

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Structure of the Plan

Twenty Years Forward: A Statewide Library Services and Construction Infrastructure for Delaware Libraries is presented in three volumes. Volume I (Executive Summary) is intended for broad distribution. It contains the major findings and recommendations from the study that formed the basis of the Plan as well as a summary version of the Plan itself. The Statewide Plan for the improvement of public library services is presented in a “Balanced Scorecard” format. This format was selected because it lends itself to integration with the quality initiatives of the Delaware Division of Libraries both internally and with ongoing work with local libraries in what can be characterized as the ***Delaware Library Performance Improvement and Quality Initiative***.

This document (Volume II – Full Plan and Documentation) includes a copy of the Executive Summary, a more detailed discussion of the findings and recommendations from the study, a detailed version of the plan, as well as reports and documentation regarding the various information and data gathering efforts that were undertaken. This includes the data and the analysis of the data collected through the statewide telephone survey, the focus groups, in-library surveys, library site inspections, and peer comparisons. Volume III contains a complete set of the individual library profiles and includes geographic information system (GIS) maps generated from a sampling of actual library use that show the area effectively served by each library and a summary report of the demographic characteristics of each library’s service area population. The profiles also report each library’s performance on a series of key measures and a spreadsheet that outlines the estimated space needs for each library at five year intervals through the year 2025. Because of the length of Volumes II and III, these documents have been reproduced in limited quantities. However, they are available to the public at their local public library and

through the offices of the Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL).

Introduction

Delaware has a long tradition of offering library service to the public. Many of the State's libraries have histories that date back to the 1800s with beginnings as subscription libraries, women's club libraries, or as mercantile or mechanics' libraries. One library, the Wilmington Institute, can trace its beginnings back to 1754. In fact, each of Delaware's three counties has at least one library that existed in some form before 1900.

Unfortunately, this long history of service has not guaranteed access to high quality library and information services for all Delawareans in 2005. Quality public library service *is* provided by some libraries in the State; however, as a whole, Delaware lags behind other states in most commonly applied measures of library service.

Recognizing this shortcoming, the Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) and the Council on Libraries (COL) began to question why the "First State" could not be ***first in the nation in providing public library service***. This desire for pursuing excellence resulted in the issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking qualified consultants to work with the Division to identify the cause of Delaware's poor public library performance and to outline a course of action that would result in dramatic improvement.

The need for this type of comprehensive study was underscored by a concern that the State's generous bond program for the construction and renovation of library facilities, while addressing local needs well, was being implemented without adequate consideration of regional and statewide needs and priorities.

Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants and PROVIDENCE Associates Inc submitted a joint proposal to carry out the year long comprehensive

planning effort and were subsequently selected to undertake the project. Work began in mid January 2004 and has continued into the early months of 2005.

The plan outlined in this document is the result of thousands of hours of work on the part of the consulting team, the Delaware Division of Libraries staff, the staff of county and local libraries, members of library “Friends” organizations and by several hundred citizens who participated in focus groups and public hearings on the Plan.

This planning effort may, in fact, be the most comprehensive look at public library service on a statewide basis ever conducted in the United States. The consultants wish to thank the entire Delaware library community and especially the Delaware Department of State, the Delaware Division of Libraries and the Council of Libraries for their unswerving support of this project.

Methodology

The development of a truly comprehensive plan for library services and facilities demands a thorough understanding of existing conditions and of the issues confronting the libraries of the State. Several different methodologies were employed to build the knowledge base necessary to recommend specific actions. The consultants also recognized from the outset that crafting a credible plan that could be met with a reasonable level of acceptance from the library community would require an inclusive approach.

To this end, the consultants designed a multi-faceted process that attempted to secure information from the general public, from library users, from government officials, from librarians and other library staff, and from statistical data that reflects both inputs (e.g., number, size and quality of facilities, staffing, collection size, available technology) as well as outputs (e.g., circulation of materials, reference questions answered, number of library visits).

A total of 432 library users were involved in 51 focus groups held in libraries throughout the State. Another 2,080 people responded to in-library surveys conducted using touch-screen computers in 29 of the libraries. Over 1,200 (1,273) people, 545 of which were **not** regular library users, participated in the telephone survey conducted by the University of Delaware.

Personal interviews were conducted with library directors and library branch managers throughout the State. Members of the consulting team participated in over twenty meetings with representatives of the library community. Included were three county level meetings of librarians, two statewide “library town meetings,” meetings with specific interest groups within the library community (automation/technology, youth services, etc.), meetings with library board members and Friends, and several regular sessions with the Council on Libraries. The principal consultants also conducted public hearings on the plan in each of Delaware’s counties.

Personal interviews with more than 50 individuals including elected and appointed officials were conducted. Additional contacts were made with persons involved in specific State and library related programs such as Livable Delaware and UDLib/SEARCH.

Addresses from two samples of actual circulation records (a March sample and an August sample) were used to create electronic pin maps defining the effective service area of each library. Individual assessments of facilities were conducted on a building by building basis. Spreadsheets outlining library space needs were developed for each facility.

Library performance data from national sources was analyzed as was information from individual counties and libraries identified as peers for Delaware counties and libraries.

The information from all of these information and data gathering efforts has been considered as the Statewide Plan was developed.

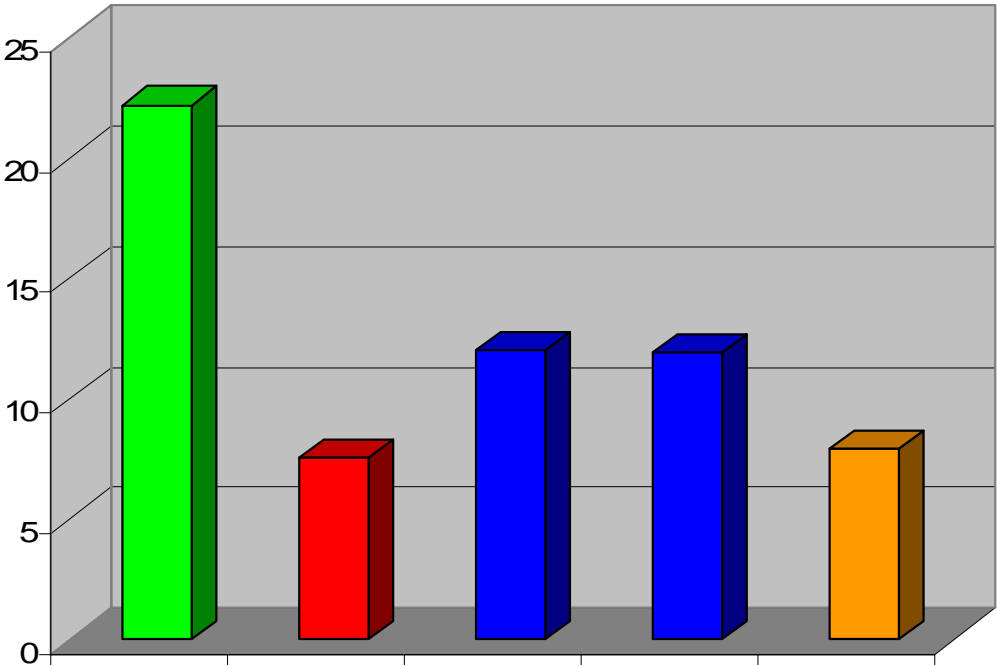
Background

As indicated in the introduction, Delaware lags behind most other states in nearly all commonly applied measures of library service. The most recent comparable data available for all states covers the 2002 Fiscal Year. The graph on the next page shows Delaware's ranking relative to other states on "Total Paid Library Staff (full-time equivalents) per 25,000 Population. Chart I on the following page shows Delaware's performance and ranking on a series of twenty measures computed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The data presented is submitted by the individual state library agencies (including DDL) through a program known as the Federal-State Cooperative System for public libraries.

The measures include both "inputs" such as staffing levels, number of volumes owned and expenditures, and "outputs" such as circulation transactions and the number of visits (door-counts). Unfortunately, no standardized data is available on a national level that attempts to document or quantify the significant "outcomes" or benefits received by individual users.

While the "First State's" performance on two of the measures is relatively good (*Interlibrary Loans Received per capita* – 5th and *State Operating Income per capita* – 8th), Delaware ranked 50th out of 51 (the District of Columbia is included in the rankings) in 2002 on *Paid FTE Staff per 25,000 Population*, narrowly beating Arkansas for the dubious honor of being dead last in the rankings.

Library Staff (FTEs) per 25,000 Population



FTEs per 25,000 Population	22.22	7.57	12.03	11.98	7.96
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CHART I - 2002 Ranking by State

Measure	Delaware Performance	Delaware Rank*	National Mean	National Median	High State Performance	Low State Performance
Visits per capita	3.74	37	4.49	4.56	6.90 (Ohio)	2.77 (Mississippi)
Reference transactions per capita	0.65	45	1.09	4.56	1.09 (District of Columbia)	0.49 (Montana)
Circulation per capita	6.17	29	6.85	6.78	14.63 (Ohio)	2.14 (District of Columbia)
ILLs received per 1,000 population	243.38	5	84.14	33.73	629.95 (Rhode Island)	0.12 (Hawaii)
Book and serial volumes per capita	1.9	46	2.83	2.95	5.05 (Maine)	1.72 (Arizona)
Audio materials per 1,000 population	79.67	37	128.94	124.66	317.53 (Ohio)	48.90 (Arkansas)
Video materials per 1,000 population	73.97	37	103.58	102.14	262.16 (Ohio)	33.70 (District of Columbia)
Current serial subscriptions per 1,000 population	6.75	27	7.02	7.02	14.15 (Vermont)	3.37 (Georgia)
Paid FTE staff per 25,000 population	7.96	50	12.28	12.44	22.22 (Ohio)	7.89 (Arkansas)
Paid FTE Librarians per 25,000 population	2.71	43	4.05	4.49	8.49 (New Hampshire)	1.95 (North Carolina)
Paid FTE Librarians with ALA-MLS per 25,000 population	1.33	43	2.74	2.27	5.49 (Connecticut)	0.85 (Arkansas)
Other paid FTE staff per 25,000 population	5.25	47	8.23	7.48	16.22 (Ohio)	4.25 (West Virginia)
Total per capita operating income of public libraries	\$22.40	37	\$30.97	\$27.90	\$56.85 (Ohio)	\$13.72 (Mississippi)
State per capita operating income of public libraries	\$3.54	8	\$3.61	\$1.07	\$40.44 (Ohio)	\$0.00 (DC, S. Dakota, Tennessee)
Local per capita operating income of public libraries	\$16.04	39	\$24.49	\$23.41	\$46.11 (District of Columbia)	\$8.72 (W. VA) Hawaii = 0.00
Other per capita operating income of public libraries	\$2.67	18	\$2.69	\$2.21	\$8.57 (Rhode Island)	\$0.53 (Arizona)
Total operating expenditures per capita of public libraries	\$19.87	38	\$28.94	\$25.51	\$53.93 (Ohio)	\$13.14 (Mississippi)
Total collection expenditures per capita of public libraries	\$3.36	34	\$4.18	\$3.84	\$9.16 (Ohio)	\$1.78 (Mississippi)
Total staff expenditures per capita of public libraries	\$12.09	41	\$18.72	\$16.50	\$34.39 (District of Columbia)	\$8.54 (Mississippi)
Salaries and wages expenditures per capita of public libraries	\$9.68	41	\$15.10	\$13.49	\$29.26 (District of Columbia)	\$6.71 (Mississippi)

* A ranking of 51 is possible because the District of Columbia is reported along with the 50 states.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics - Public Library State Summary/State Characteristics Data File for 2002

Delaware ranked 46th in *Book and Serial Volumes per capita* and 45th in *Reference Transactions per capita*.

If Delaware's ranking on the 20 measures reported by NCES are averaged, Delaware places 35th among the states. Some of Delaware's neighbors fare much better; Maryland's average ranking was 15th and New Jersey's ranking was 16th.

While it is of interest to note that Delaware's ranking on total per capita income and total per capita expenditures closely correlates with its overall performance, it is also clear from a careful examination of the measures that the First State's generally poor performance is not due to any single factor. A review of the more detailed charts and graphs contained in Volume II demonstrates that simply "throwing money at the problem" is not the total solution. While it is true that more money for library services will be necessary if Delaware is to move up in the rankings to any significant degree, how additional funding is targeted is nearly as important as how much additional funding is provided.

An example of targeted funding having a positive effect can be seen in the Interlibrary Loans Received measure. One of the reasons that Delaware performs well in this category is the investment that has been made in resource sharing in the State. The availability of national and state-level resource sharing systems makes the process of sharing materials feasible and affordable. For the end user or library "customer," shared automated catalogs offer an easy way to locate and request materials from other libraries.

Delaware's performance as a state is obviously influenced by the performance of individual libraries in the State. When statewide data is analyzed, it becomes clear that there is a wide variation in the quality and quantity of library service offered. Convenient access to high quality public library service is often a function of where you live.

An illustration can be found in comparing the amount that is spent per capita to purchase new materials in each of Delaware's counties. Public Library Data Service statistics reveal that the national average per capita spent by all libraries serving populations of under 100,000 is over \$ 5.00 per capita. Not surprisingly, Delaware's mean (\$ 3.37 per capita) is significantly lower than this benchmark. However, a look at this measure by county reveals that the State's \$ 3.37 average is result of the following county level expenditures:

- Kent County \$ 1.81 per capita
- New Castle County \$ 4.03 per capita
- Sussex County \$ 3.10 per capita

Looking below the county level reveals that expenditures per capita by individual libraries range from a low of \$ 0.41 per capita to a high of \$ 7.99 per capita.

It is abundantly clear from the consultant team's analysis of a wide variety of information that making progress in the improvement in public library service statewide will require actions that influence what takes place at the county and local levels.

Findings

A full discussion of the data that supports the following findings can be found later in this volume. A brief synopsis of the data that supports each finding is offered below.

FINDING I

Taken as a whole, the quantity and quality of public library services offered to the residents of Delaware are sub-standard.

National statistics reveal that compared to other states, Delaware ranks below the mean on 19 of 20 performance measures collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and below the median on 17 of the same 20 measures.

An illustration of the fact that Delaware is lagging behind can be found through an examination of the websites of Delaware's public libraries in comparison to library websites from neighboring states. A number of Delaware libraries do not have web sites at all. Among those that do, many are rudimentary and offer little more than library location, hours, a link to their area's shared automation system and a link to DelAWARE (the State's digital library). It should be noted that a number of Delaware libraries do have reasonably good web sites. However, the general status of the digital doorway to Delaware's libraries is clearly substandard.

An examination of library websites maintained by libraries in Maryland and New Jersey reveals a much stronger web presence. Their websites tend to look far more professional and, even more importantly, tend to provide much greater access to informational resources.

FINDING II

The quality and quantity of library service that is offered vary greatly by county and by locale.

County and local library level data reveal significant disparities between and among Delaware's public libraries. A good example can be found by examining circulation per capita data. In 2003, six Delaware libraries circulated 3.0 or fewer items per person in their service areas. At the opposite end of the scale, six libraries circulated 8.0 or more items per person.

Delaware libraries range from a low of 0.7 items per capita on this measure to a high of 13.7 items per

capita. The average for libraries in Kent County is 3.0 while Sussex County's circulation per capita is twice as high at 6.0. Within Kent County, libraries range from 0.7 circulations per capita to 5.2 circulations per capita. As a point of reference, the State of Delaware mean is 5.6 and the national mean for libraries reporting to the Public Library Data Service is over 9.0 per capita.

FINDING III

Some real progress in improving library services has been made in recent years.

Significant capital investments by the State (through the Delaware Public Library Construction Assistance Act) and by county governments (particularly New Castle County) coupled with additional State and county investments in operational costs have resulted in noteworthy improvement in service measures such as library visits per capita and circulations per capita.

The State of Delaware and the Delaware Division of Libraries have exercised considerable leadership in encouraging the adoption of new technologies, in expanding continuing education and training efforts for library staff, as well as taking an active role in public library facility development. DeLAWARE, The First State's Digital Library, has expanded the breadth of information resources available in the smallest libraries in the State.

County library operations in all three counties have also grown stronger. Operational support for public libraries from County governments has increased and County operations in New Castle and Sussex Counties are exercising a greater role in coordinating library development within their jurisdictions.

FINDING IV

Much of the progress has been due to greater involvement of county governments in coordinating and funding library services.

The greatest progress has been made by libraries that have received additional county tax revenues. Far less progress has been made by libraries that are the most dependent on municipal revenues. It should be noted that the Dover Public Library has performed reasonably well although the majority of its support comes from its municipal government. Only three public libraries in Delaware receive 50 % or more of their operational support from municipalities. All three of these libraries are located in Kent County.

New Castle County has continued to encourage independent libraries to become County libraries. The Woodlawn project in the City of Wilmington is a concrete example of these efforts.

FINDING V

Unless a concerted effort is made to improve library services quickly, Delaware is likely to fall further behind (especially in terms of per capita measures) because of its significant population growth.

Population projections for the State of Delaware indicate that more than 1,000,000 people will reside in Delaware by the end of the twenty year time horizon covered by this plan. Depending on which projections are used, this represents an increase in population of between 18% and 20% by the year 2025. Delaware's investment in public libraries will need to significantly exceed the growth rate if there is an expectation that Delaware will realize more than marginal improvement.

