is the library?"
- 10 out of 10! I know the Library's importance for schools.
- Incoming companies want to know the quality of the local school systems and libraries.

The military focus group was asked about the importance of Fort Rucker to Ozark and Dale County:
- Without Ft. Rucker, we'd all be stacking peanuts!
- We would survive, we'd come up with something.
- The Ft. Rucker library has friendly people.
- Some retirees move back to the area, after being stationed at Ft. Rucker.
- The deep South is not like some people describe it. This is a good place to live.
- Fewer soldiers live in Ozark. Some at Ft. Rucker discourage soldiers from living in Ozark.
- When the ODCPL was rain damaged, no repairs were made.
- Why is there money for baseball diamonds but not the Library?

An interesting point was made that an outside group called "Teen Challenge" raised $50,000 in one day. Some wondered why the Library doesn't receive this kind of funding interest.

When asked, "What is bad about the Library," group members responded:
- The building's leaking roof. "We need an umbrella inside."
- The City of Ozark is too dependent on its leadership for ideas. The community is disengaged.
- The Dale County Commission must get involved.

- The community must take its demands to the elected officials and expect them to follow through on their promises.
- As a community, we need to be honest with the elected officials, and ourselves, about our community needs.
- Some local politicians do not want to help the Library.
- Are there fire code violations in the Library?

The topic of funding came up. Here is what the members had to say:
- The Wiregrass Foundation will not fund repairs to the current building.
- Funding is more important than where the library is built.
- Most elected officials speak in generics when talking about funding, but they don't do what they say.
- The community needs to remind the politicians of their promises.
- When it comes to fundraising, the City of Ozark is not enough. The City, County and Wiregrass Foundation must work together to raise the necessary funding.
- The Libraries must market their services better in order to show how they benefit the community.
- Why don't politicians do what we ask them to do?
- We need younger people to run for political office because we need newer ideas.
- Why can't the community organize 100+ people to lobby for a new building?

When asked about the current ODCPL location, the members responded:
- The current location is no longer convenient.
- Many kids come from housing projects.
- We need a centrally located Library.
- The current location is safe at night.
- Any new location must be convenient for pedestrians.
- The Library Board must get input from Dale County residents, not just City of Ozark residents.
- There is not enough lighting at the current location.
- Are most new Library users Ozark residents or are they from the County?
- Most City and County residents do not care about the Library.

The discussion of local politics brought up these observations:
- The City and County elected officials must take responsibility for the current state of the Library.
- The City of Daleville has its own library and convincing politicians in this area to fund a new ODCPL may be difficult.
- Residents in the North of Dale County use the Library more heavily than people in the South. South County residents can't be forgotten, however.
- We can't use Dothan as an example because Ozark and Dale Co.'s situation is very different.
- ODCPL must work with other Dale Co. libraries. Is reciprocal lending an option?
- Would reciprocal lending agreements offend the local school districts?

The conversation drifted back to a new location for ODCPL. Comments included:
- We want to help get a new location, but how do we do it? Where do we start?
- We don't feel included at Library Board meetings. How do we get to speak at Board meeting?
- Do not renovate the current building.
- Renovating an existing building could help reduce urban decay.
- We don't want a flat roof, no matter what option is chosen.
- A donated building might work.
- Any option is dependent upon the structural integrity of the building.
- We don't want a building that is attached to another building.
- "rubberoid touchdown" could help make a roof leak-proof.

When asked for their advice for the Library Board, the military focus group responded:
- Build a new library.
- Don't just plan for this generation, plan for the next one.
- Also plan for Dale County as a whole.
- Get more people involved in the planning process.
- Many people think their elected officials do not listen. Residents should be allowed to speak at Board meetings.
- The Board must plan for all ages and all talents.
- The new library must include more meeting spaces.
- Special collections for art, African-American History, and the LGBT population should be created in the Library.
- Maker's spaces and drama spaces would be a good idea.

"Other" Focus Group Notes

LibraryMax, LLC conducted a focus group of members of the Ozark and Dale County community who were either economically challenged or could not attend the other group sessions.

The group members were asked about their earliest library memories:
- Bringing my children for research and the summer reading program.
- My brother brought me books from the library because our parents didn't read to us. Also, the summer reading program.
- My grandmother took us to the old downtown library. I have very clear memories of this.
- I used my school libraries, which probably weren't as good as the public library. That put me at a disadvantage at school. I take me kids to storytime. I didn't read for pleasure until after college.
- I lived in a rural area and didn't have access to a public library.

The group was asked about the good things about the Ozark-Dale County Public Library (ODCPL):
- The Library has a very friendly staff that helps me find the materials I need.
- I use many of the Library's resources and it is great to see people use the Internet here.
- I love the genealogy collection.
- The Director and staff create a very friendly environment.
- The location is convenient for me.
- The building should be more centrally located; the town of Ozark's focus has shifted to other areas.
- Students who take online classes can use the Library's Internet.
- The Friends of the Library provides good services like book sales.
- The meeting rooms are convenient for local events such at Alcoholics Anonymous.
- Patrons don't have to come into the library to use the meeting rooms.
- The seasonal kids programming is great, especially Pokemon.
- Other programs I like are "write your own book" and "popcorn and movies."

One very popular part of ODCPL is the genealogy collection. Here's what the group had to say:
- World War One research has become a passion of mine. The staff has been a Godsend for me.
- People from all over the country use the genealogy staff and resources. Jocelyn is wonderful; she's better than the staff at other genealogy collections I've used.
- I've very proud of the collection we have. It is cramped, but the resources are great.
- The school records archives have been very helpful in my research.
- Online genealogy has exploded. Ancestry.com access is much appreciated.

After talking about the positive aspects of ODCPL, the members moved on to areas they would like to see improved:
- The parking is inadequate.
- Kids don't come into the Library if they have the Internet at home. Those that do depend on the Library for Internet access often find the computer seats full.
- The Library's relationship with the schools could be improved so students can better learn research skills.
- More meeting room options for tutors and others who need smaller rooms would be nice.
- School-organized tours of the library for students and teachers would help both groups understand what services the Library offers.
- Better contacts with the schools should be developed. This is a marketing and programming issue.
- Although ODCPL material is sent to schools, it doesn't seem to be reaching the teachers or students. How can the Library follow up to see if the material is getting to the people who need to hear about it?
- The building is not a pleasant place; it is dirty, stained and crowded. Can it be updated?

- Too many additions have been made over the years.
- The building is 1955 vintage, the resources inside are great but the building is dated.
- The building is deteriorating, the roof leaks. It has served its day.
- The building is very costly to update.
- There needs to be a dedicated Internet room with staffing and printing.
- The bathrooms are old. Are they ADA compliant?
- Whatever happened to the regional library system?
- Broward Co. FL has a great library system. They are well funded.
- The staff needs medical benefits.
- The wiring is outdated; cables are visible to the public.
- The building really isn't handicapped accessible or ADA compliant.
- Is it possible, in a new building or the current one, to have a delivery service?
- There is no room for large groups of kids.
- Kids don't want to come here.
- The teen section is too small.
- Ozark is a small town. Where would the money to build a new building come from?
- Efforts have been made to bring outside companies into Ozark. The downtown and Airport are examples. What about the Library?
- Libraries should be a showcase for economic development. ODCPL needs to be better to make this happen.
- A Library speaker should to into the schools and talk to the students and teachers about Library services.
- There seems to be a disconnect between the Library and the schools.