An additional issue relates to the large number of non-resident users of Delaware libraries. Nearly 30% of the registered borrowers at the South Coastal Library (Bethany Beach) and at the Rehoboth Beach Library are non-residents. The non-resident total at the Lewes Library is nearly 10%. Good libraries are an attractive incentive that encourages investment in Delaware. However, non-residents add significantly to the service populations of the beach (and most of the border) communities. Non-resident populations must be factored into any library service equation in these areas. Finally, it should be noted that many non-residents are coming from states and areas that offer a higher level of public library service than they find in Delaware. These people bring their high expectations with them when they spend time in the First State.

FINDING VI

In general, Delaware has too many library buildings but not enough library space to offer high quality library service.

With 33 library facilities (there are also two bookmobiles in operation in the State), Delaware has roughly one library for every 25,500 people. While this ratio of facilities to population is reasonable, there are extreme variations in the populations served by individual libraries.

If the effective service area populations calculated by the consultants are used, ten of Delaware's libraries have service populations under 10,000. Four of these libraries serve populations of 4,000 or less. At the other end of the spectrum, six libraries in the State serve populations in excess of 60,000. It is of great interest to note that these six libraries, four of which are 25,000 gross square feet (GSF) or larger in size, account for 52% of the State's total circulation of library materials.

The outstanding success of larger facilities such as New Castle County's Bear and Brandywine Hundred libraries illustrates that larger buildings that serve a broader area usually generate much greater use than small libraries serving a limited population base.

Both Sussex County and Kent County operate bookmobiles. While the notion of a bookmobile as a suitable substitute for a physical facility is both romantic and historically accurate, changing demographic patterns, especially the prevalence of two-income families, has altered the most effective model of bookmobile service. The days of establishing a successful daytime bookmobile stop at a general store or at an intersection in a rural area are largely past. Instead, bookmobiles are most effective as outreach tools that serve concentrated clusters of the population that are limited in mobility. Daycare centers and senior housing facilities are examples. Bookmobiles can also be used for community stops; however, evening and weekend stops should be the rule rather than the exception.

FINDING VII

Almost without exception, Delaware's public libraries are badly understaffed.

We have already pointed out that the State of Delaware ranks 50th out of 51 (the 50 states and the District of Columbia) in *Paid Full-Time Equivalent Staff per 25,000 Population*. The First State's rank is 43rd in categories that measure the number of librarians holding a Master's degree in Library Science from an American Library Association (ALA) accredited program per 25,000 in population and 43rd in the number of staff categorized as librarians who lack the ALA accredited degree. Delaware's showing is even worse (47th) in the "other" staff category that would include library associate and clerical positions.

The consultants also discovered that many library directors and other staff in Delaware receive little or nothing in the way of fringe benefits. This situation is especially prevalent among the ‘independent’ libraries that are established as 501 (c) (3) organizations. This lack creates difficulties in the recruitment and retention of qualified staff in addition to creating significant personal hardships.

FINDING VIII

Taken as a whole, Delaware’s library collections are too small and, in many cases, are out of date.

The FY 2002 NCES statistics ranked Delaware 46th among the states in terms of *Book and Serial Volumes per capita*. The First State performed somewhat better (37th) on measures of both audio and video formats.

2003 statistics from Delaware libraries indicate improvements in all three areas (books and serials, audio units, and video units) from 2002 levels. Nevertheless, Delaware still has a good distance to go in developing its basic library resources. Furthermore, national and State statistics do not reflect the quality of materials that are owned. From the consultants’ time spent on-site in Delaware libraries, we are aware that some libraries have active, well-chosen collections. However, more than a few other collections contain a high percentage of dated and worn materials. In many cases, these materials were gifts from community residents.

The measure known as “turnover rate” provides a relatively easy way to assess the “freshness” and relevance of library collections. Turnover rate simply looks at the number of volumes owned and the average number of times these items circulate during a year’s time. In other words, if a library has 10,000 volumes and a circulation of 10,000, the turnover rate is 1.0. If the 10,000 volumes generate 20,000

circulations, the turnover rate is 2.0. Higher turnover rates are an indication that users are interested in what they find on library shelves.

In 2003, turnover rates in Delaware libraries ranged from 0.58 to 7.04! Several of the larger New Castle County libraries perform particularly well on this measure indicating that their collections contain materials that their users want. Very low turnover rates (anything below 1.0 certainly qualifies as being low) often signal that a collection may contain a lot of “dead wood.” The library may well have some good materials, but these items may be lost among many other materials that are old, unattractive, and dated.

Some libraries in Delaware need to address relatively low volume counts. Others need to reduce the size of their collections to make well selected materials more visible and accessible.

FINDING IX

Residents of some areas of the State lack convenient access to in-depth library resources and collections.

The combination of relatively small libraries and a very small number of library professionals in the State leaves many Delaware residents with less in the way of reference service than is common in most other states. There are only a few libraries that have what might be considered in-depth resources, collections, and reference assistance.

Ideally, every Delaware resident would have access to such resources within their own county in the form of a resource library designed to fulfill county-level needs. In fact, many states in the United States have some form of State Aid that recognizes this need and designates specific libraries as “County Resource Libraries.” In some states, these libraries are supported primarily with county funds; others are

independent libraries that receive state or county subsidies to support more in-depth services. This concept is very consistent with the idea of having at least one “Anchor” library in each of Delaware’s three counties.

FINDING X

Delaware has several positive assets that can be used to address many of the deficiencies that have been cited.

While the overall status of Delaware libraries may at first seem a bit bleak, the First State has many assets that it can bring to bear on the problem. Delaware has several programs of which it can be justifiably proud. The DeLAWARE database licensing program offers electronic access to high quality resources. The First State’s bond program for public library construction is one of the finest in the country. General State Aid support has been strong and elected officials have been supportive of efforts to improve the quality of life enjoyed by Delaware residents in general and specifically, the quality of library services enjoyed by State residents.

Furthermore, the State’s Council on Libraries and the staff of the Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) have a vision for improved library services that continuously asks, “why not the best?” Librarians throughout Delaware are fully engaged with the DDL on numerous projects and initiatives to improve service.

Advocacy (and financial support) for movement to the development of a Statewide automated integrated library system is another bright spot. Library customers clearly expressed their preference for shared catalogs in the focus groups that were held throughout the State. (In fact, the public expressed their desire for an integrated catalog that includes not just public libraries but academic libraries as well.) A broader shared catalog can result in greater efficiency

in resource sharing, more coordination in collection development, and the reduction of duplication of resources.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the public is supportive of public libraries. The telephone survey that was conducted as part of this planning effort revealed significant support for libraries. In fact, 89.9% of all respondents said that public libraries were either “vital to the quality of life in their community” or “very important to the quality of life in their community.” Not surprisingly, a higher percentage (92.7%) of regular users of libraries selected “vital” or “very important.” However, the most encouraging news of all may be that 84.1% of people who **do not** use Delaware’s public libraries also concurred that libraries were either “vital” or “very important.” Public support for the public library as an important institution is alive and well in the First State.

A FINAL FINDING

The final finding is not so much a finding as it is an invocation to action. The consultants believe that it is in the State of Delaware’s own self interest to continue to support the development of high quality public library services. A recent study conducted by the University of South Carolina looked at the economic impact of expenditures on public library services. The conclusion of the study was that South Carolina receives \$ 4.48 in value for every dollar spent; a 350% return on investment. A link to the study can be found at:

<http://www.libsci.sc.edu/SCEIS/home.htm>

The consultants believe that dollars provided for the improvement of public library facilities and services are dollars invested rather than dollars spent and that the return on such an investment goes well beyond the financial analysis covered by the South Carolina study. It is extremely difficult to measure the benefit

derived by the State when a pre-school child is introduced to the world of books and literature in a way that causes her or him to become a lifetime reader. It is impossible to calculate the cost to the education system if a middle school child is denied the help she or he needs while working on her or his first "research paper." And this says nothing of the value added to Delaware's property base and to the State's businesses when retirees from Maryland or New Jersey decide to build a home in Delaware because the community they have chosen has a good public library. Our final finding is that public libraries are not only vital to the quality of life in the First State; public libraries are a fiscally sound investment as well.

Balanced Scorecard

As the findings demonstrate, no one factor is responsible for Delaware's overall poor performance on standard measures of library service. The problem is not a single-faceted one. Rather, it is a series of related problems. As such, the situation must be addressed in a holistic fashion.

The statewide plan for library services in the State of Delaware is intended to be one piece in a larger framework of planning for public library services in Delaware. It is seen as the top level of a series of planning efforts that, taken together, will move the performance of the First State's libraries from their present status in the lowest quartile nationally to the forefront of what twenty-first century libraries can and should be. The Vision of the Delaware Division of Libraries is that "Residents of the First State will have public library service that is second to none in the nation!"

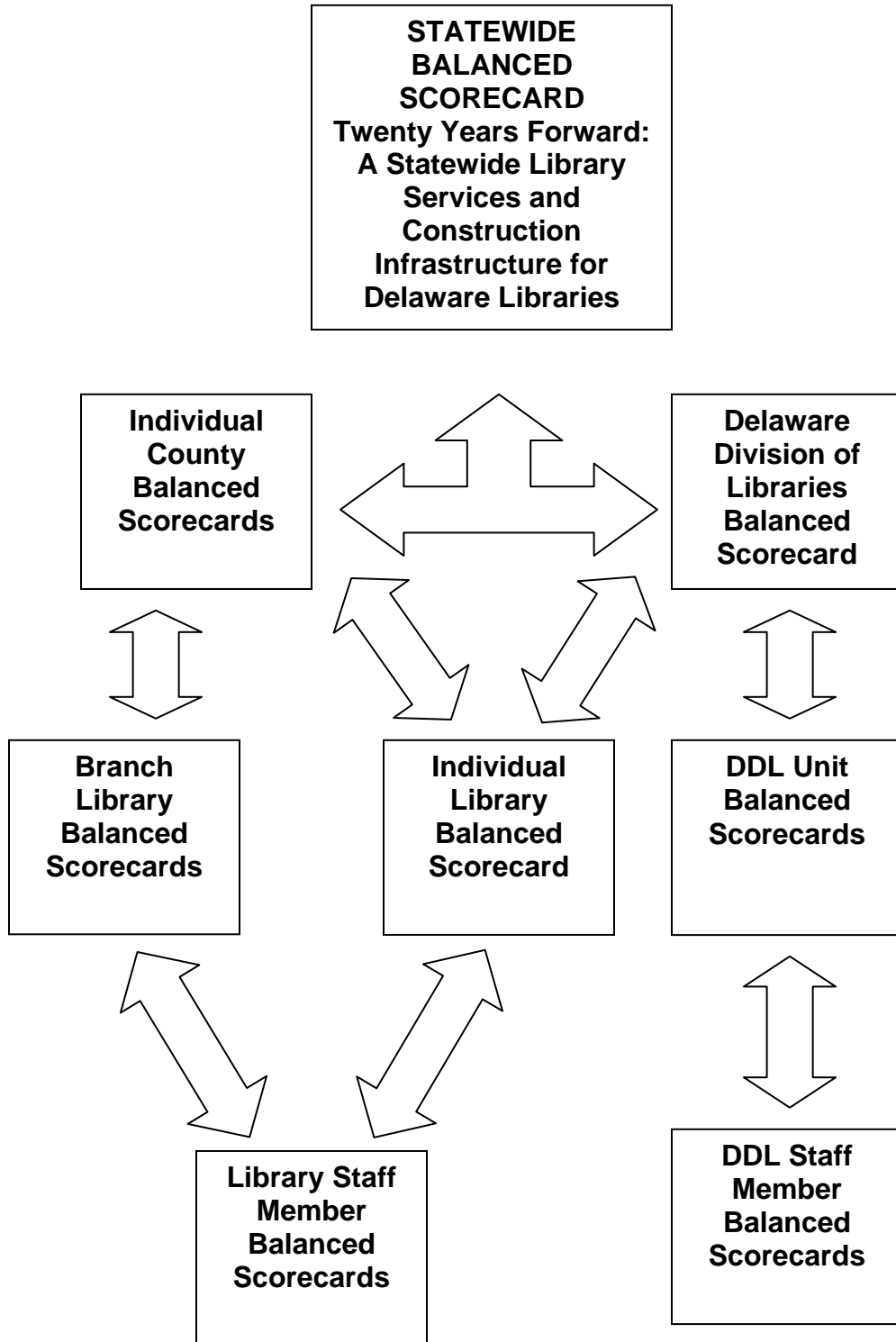
Making this vision a reality will require a cooperative and coordinated effort between and among many entities. While the Delaware Division of Libraries and the State government are key players in the mix,

becoming a leader in library services is highly dependent on the actions of local and county libraries as well as on the governments that fund them. One of the important roles of the Division of Libraries and of the State government will be to develop and implement policy and funding initiatives that encourage local governments and libraries to pursue the objectives outlined in this plan.

Because each library in the State is different and serves a different population, some planning will be needed at the local level. However, the efforts already undertaken as part of the statewide planning project mean that individual libraries will be well on their way to developing plans that are linked to the State plan before they even begin their own planning process.

The State Plan has been crafted using a technique referred to as a “Balanced Scorecard.” The Balanced Scorecard method of strategic planning emerged in the late 1980s and gained wide popular acceptance in the 1990s based on the work of Robert S. Kaplan of the Harvard Business School and his colleague David P. Norton. Because the balanced scorecard can easily be “scaled” to encompass the needs of large organizations that have many tiers, the approach has also been very successful in situations in which separate entities share a common vision. The diagram on the next page illustrates how the statewide plan, the Delaware Division of Libraries’ own plan, and individual library plans will be linked together.

There are two major reasons for adopting the balanced scorecard planning approach on a statewide basis. The first is that the balanced scorecard attempts to simplify and streamline the key points in a way that is easy to understand. This is extremely important when planning is being done across a number of entities even if they do share the same ultimate goal. It is extremely important that all libraries in Delaware understand what the State hopes to accomplish and how the statewide vision relates to their library.



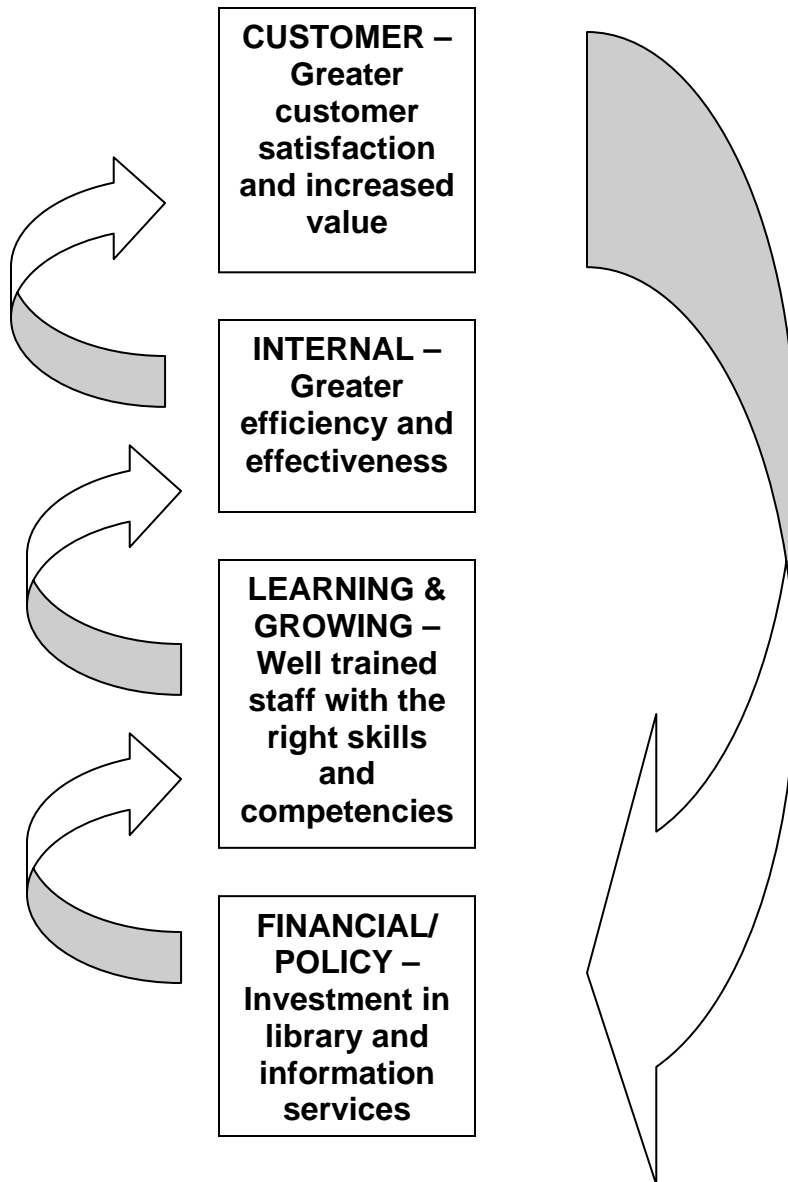
A second related reason for adopting the balanced scorecard approach is that it is designed to encourage linkages between individual plans. This aspect of the planning method provides a mechanism that lends itself to working together to achieve common objectives.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE BALANCED SCORECARD APPROACH

The balanced scorecard has many similarities to older, more traditional methods of strategic planning. The approach uses a structure of objectives, measures, and activities that will seem familiar to most people who have participated in other planning efforts. Perhaps the greatest difference is that the balanced scorecard is structured around looking at an organization or, in the case of the statewide plan, at a service system from several different viewpoints. In balanced scorecard parlance, these viewpoints are called "Perspectives."

The perspectives create a bottom-up hierarchy that organizes the Plan's priorities in a very streamlined way. The perspectives used for this Plan are presented on the next page. They should be read from the bottom of the diagram to the top. In other words, the FINANCIAL/POLICY perspective is the base and, while it is critical to the success of the system, the most important perspective relates to the CUSTOMER and the value that customers receive from their public libraries.

Each perspective links and supports the perspective above it. All of the components of service including staffing, collections, and technology build to meet customer needs and demands.



The arrow on the right hand side of the diagram shows that if customers are highly satisfied and if they are receiving value from the services that are provided, they will support additional funding to further improve those services. In other words, if an initial investment in libraries is used to deliver highly valued services, the results will, in turn, "earn" greater financial support.

Much of the rest of the balanced scorecard approach bears great similarity to more traditional planning methods. There are objectives within each of the perspective areas, and a mechanism for the measurement of progress toward each objective is built into the plan from the start. The “action” phase of the plan comes in the form of “initiatives” directed to the desired improvements at each level.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE PLAN

Balanced scorecard planning, like most other planning processes, starts with mission, vision, and values. Following is an attempt to express these concepts on behalf of the entire system that makes up the public library service delivery framework.

Mission

The public libraries of Delaware ensure that all Delawareans have access to quality information resources and services that enable them to be successful and to enjoy a high quality of life.

Vision

The First State will offer public library service that is “First in the nation!”

Values

- The free exchange of ideas is fundamental to a democracy.
- All people should have free access to high quality information resources.
- Reading is a fundamental life skill.
- Information literacy is a critical skill in an increasingly technological society.
- Reading, listening to and/or viewing library materials for pleasure enhances quality of life.
- The public has a right to expect that tax supported organizations will be efficient and effective and that they will strive for excellence in everything they do.

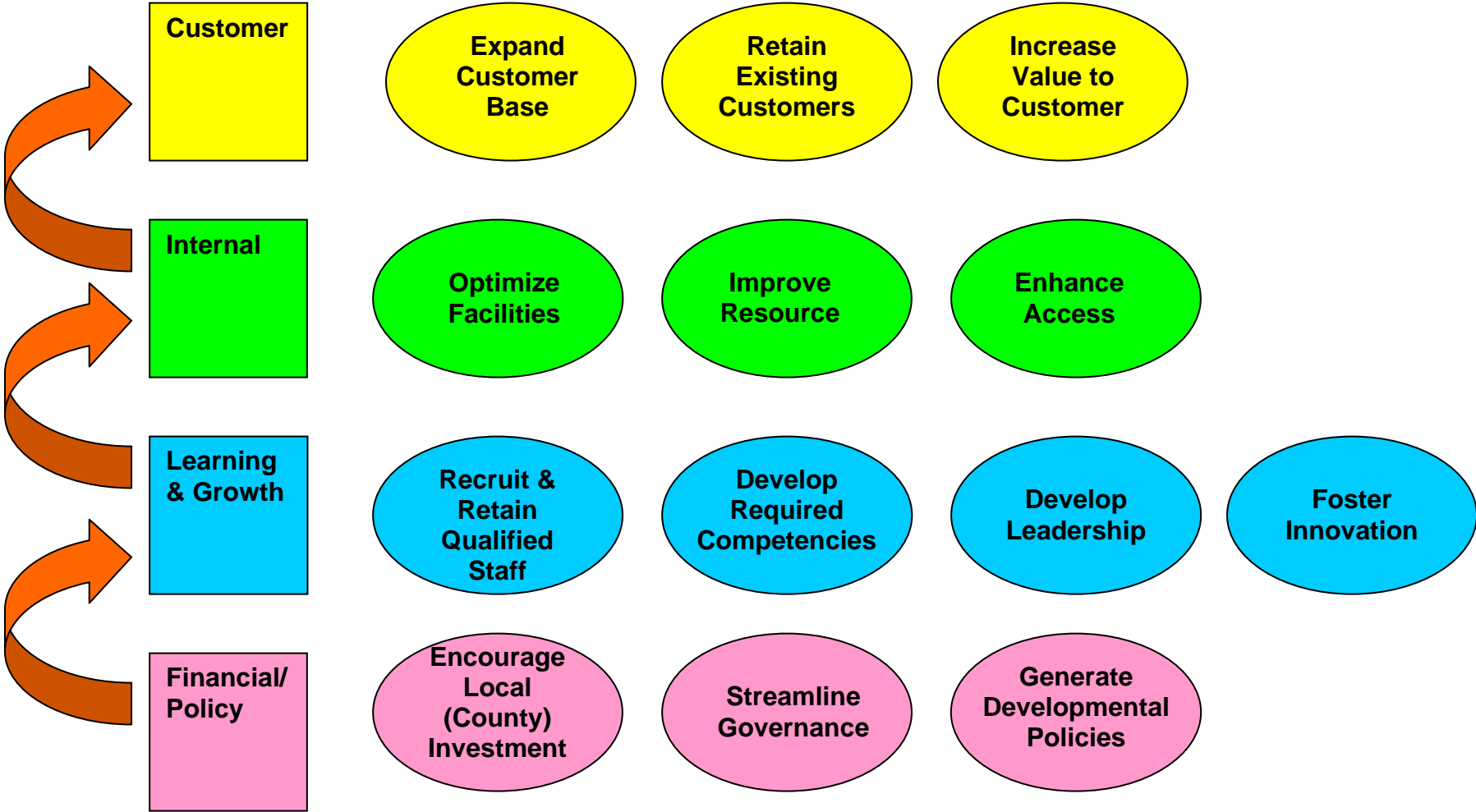
In addition, participants in DDL “Be Our Guest” workshops in 2002 underscored that Delaware libraries embrace the values of Access, Excellence, and Service represented by the following statements adopted by the American Library Association as being among its core values:

- Access - All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users.
- Service - We provide the highest level of service to all library users... We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

STRATEGY MAP

As indicated earlier, balanced scorecard planning tries to strip down the plan to the essentials to make it easy for all who are working within the system to understand and to display this information in a way that is easy to grasp. An initial step in this effort is the creation of something called a strategy map. The next page presents the statewide plan in the form of a strategy map.

The perspectives in the plan are ordered in the fashion that has already been described. The CUSTOMER or potential customer is every resident of Delaware (whether a full-time resident or



a seasonal resident). Satisfying the customer by providing information and services that are relevant, valued, and that contribute to the quality of life in the State is the ultimate goal.

The plan proposes a step-by-step approach that starts at the bottom and gradually works its way toward the top of the chart. This is not to say that steps aimed at accomplishing objectives throughout the plan will not happen simultaneously. However, it does suggest that complete success at the CUSTOMER level cannot be realized unless progress is made at the FINANCIAL/POLICY, LEARNING & GROWTH, and INTERNAL levels.

The bottom-up hierarchy that is expressed in the chart would suggest that work aimed at meeting the objectives that appear in the pink ovals (the bottom set of ovals) is extremely important. As work is done toward achieving the objectives of optimizing facilities and improving resources, the strategies employed to accomplish these objectives should be assessed in terms of whether actions encourage county investment, encourage the streamlining of governance structures, and employ policies that are developmental in nature.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE PLAN

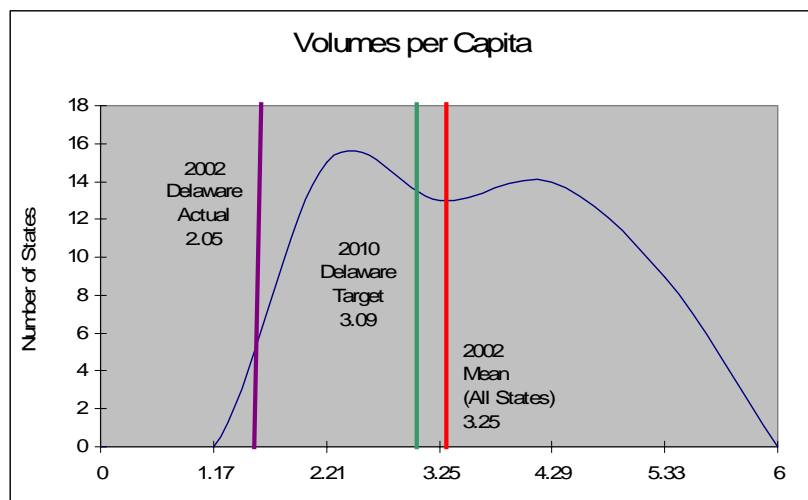
This Executive Summary is intended as an overview. The full plan follows later in this volume. However, we will attempt to provide a quick overview of what the plan will require in the way of action. Each of the objectives that are contained in the ovals on the previous page is the subject of specific strategies and actions in the full plan. For example, several developmental policies are recommended that attempt to improve the potential for success in achieving other objectives.

One example of the interrelationship between and among the objectives can be seen by looking at the “Generate Developmental Policies” objective in tandem with the “Optimize Facilities” objective. The plan recommends the adoption of a policy that would have the State award a higher percentage of construction

costs for Anchor libraries or for the merging of libraries called for in the plan than for “Community” libraries that do not involve mergers. The purpose then of the Developmental Policies objective is to encourage highly efficient facilities.

Another example is a recommendation that the State of Delaware develop a program of “Quality Library Aid.” This program would not replace the current aid program. Rather, it would provide incentives to libraries to meet performance targets. In this example, the new funding initiative would result in better performance in the Plan’s objective of “Improve Resources.” This is because one of the measures that would be applied to determine Quality Library Aid relates to the size of library collections.

Each of the objectives in the plan is the subject of a series of measures designed to assess the progress that is being made toward reaching the objective. Let us continue to use the volumes per capita example we used above. Specific statewide targets **and individual library targets** are established for some objectives in the plan. When possible, the statewide targets are established in comparison to national or State norms. Targets for statewide improvement are typically set at one standard deviation above performance during the previous year. The following chart illustrates this approach:



In this instance, the chart is based on the performance of the 50 states and the District of Columbia as reported to NCES. As was acknowledged earlier, Delaware's performance of 2.05 volumes per capita is quite low. The curve shows that only a few states had lower volume counts than Delaware. The numbers across the bottom of the chart represent "standard deviation" from the national mean or average. Standard deviation is a way of measuring the degree to which individual scores, or in this case, the number of volumes per capita, differ.

We have established the statewide target at the value of one standard deviation higher than the base year's performance. You will note that the standard deviation, or the difference between the numbers at the bottom, is 1.04. Since Delaware is currently at 2.05, an improvement of one standard deviation would be 3.09 (or $2.05 + 1.04$). As you can see, this is not the final solution. In fact, Delaware would still be below the national mean. However, the standard deviation approach represents making real progress in an incremental way.

Targets for local libraries would also be based on their current performance. If a library currently had 1.00 volumes per capita, it would not initially be expected to reach the 3.09 target. Rather its target would be 2.04 (or $1.0 + 1.04$), which represents one standard deviation above its current level.

This approach also has the advantage of encouraging continuous improvement. Each year, targets would be readjusted upward as statewide performance improves. The hope is that eventually this incremental improvement will place Delaware among the top tier of libraries.

Libraries would not be expected to achieve the targets that have been established in a single year. In fact the timeframe for improvement varies from measure to measure. The point of establishing the specific targets and providing incentives for doing so is to encourage progress.

THE OPTIMIZE FACILITIES OBJECTIVE

Much attention has been given to the “Optimize Facilities” objective. This is because one of the major goals for the Statewide Plan has been to clarify how the State could maximize the benefits derived from the Delaware Public Library Construction Assistance Act.

The Optimize Facilities objective speaks to the needs identified in Finding VI. (*In general, Delaware has too many library buildings but not enough library space to offer high quality library service.*) Many actions will be required to achieve this objective.

One of the specific targets established for this objective is the establishment of at least one Anchor Library in each of the three counties. This recommendation is based on the fact that larger facilities designed to serve a larger population and a larger area are more efficient to operate and generate greater use (e.g., more library visits per capita, more circulation per capita). However, the action of establishing at least one Anchor facility in each county also addresses the need identified in Finding IX (*Residents of some areas of the State lack convenient access to in-depth library resources and collections.*) This illustrates the way in which the Plan, its objectives, and the actions taken to implement it are connected to the Findings.

The Plan also establishes a statewide target of 1.0 Gross Square Feet (GSF) per capita. This does not mean that each building should be sized to exactly 1.0 GSF per capita. However, this target would apply on the county level as well as at the State level.

The Plan also establishes other ways of measuring progress toward reaching the Optimize Facilities Objective. Since fewer but larger facilities would lead to higher use and greater efficiency, larger facilities are recommended. It is relatively simple to measure progress by looking at the average size of facilities. An increase in the average size is a simple indicator that progress is being made.

Summary

Twenty Years Forward: A Statewide Library Services and Construction Infrastructure for Delaware Libraries is an extremely ambitious plan. It attempts to change the way that the State of Delaware approaches the development of library services. The Plan will not be successful if it is viewed as the Delaware Division of Libraries' plan **FOR** Delaware's libraries. True progress will be made only when the Plan is embraced by the library community **as its own plan** for improvement.

The Plan demands a close working relationship between and among a wide variety of stakeholders. These stakeholders include:

- local libraries including their staff, Board and Friends;
- local units of government;
- the DDL and the Council on Libraries;
- elected and appointed county officials;
- the Office of the Secretary of State; and,
- the Executive and Legislative branches of State government.

The Plan takes a holistic approach that closely links components of the plan to each other. Facilities are not an end in themselves; rather, they are a mechanism for improving access. Policies are designed to encourage and reward development rather than to punish.

The Plan establishes very specific targets for improvement that are not "one size fits all" solutions. Rather, the performance targets attempt to meet libraries where they are and make measurable progress toward the indicator of success.

Finally, it must be noted that implementing this Plan will take a tremendous amount of work. Yes, this is an ambitious Plan; but it is also a practical Plan that sets its sight on the goal of making the First State first in the nation in public library service.

THE DETAILED PLAN

Introduction

Delaware has a long tradition of offering library service to the public. Many of the State's libraries have histories that date back to the 1800s with beginnings as subscription libraries, women's club libraries, or as mercantile or mechanics' libraries. One library, the Wilmington Institute, can trace its beginnings back to 1754 as a private subscription library. The Library became the Wilmington Institute, dedicated to educating tradesmen, in 1859.

The New Castle Public Library traces its history back to 1812 with the founding of the New Castle Library Company, a private subscription library. The Dover Public Library also got its start as a private subscription library. It was founded in 1885 and became a public library in 1902. Many of the public libraries in Sussex County began as "club" libraries around the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century. The library in Georgetown was established by the New Century Club in 1899. Likewise the Laurel New Century Club founded a library in 1902 and Seaford's Acorn Club established a library in the same year.

While some of the other libraries in the State are relatively recent arrivals, Delaware does have a long tradition of library service. Each of Delaware's three counties has at least one library that existed in some form before 1900.

Unfortunately, this long history of service has not guaranteed access to high quality library and information services for all Delawareans in 2005. Quality public library service *is* provided by some libraries in the State; however, as a whole, Delaware lags behind other states in most commonly applied measures of library service.

Delaware's peers among the states in many measures tend to be southern states and states with

a far shorter tradition of providing library service. Libraries in neighboring states such as New Jersey and Maryland outperform Delaware libraries significantly.

Recognizing these shortcomings, the Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) and the Council on Libraries (COL) began to question why the “First State” couldn’t be ***first in the nation in providing public library service***. This questioning was in part motivated by the State of Delaware’s interest in pursuing excellence in all endeavors and the Delaware Division of Libraries participation in a number of the State’s “Quality” initiatives.

The desire of DDL and COL to pursue excellence resulted in the issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) late in 2003 seeking qualified consultants to work with the Division to identify the cause of Delaware’s poor performance and to outline a course of action that would result in dramatic improvement.

The need for this type of comprehensive study was underscored by a concern that the State’s generous bond program for the construction and renovation of library facilities, while addressing local needs well, was being implemented without adequate consideration of regional and statewide needs and priorities.

Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants and PROVIDENCE Associates Inc, Library Planners and Consultants, submitted a joint proposal to carry out the comprehensive planning effort and were subsequently selected to undertake the project. Both Himmel & Wilson and PROVIDENCE are consulting firms that specialize in public libraries and both brought significant experience working on statewide projects to the task at hand. Work on the project began in mid January 2004 and has continued into the early months of 2005.

Methodologies and Findings

The development of a truly comprehensive plan for library services and facilities demands a thorough understanding of existing conditions and of the issues confronting the libraries of the State. Several different methodologies were employed to build the knowledge base necessary to recommend specific actions. The consultants also recognized from the outset that crafting a credible plan that could be met with a reasonable level of acceptance from the library community would require an inclusive approach.