The Library's marketing efforts were an area of concern for this focus group:
- The Library should advertise and make better use of its webpage and social media.
- A staff member should join the Rotary Club and use the organization's speaking opportunities to promote the Library and its services.
- Staff members should present in the schools and provide a human touch to doing research.
- Community organizations need to know that Library speakers are available for speaking engagements.

During the community discussion, concerns about the Ozark and Dale County community were offered:
- It is very difficult to get a good job in Ozark, though there are many minimum wage jobs available.
- Because jobs are so scarce, workers are often abused.
- The Library's computers are essential for getting a job.
- Filling out online resumes and job applications is very difficult without help from the Library staff, as is navigating the black hole of online applications.
- What impact has digital technology had on ODCPL?
- The Library should keep its older books; new authors don't appeal to me.

- The Library's technology books are out of date. This makes it harder to study for tests.

According to the group, ODCPL's other problems include:
- The energy efficiency of the building.
- The Library's amount of space and how it is organized.
- The inside of the building is a very depressing environment. It is dull, stagnating, and unappealing.
- Could remote controlled blimps be used to advertise the Library? These blimps could hover over sporting events and major highways and advertising space could be sold to local businesses.
- The Library could use a staff member dedicated to marketing. I don't know if this is feasible, but the Library needs to market its services better.
- Doorknob hangers that show a list of Library services could be a cheap way to market.
- Rather than a welcome wagon, the City of Ozark has an unwelcome wagon for visitors.
- Can the Library work with the local Chamber of Commerce to better market its services?
- Could the Library work with Veronica from the Economic Development Corporation to do partnered programs that would demonstrate the Library's services for local businesses?

The group moved on to the Library building for its next topic of discussion:
- How does the current building rate in terms of health safety, fire safety, and personal safety?
- Is doing nothing about the current building an option? NO!
- Should the Library attempt to retrofit another existing building?
  - Have all the current building options been explored?
  - Tell us about the McAllen, TX Wal-Mart that was turned into a library.
  - If the building has a flat roof, we need a lifetime guarantee against leaks.
  - Cost-wise, how would this option compare with building new?
  - Whatever is done, more meeting rooms are necessary for Ozark.
  - What about the old Van Heusen shirt factory building?
  - A new building might be the best option since none of the other options are good.
- Any new building must have better lighting than the current building.

The "Other" focus group finished up by offering their advice to the Library Board:
- Have Monday hours for those who can only use the Library on that day.
- Put solar panels on the roof. The Library can receive its own electricity plus any unneeded power can be sold back to the electric company.
- The new library should have a cultural center, a gallery space, and a café with music.

- Technology workshops inside a new Library can help local residents develop their skills.
- The Library is a middle ground between work and home. As such, it should be a place where all can feel comfortable and find materials of interest.
- A bigger children's area is needed for entertainment programs.
- The Board must do something to get a new building!
- The Board should act now and not wait to make the necessary changes.
- Few new customers will be gained from the current building situation.
- Teens love the "Skate Shop." That could be a model for a new library's teen area.
- The public should be able to view LibraryMax's final report to the Board.

Seniors Focus Group Notes

LibraryMax's focus group with a selection of Ozark and Dale County senior residents began with the members' first experiences with libraries. Their memories included:
- I was born and raised in a small town. I was taken to the local library once a week.
- I often went to the library as a child.
- My mother was an assistant librarian. I read "Profiles in Courage" as a child. I am currently a teacher and use the library for my tutoring.
- I didn't grow up using a library because my town had no library, but I first used a library to help my daughter do legal research.
- I grew up in Brooklyn, NY, and first walked to my local library when I was 7 or 8. I was very proud of my library card and I never stopped using libraries.
- I used the Ozark Library when it was located in the old health building (prior to the current location). The first book I checked out was "the Little Red Car," and I've liked sports cars ever since.
- I also went to the old health building. My parents never read to me so I came to the library whenever I could. I was ill for 6 weeks and I read any book I could find in the house.

This group wasn't fond of eBooks. One member had an eBook reader, but doesn't use it. Another tried it out but found it too difficult to use. Others said they preferred the feel of printed books.

The Alabama Virtual Library was barely used and most members hadn't even heard of it.

When asked, "Why do you live in Ozark and/or Dale County, the members commented:
- I like the small town charm.
- This is home. It's low-key, low-crime and the cost of living is low.
- I find it convenient. The traffic is light. Ozark is centrally located geographically among my family members. I like small towns.
- I came here in 1954 with my Military Police husband. People call me "Ma'am." The drivers wave to each other; the traffic is light.

- I was born is D.C, but I came back after my retirement. Ozark is laid back, but I'd like to see more energy. Ozark is losing services.
- I like the light traffic, warm climate, and my children grew up here.
- I came with my military husband in 1959, and I decided to stay here.

On the question of "What services should Ozark-Dale County Public Library provide," the members answered:
- Help with online job applications.
- Help with specific online forms and faxing; especially during tax season.
- The Library needs to market itself better.
- Some members did not know ODCPL has a notary service.
- The members appreciated the help ODCPL staff provides for online and print genealogy research.

The focus group members wanted to talk about ODCPL's marketing needs. Suggestions included:
- The Library does not market its services well enough.
- Signage inside the Library could be improved.
- The Friends of the Library brochure is very good but not good enough.

The discussion moved on to what the members did not like about ODCPL. Responses included:
- The building was good at first but now it is in disrepair.
- The building needs more restrooms and family restrooms for parents should be added.
- The Library is like a warm, trusty overcoat that has gone out of style with age.
- There isn't enough lighting inside or outside of the Library.
- The lack of sidewalks makes it difficult for pedestrians.
- I've heard there is a new building in the offing that is a former furniture store.
- The current flat roof is a problem. Any new building should include an apex roof. Are there special coatings that could reduce leaks on a flat roof?
- Is a drive-thru service practical?
- A new building should be near a Wal-Mart to increase street visibility.
- Why not a multi-story building? That would free up space for more parking.
- Why aren't there more street signs that would tell people how to find the Library?

Fort Rucker's influence on Ozark and ODCPL was discussed:
- The Ft. Rucker library now allows non-military people to use their services.
- The Ft. Rucker library has a large collection of technical materials but few fiction or children's books.
- ODCPL doesn't get as many Ft. Rucker customers because of its proximity to Enterprise, AL.
- Ft. Rucker is not the only influence on Ozark, but it is the largest.
- Most Ft. Rucker students go to Enterprise and Daleville schools.
- The security gate situation at Ft. Rucker hurts the community of Ozark.
- Ozark must look forward, and not live in the past.

- Ozark used to cultivate its relationship with Ft. Rucker, and that relationship is not as strong as it used to be.
- Ozark must get back in love with Ft. Rucker.
- ODCPL employees would need passes to do programming at Ft. Rucker. These passes would need to be renewed every 6 months.
- If Ft. Rucker closes, Ozark will die.
- ODCPL should use art and cultural programming to bring Ft. Rucker and other community members into the Library.
- The current building should be gutted.