To this end, the consultants designed a multi-faceted process that attempted to secure information from the general public, from library users, from government officials, from librarians and other library staff, and from statistical data that reflects both inputs (e.g., number, size and quality of facilities, staffing, collection size, available technology) as well as outputs (e.g., circulation of materials, reference questions answered, number of library visits). A total of 432 library users were involved in 51 focus groups held in libraries throughout the State. Another 2,080 people responded to in-library surveys conducted using touch-screen computers in 29 of the libraries. Over 1,200 (1,273) people, 545 of whom were **not** regular library users, participated in the telephone survey conducted by the University of Delaware.

Personal interviews were conducted with library directors and library branch managers throughout the State. Members of the consulting team participated in over twenty meetings with representatives of the library community. Included were three county level meetings of librarians, two statewide “library town meetings,” meetings with specific interest groups within the library community (automation/technology, youth services, etc.), meetings with library board members and Friends, and regular sessions with the Council on Libraries. The principal consultants also conducted public hearings on the plan in each of Delaware’s counties.

Personal interviews with more than 50 individuals including elected and appointed officials were conducted. Additional contacts were made with individuals involved in specific State and library related programs such as Livable Delaware and UDLib/SEARCH.

Addresses from two samples of actual circulation records (a March sample and an August sample) were used to create electronic pin maps defining the effective service area of each library. Individual assessments of facilities were conducted on a building by building basis. Spreadsheets outlining library space needs were developed for each facility.

Library performance data from national sources was analyzed as was information from individual counties and libraries identified as peers for Delaware counties and libraries.

The knowledge gleaned from all of these information and data gathering efforts has been considered as the Statewide Plan was developed.

The specific results from all of these efforts can be found in the appendices contained in this volume. The contents of the appendices are as follows:

- APPENDIX A – Site Visit Report
- APPENDIX B – Peer Comparison Report
- APPENDIX C – Focus Groups Report
- APPENDIX D – Mapping and Demographics Report
- APPENDIX E – Telephone Survey Report
- APPENDIX F – In-Library Survey Report

Summaries of each of these data gathering efforts follow.

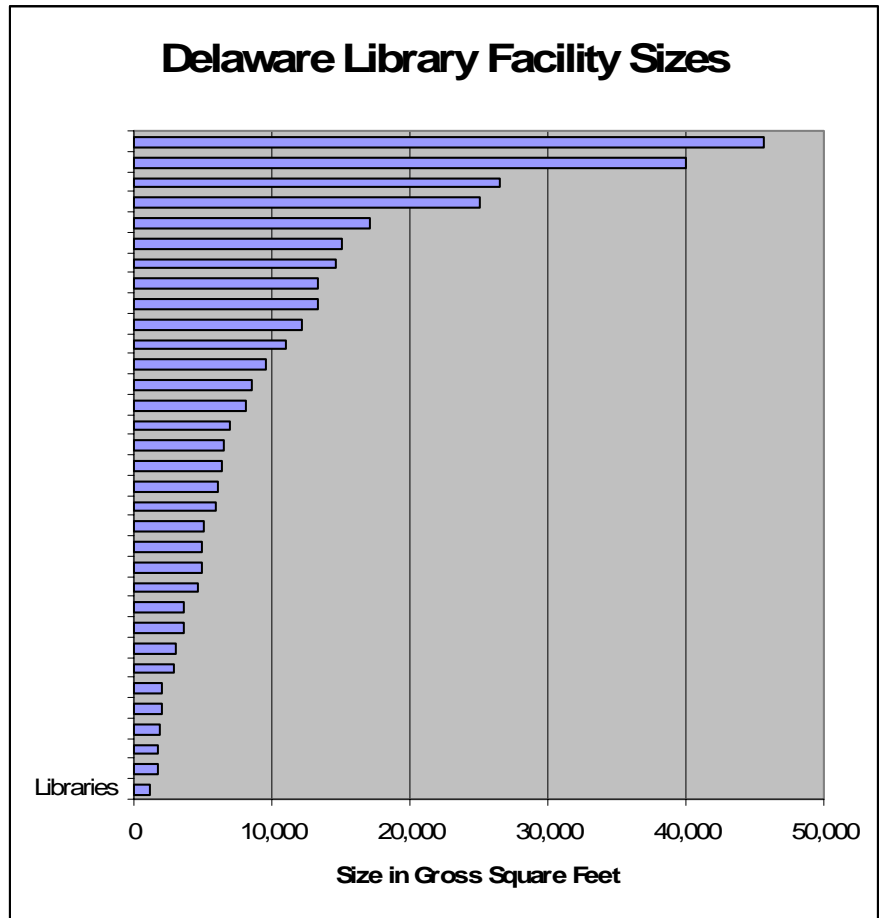
Site Visits (Details in Appendix A)

Each public library facility in Delaware was visited at least twice, and several of the libraries were visited as many as six times by members of the consulting team. One visit at each library focused on an assessment of the facility. Focus group sessions were held in 28 of the libraries. A series of digital photos was taken at each site as well. These photos are contained on a compact disc that is included as a supplement to this report. Appendix A contains a more detailed accounting of the site visits.

The site visits clearly demonstrated the wide variety of library buildings that exist in Delaware. The architecture of the libraries ranges from traditional structures such as the Wilmington Institute's main library to modern facilities such as the Brandywine Hundred Library. Of the 33 facilities, 14 were not originally designed as libraries and have been adapted to public library use. Included are buildings that formerly served as a church, a bank, a funeral home, several schools, and a variety of other commercial and residential properties.

The sizes of the facilities also vary significantly. The graph below shows the sizes of all of the facilities in gross square feet (GSF) as they were in early 2003. It should be noted that several libraries have expanded since that date. Only two of the facilities (Wilmington Institute's main library and the Brandywine Hundred Library) exceed 30,000 GSF. Only two others were larger than 20,000 GSF.

At the other end of the scale, 13 libraries, or almost 40% (39.39%) were 5,000 GSF or less. Twenty-two of the buildings, or two-thirds of the total, were less than 10,000 GSF in size.



When recommended standards for off-street dedicated parking space were applied, nineteen of the 33 libraries had deficits. Several had (and continue to have) no dedicated parking whatsoever.

Only three library facilities in the State were found to have adequate space to serve the estimated service area populations calculated by the consultants and/or to contain the collections and equipment they are now housing. Extreme crowding was the rule rather than the exception. Many of the libraries have collections that are simply larger than their facilities can contain without sacrificing space for other library functions, or even more importantly, appropriate space for users.

Such crowding also raises accessibility concerns even in buildings that are otherwise compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines (ADAG). Individuals in wheelchairs would find maneuvering

through the labyrinth of book stacks, supplemental racks used to house paperbacks and non-print materials, tables and chairs nearly impossible even in some buildings that provide an entrance at grade.

A large percentage of the restrooms in Delaware libraries are not compliant with ADAG and a majority of shelving units for periodicals exceed the ADAG “reach” specifications. While all but a few facilities provide physical access to an entry (either entry at grade or an approach by way of a ramp), in a good number of cases, such entry is through a locked secondary entrance that requires a person to signal library staff in order to gain admission. In one instance, a lift that is intended to provide access is not operational and appears to have been out of commission for an extended period of time.



Delaware libraries are quite often located in close proximity to each other. Appendix A contains a mileage chart showing the distances between each of the libraries in the State. Only two libraries in the State of Delaware do not have at least one other public library within ten miles. Those two libraries are the Smyrna Public Library and the South Coastal Library. At the other end of the scale, ten libraries in the State have **four or more** other libraries within a 10 mile drive. Over half of the libraries (17) are five miles or less from at least one other public library.

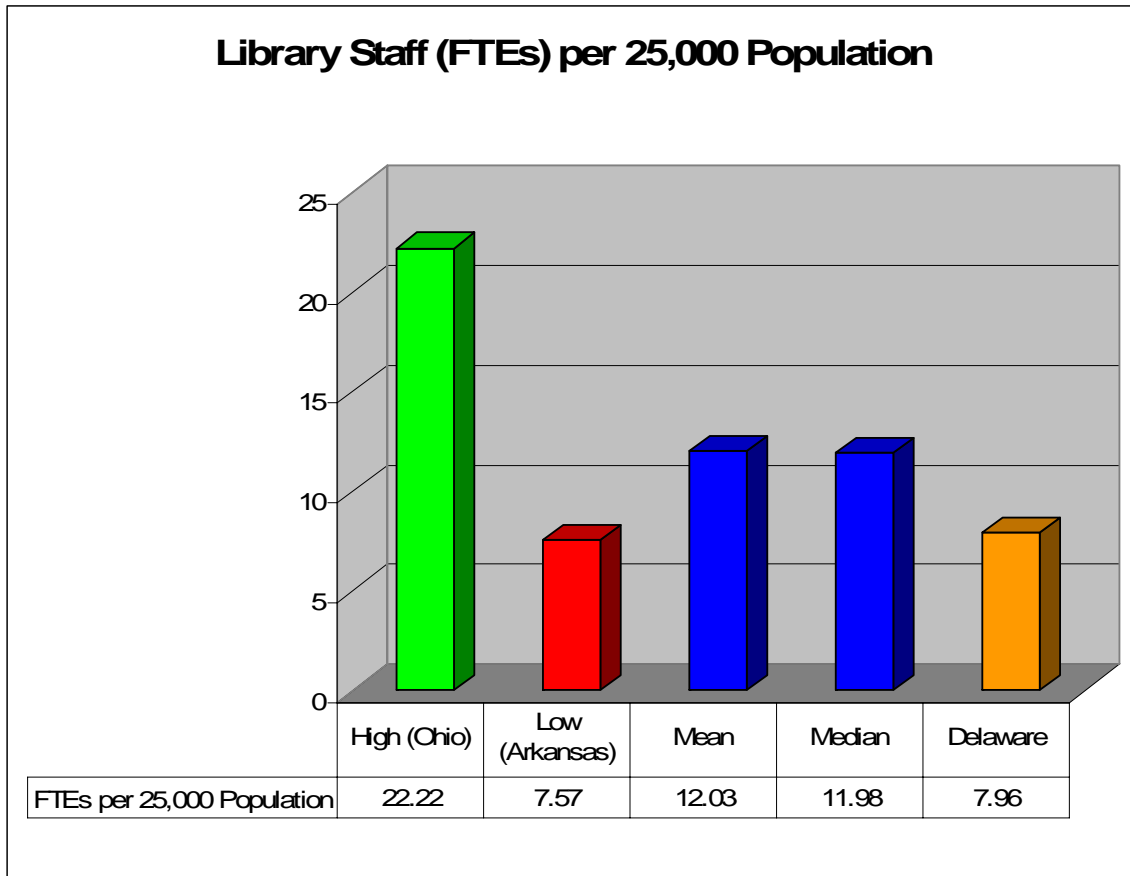
In short, Delaware has more than enough facilities; however, many of the library buildings are too small, ill-suited to serve as libraries, and/or are deficient in terms of handicapped access.

Peer Comparisons (Details in Appendix B)

Four types of peer comparisons were performed. Delaware's overall performance on 20 input and output measures collected and reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through their Federal-State Cooperative System was compared to the other states. A second set of peer comparisons used Delaware's library service data aggregated at the county level in contrast to national averages for counties with similar populations as reported in the Public Library Data Service (PLDS). A third level of peer comparison contrasted Delaware's county level performance with counties of similar size and characteristics in neighboring states and states on the Eastern seaboard. Finally, library performance measures for Delaware's three counties were compared to each other.

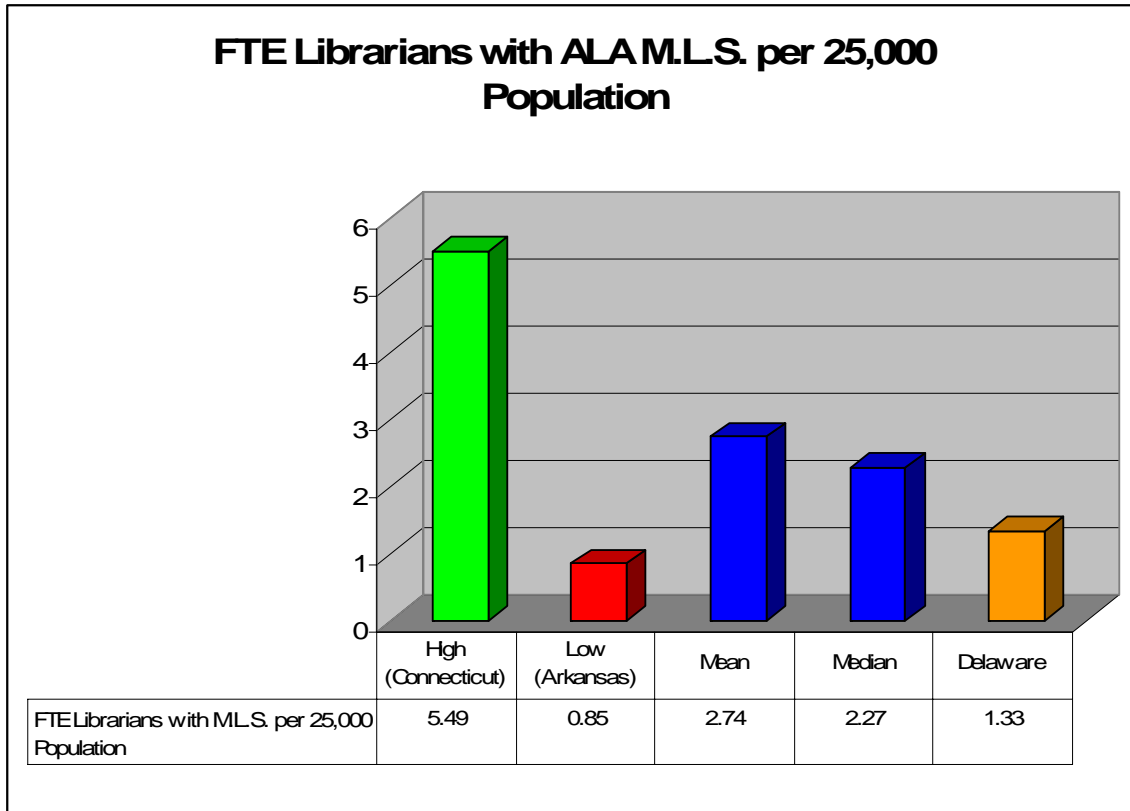
NATIONAL PEER COMPARISONS

Delaware's performance compared to other states revealed significant deficiencies. This was particularly true in the area of staffing. The following charts compare Delaware to the highest performing state, the lowest performing state and to the mean and median on several staffing measures.

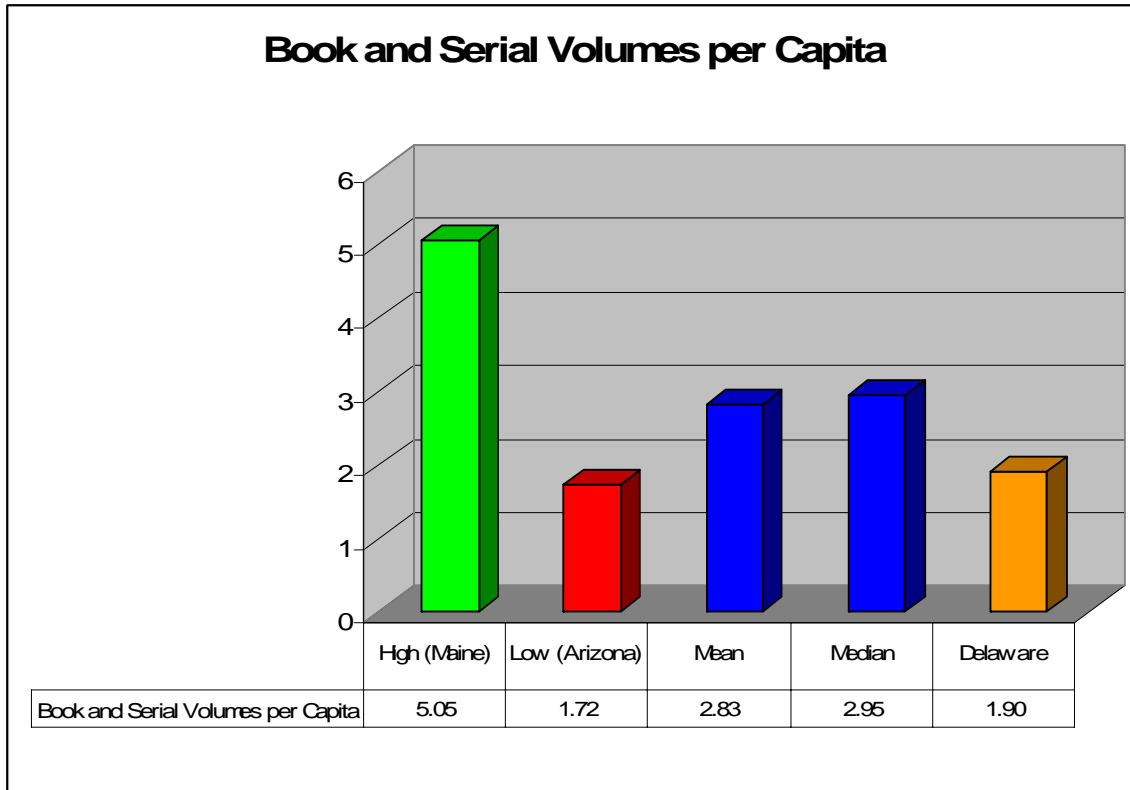


Delaware's rank of 50th (a ranking of 51 is possible because the District of Columbia is included in the statistics) exceeds only Arkansas's performance.