When asked about building a new building the members offered:
- The location is not important; the quality of the building is what matters.
- Don't accept the situation when elected officials make promises about doing things, "tomorrow." Tomorrow never comes.
- How does ODCPL address the "Brown legacy" that is attached to the current building. If the current building remains if the Library moves, can a plaque remain to honor the Browns? Or could a plaque honoring the Browns be placed in a new building?
- Parts of the existing building should be torn down and replaced by new construction. The new elements should be attractive.
- How important is sentimentality when considering whether to move or construct a new building?

The hours of operation became a talking point:
- The library is not open enough hours, especially on Friday & Saturday.
- Is it possible for ODCPL to open on Sunday afternoon & Monday?
- Why are ODCPL's hours the way they are? Has a community survey been done to examine the current operating hours?
- Are there too many volunteers at ODCPL? How are they trained?
- Would the increased use of eMedia mean a smaller building is needed?
- Any new building should have a glassed-in children's area.

When asked what advice the group would have for the ODCPL Board the members replied:
- Don't have the same problems we have in the current building in a new building.
- Don't spend money on a new building unless it is necessary.
- Be sure to keep staff suggestions in mind when planning for a new building.

Teens Focus Group Notes

LibraryMax, LLC conducted a focus group of members of the Ozark and Dale County teen community. In addition, two adults also attended.

The teens were asked about their earliest library memories:
- Originally, I came for the puppet shows, but then I started coming to the Library every day.

- I remember the card catalog, but the computer catalog is more efficient.
- I did the summer reading program, storytime, and used the Library for school research.
- My mother and grandmother work in the Library. I first came here because I liked the toys, but now I like the Pokemon program.
- I liked the storytime and toys.
- I first participated in the summer reading program.
- I grew up in North Carolina and they had a more modern library than we do.

The group members were asked what were the current Library's problems:
- The number of parking spaces is too small.
- The roof leaks in the young adult section.
- Doing nothing to fix the building is not an option. The building is an eyesore and has electrical problems.
- I don't think repairing the current building is a good solution. It would be like applying a new paint job on a 1955 Toyota Corolla.
- The current location needs to have better parking.
- Could the current building be razed, then a new building built further back on the existing lot?
- The current location is not convenient for most Dale Co. residents.
- If the current location remains, a new angular roof should be fitted.

The option of renovating an existing building into a new library was proposed:
- The old Supersave building was built for retail. It has no columns.
- How about the old CVS building?

When asked if a completely new building was a good idea, the teens replied:
- If the building is purpose-built for a library, that would be the best option.
- Does Ozark have the money to build new? If not, the City's money is not getting to the right people.
- What about library service during the build? Will the existing building remain open until the new building opens?

According to the teens, a new building must have:
- Full handicapped accessibility.
- An elevator and/or escalator if the building is more than one story.
- An integrated Wi-Fi network with multiple access points.
- The 27-inch iMacs that are in storage should be brought out and installed in the new building.
- Installing Smartboards would provide many presentation options.
- Chromebooks or tablets available for checkout.
- More public computers. Currently, patrons are bumped from computers too often.
- Dedicated computer labs.

- Student study rooms.
- A coffee shop.
- Exercise bikes.
- The ability to bring food in designated areas.
- Charging stations for computers, tablets and phones.
- Better security so that property is not stolen.
- More comfortable furniture.
- Have a children's room like Dothan Public Library.
- More color. The currently library is like a creepy horror movie.
- The loaning of tablets by the Library is a bad idea because people will damage them.
- Anti-static carpet tiles would be nice.
- A children's restroom.

The question of how ODCPL could better market their services was raised:
- The Library should promote itself heavily in the local schools. The Kids Korner (sp?) brochures could be used to promote adult programming to parents of students.
- Some of the social media outlets the teens use include Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook. The Library could use these apps to promote itself.
- Use Viewsonic TV kiosks in the Library to promote various Library services and events.
- The teens use Snapchat- ODCPL should too.
- Twitter is not heavily used by this group.
- Newer social media apps like Periscope and Vine should be used.
- The idea of buying a blimp to fly around busy areas of Dale Co. is a bad one.
- Elected officials make too many excuses about why they can't build a new library.

The teens were asked how ODCPL could bring more teens into the Library:
- Have better tables and chairs. The current ones are unsightly and uncomfortable.
- The inside of the building is boring. More color and light would be nice.
- Another teen claimed the furniture is not comfortable.
- Programs like a lip-sync battle would be fun.
- Programs that provided food, such as candy, pizza, and boiled peanuts would attract teens.
- The currently shown movies are boring-probably due to the expense of acquiring the public viewing rights.

Other focus groups said that young adults who go off to college seldom return. Our teen group offered some explanations why:
- There is nothing here to return to.
- There are few jobs available.
- There are more opportunities in Dothan or Enterprise.

When asked about other new programs that might bring more teens into ODCPL, the group responded:
- Coding classes in many different programming languages would be appreciated.
- Offering Lynda.com would enable Library customers to take short classes using Library PCs or at home.
- The classes should be in small groups, so each student receives more attention.
- The classes should teach the kinds of classes that the local schools don't teach.

The teens voiced their opinions on what they did not like about ODCPL:
- The color scheme looks like a prison.
- The aged, old furniture.
- Meeting room inflexibility.
- More public computers, as the Internet is expensive in rural areas.
- The local Boys and Girls Club should have field trips to the Library.
- I didn't know Newton, Midland City and Daleville had public libraries.

The Teen Focus Group offered this advice for the ODCPL Board:
- Listen to Director Sandra Holmes.
- The Library must be an integral part of the community. A community that doesn't support its library is cutting away its knowledge base.
- The Library really needs improvement.
- A new library could be the spark this community needs.
- New library facilities could attract investment and economic development in the region.
- Having e-textbooks available would be a great addition to the Library's collection.
- Better communication between Sandra and the Board will enable more things to get done.