The picture is only slightly better when Delaware is compared to other states in regard to the number of librarians per 25,000 of population holding a Master's degree in Librarianship from an American Library Association accredited school. Delaware ranks 43rd but also has less than one-half the national mean number of ALA Master's degreed librarians per 25,000 of population.



Delaware also fares poorly in national rankings on some measures of library collections. The Book and Serial Volumes per capita measure excludes non-print formats. Delaware's rank for FY 2002 was 46th with 1.90 volumes per capita, which is almost one volume per capita below the national mean. Delaware's rank on audio and video formats is 37th; however, these ranks are both below the national mean as well. When all formats are considered, Delaware libraries reported having 2.05 items per capita in 2002.



COUNTY-LEVEL PEER COMPARISONS WITH PLDS AVERAGES BY SERVICE POPULATION

Comparisons of Delaware library statistics aggregated at the county level with national averages from PLDS for libraries serving similar populations are a bit misleading because there are several different ways in which “librarian” is defined. Some definitions restrict the term “librarian” to individuals holding a master’s degree in Library Science (M.L.S.) from a school accredited by ALA. Others, including PLDS, apply the word more broadly to include people who carry out managerial and/or professional tasks in a library setting.

Collectively, the libraries of New Castle County with 39.67 “librarians” are close to the PLDS average for librarians (broadly defined) in the 250,000 – 499,999 service population grouping. Furthermore, 35.03 of these positions, or over eighty-eight percent (88.3%), of the total hold an ALA master’s degree.

At first blush, Sussex County, with its eleven independent libraries, three county libraries, a bookmobile and an administrative headquarters, looks like it performs reasonably well in that it has nearly double the PLDS average number of FTE librarians for serving a population of 100,000 to 249,999. However, of the 35.65 FTE individuals defined as librarians in Sussex County in 2003, less than five (4.975) held an MLS from an accredited ALA program. Furthermore, the impact of Sussex County's higher performance is diluted because of the fact that Sussex County has a large number of library facilities given its population.

Under the more expansive PLDS definition, there are 12.19 librarians in Kent County, but only 4.81 FTE have an MLS from an accredited ALA program. Furthermore, the majority of these MLS positions are at one library, the Dover Public Library.

Kent County libraries lag behind their PLDS peer averages in holdings per capita; New Castle County libraries are just below the average holdings per capita; and Sussex County libraries are above the average for their service population category. It should be noted that holdings per capita measures only the number of volumes, not the quality of the volumes. The consultants' observations indicate that several libraries have a considerable number of materials that are out-of-date and should be withdrawn from the collections.

Comparing reference transactions per capita clearly shows this service is not a priority in Delaware libraries. Comparisons of annual visits in library per capita also show Delaware libraries lagging the averages of their PLDS counterparts, except Sussex County libraries, which have a higher number of visits than the average for PLDS libraries servicing this population size. Comparing the data for total number of persons attending programs shows that New Castle County libraries and Sussex County libraries have made programming a priority.

Comparisons related to per capita expenditures show that all three counties in Delaware are lagging behind the average for comparable populations as reported in PLDS. Kent libraries lag the average by nearly forty-three percent (42.7%); New Castle libraries lag by over seventeen percent (17.3%); and Sussex libraries lag by more than twenty-two percent (22.3%).

COUNTY-LEVEL PEER COMPARISONS WITH COUNTIES IN EASTERN SEABOARD STATES

Comparisons of library services in Delaware's three counties with individual counties along the Eastern seaboard or bordering Delaware show the First State in a somewhat better light. The individual counties selected for comparisons with Delaware counties are Anne Arundel, Charles, Harford, and Wicomico Counties in Maryland; Atlantic, Cumberland, and Ocean Counties in New Jersey; Chester and Delaware Counties in Pennsylvania; and Anderson and Horry Counties in South Carolina.

Sussex County and Kent County libraries lead their peer groupings with the highest number of FTE librarians while New Castle County libraries have the lowest number in their peer grouping. Kent's good performance in this measure is largely due to the fact that the Dover Public Library has a sizeable number of professional librarians relative to their population.

New Castle County libraries nearly match the average for their peer group in holdings per capita; Sussex County libraries have the third highest holdings per capita of the fourteen counties that were compared. Kent County libraries' average per capita holdings is below the average for libraries in its peer grouping.

In terms of circulations per capita, two of the three Delaware Counties libraries trail their peers, although to varying degrees. In the largest population peer grouping, New Castle County libraries trail the average circulations per capita. Sussex County libraries have an above average circulation per capita in their peer group and Kent County libraries average

circulations per capita are lower than the peer grouping average.

Of the peer counties' libraries, two clearly emphasize reference services. Ocean County, New Jersey, and Harford County, Maryland, provide reference services at a level much higher than the other peer counties' libraries including the Delaware counties.

In annual visits to the library per capita, Sussex County libraries lead all of the county libraries in the peer groupings. New Castle County libraries receive below the average annual visits for its peer group while the Kent County libraries are just above the average for the small peer grouping.

Sussex County libraries again lead all the peer counties in program attendance. Program attendance in New Castle County and Kent County libraries is above average for their peer groupings.

As was noted earlier, Delaware counties libraries lead their peers in terms of interlibrary loans to others and from others. New Castle County libraries more than double the peer county libraries in terms of interlibrary loans to and from other libraries. Sussex County libraries have more than ten times the interlibrary loans to others than their nearest peer county libraries and nearly ten and a half times the interlibrary loans from others.

The average expenditures per capita for the fourteen peer counties is \$26.00. None of the Delaware Counties reach that average.

COUNTY-LEVEL COMPARISONS WITHIN DELAWARE

When Kent, New Castle, and Sussex Counties are compared to each other, some significant disparities appear. The following chart compares the performance of each county on six common service measures.

Measure	Kent	New Castle	Sussex
Items/capita	1.27	2.22	3.01
Circulation/capita	3.35	6.45	6.45
Turnover rate	2.60	2.90	2.10
Reference transactions/capita	0.16	0.78	0.32
Annual library visits/capita	2.14	3.77	5.36
Expenditures/capita	\$17.29	\$23.74	\$23.48

These comparisons show that when Kent County library statistics are aggregated, the County has the lowest performance on five of the six measures. When examined on a countywide basis, Kent's libraries have the lowest number of items per capita, circulate the fewest items per capita, have the fewest reference transactions per capita, and have the lowest number of annual visits per capita and expenditures per capita.

New Castle County's libraries taken as a whole lead in three categories and are tied with Sussex on a fourth measure. New Castle leads in turnover rate (the average number of times items in the collections circulate each year), in reference transactions per capita and in expenditures per capita. Sussex libraries have the highest number of library visits (door count) per capita and the highest number of volumes per capita. New Castle and Sussex tie on the circulation per capita measure.

The per capita calculations shown above for the three Delaware counties do not reflect recent population growth in the First State. When more recent population estimates are used, per capita measures drop. For example, Kent County's circulation per capita drops from 3.35 down to 2.97. Sussex drops from 6.45 to 6.04 and New Castle drops from 6.45 to 5.95. Unless increases in population are met with gains in funding for additional staffing and materials, most per capita measures are destined to continue to drop.

It should also be noted that the Sussex County libraries have the lowest turnover rate of the three counties. Generally a low turnover rate is related to having an older collection in need of weeding and/or

having a large non circulating (reference) collection. If we look at the turnover rates of the Bear Public Library (7.0) and Hockessin Public Library (6.6), we have a standard of comparison for what is possible in Delaware libraries in terms of the active use of collections.

Focus Groups (Details in Appendix C)

A total of 432 individuals took part in fifty-one focus groups held in the spring of 2004. Focus groups were held in twenty-eight sites throughout the State. Participants were primarily active library users. In a number of instances, participants represented “Friends” organizations from the libraries. Following is a summary of the comments gleaned from the focus group sessions.

- Participants see Delaware changing rapidly. In most areas of the State rapid development is bringing new people into the communities. The newcomers are, in some places, retirees who will bring higher expectations for library services but also a greater willingness to support libraries through volunteerism and funding. In other places the newcomers are young families without a tradition of library use. Current library supporters see a great opportunity to serve the new families, but lack the outreach capabilities and marketing tools to reach them. In still other areas the newcomers bring language and cultural differences that require libraries to reassess their collections and services to ensure that they are relevant to changing community needs.
- Many participants were pleased with the library service they receive; their expectations were largely traditional—good personalized service and more books, including audio books and books on CD, although they see others using libraries for the computer and Internet access. Some said they desired

more extensive collections of traditional materials, such as a more diverse collection of newspapers, both U.S. and foreign, and financial publications. Still others stressed the need for additional materials of all types in Spanish and Russian specifically to meet the needs of newcomers to their communities.

- Participants were interested in making the library the hub of their communities, providing meeting and gathering spaces for families and people of all ages with programs, exhibits, game nights, and ways to interact with each other.
- Participants usually agreed that their library's biggest need was for more space, but most would not want a larger facility at the expense of the "homey" or comfortable feel of their current library.
- Their descriptions of the perfect library for their community often included meeting spaces for programs and a coffee shop, but also separate spaces for both noisy and quiet activities such as children's story times separate from a young adult area separate from tutoring spaces separate from computer spaces and quiet reading areas. They wanted space to view videos and DVDs and to listen to tapes and CDs at the library.
- They identified the strengths of their library as:
 - Children's programming and services;
 - The cost savings afforded by the library because they don't have to buy the books, videos, and magazines that they borrow from the library;
 - The ability to place reserves and to renew online;
 - Audio book collections, especially unabridged books;
 - Availability of interlibrary loan service;

- Friendly, helpful staff;
 - Convenient location, and,
 - Sunday hours.

- They identified the weaknesses of their library as:
 - Too many obsolete or old books, especially in non-fiction areas;
 - The lack of classics in the collections;
 - Inadequate, outdated music collections;
 - Noise levels;
 - Too few computers;
 - Too few evening hours;
 - Too little space, including lack of quiet areas and comfortable seating;
 - Lack of meeting room space;
 - Too few children's sessions (unable to get in because already filled);
 - Lack of services and programs for middle school aged children;
 - Lack of adequate parking;
 - Lack of handicapped accessibility;
 - Low staff salaries and fringe benefits;
 - Insufficient numbers of staff, and
 - Online computer catalogs that are hard to use.

- People in the focus group sessions were avid readers who used many types of materials including books, audio books, DVDs, videotapes, magazines and newspapers. Many focus group participants buy books, magazines, and AV items in addition to borrowing them from libraries. Most said they bought books as gifts. They also bought books they wanted to use for reference or to reread and ones they thought would take them a long time to read. Others purchased books by favorite authors to encourage and support those writers. Many said they bought their books at the library book sales; sometimes they bought best sellers to read and then donated them to the library.

- Participants were pleased with their access to materials throughout their respective counties; however, many were enthusiastic about the idea of being able to search a statewide electronic library catalog with a single search and to have what they found delivered to their local library. This was especially appealing if the libraries at the University of Delaware and Delaware Technical College were included in the catalog along with the holdings of the public libraries.
- People had positive, but mixed, reactions to the possibilities of classes on using computers and searching the Internet. Generally they thought these were good ideas for services and that people would sign up for them, but that skills varied widely and there would be a need for both beginner and advanced classes. They worried that libraries would be overwhelmed by the demand.
- Reactions to the electronic databases were mixed; some knew nothing about them; others seemed to be aware of them, but thought they were primarily for students. Very few were regular users of the DeLAWARE databases.
- Having access to reference service 24 X 7 was not a high priority for most of the focus group participants. Although some said they would use such a service, others thought the Internet already provided that and still others were not heavy users of reference services electronically or via the telephone.
- An Amazon.com-like reader's advisory service also got a lukewarm reception. Participants said it would be okay if people could opt out of the service, but others thought it would be an invasion of privacy. Some said they already used Amazon.com to

identify what they wanted to reserve at their own library, but they wanted to be able to control that.

- Participants liked the idea of increased adult programming, although in a few instances they said the library had tried to involve the community in that way and had been unsuccessful in getting good attendance.
- Teen programming and collections were often mentioned as services the library should be more aggressive about providing.
- Participants liked the idea of exhibit spaces in libraries, but had misgivings about most of the other joint community spaces that were probed by the consultants, such as sharing a school, senior center facility, or a community center. Most of those who opposed such sharing said they thought it would dilute the focus of the library and cause other problems.
- They were supportive of libraries providing tutoring spaces and homework centers.

Mapping and Demographics (Details in Appendix D)

The consultants analyzed usage patterns for each of the libraries using geographic information system (GIS) tools. Two samples, each covering a two-week time period, were extracted from each of the four library automation systems used by Delaware libraries. One of the automation systems includes all of the libraries in New Castle County with the exception of the four Wilmington Institute locations. A second integrated library system tracks transactions for the Wilmington Institute's main library and its branches. A third automation system is used by the four libraries in Kent County as well as by the Milford Library, which serves users in both Kent and Sussex Counties. The fourth automation system serves all of

the public libraries in Sussex County with the exception of Milford.

The sample transaction records represented households with circulation activity during the two week period prior to the time when the samples were drawn. These records, which contained addresses and a code representing the library at which the circulation transactions took place, were divided by library of origin and the addresses were processed using a geo-coding program. The match rate for most libraries was in the 90% range. In the instance of a few libraries where a large number of rural delivery route addresses were included in the sample, approximate locations were determined using maps showing the boundaries of rural routes. The majority of these rural addresses were in Sussex County.

The GIS software generated separate electronic pin maps that show the distribution of active households for each library. Maps displaying the interaction between and among libraries were also created. The consultants determined primary service areas for each of the 33 library facilities using these interaction maps. Polygons representing the approximate boundaries for each of the libraries were determined by locating the approximate point where the prevalent use shifts from one library to another. All areas of the State were assigned to a library using this procedure.

A service provided by a commercial vendor of demographic information (Claritas Inc) was used to determine the population residing within each of the polygons created by assigning primary service area boundaries. Adjustments were made to these populations based on population estimates from the Delaware Population Consortium's Annual Population Projections released September 29, 2004. The resulting service populations for 2004/05 were used in computing the per capita measures and the current and long-term space needs included in the library profiles found in Volume III.

Some additional adjustments were made in calculating service populations and space needs for

four libraries. A “non-resident” factor was applied for the Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, Selbyville, and South Coastal (Bethany Beach) libraries. Non-residents make up more than 5% of the registered borrowers for each of these libraries. Non-residents account for more than forty percent of registered borrowers in Rehoboth Beach and at the South Coastal libraries (41.73% and 40.48% respectively).

For a number of libraries, the service populations determined by the consultants vary significantly from the “legal” service populations used in the calculation of State Aid. While we believe that the populations we have used are more accurate than the legal service population calculations, we hesitate to recommend their use for the purpose of determining State Aid. Our analysis assigned populations using U.S. Census block groups. We believe that using a similar approach but refining it to assign population at the U.S. Census “block” level would be even more accurate and would be appropriate for determining state funding in the future.

Appendix D contains service area maps and service area population charts.

Telephone Survey (Details in Appendix E)

BACKGROUND

In order to ensure that the consultants gained input from Delaware residents who do not use libraries as well as from those who are library users, a telephone survey was conducted for the consultants by the Center for Applied Demography & Survey Research (CADSR) at the University of Delaware. The survey used a sample that was large enough to allow generalization of the results to households at both the State and county levels. The survey was conducted between May 11th and August 8th, 2004, and resulted in a total of 1,273 completed interviews.

The households were selected by random digit dialing (RDD) to ensure that unlisted numbers were included

in the universe from which the sample was drawn. Upon contacting a household, a random adult of age 18 or older was selected to participate in the survey. Five attempts were made to contact each number in the sample before a new number was drawn. The attempts were made in the daytime, the nighttime, and on the weekend.

The study design called for a precision of +/- 5% at the county level and +/- 4% at the state level. This was achieved by employing a disproportionate stratified sample design by county. Interviews were completed with 429 Kent County households, 467 New Castle County households, and 372 Sussex County households. In five cases the county could not be ascertained. The sample over weighted Kent and Sussex counties and under weighted New Castle County to allow equally precise estimates at the county level.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The valid responses included 724 library users and 545 individuals categorized as non-users because neither they nor a member of their household had used a public library in the last six months.

The profile of a survey participant based on the highest percent of responses in each of the demographic categories would describe participant as an employed female, between the ages of 25 and 44, with an annual household income of \$50,000 to \$79,999. She is a college graduate and a library user. She speaks English at home and has lived in Delaware 24 years.

Although eighty-six percent said they had a library card, only fifty-seven percent said they or a member of their household had used a public library in the last six months.

Seventy-nine percent said they generally made a special trip to go to the library; seventy-two percent said they are willing to travel between ten and thirty

minutes to use a library that has information and materials relevant to them.

Out of sixteen aspects related to library services respondents gave their highest rating to the physical condition of the facility they used and their lowest rating to the range of services for non-English speaking users.

Those participating in the survey were frequent users of their library. Eight percent visited the library several times each week and another fourteen percent said once a week. Thirty-two percent were there several times a month.