APPENDIX B

Seven Major Trends Facing Public Libraries
Prepared by Nancy Bolt and Karen Strege

"In the changing landscape [of society], public libraries are trying to adjust their services to new realities while still serving the needs of patrons who rely on more traditional services." (Pew Research Center, *Digital Age*)

"*American libraries will confront formidable challenges during the next few decades of the 21st century. Both the media and technologies they deploy will continue the digital transformation that has already eroded or swept away in years what had lasted for decades or centuries. Nor is the rate of change slowing. The new media and technologies are enabling a steady flow of genre- and usage-changing innovations, and institutions drawing on these disruptive changes are competing with the library in its most fundamental roles. Libraries also are challenged by the financial constraints facing the agencies that support them, as well as shift in the nature and needs of library users. If libraries are to evolve*

rapidly enough to meet these challenges, they will have to make careful and difficult strategic decisions and persevere in implementing those decisions." (ALA. *Confronting the Future*)

This paper is based on research from multiple sources. Our research culminates into a synthesis of seven major future trends in US public library service:
- Change in the composition of library collections
- Support of economic and community development
- Educational hub for all ages
- Technology advances for the public and staff
- Community hub
- Library staffing
- Advocacy and the demonstration of the library's value

We found only limited research on the penetration of these trends within the library community. Typically, larger libraries are the leaders in adopting this trends followed by smaller libraries.
Each section of this document describes a trend and the implications for a library to consider if it implements activities to address the trend. These sections are followed by a bibliography of the resources consulted in preparing this document. We urge readers to read the following four sources in their entirety:
- OITP's *Confronting the Future: Strategic Visions for the 21st Century Public Library*
- The Gates Foundation's, *Edge Initiative*
- Joseph Sanchez's *From content warehouse to content producer: libraries at the crossroads*
- The Pew Research Centers studies as part of the *Pew Internet and American Life Project*

One source quoted extensively is the Public Library Directors Survey (Directors Survey) in Iowa and Colorado conducted in the spring of 2013 in preparation for a presentation at an international conference. The survey asked for major changes in public libraries in the last ten years and for expected changes in the next 10 years.
As a final note, the authors are aware that some of the examples listed under each trend are already programs and services offered by the Timberland Regional Library. No attempt has been made to exclude ideas that TRL may already have adopted.

1. Change in the composition of library collections

Library collections are changing dramatically in several ways. One of the most prominent changes is the addition of e-books, which provide legal and practical challenges for libraries. The right of first sale is the rights of an item's buyer to sell, exchange, donate, or discard the item. However, the right of first sale does not apply to e-books. Thus, publishers lease the format to a library (or to an

individual) and the publisher determines what happens to that format in the future, not the buyer. Typically, libraries buy a certain number of books and share them until the book wears out and if needed, the library purchases additional books. Major publishers, seemingly threatened by the concept of a public library loaning books that never wear out, refuse to sell to libraries or limit the number of circulations before the library must purchase another e-book. Jamie LaRue from the Douglas County Libraries in Colorado developed a model for libraries to respond to this by organizing their own efforts to purchase rather than lease e-books.

Downloading e-books from libraries is often so complicated that users must request special instruction on how to do so. In addition, users do not understand why it is easy to purchase e-books from Amazon or Barnes and Noble but so difficult to download e-books from libraries. At the same time, the use of e-books is growing with access available from not only e-readers but also from I-pads, tablets, and smart phones. The cost of e-books has generated a demand from libraries for group purchasing and libraries often look to the state library or regional cooperatives to take the lead in negotiations.

While there is no doubt about the demand for e-books, there has been only a slight decrease in the demand for printed books. Research by the Pew Foundation shows that while people who read printed books do not necessarily read e-books, conversely people who read e-books also read print books and magazines. Therefore, while e-books use is increasing, the demand for printed books is not decreasing. The increasing demand for e-books is similar to the increasing demand for CDs and DVDs of music and film. Furthermore, print reference collections are becoming obsolete, as more reference information is available thorough databases and other online resources. We visited a branch library in Florida where one-fifth of library space was devoted equally to a children's room, to adult books, to electronic media, to public computers, and to a classroom devoted to computer and ESL classes.

Another growing trend is the role of the library as publisher. Libraries have always supported authors and researchers by providing resources. With the advent of self-publishing tools, the step between providing research material and publishing, and distributing these products has narrowed. One respondent to the Directors' Survey said, *"The library as publisher is about the move from consumers of content to creators...We need to be players in that venue - CAPABLE of managing new streams of content. But it's only a short hop to the realization that if you can do that, you can BE a publisher. Then things get interesting."* This concept is further explored in Sanchez's article. He suggests that library publishing can share work of local authors and researchers and artists.

Digitization of local resources continues to grow with libraries now taking the lead in digitizing their community's history, local artists' work, and other resources found in local documents, research, and creation. A new movement

pushes the library into a leadership role in publishing by soliciting memories and documents from the community to produce a more comprehensive and personal history. A library could take the lead in helping community members create a community "Wikipedia" focusing on gathering information about local history, events, and services.

Finally, collections are moving beyond print and electronic resources to non-traditional circulating resources. A recent Today Show reported that the Sherman Park Branch of the Chicago Public Library checks out fishing poles for kids to fish in local park lakes; Anne Arbor, MI Public Library checks out telescopes and steel drums; the Skokie Public Library checks out flip cams and head cams for uses to film extreme sports; and the Gross Point Public Library has a collection of 285 tools for loan.   Public libraries in Basalt, CO, Pima County, AZ, San Jose, CA, and Richmond, VA, among others offer a community seed bank where community members borrow seeds in the spring to plant a garden and return new seeds in the fall to share the following spring. Probably the most interesting is a story on National Public Radio that the Providence, RI Public Library checks out what they call Human Books, people in the community with expertise or unique experiences who agree to be a resource such as immigrants, refugees, and people with disabilities as examples.

Implications

What are the implications of these changes for library planning? First, the change in the composition of the collections calls for a redesign of the library space. The demise of reference collections frees up space that libraries can use for other purposes. Some libraries convert this space to additional meeting rooms. Others add space for increased electronic resources, including space for listening and viewing. The Denver Public Library converted one floor of their five-story building into a media department with stations for listening to music and viewing DVDs individually or in a group setting. The Skokie Public Library eliminated their print reference collection and created a three-room business suite with computers, databases, comfortable meeting rooms, and staff support. More technology also requires more electrical outlets and spaces for devices that users bring to the library (this is explored more under the technology trend).

The increase in electronic resources requires additional employee support for uses to train in the use of new technology. Once a library's IT department provided all the technological support necessary for a library; today all public service employees must have basic technological knowledge and more advanced expertise with a variety of products

The change in collections also results in changes in the library budget requiring increased expenditures for both content and hardware to support the content. ALA reports that 31% of libraries with e-book collections buy and circulate e-book readers. Some libraries (Anythink Library in Brighton, CO, for example) converted from the Dewey classification system to a bookstore arrangement to be more accessible to their users.

2. Support economic and community development

Opinions about the economy are mixed. Some economists assert that the economy is improving; others describe the high rate of unemployment. The

Affordable Care Act is reported to influence some employers' decisions about hiring full-time workers, with some employers only hiring part-time workers to avoid paying for health care insurance. The continuing high rate of un-employment creates a continued need for libraries to help people find jobs; help employers find part-time workers; and help creative people develop innovations or new businesses.

Another trend in libraries is increasing partnerships with community organizations and businesses. Christine Hamilton Pennell in her work "Public Libraries and Community Economic Development" reports that 97.5% of all US firms have fewer than 20 employees and generate 60-80% of all new jobs in the US in the last decade. Microenterprises, businesses with less than five employees, require special services to prosper, but many small communities that depend on small business cannot provide such assistance. Libraries are well positioned to provide this support because of the resources they offer. Hamilton-Pennell calls supporting local businesses "economic gardening" as developed by the city of Littleton, CO. This "gardening" includes services such as helping with business plans, getting businesses, and finding marketing information. The Denver Public Library offers the "Personal Librarian" service, allowing businesses to make an appointment with reference libraries to find information about starting a business or to access information about resources to support business planning. The Skokie Public Library created a three room Business Center with a 50-person presentation room, comfortable chairs, and resources designed specifically for businesses. In recent years, libraries have also helped job seekers, offering resume writing, interview skills, and English language classes.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded the "Edge Initiative," administered by the Urban Library Council that seeks to help community libraries form partnerships with local businesses and government. This Initiative will "enable library leaders to make informed decisions about the programs and services that will contribute to achieving community priorities, and demonstrate the value and impact of the library in meeting the changing needs of its constituents. Edge includes "benchmarks for libraries to guide decisions about services. These benchmarks are included as Appendix 1. Each benchmark has extensive suggestions for specific services.