Eighty percent had Internet access at home, but only twenty-nine percent had used their library's Internet website. Their main reason for visiting the website was to search the library's catalog for a book or other item.

Non-users (those who had not used a public library in the last six months) gave as their major reasons for not using the library that they had had no recent need and that they get information from the Internet.

Eighty-five percent of those surveyed said they or members of their household went to bookstores. Fifteen percent spent more than \$500 on reading materials, DVDs, and/or videos in the previous year; only four percent said they had spent no money on these items.

The participants were most interested in later evening hours and using self check-out. They were least interested in the library's providing community meeting facilities. However, when asked which of the same list of services were worthy of tax support, their answers were more altruistic. The top two services worthy of tax support were library services for homebound people and adult literacy training. Interestingly, over sixty percent also approved of tax support for job/employment information, computer/Internet training/classes, structured homework assistance programs, more extensive book

collections, and access to additional library electronic databases.

Fifty-six percent said public libraries are essential to the quality of life in their community; another thirty-two percent said public libraries are very important, but not essential. Ten percent said public libraries were somewhat important, but not essential; less than one percent said libraries were not very important and less than another one percent said libraries are not at all important to the quality of life in our community.

USERS VS. NON-USERS

Non-users of libraries were less likely than users to go to book stores, to have Internet access at home, or to attend concerts, live theatre, movies, or museums. Users were more than twice as likely to use multiple libraries; however, there was only an eight percent difference between users and non-users in having Internet access at home.

Library users were ten percent more likely than non-users to have spent between \$251 and \$500 in the past year buying reading materials, DVDs, and/or videos. However, fifteen percent of the users and fourteen percent of the non-users had spent more than \$500 in the past year on reading materials, DVDs, and/or videos.

Users found adult literacy training, more extensive book collections and later evening hours most desirable while non-users were most interested in computer/Internet training/classes, self check-out and later evening hours.

While each of the potential services was deemed worthy of tax support by a majority of users, less than half of the non-users agreed that self check-out, community meeting facilities, and Sunday hours were worthy of tax support.

Non-users were less willing to travel longer periods of time to use a library and although they see public libraries as somewhat or very important to the quality

of life in their community, non-users were less likely than users to see public libraries as essential.

COUNTY LEVEL COMPARISONS

Kent County users gave their highest scores on the sixteen aspects of library services to the helpfulness of personnel and the competence or knowledge of personnel and their lowest scores to parking and to the range of services for non-English speaking users. New Castle County users gave their highest scores to the physical condition of the library facility and the competence or knowledge of personnel and their lowest scores to the range of services for non-English speaking users and the availability of other technologies. Sussex County users gave their highest scores to the helpfulness of personnel and the physical condition of the library facility and their lowest scores to the availability of other technologies and the range of services for non-English speaking users.

Of the sixteen aspects of library services the New Castle County respondents gave the highest scores of the three counties for nine of the sixteen aspects; the Sussex County respondents gave the highest scores for the other seven aspects. These comparative rankings might be perceived as indicating relative approval of their library services. Kent County respondents did not give the highest mean score for any of the aspects. While the mean scores across the three counties were often quite close, the aspects where Kent County lagged most were parking, range of services for non-English speaking users, and adequacy of the facility space to provide needed services.

Almost ninety percent of the Sussex County respondents had a library card. In comparison, only eighty-two percent from Kent County had a card. Less than a third of the users in all three counties said they visited a public library as often as several times a month. Kent County respondents were more likely to combine their visit to the library with other activities than respondents from the other counties.

New Castle respondents were more likely than residents in the other counties to have used their library's Internet website or the Delaware Division of Libraries website. The major reason New Castle and Sussex respondents had used their library's website was to search the library's catalog for a book or other items. In Kent County the major reason for using the website was to access online research databases.

Some of the reasons for not using the library were consistent across the three counties; however, there were some reasons that appeared to be distinctly county related. Sussex non-users were more than twelve percent (12.25%) less likely to get information from the Internet than the respondents in the other two counties. Ten percent of the Kent County non-users and nine percent of the Sussex non-users said they were not sure when the library is open while only three percent of the New Castle respondents gave this answer. New Castle respondents were also more likely to get information from other libraries.

New Castle County respondents were more likely than respondents in the other counties to use multiple libraries, go to book stores, have Internet access at home, and attend concerts, live theater, movies or museums.

New Castle County respondents were more likely than respondents in other counties to have spent \$101-\$250 in the past year to buy reading materials, DVDs, and/or videos, but less likely to have spent more than \$500.

Residents of the three counties had slightly different priorities for possible library service additions. The top priority for Kent County was computer/Internet training/classes; for New Castle County it was self check-out; and for Sussex County it was library services for homebound. Kent County and New Castle County respondents gave only one service, community meeting facilities, a score below the mid point on a five point scale. Sussex respondents gave their lowest score to Sunday hours.

Survey results indicate that it is likely that several of the possible services would fail if put to a referendum for tax support in Kent and Sussex Counties. Under half or less than fifty percent of the Kent County and Sussex County respondents thought Sunday hours, community meeting facilities, and self check-out were worthy of public tax support; New Castle County respondents gave over fifty percent approval to all of the potential services except community meeting facilities, which received only fifty percent approval.

The percentages of individuals willing to travel less than 10 minutes, and 15 to 30 minutes to use a library that has information and materials relevant to them was nearly equal. Kent County respondents were seven percent less likely to be willing to travel 10 to 15 minutes, but six percent more likely to be willing to travel more than 30 minutes than respondents in the other two counties.

While more than fifty-five percent of the respondents in each of the counties said public libraries were essential to the quality of life in their community, Sussex participants were more likely than participants in Kent and New Castle counties to give this response. Sixty-four percent of the Sussex respondents said public libraries were essential to the quality of life in their community compared with fifty-five percent in Kent and New Castle Counties.

Sussex County respondents were nine percent more likely to have lived in Delaware for fourteen or fewer years than residents in the other counties. Sussex County respondents were also ten percent more likely than respondents in the other counties to be in the 55 to 74 years of age category.

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN DELAWARE

Those who had lived the longest in Delaware, 35 or more years, gave the highest scores (compared with the scores of the other two groups, which were 0 to 14 years residency and 15 to 34 years residency) to eight of the sixteen library service aspects while those

who had lived in the State for 14 years or less, the shortest residencies, gave the highest scores to five aspects. People in the middle group, those who had lived in the State for 15 to 34 years, gave the highest scores to only three aspects.

Those who had lived in the State 15 to 34 years, the middle group, were more likely, however, to have a library card than residents in the other two categories.

The participants who had lived 35 and more years in Delaware were eleven percent less likely to visit the library several times a month than the participants in the other two groups.

Those with 35 and more years' residency were ten percent less likely to have used their library's Internet website or the Delaware Division of Libraries website than the participants in the other two residency groups.

Even though "no recent need" was the most frequently given reason for not using the library by individuals in all three groups, the respondents who had lived in Delaware the longest were ten percent more likely than respondents in the other two categories to give this reason. Those who had lived in the State the shortest period were more likely to say that they get information from the Internet, although this difference was only six percent.

Interestingly, respondents who have lived in the State for 14 years or less were almost twelve percent less likely than the respondents in the other two groups to say that they have other sources of reading materials. Those who had been in the State the shortest time were eleven percent more likely to say they were not sure when the library is open, and ten percent more likely to say they were not sure where the library is located than the respondents in the longer residency categories.

Residents who had lived in the State 35 years or more were fourteen percent less likely to have Internet access at home than the respondents in the

two categories of fewer years' residency. They were also less likely to have spent more than \$500 in the previous year buying reading materials, DVDs, and/or videos.

Respondents in the three residency groups (users and non-users combined) had somewhat different priorities for possible library service additions. Those who had lived in the State the shortest category of time thought later evening hours were most attractive, as did the middle residency group. For the longest residency group the top choice for added library services was computer/Internet training/classes. In last place those in the shortest residency group were least interested in adult literacy training. Residents in the middle group gave only one possible service a score below the mid point and that was for community meeting facilities. Residents who had lived in Delaware for 35 or more years gave scores below the mid point to four possible services. The lowest score went to Sunday hours, followed by community meeting facilities, business information/services for home and small businesses, and access to additional library electronic databases.

Residents had different perspectives on which services were worthy of public tax support. Those who had lived 14 years or less in Delaware gave less than fifty percent approval to using tax dollars to support self check-out and Sunday hours. Respondents who had lived in Delaware 15 to 34 years gave less than fifty percent support only to community meeting facilities. The longest term residents gave less than fifty percent support to three of the services: Sunday hours, later evening hours, and community meeting facilities.

The longest term residents were fourteen percent less likely than the other two groups to favor tax support for more extensive book collections, ten percent less likely to favor tax support for later evening hours, and eight percent less likely to favor tax support for Sunday hours.

Appendix E contains a full report analyzing the survey data and charts detailing survey results.

In-Library Survey (Details in Appendix F)

In-library surveys were conducted in the libraries using touch-screen computers. The computers were in each of the public libraries in Delaware, excluding the Wilmington libraries, for one week between August 2004 and November 2004. A total of 1,832 people completed the survey during that time.

The survey participants in all three counties tended to be frequent users of the library. Over seventy percent said they had visited the library more than ten times in the previous six months. The 'other' libraries they visited were most often other libraries in the same county as "their" library. However, a good number of participants in all three counties said they also used libraries in other states.

When asked what they intended to do during their visit to the library, participants in all three counties said they were going to check out books for leisure reading. The second most frequently cited activity in Kent and New Castle Counties was to use the library computer for Internet access. In Sussex County the second most frequent activity was to check out video tapes or DVDs. That was the third most frequent activity in Kent and New Castle Counties. Using the library computer for Internet access was the third most frequent activity in the Sussex County libraries.

Survey participants in all three counties gave their highest ratings to the helpfulness and knowledge of the library staffs and their lowest scores to the quality of their library's collection of videos and DVDs.

Participants in Kent County said a new/improved library facility would most enhance their enjoyment of the library. In both New Castle and Sussex Counties the highest percents of participants said larger/better collections of books would most enhance their

enjoyment. Having more/better programs was the lowest priority in all three counties.

Eighty-two percent of the Kent respondents, seventy-four percent of the New Castle respondents and seventy-eight percent of the Sussex respondents said libraries were essential or very important to the quality of life in their communities.

Less than half of the participants in each of the counties had used DelAWARE, the State's online database service.

Over sixty percent of the participants in each county said they had used a car or motorcycle to get to the library rather than walking, riding a bicycle, or taking public transportation.

Appendix F contains the results and an analysis of the in-library survey.

Findings

FINDING I

Taken as a whole, the quantity and quality of public library services offered to the residents of Delaware are sub-standard.

National statistics reveal that compared to other states, Delaware ranks below the mean on 19 of 20 performance measures collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and below the median on 17 of the same 20 measures.

An illustration of the fact that Delaware is lagging behind can be found through an examination of the websites of Delaware's public libraries in comparison to library websites from neighboring states. A number of Delaware libraries do not have web sites at all. Among those that do, many are rudimentary and offer little more than library location, hours, a link to their area's shared automation system and a link to

DelAWARE (the State's digital library). It should be noted that a number of Delaware libraries do have reasonably good web sites. However, the general status of the digital doorway to Delaware's libraries is clearly substandard.

An examination of library websites maintained by libraries in Maryland and New Jersey reveals a much stronger web presence. Their websites tend to look far more professional and, even more importantly, tend to provide much greater access to informational resources.

FINDING II

The quality and quantity of library service that is offered vary greatly by county and by locale.

County and local library level data reveal significant disparities between and among Delaware's public libraries. A good example can be found by examining circulation per capita data. In 2003, six Delaware libraries circulated 3.0 or fewer items per person in their service areas. At the opposite end of the scale, six libraries circulated 8.0 or more items per person.

Delaware libraries range from a low of 0.7 items per capita on this measure to a high of 13.7 items per capita. The average for libraries in Kent County is 3.0 while Sussex County's circulation per capita is twice as high at 6.0. Within Kent County, libraries range from 0.7 circulations per capita to 5.2 circulations per capita. As a point of reference, the State of Delaware mean is 5.6 and the national mean for libraries reporting to the Public Library Data Service is over 9.0 per capita.

FINDING III

Some real progress in improving library services has been made in recent years.

Significant capital investments by the State (through the Delaware Public Library Construction Assistance Act) and by county governments (particularly New Castle County) coupled with additional State and county investments in operational costs have resulted in noteworthy improvement in service measures such as library visits per capita and circulations per capita.

The State of Delaware and the Delaware Division of Libraries have exercised considerable leadership in encouraging the adoption of new technologies, in expanding continuing education and training efforts for library staff, as well as taking an active role in public library facility development. DeLAWARE, The First State's Digital Library, has expanded the breadth of information resources available in the smallest libraries in the State.

County library operations in all three counties have also grown stronger. Operational support for public libraries from County governments has increased and County operations in New Castle and Sussex Counties are exercising a greater role in coordinating library development within their jurisdictions.

FINDING IV

Much of the progress has been due to greater involvement of county governments in coordinating and funding library services.

The greatest progress has been made by libraries that have received additional county tax revenues. Far less progress has been made by libraries that are the most dependent on municipal revenues. It should be noted that the Dover Public Library has performed reasonably well although the majority of its support comes from its municipal government. Only three public libraries in Delaware receive 50 % or more of

their operational support from municipalities. All three of these libraries are located in Kent County.

New Castle County has continued to encourage independent libraries to become County libraries. The Woodlawn project in the City of Wilmington is a concrete example of these efforts.

FINDING V

Unless a concerted effort is made to improve library services quickly, Delaware is likely to fall further behind (especially in terms of per capita measures) because of its significant population growth.

Population projections for the State of Delaware indicate that more than 1,000,000 people will reside in Delaware by the end of the twenty year time horizon covered by this plan. Depending on which projections are used, this represents an increase in population of between 18% and 20% by the year 2025. Delaware's investment in public libraries will need to significantly exceed the growth rate if there is an expectation that Delaware will realize more than marginal improvement.

An additional issue relates to the large number of non-resident users of Delaware libraries. Nearly 30% of the registered borrowers at the South Coastal Library (Bethany Beach) and at the Rehoboth Beach Library are non-residents. The non-resident total at the Lewes Library is nearly 10%. Good libraries are an attractive incentive that encourages investment in Delaware. However, non-residents add significantly to the service populations of a number of beach (and border) communities. Non-resident populations must be factored into any library service equation in these areas. Finally, it should be noted that many non-residents are coming from states and areas that offer a higher level of public library service than they find in Delaware. These people bring their high expectations with them when they spend time in the First State.

FINDING VI

In general, Delaware has too many library buildings but not enough library space to offer high quality library service.

With 33 library facilities (there are also two bookmobiles in operation in the State), Delaware has roughly one library for every 25,500 people. While this ratio of facilities to population is reasonable, there are extreme variations in the populations served by individual libraries.

If the effective service area populations calculated by the consultants are used, ten of Delaware's libraries have service populations under 10,000. Four of these libraries serve populations of 4,000 or less. At the other end of the spectrum, six libraries in the State serve populations in excess of 60,000. It is of great interest to note that these six libraries, four of which are 25,000 gross square feet (GSF) or larger in size, account for 52% of the State's total circulation of library materials.

The outstanding success of larger facilities such as New Castle County's Bear and Brandywine Hundred branches illustrates that larger buildings that serve a broader area usually generate much greater use than small libraries serving a limited population base.

Both Sussex County and Kent County operate bookmobiles. While the notion of a bookmobile as a suitable substitute for a physical facility is both romantic and historically accurate, changing demographic patterns, especially the prevalence of two-income families, has altered the most effective model of bookmobile service. The days of establishing a successful daytime bookmobile stop at a general store or at an intersection in a rural area are largely past. Instead, bookmobiles are most effective as outreach tools that serve concentrated clusters of the population that are limited in mobility. Daycare centers and senior housing facilities are examples. Bookmobiles can also be used for community stops;

however, evening and weekend stops should be the rule rather than the exception.

FINDING VII

Almost without exception, Delaware's public libraries are badly understaffed.

We have already pointed out that the State of Delaware ranks 50th out of 51 (the 50 states and the District of Columbia) in *Paid Full-Time Equivalent Staff per 25,000 Population*. The First State's rank is 43rd in categories that measure the number of librarians holding a Master's degree in Library Science from an American Library Association (ALA) accredited program per 25,000 in population and 43rd in the number of staff categorized as librarians who lack the ALA accredited degree. Delaware's showing is even worse (47th) in the "other" staff category that would include library associate and clerical positions.

The consultants also discovered that many library directors and other staff in Delaware receive little or nothing in the way of benefits. This situation is especially prevalent among the "independent" libraries that are established as 501 (c) (3) organizations. This lack creates difficulties in the recruitment and retention of qualified staff in addition to creating significant personal hardships.

FINDING VIII

Taken as a whole, Delaware's library collections are too small and, in many cases, are out of date.

The FY 2002 NCES statistics ranked Delaware 46th among the states in terms of *Book and Serial Volumes per capita*. The First State performed somewhat better (37th) on measures of both audio and video formats.

2003 statistics from Delaware libraries indicate improvements in all three areas (books and serials, audio units, and video units) from 2002 levels.

Nevertheless, Delaware still has a good distance to go in developing its basic library resources. Furthermore, national and State statistics do not reflect the quality of materials that are owned. From the consultants' time spent on-site in Delaware libraries, we are aware that some libraries have active, well-chosen collections while more than a few other collections contain a high percentage of dated and worn materials. In many cases, these materials were gifts from library users.

The measure known as "turnover rate" provides a relatively easy way to assess the "freshness" and relevance of library collections. Turnover rate simply looks at the number of volumes owned and the number of times these items circulate during a year's time. In other words, if a library has 10,000 volumes and a circulation of 10,000, the turnover rate is 1.0. If the 10,000 volumes generate 20,000 circulations, the turnover rate is 2.0. Higher turnover rates are an indication that users are interested in what they find on library shelves.

In 2003, turnover rates in Delaware libraries ranged from 0.58 to 7.04! Several of the larger New Castle County libraries perform particularly well on this measure indicating that their collections contain materials that their users want. Very low turnover rates (anything below 1.0 certainly qualifies as being low) often signal that a collection may contain a lot of "dead wood." The library may well have some good materials, but these items may be lost among many other materials that are old, unattractive, and dated.

Some libraries in Delaware need to address relatively low volume counts. Others need to reduce the size of their collections to make well selected materials more visible and accessible.

FINDING IX

Residents of some areas of the State lack convenient access to in-depth library resources and collections.

The combination of relatively small libraries and a very small number of library professionals in the State leaves Delaware residents with less in the way of reference service than is common in other states. There are only a few libraries that have what might be considered in-depth resources, collections, and reference assistance.

Ideally, every Delaware resident would have access to such resources within their own county in the form of a resource library designed to fulfill county-level needs. In fact, many states in the United States have some form of State Aid that recognizes this need and designates specific libraries as “County Resource Libraries.” In some states, these libraries are supported primarily with county funds; others are independent libraries that receive state or county subsidies to support more in-depth services. This concept is very consistent with the idea of having at least one “Anchor” library in each of Delaware’s three counties.

FINDING X

Delaware has several positive assets that can be used to address many of the deficiencies that have been cited.

While the overall status of Delaware libraries may at first seem a bit bleak, the First State has many assets that it can bring to bear on the problem. Delaware has several programs of which it can be justifiably proud. The DeIAWARE database licensing program offers electronic access to high quality resources. The First State’s bond program for public library construction is one of the finest in the country. General State Aid support has been strong and elected officials have been supportive of efforts to improve the quality of life enjoyed by Delaware

residents in general and specifically, the quality of library services enjoyed by State residents.

Furthermore, the State's Council on Libraries and the staff of the Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) have a vision for improved library services that continuously asks, "why not the best?" Librarians throughout Delaware are fully engaged with the DDL on numerous projects and initiatives to improve service.

Advocacy (and financial support) for movement to the development of a Statewide automated integrated library system is another bright spot. Library customers clearly expressed their preference for shared catalogs in the focus groups that were held throughout the State. (In fact, the public expressed their desire for an integrated catalog that includes not just public libraries but academic libraries as well.) A broader shared catalog can result in greater efficiency in resource sharing, more coordination in collection development, and the reduction of duplication of resources.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the public is supportive of public libraries. The telephone survey that was conducted as part of this planning effort revealed significant support for libraries. In fact, 89.9% of all respondents said that public libraries were either "vital to the quality of life in their community" or "very important to the quality of life in their community." Not surprisingly, a higher percentage (92.7%) of regular users of libraries selected "vital" or "very important." However, the most encouraging news of all may be that 84.1% of people who **do not** use Delaware's public libraries also concurred that libraries were either "vital" or "very important." Public support for the public library as an important institution is alive and well in the First State.

Balanced Scorecard

As the findings demonstrate, no one factor is responsible for Delaware's overall poor performance on standard measures of library service. The problem is not a single-faceted one. Rather, it is a series of related problems. As such, the situation must be addressed in a holistic fashion.

The statewide plan for library services in the State of Delaware is intended to be one piece in a larger framework of planning for public library services in Delaware. It is seen as the top level of a series of planning efforts that, together, will move the performance of the First State's libraries from their present status in the lowest quartile nationally to the forefront of what twenty-first century libraries can and should be. The Vision of the Delaware Division of Libraries is that "Residents of the First State will have public library service that is second to none in the nation!"

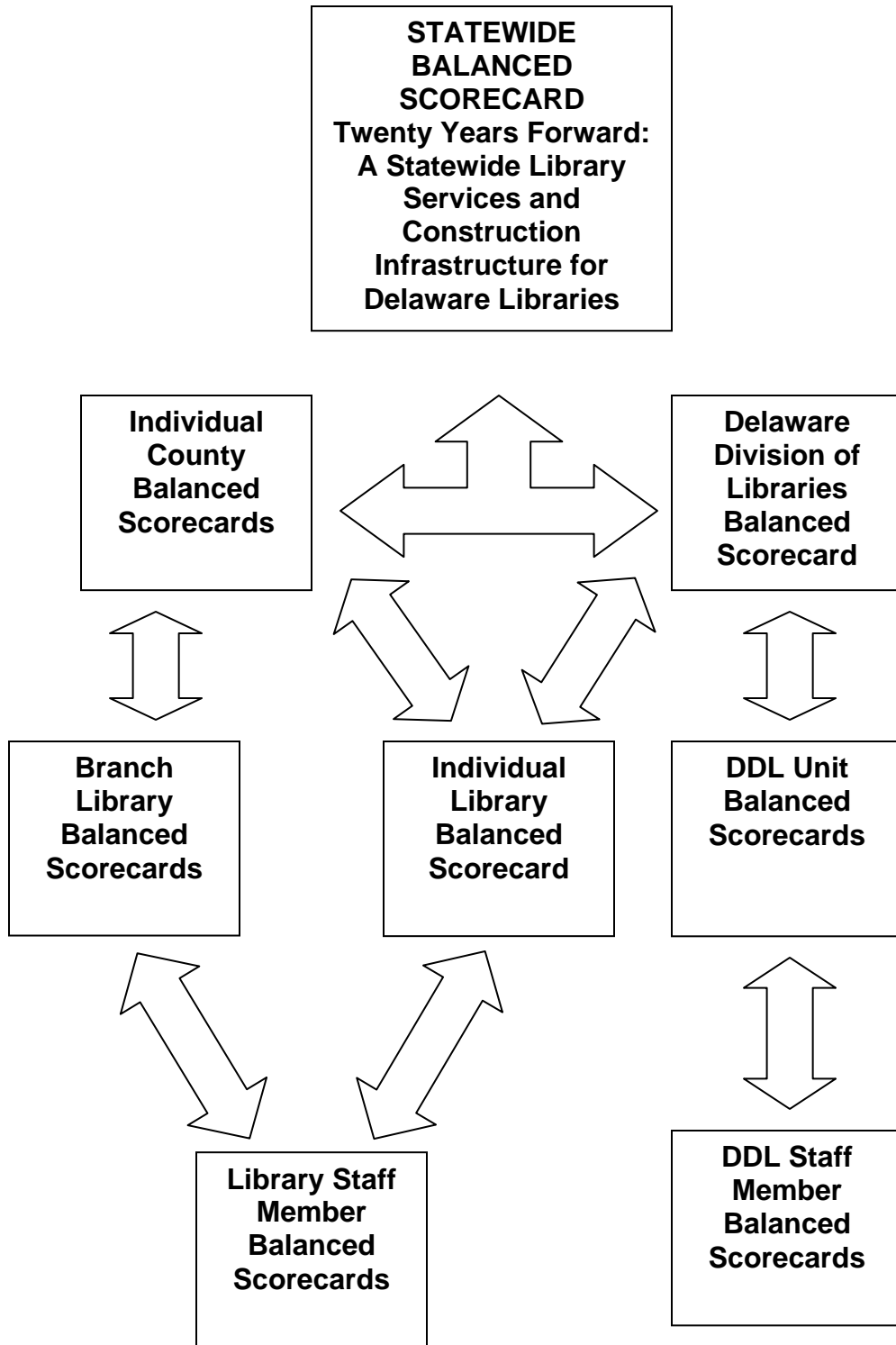
Making this vision a reality will require a cooperative and coordinated effort between and among many entities. While the Delaware Division of Libraries and the State government are key players in the mix, becoming a leader in library services is highly dependent on the actions of local and county libraries as well as on the governments that fund them. One of the important roles of the Division of Libraries and of the State government will be to develop and implement policy and funding initiatives that encourage local governments and libraries to pursue the objectives outlined in this plan.

Because each library in the State is different and serves a different population, some planning will be needed at the local level. However, the efforts already undertaken as part of the statewide planning project mean that individual libraries will be well on their way to developing plans that are linked to the State plan before they even begin their own planning process.

The State Plan has been crafted using a technique referred to as a “Balanced Scorecard.” The Balanced Scorecard method of strategic planning emerged in the late 1980s and gained wide popular acceptance in the 1990s based on the work of Robert S. Kaplan of the Harvard Business School and his colleague David P. Norton. Because the balanced scorecard can easily be “scaled” to encompass the needs of large organizations that have many tiers, the approach has also been very successful in situations in which separate entities share a common vision. The diagram on the next page illustrates how the statewide plan, the Delaware Division of Libraries’ own plan, and individual library plans will be linked together.

There are two major reasons for adopting the balanced scorecard planning approach on a statewide basis. The first is that the balanced scorecard attempts to simplify and streamline the key points in a way that is easy to understand. This is extremely important when planning is being done across a number of entities even if they do share the same ultimate goal. It is extremely important that all libraries in Delaware understand what the State hopes to accomplish and how the statewide vision relates to their library.

A second related reason for adopting the balanced scorecard approach is that it is designed to encourage linkages between individual plans. This aspect of the planning method provides a mechanism that lends itself to working together to achieve common objectives.



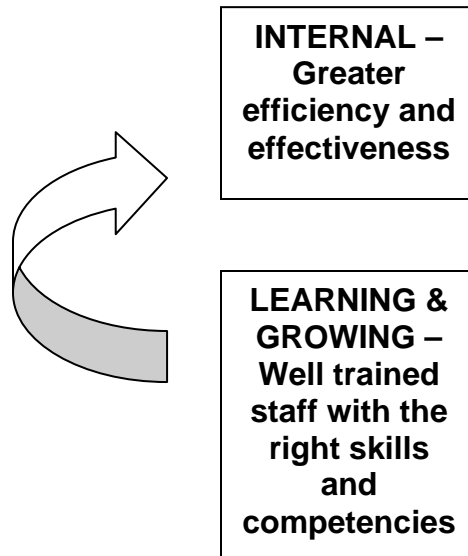
A Brief Introduction to the Balanced Scorecard Approach to Strategic Planning

The balanced scorecard has many similarities to older, more traditional methods of strategic planning. The approach uses a structure of objectives, measures, and activities that will seem familiar to most people who have participated in other planning efforts. Perhaps the greatest difference is that the balanced scorecard is structured around looking at an organization or, in the case of the statewide plan, at a service system from several different viewpoints. In balanced scorecard parlance, these viewpoints are called “Perspectives.”

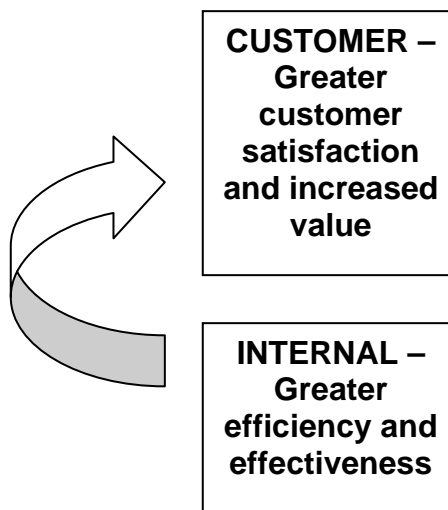
The perspective approach is born of the fact that business organizations have traditionally looked at organizational success in a one dimensional way – from the financial perspective. The balanced scorecard method recognizes that organizations are multi-dimensional and that there are opportunities for improvement throughout an organization or throughout a system of service. The planning method attempts to strike a “balance” between and among a number of factors that contribute to success. Balanced scorecard planning arranges multiple perspectives in an order that represents a cause and effect relationship. The classic perspectives identified by Kaplan and Norton are:

- Financial
- Customer
- Internal
- Learning & Growing

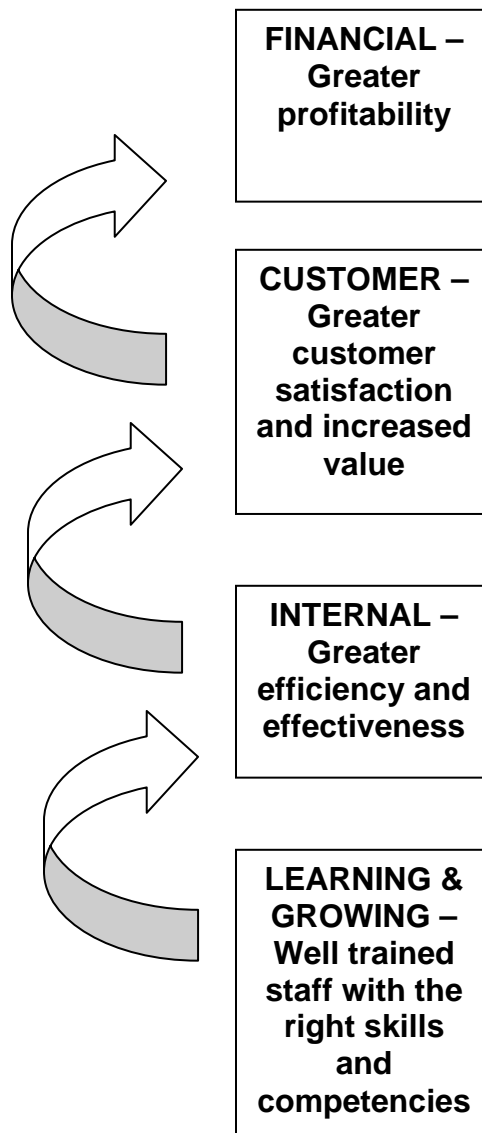
The Learning & Growth perspective typically has to do with employees, the skills and competencies they need to do their jobs, and their level of satisfaction with their employment situation. The cause and effect relationship to the Internal perspective is that if you have employees that possess the right competencies, have the right training, and are happy about what they’re doing, the organization (or system of services) becomes better at what it does.



The internal perspective has to do with the processes and the tools used by staff to accomplish their work. Most planners link the Internal perspective closely to concepts such as “Total Quality Management” and/or “Continuous Process Improvement.” Efforts at this level are geared toward developing and/or improving processes and tools or acquiring technology that improves productivity or effectiveness. Again, there is an expectation that there is a cause and effect relationship. In other words, greater efficiency and effectiveness drives customer satisfaction and the customers’ perception of the value that they’re receiving.



The “top of the food chain” in traditional balanced scorecard planning for profit making entities is typically the Financial perspective. This recognizes that profit-making organizations are still in business for the primary purpose of making money. The cause and effect relationship between the Customer perspective and the Financial perspective is that if I satisfy my customers and deliver something of great value, I will, in turn, make more money. The overall hierarchy of perspectives for the profit-making sector looks like the diagram below.



If a profit-making organization wants to continue to make a profit, it will invest some of the profits back into the organization. In other words, some of the money cycles back down and is invested in the workforce. Then the whole process begins again, the system improves even more, and there is even greater profitability.

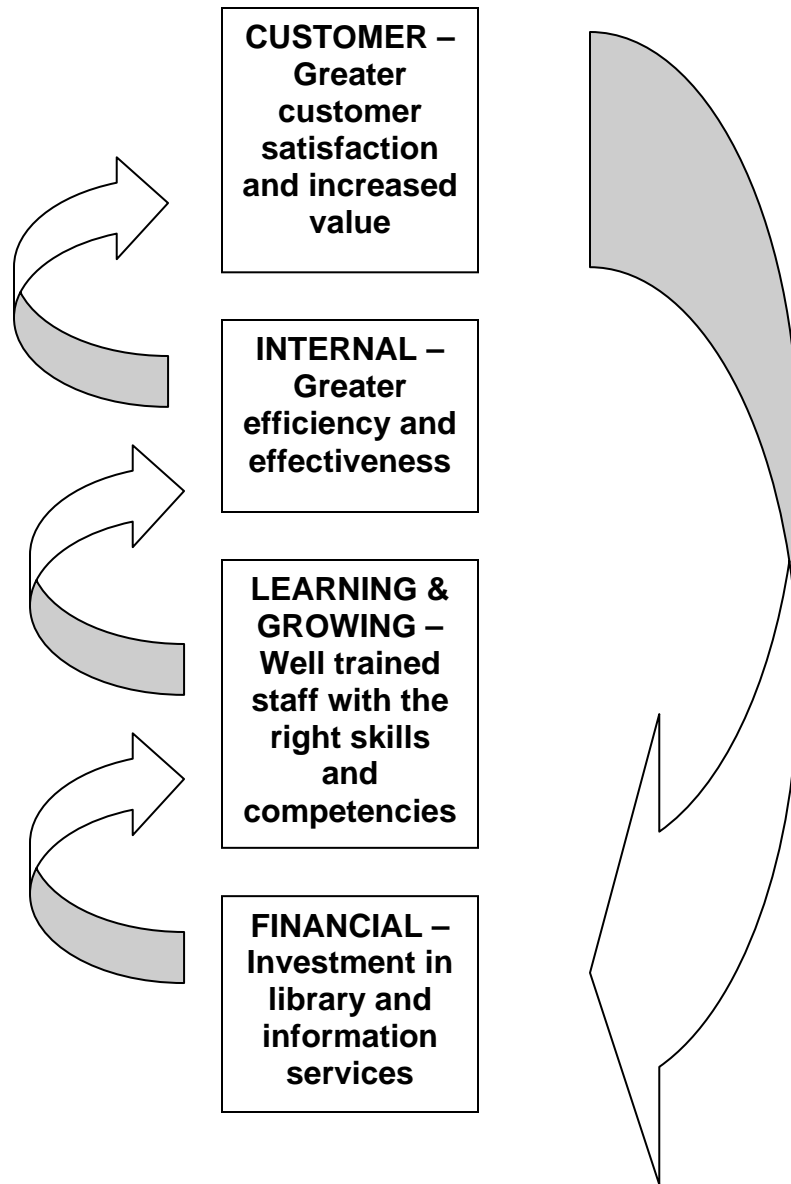
The biggest difference between using the balanced scorecard approach with a non-profit or governmental entity is that financial gain is not at the pinnacle. We don't offer library services to create a profit. Increased value to the customer and increased user satisfaction that leads to an educated and informed citizenry and a higher quality of life are our ultimate goals.