Another aspect of community development is what is called "embedded librarians" or public library staff assigned to a community or government agency. Their role is to fully participate in discussions to the extent allowed; become appointed to a board or committee; identify issues that the organization or agency is addressing; and assist in addressing those issues. Often issues that seem far removed from traditional library service (need for water resources, teen drug use, business development, promoting tourism) can be rich themes for library research into regional or national studies or programs to inform local decisions. Collection building, programing, and new services are all ways a library participates in community building. A librarian who responded in the Library Director's Survey described this trend as, *"This is about the application of reference and research skills not just on the individual level, but community-wide. We help our communities discover what the deep question is, then how to answer it. And we do have to leave the building to do that. We have to be*

conveners, facilitators, and civic leaders. Although we demonstrate our value thereby, we're not the point. This is community-centered librarianship: making our environment better by helping people get ready for tomorrow."

A new movement in libraries called "Maker Space," defined by Sanchez as having two main characteristics: 1) physical and human resources dedicated to patron creation and 2) library supplied resources for the purpose of creation such as computers, cameras, tools, etc. While touted as "new," libraries have offered craft projects for young children for decades. However, the concept of "Maker Spaces" takes this traditional program to a new level. Libraries installed media labs (editing equipment, green screens) and other technologies (3-d printers, sewing machines, and computer software) aimed typically at teenagers. Shirley Amore, Director of the Denver Public Library, commented that the library had always had a problem attracting teenage boys until they installed their media lab. Now the lab is so crowded during its limited open hours that the library is discussing how to expand the lab's space and hours.

While public libraries have been creating these spaces with their own funds or small grants for the last few years, recently the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded $250,000 to the Chicago Public Library (CPL) to create a Maker Space. Their proposal described Maker Spaces as "a growing movement of hands-on, mentor-led learning environments to make and remake the physical and digital worlds. They foster experimentation, invention, creation, exploration, and STEM learning." To implement the project, CPL will collaborate with the Museum of Science and Industry and the STEM & Entrepreneurship Exchange, *"to plan, design, and pilot a digital design and fabrication lab that will be available to the general public, . . . enabling new forms of personal manufacturing and business opportunities."* CPL will also examine viable roles for public libraries, "as the providers of such spaces and services to the community.

In *Something Like America,* Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson interviewed people who have lost their jobs, sometimes their houses, and have multiple bills. In a recent *New Yorker* magazine, George Packer sums up Maharidge and Williamson conclusions by saying, "In the new depression, Maharidge and Williamson find that Americans are growing tomatoes in condo courtyards, raising chickens in back yards, and trying to start businesses out of living rooms. They know they're on their own." Libraries can help people meet these basic needs.

<u>Implications</u>

One implication for this trend is for libraries to increase their visibility in the community to business organizations and to the people who need help. These groups might have not thought about the library as a partner to meet their needs. Another major implication is the change in the role of library employees. As state and county offices close service outlets, people use the library for help to apply for jobs or benefits online. While libraries have always provided information that helps people solve personal problems, this expanded social service role requires different knowledge (how social service in the state works) and skills (more staff need to be familiar with technology and databases). These users also require more intense customer services skills. This role is expanding as President Obama

asked that libraries accept a major role in providing information about the Affordable Care Act and help people sort through their health care options (although some states require a license and multiple hours of training to do so.) Expanded community involvement can also have implications for staff salaries and working hours. Embedded librarians must have flexible hours to attend meetings outside of the library and library hours. These librarians may also have more responsibilities. Finally, these new services might require a review of library policies, collections, and space regarding use of facilities by business, time limits at computers, the types of equipment purchased, the use of space, and staff training.

3.   Educational hub for all ages

A respondent to the Directors' Survey commented, *"We OWN ages 0-5, but could and should step this up a notch. I recently read the 20-year study (published in 2010) by the University of Las Vegas: the greatest predictor of life span, health, educational attainment, income, and likelihood of avoiding incarceration is the number of books in the home before you turn five. (The higher the book count, the better you do.)"*
The Pew Research Foundation (Parents) found that mothers with children are among the biggest supporters of libraries. The study found that 58% of parents with children under six read to their children daily and another 26% read to them multiple times a week. A very high percent (84%) want their children to have access to libraries because libraries, "help inculcate their children's love of reading and books; and another 81% say libraries are important because they provide "information and resources not available at home." The study also found that parents are more likely to use the library than other adults without children (79% of parents with a library compared to 59%) and 64% of parents visited a library in the past year as compared to 49% of adults without children. Parents of young children are an obvious marketing target population for libraries to continue to target.
Public libraries have always offered a place and resources for students doing homework. Now, more databases are available with resources useful to students. A creative youth services librarian can take advantage of databases, some free, to encourage young people to use library services. Librarians can also offer services to support the Common Core, a national curriculum that changes the focus of learning in many schools. To date 45 states and the District of Columbia have adopted these standards as mandatory or as recommendations. This change calls for increased cooperation with schools. Another Pew study (*Younger Americans)* found that 87% of those under 30 felt that public libraries "definitely should" cooperate more with local schools and offer free literacy programs.
In addition to children and teen services, the numbers of college students, adult learners, and business people engaged in online learning are increasing. Education providers know that offering courses and webinars online expands their market. Learners find that online learning is cost efficient saving money in time and travel. Online learning management programs, such as Blackboard, allow for student interaction and networking formerly only available though in-person classes.   Students can earn undergraduate and graduate degrees and full

certification programs with no or limited travel to campus. Public libraries can support online learning by establishing telecommunication-learning sites. Libraries can also help students learn how to learn on line and use the technology that makes learning successful.

Implications

To respond to this trend as with others, libraries may need to reconfigure space. In the past, public librarians eschewed the role of teacher, leaving that to school librarians. Currently, the role of teacher, particularly in teaching early literacy skills, has become more prominent and children's librarian may need special training. This trend also demands closer cooperation with schools and colleges and potentially businesses as well.

4. Technology advances for the public and staff

Advances in technology are divided between those innovations that employees can use to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of library service and those that users adapt and want the library to provide and manage. Often the line between these two merges as in online learning. Advances in technology not only help the library user receive information, such advances also allow the library to be more efficient in serving users and their employees.

The constant increased demand for increased bandwidth and more computers affects all libraries. When asked how much bandwidth they thought they would need, a librarian in a focus group in Missouri said, "More than we ever have." ALA research shows that 41.7% of libraries report their connection speeds are insufficient and that 65.4% report they have too few public access computers to meet demand. New technology known as "super Wi-Fi" or "white space" that allows public libraries to project Wi-Fi to a broad geographic area may help both libraries and communities expand their broadband options.

Libraries are continually automating library functions such as sorting of returns (usually situated so that the public can watch in fascination); self-check out (first voluntary and then mandatory), expansion of RFID, scheduling, time clocks, o payment of fines and fees, and enhanced collection searching, integration of media in catalogs (including both library user published resources and digitized resources). It is impossible to predict what the next major technical innovation is, but the library must continue evaluating new technologies for potential adoption.

It is safe to predict that the public will continue to demand more from the library in technology and will not use the library if the library does not respond. Libraries see an increase in demand for assistance in learning new technology, particularly after gift holidays, and help in navigating current and emerging social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. Technologies also offer a way for the library to communicate with users in new ways, such as receiving and answering reference questions via text, using Facebook to publicize the library, and to communicate about other matters using library specific aps.

The most current ALA data shows that 90% of public libraries offer wireless connectivity; 90.2% offer training of some kind from simply answering questions to personal learning sessions and regular classes; 76.3% offer e-books; 31% check

out e-readers; and 71% currently have Facebook pages. In addition, 96% of libraries report they offer access to job information or help in finding jobs and that 62% are the sole source of internet for their community. Assistance is complicated by users' wide range of technology proficiency ranging from those with advanced skills to people whose fingers have never touched a computer keyboard, but need to apply for social benefits or a job and need an email address to receive replies to applications.

In an analysis of its research about the emerging role of public libraries, the Pew (Digital Life) lists three major functions of future public libraries:

- Help information consumers from becoming overwhelmed by the volume of available information
- Help information consumers sort through available information to find what is relevant to their individual needs
- Help information consumers keep up with the constant stream of new information

The same Pew Study found that, "The availability of free computers and internet access now rivals book lending and reference expertise as vital services of libraries." Pew also found that 80% say that borrowing books and reference is "very important" and 77% say that "free access to computers and the internet" is also "very important". Another approximately 60% say it would be "very important" to them for the library to adopt new technology services such as online research services, library aps, "petting zoos" to learn about using new technology, GPS-type navigation systems to help locate materials INSIDE [author's emphasis] the library, "Redbox"-style delivery of library materials, and "Amazon"-style recommendations.

Implications

As with other trends, this trend has implications for use of space with room needed for the use of personal laptops and electrical outlets in which to connect them. Technology skills can no longer reside only in the IT department. All public service employees must have at least a minimal understanding of how the library's technology works and many must know how a user's technology works. The use of some technology in library operations will result in a change in employee positions. If a machine is now sorting books and the library offers self-check-out, what is the function of the circulation desk staff? Should there be a library greeter who welcomes people and helps those who cannot master self-check-out? Will current staff have to learn new skills?

Costs will also increase, as libraries must keep current with technology, offer expanded bandwidth, and purchase software and hardware to meet user demand.

5. Community Hub

Another major trend is a refocus on the library as a community hub. A new term to describe this is "The Third Place," which describes a public place after home and school or work. One of the Directors' Survey respondents commented: "*Library as place. This is about building an environment that encourages and*

rewards exploration and discovery. And it is also a place where people connect with each other. We are wired to learn, and wired for each other."

This role typically includes unique and diverse programming for all ages limited only by the creativity of library staff. In Florida, we saw badminton lessons on the library lawn, and a lecture and demonstration by a traveling Cirque de Soleil acrobat. In Colorado, libraries offer a community garden and morning yoga classes. In other states, libraries offer art exhibits, parenting classes, divorce clinics, a venue for public nurse immunizations, passport services with more accessibility (and reportedly friendlier staff) than the local post office.

IMLS provided a grant to OCLC/WebJunction, in cooperation with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to provide health care information needed to implement the Affordable Care Act. The news release says, *"The Marketplace Website, www.healthcare.com will be the primary tool for delivering information to Americans about their health coverage options. As prominent providers of Internet access and digital literacy training for people who lack Internet connections at home, libraries can anticipate intensified demand for computer services. IMLS and CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) will work cooperatively to make sure that libraries are aware of and able to connect patrons with information resources and community partners who are trained enrollment assistors."* Cathy De Rose, OCLC Vice President for the Americas and Global Marketing, commented *"Libraries are a lifeline for Americans who wouldn't otherwise have access to information and communication technologies and now online health information is critical to leading a healthy, productive life. "*

Another aspect of being a community hub is the need to analyze the ethnic and cultural make-up of the community and responding to the needs of those segments. The 2010 US census shows that currently 72.4 % of the US population is white, 12.6% African American, 4.8% is Asian, and 16.4 % Hispanic. The ethnicity in the state of Washington shows a similar white population (72.5%) with 11.2% Hispanic, 3.6% Black, and 7.2 % Asian. The Census Bureau predicts that by 2060, admittedly pretty far in the future, 57% of the total US population will be non-white.

Baby boomers are turning 66 this year. They still represent a major bulge in the US population. More than half (52%) of the oldest Boomers (and their spouses) have fully retired; 86% are collecting Social Security; most are empty nesters and have grandchildren; and a large majority (82%) rate their heath as good to excellent. They do not view themselves as "old." This generation represents a great opportunity for public libraries.

Baby boomers are healthy; they have time on their hands; they have grandkids to bring to the library; they can serve as volunteers; attend adult education programs; and they can be great advocates for the library.

Part of being a "Third Place" is offering a gathering place for individuals, community groups, businesses, and study groups. One respondent on the Directors' Survey respondent called the library a "safe place for kids to hang out." Another said, *"Libraries are gathering places for people and workspaces for telecommuters, free lancers and tutors who either miss the social atmosphere of office life or need a public place to connect."*

Research conducted by Pew Research (Younger Americans) reported that 60% of library users under 30 are more likely to use the library as a "hangout" to "study, sit, and read, or watch or listen to media" compared with only 45% of those over 30. A majority of people of all ages want libraries to have a "more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing."

Library collections are also changing to fulfill the role of "Third Place" such as the collections on non-traditional items mentioned above (see Collections). The Iowa City Library and Memphis Public Library collect works of local musicians and make them available for permanent download to library users. Gaming groups attract particularly teenage boys. Political organizations organize town meetings or election debates.

Implications

There are many implications if a library adopts the role of becoming a "Third Space." Meeting places can be noisy and often include food or drink where people settle in and feel comfortable (think of a local coffee shop) and can require a change in library policy and practices. Staff members may have to adopt a more relaxed customer service attitude.

The libraries with the most success in becoming a community hub have full-time programming managers who access the needs of the library community and work with community resources to plan, implement, and evaluate programs. Emphasizing programming may require a procedure guide covering all steps needed to ensure success.

Becoming a Third Space, as with almost all of these trends, also requires a review of the library's building configuration. This role may also require a new marketing campaign to promote a new image.

6. Library Staffing

All of these trends mean changes in library staffing and new skills, particularly if administrators revise some positions. Of course, with a unionized work force, administrators must work closely with union representatives in any staffing changes.

Overall, the role of employees is changing in all types of libraries. Currently, approximately 70% of library employees do not have an MLS. Not long ago, only MLS librarians answered reference questions or cataloged; now many library support staff perform these functions. Support staff typically perform copy cataloging at the library. Local IT staff frequently have technical expertise but not an MLS. This suggests that the percentage of support staff may be increasing in proportion to MLS staff. In fact, 52% of public library directors do not have an MLS degree, primarily in states with no requirements that directors have MLS degrees or in small or rural libraries.

As mentioned in the technology section, changes such as automatic sorting machines and self-check eliminate some jobs. New services need new job skills. Helping people access e-government and fill out benefit forms requires knowledge of state benefit programs and social service skills. Early literacy programs require a higher level of teaching early childhood development. Serving business adequately may need advance business research and business

planning skills. Becoming a community hub may benefit from staff with facilitation skills. All of this implies the need for a different kind and more extensive training.

Implication

Some of these implications are beyond the control of a single library or library system. Professional library educator may need to rethink the curriculum including more focus on leadership and advocacy. Training for support staff needs to be more systematic and comprehensive, giving support staff the "big picture" of how libraries work and the self-confidence to offer suggestions and participate in library service planning.

Libraries should also consider how to hire employees who reflect the ethnic population of the feel welcome. People of color, particularly immigrants, report they want to see faces like their own when visit a library. Front line staff with minimal language training can make ethnic groups feel more comfortable.

A new concept in churches is called "radical hospitality" which strives to make people feel welcome when they arrive. The concept of library "greeters" at the front door is one-way libraries are striving to welcome all users. One Public Library Director's Survey respondent put it this way, "Librarians are less in the role of hushing people and more in the role of coaching, education, and helping." Finally, one survey respondent suggested that libraries, "require library staff to engage in lifelong learning as a performance expectation" so that they keep their skills constantly current.

7. Advocacy and demonstration of the library's value

The final trend is a renewed emphasis on demonstrating the library's value to the community. Certainly, advocacy is not a new trend; ALA and state libraries have been encouraging advocacy for years and teaching advocacy skills. Many of the activities described above describe the library as becoming more meaningful to a broader community and embedding itself in helping to solve community problems.

One respondent to the Directors' Survey put it this way: *"The library as community hub is critical in showing relevance and value. The role is critical in the future, so is focused greatly on raising the profile of libraries in their own communities. This means educating the civic leaders and general public about how the library fits into and is integral in the municipal framework in all communities: urban and rural, large and small."*

To demonstrate this value, several states have conducted Return on Investment studies showing the dollar return TO the community of every dollar invested BY the community in the library.   For example, a 2011 study in Ohio showed that county residents derived $2.86 for every $1.00 in the library's budget.

A bigger issue is how to determine the value of these new, innovative, and intangible library services. Emily Clasper as quoted by Greenwalt puts it this way*: "Services are evolving, and they're having a hard time showing their success to those who control the purse strings, which includes the general public. So I'm getting panicked phone calls from library staff members who intuitively know that their library is successful in serving their community, who see firsthand the growth they're experiencing, and are frustrated because the*

numbers they've relied on for so long just don't show that." She goes on to say *"Libraries I work with…have no methods in place for gathering quantitative data bout the non-circulation – related services they provide, even though these are the services seeing the most growth and investment. We need ways to gather meaningful statistics regarding library programming, online services, user engagement, and facilities use, just to name a few."*

The Public Library Association is starting a new project, with help from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to capture not just the numbers that reflect increased library use (number of people who attend programs), but also the real impact of those programs or of having access to technology. R. Toby Greenwalt says on PLA Online, *"In the age of multiple screens and BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), the raw counts of public PC use are only telling us part of the story. We could use patterns in our WI-FI traffic to identify much more about everything from which devices people prefer to when we can anticipate a spike in broadband usage. The BYOD crow also introduces the "Starbucks effect" in our buildings where patrons camp out at open tables or study rooms for long periods of time. We've always talked the library as a third space – why aren't we supporting this argument with better data."*

Finally, one respondent in the Directors' Survey said, *"Libraries are great at collecting other people's stories, and miserable at gathering and disseminating our own. By our own, I don't mean stories centered on us. I mean stories about how people used libraries to navigate powerful transitions in their lives."*

Libraries continue to be asked to compete for dwindling resources. Too many libraries are discovering, despite their new services to new and non-traditional library users, that the library's budget is being cut. The ALA Office of Research and Data shows that the decline in the economy has not served libraries well: in FY09-10, the overall decline in library's budgets was 41.79% and in FY12-13 budgets declined by 5.26%. ALA concludes that, *"despite some promise of budgetary relief, the extraordinary demands for service continue to outpace available funding needed to respond to these demands."*

<u>Implications</u>

Libraries need to devise their own ways to measure impact as well as monitoring and participating in national efforts undertaken by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Public Library Association. Measuring impact requires developing closer connections with users than usual; for example, library staff must collect names and contact information to follow-up to the impact of new services. Evaluations conducted immediately following training are typically quite positive but do not demonstrate the value of the training to the recipient in terms of accomplishing personal goals.

Another implication can be identifying and training library advocates, preferably not library staff. The Colorado Library Association's BHAG project identified four themes about Colorado public libraries: Libraries change lives; libraries build community; libraries mean business; and libraries are a smart investment. Each of these is supported by a slide show, a training tutorial, and personal stories about each of these themes. Colorado Libraries recruit non-library presenters to speak at meetings of various community organizations.

Another implication is the need for branding and marketing the library and developing the ability to use the data and stories that are collected to demonstrate the library's ultimate value to the community.

<u>Conclusion</u>

This exploration of trends does not contain specific recommendations for TRL action, but rather ideas for consideration in planning responses to community needs and staff ideas. Many of these trends are not brand new. Many are extensions of current services, but expanded and delivered with new intensity. With all of these trends, TRL has at least three options:

A. Ignore the trend because it does not relate to TRL's user needs.
B. Respond but do not initiate or take the lead. If a user requests a service, provide that service or refer to another agency.
C. Take the lead in creating a new service to meet a community need or reaching out to new users with new programs.

Depending on the need, resources, capacity, and viability, any of these responses are appropriate.

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Appendix 1:
Edge Initiative

Community Value - Libraries provide programs and services that enable people to get value from their use of technology.

Benchmark 1: Libraries provide assistance and training with the goal of increasing the level of digital literacy in the community

1.1 The library has curriculua for and provides regularly scheduled digital literacy training.

1.2. The library provides individual assistance for digital literacy at all outlets.

Benchmark 2: Libraries provide access to relevant digital content and enable community members to create their own digital content

2.1. The library supports the creation of digital content on public access computers.

2.2. The library monitors its service delivery of online content.

2.3. The library provides access to information resources through its website.

Benchmark 3: Libraries provide technology resources to help patrons meet important needs related to personal goals and community priorities

3.1. The library supports use of public technology for workforce development and entrepreneurship.

3.2. The library supports use of public technology for eGovernment or legal purposes.

3.3 The library supports use of public technology for patrons pursuing educational opportunities.

3.4 The library supports use of public technology for health and wellness purposes.

Engaging the Community & Decision Makers - Libraries are a valuable community resource and a strategic partner in helping people and communities improve their quality of life.

Benchmark 4: Libraries make strategic decisions based on community priorities for digital inclusion and innovation

4.1 The library has leaders who maintain ongoing relationships with community leaders.

4.2. The library gathers feedback from the community about its public technology needs.

4.3. The library surveys its patrons about technology use in strategic purpose areas.

4.4. The library evaluates its technology programs and services.

4.5. The library makes strategic decisions based on information about community needs and priorities.

Benchmark 5: Libraries build strategic relationships with community partners to maximize public access technology resources and services provided to the community

5.1. The library develops and maintains partnerships that amplify the library's reach, avoid duplication of effort, aid the library in planning or advocacy, or are otherwise mutually beneficial.

5.2. The library engages in technology outreach activities.

Benchmark 6: Libraries support continuous improvement in public access technology services by sharing expertise & best practices with other digital inclusion organizations

6.1. The library participates in a community of practice and shares public access technology knowledge, resources, and other tools.

6.2. The library conducts surveys to gather feedback about library technology.

Organizational Management - Libraries manage resources so that members of the community who need or want access can get it regardless of ability, skill, personal technology, or available time.

Benchmark 7: Libraries integrate public access technology into planning and policies

7.1. The library maintains technology and patron data management policies.

Benchmark 8: Libraries have sufficient staff with technology expertise to help patrons achieve their goals

8.1. The library provides staff with work time to engage in technology-related learning activities.

8.2. Library staff assigned to assist patrons are responsible for maintaining technology competencies.

8.3 Staff assigned to assist patrons are able to answer patrons' technology questions.

Benchmark 9: Libraries have sufficient devices and bandwidth to accommodate user demand

9.1. The library has a sufficient number of device hours available on a per capita basis.

9.2. The library meets or exceeds the minimum bandwidth capacity necessary to support public user demand.

9.3. The library assures adequate time for patrons to complete tasks.

9.4. The library provides peripheral equipment that enables patrons to complete tasks.

Benchmark 10: Libraries manage their technology resources to maximize quality

10.1. The library actively manages Internet connectivity.

10.2. The library minimizes out-of-service devices.

10.3. The library tracks key measures about public technology services for planning purposes.

Benchmark 11: Libraries ensure participation in digital technology for people with disabilities

11.1. The library accommodates users with disabilities.

APPENDIX C

Community Demographics

Demographic Snapshot Comparison
Geography: County - Dale

	Dale

Population: 2015A	
Total Population	50,038
Female Population	50.5%
Male Population	49.4%
Population Density	88
Population Median Age	36.8
Employed Civilian Population 16+	18,535
% White Collar	50.8%
% Blue Collar	49.1%
Total Employees	20,917
Total Establishments*	1,404

Population Growth 2000-2010	2.2%
Population Growth 2015A-2020	1.0%

Income: 2015A

Average Household Income	$51,118
Median Household Income	$39,399
Per Capita Income	$20,600
Avg Income Growth 2000-2010	31.5%
Avg Income Growth 2015A-2020	10.5%

Households: 2015A

Households	19,982
Average Household Size	2.45
Hhld Growth 2000-2010	6.2%
Hhld Growth 2015A-2020	1.9%

Housing Units: 2015A

Occupied Units	19,982
% Occupied Units	87.8%
% Vacant Housing Units	12.1%
Owner Occ Housing Growth 2000-2010	1.7%
Owner Occ Housing Growth 2000-2020	5.1%
Owner Occ Housing Growth 2015A-2020	2.6%
Occ Housing Growth 2000-2010	6.2%
Occ Housing Growth 2010-2020	1.5%
Occ Housing Growth 2015A-2020	1.9%

Race and Ethnicity: 2015A

% American Indian or Alaska Native Population	0.7%
% Asian Population	1.3%
% Black Population	19.5%
% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Population	0.1%
% Multirace Population	3.0%
% Other Race Population	1.7%
% White Population	73.5%
% Hispanic Population	5.7%
% Non Hispanic Population	94.2%

Seasonal Population Trending

Q4 2011	502
Q1 2012	500
Q2 2012	504
Q3 2012	504
Q4 2012	495
Q1 2013	499
Q2 2013	505
Q3 2013	505
Q4 2013	505
Q1 2014	498
Q2 2014	499
Q3 2014	506
Q4 2014	542

Demographic Snapshot Index Comparison

Geography: County - Dale

Index Base Average = 100   Index Base File: Entire US

	Index: Entire US		Dale	
	Count	**Index**	**Count**	**Index**
Population: 2015A				
Total Population	319,507,044		50,038	
Female Population	50.7%	100	50.5%	99
Male Population	49.2%	100	49.4%	100
Population Density	88	100	88	100
Population Median Age	37.5	100	36.8	98
Employed Civilian Population 16+	147,874,764		18,535	
% White Collar	60.8%	100	50.8%	83
% Blue Collar	39.1%	100	49.1%	125
Total Employees	131,154,504		20,917	
Total Establishments	12,255,314		1,404	
Population Growth 2000-2010	9.7%	100	2.2%	23
Population Growth 2010-2020	7.7%	100	0.5%	7
Population Growth 2015A-2020	4.0%	100	1.0%	24
Income: 2015A				
Average Household Income	$76,502	100	$51,118	66
Median Household Income	$53,423	100	$39,399	73
Per Capita Income	$29,272	100	$20,600	70
Avg Income Growth 2000-2010	29.4%	100	31.5%	107
Avg Income Growth 2010-2020	19.5%	100	8.1%	41
Avg Income Growth 2015A-2020	4.0%	100	1.0%	24
Households: 2015A				
Households	120,853,189		19,982	
Average Household Size	2.56	100	2.45	95
Hhld Growth 2000-2010	10.6%	100	6.2%	58
Hhld Growth 2010-2020	8.2%	100	1.5%	18
Hhld Growth 2015A-2020	4.0%	100	1.0%	24
Housing Units: 2015A				
Occupied Units	120,853,189		19,982	

% Occupied Units	90.1%	100	87.8%	97
% Vacant Housing Units	9.8%	100	12.1%	124
Owner Occ Housing Growth 2000-2010	8.7%	100	1.7%	19
Owner Occ Housing Growth 2010-2020	6.6%	100	3.3%	50
Owner Occ Housing Growth 2015A-2020	4.7%	100	2.6%	55
Occ Housing Growth 2000-2010	10.6%	100	6.2%	58
Occ Housing Growth 2010-2020	7.3%	100	1.3%	18
Occ Housing Growth 2015A-2020	4.5%	100	1.9%	42

Race and Ethnicity: 2015A

% American Indian or Alaska Native Population	0.9%	100	0.7%	73
% Asian Population	5.1%	100	1.3%	25
% Black Population	12.7%	100	19.5%	153
% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Population	0.1%	100	0.1%	54
% Multirace Population	3.1%	100	3.0%	96
% Other Race Population	6.5%	100	1.7%	26
% White Population	71.1%	100	73.5%	103
% Hispanic Population	17.3%	100	5.7%	32
% Non Hispanic Population	82.6%	100	94.2%	114