For this reason, many organizations reorder the traditional four perspectives and place Finance at the bottom and the Customer at the top. This is not to say that finances aren't important. It does, however, indicate that the journey begins with dollars invested in library services that we can feed into staff competencies, library resources, technology, and facilities that eventually result in the delivery of services that are of greater value to the public and that generate even higher customer satisfaction. If the model works, the entities that support library services (state and local governments, and to a much lesser extent, the Federal government) will be more inclined to invest more in providing library services.

The hierarchy of perspectives used for this plan is presented on the next page:

The model indicates that we use an initial investment in libraries to deliver highly valued services and that, in turn, libraries will "earn" greater financial support.

Much of the rest of the balanced scorecard approach bears great similarity to more traditional planning methods. There are objectives within each of the perspective areas, and a mechanism for the measurement of progress toward each objective is built into the plan from the start. The "action" phase of the plan comes in the form of "initiatives" directed to the desired improvements at each level.



The Fundamentals of the Plan

Balanced scorecard planning, like most other planning processes, starts with mission, vision, and values. Following is an attempt to express these concepts on behalf of the entire system that makes up the public library service delivery framework in the State.

MISSION

The public libraries of Delaware ensure that all Delawareans have access to quality information resources and services that enable them to be successful and to enjoy a high quality of life.

VISION

The First State will offer public library service that is “First in the nation!”

VALUES

- The free exchange of ideas is fundamental to a democracy.
- All people should have free access to high quality information resources.
- Reading is a fundamental life skill.
- Information literacy is a critical skill in an increasingly technological society.
- Reading, listening to and/or viewing library materials for pleasure enhances quality of life.
- The public has a right to expect that tax supported organizations will be efficient and effective and that they will strive for excellence in everything they do.

In addition, participants in DDL “Be Our Guest” workshops in 2002 underscored that Delaware libraries embrace the values of Access, Excellence, and Service represented by the following statements adopted by the American Library Association as being among its core values:

- Access - All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users.

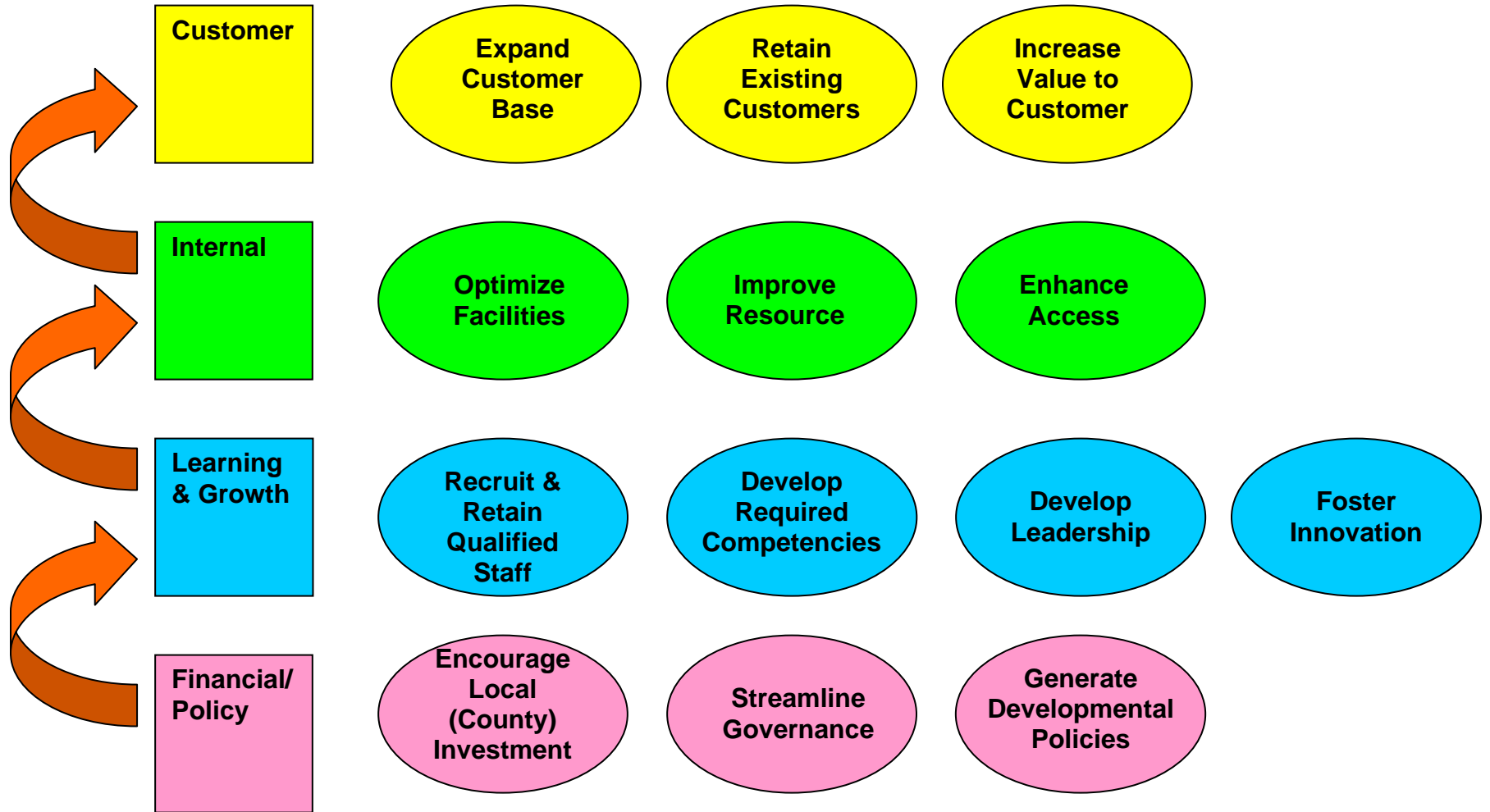
- Service - We provide the highest level of service to all library users... We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Strategy Map

As indicated earlier, balanced scorecard planning tries to strip down the plan to the essentials to make it easy for all who are working within the system to understand and to display this information in a way that is easy to grasp. An initial step in this effort is the creation of something called a strategy map. The next page presents the statewide plan in the form of a strategy map.

The perspectives in the plan are ordered in the fashion that has already been described. The CUSTOMER or potential customer is every resident of Delaware (whether a full-time resident or a seasonal resident). Satisfying the customer by providing information and services that are relevant, valued, and that contribute to the quality of life in the State is the ultimate goal.

The plan proposes a step by step approach that starts at the bottom and gradually works its way toward the top of the chart. This is not to say that steps aimed at accomplishing objectives throughout the plan will not happen simultaneously. However, it does suggest that complete success at the CUSTOMER level cannot be realized unless progress is made at the FINANCIAL/POLICY, LEARNING & GROWTH, and INTERNAL levels.



The bottom-up hierarchy that is expressed in the chart would suggest that work aimed at meeting the objectives that appear in the pink ovals (the bottom set of ovals) is extremely important. As work is done toward achieving the objectives of optimizing facilities and improving resources, the strategies employed to accomplish these objectives should be assessed in terms of whether actions encourage county investment, encourage the streamlining of governance structures, and employ policies that are developmental in nature.

Following is a summary of the Statewide Plan's Perspectives, Objectives, and suggested Measures.

Summary of Delaware Balanced Scorecard Perspectives, Objectives and Measures

PERSPECTIVE - CUSTOMER

OBJECTIVE - Expand Customer Base

- MEASURE – Total number of registered borrowers
- MEASURE – Number of children registered
- MEASURE – Registered borrowers as a percentage of the service population

OBJECTIVE - Retain Existing Customers

- MEASURE – Comparison of registrations to baseline registrations (previous year)
- MEASURE – Number of pre-school story hour “graduates” that participate in children’s programming for older children
- MEASURE – Periodic in-library survey results (Survey can provide data used for several objectives)

OBJECTIVE - Increase Value to Customer

- MEASURE – Periodic in-library survey results (see above)
- MEASURE – Service units per capita (refined composite measure including circulation, reference, program attendance, etc.)

OBJECTIVE - Increase Value to Customer (continued)

- MEASURE – Electronic resource use (Use of Smart Access Manager software [SAM] system will help measure a number of specific categories of use)
- MEASURE – Number of contacts with users or potential users to determine customer needs (focus groups, surveys, community meetings, etc.)

PERSPECTIVE - INTERNAL

OBJECTIVE - Optimize Facilities

- MEASURE – Number of “Anchor” libraries
- MEASURE – Average size of facilities
- MEASURE – Square feet per capita (progress toward 1.0 GSF/capita)

OBJECTIVE - Improve Resources

- MEASURE – Volumes per capita and turnover rate (refined composite measure to avoid large collections that are poor in quality)
- MEASURE – Number of public computers with Internet access
- MEASURE – Number of web pages with significant information content offered by Delaware’s public libraries

OBJECTIVE - Enhance Access

- MEASURE – Population proximity to “Anchor” libraries
- MEASURE – Convenience of hours of operation (weighted for evenings and weekend hours in most cases; however individual libraries can weight convenient hours differently if demographics suggest this is appropriate)
- MEASURE – Number of inter and intra library loans handled by shared automation systems (may also factor in other collection sharing mechanisms)
- MEASURE – Average frequency of ILL deliveries (van deliveries)
- MEASURE – Mean delivery time (cycle time) for ILL requests

OBJECTIVE – Improve/Refine Internal Processes

- MEASURE – Processes targeted for review and Improvement (Quality, not quantity of these efforts.)

OBJECTIVE – Improve/Refine Internal Processes (continued)

MEASURE – Number and duration of benchmarking contacts made related to continuous process improvement

PERSPECTIVE - LEARNING & GROWTH

OBJECTIVE - Recruit & Retain Qualified Staff

MEASURE – Number of public librarians working in Delaware libraries holding an MLS from an ALA accredited program

MEASURE – Number of Delaware public libraries headed by a director holding an MLS from an ALA accredited program

MEASURE – Wages and benefits per full-time equivalent library employee

MEASURE – Turnover rate of professional and managerial staff (should decrease as wages and benefits increase)

OBJECTIVE - Develop Required/Emerging Competencies

MEASURE – Number of participants in the Library Associate Training Institute (LATI)

MEASURE – Number of library staff participating in courses/workshops related to the Western Council's competencies

MEASURE – Number of continuing education units awarded to library staff members

MEASURE – Number of State-certified public library directors (new program)

MEASURE – Number of State-certified library practitioners (new program)

OBJECTIVE - Develop Leadership

MEASURE – Number of participants in State, regional, or national library leadership institutes

MEASURE – Number of multi-state library leadership events planned and implemented

MEASURE – Number of public library staff members serving in elected positions in the American Library Association or the Delaware Library Association

OBJECTIVE - Foster Innovation

- MEASURE – Number of innovative products and/or services introduced to the library community and supported with incentives for adoption by DDL
- MEASURE – Number of libraries participating in innovative efforts sponsored by the State or by DDL initiated innovative efforts
- MEASURE – Number of awards given to public libraries or library staff for innovative projects/efforts

PERSPECTIVE - FINANCIAL/POLICY

OBJECTIVE - Encourage Local (County) Investment

- MEASURE – Number and magnitude in dollars of performance-based incentive programs implemented
- MEASURE – Amount and percentage increase in county funding for library operations (compared to baseline year)
- MEASURE – Amount and percentage increase in county funding for library capital projects (compared to baseline year)

OBJECTIVE - Streamline Governance

- MEASURE – Number of independent libraries that join county Library systems
- MEASURE – Reduction in the number of 501(c)(3) libraries with conversion of IRS non-profit status to foundations that carry out educational and fund-raising efforts

OBJECTIVE - Generate and Apply Developmental Policies

- MEASURE – Number of incentive programs and developmental policies that advance objectives in other perspective areas
- MEASURE – Annual review of the effect of developmental policies and incentive programs on other objectives in the plan

THE PLAN

The strategy map and the “Summary of Perspectives, Objectives and Measures” reveal the framework for the Plan. As was mentioned earlier, the perspectives in the Plan are designed to be connected or linked together. While the “CUSTOMER” perspective is ultimately the most important, complete success in reaching the three CUSTOMER objectives is somewhat dependent on successfully attaining the objectives listed under the FINANCIAL/POLICY, LEARNING & GROWTH, and INTERNAL perspectives.

The library community should work on all four perspectives simultaneously; however, opportunities for accomplishment at the CUSTOMER level are greatly enhanced if good progress is being made on the perspectives that are lower in the hierarchy. Because the perspectives are much like building blocks, we will start with the FINANCIAL/POLICY “foundation” and work our way toward the CUSTOMER perspective at the top of the strategy map.

FINANCIAL/POLICY Perspective

The FINANCIAL/POLICY perspective is all about building a solid infrastructure that will enable Delaware’s libraries to succeed. There are three objectives in the FINANCIAL/POLICY realm. They are:

- Generate and Apply Developmental Policies
- Streamline Governance
- Encourage Local (County) Investment

There is a difference between policies and actions that support libraries and policies and actions that encourage the development of libraries. Nearly everyone has heard the old saying, “Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime.”

If the First State truly aspires to be first in the nation in providing library and information services, Delaware's libraries will need more than a handout that lasts a single day. It will be necessary for the State to develop and implement policies and funding programs that reward effort and accomplishment.

State funding for libraries should be seen as a long-term investment in the people of Delaware. While a baseline of State support is likely to be needed for a considerable time to come, new funding programs that focus on development will also be required.

The three FINANCIAL/POLICY objectives are closely linked. Developmental policies and funding programs will likely be needed to encourage the streamlining of governance structures and an increase of county investment in public libraries. At the same time, additional county money would provide an incentive for the streamlining of governance structures through consolidation with county libraries.

Developmental policies and targeted seed money are the keys to achieving the FINANCIAL/POLICY objectives. Furthermore, achieving these objectives promises to have positive effects in other perspective areas. For example, the policy of increasing the percentage of State funding for Anchor libraries would serve to further the "optimize facilities" objective in the INTERNAL perspective. Building anchor libraries would, in turn, "enhance access" to more in-depth library resources, which is another of the INTERNAL objectives.

While a wide range of developmental policies and funding programs should be pursued, seven specific actions are recommended. They are:

- Establish a "Quality Aid" program that rewards libraries for performance.
- Implement policies and funding that reward counties that increase county funding for libraries.
- Provide additional funding for independent libraries that become branches of county library systems.

- Provide additional funding for the establishment of Anchor libraries.
- Provide additional funding for libraries in close proximity to each other that are willing to merge.
- Provide additional financial support for addressing ADA deficiencies in libraries.
- Provide additional financial support for projects that result in LEEDS™ certification.

Establish a Quality Aid program that rewards libraries for performance.

Much attention has been focused on library facilities during this study. However, we believe that the most important recommendation growing out of this study is the call for a new developmental state aid program for libraries. Quality Aid would be over and above the current state funding program.

Quality Aid would be tied to the achievement of a specific set of specific performance targets that are established individually for each library. Rather than the establishment of a single target for all libraries to achieve, targets should recognize where each library is starting out. Progress rather than the attainment of an artificial benchmark should be rewarded. A process for establishing targets is outlined under the INTERNAL perspective. Because of its relatively small size, Delaware has an opportunity that most other states will never have. Delaware's small size and the relatively small number of libraries in the State make the creation of individual development plans for each library plausible.

Implement policies and funding that reward counties that increase county funding for libraries.

With only a few exceptions (Dover being the most notable among them), very little tax support for libraries is currently provided by municipalities. While this might be seen as a negative, it can also be seen as an advantage. Dependence on municipal funding

when library services are more regional in nature only leads to inequities.

County and State funding both have the distinct advantage of being universal. That is, every resident of the State of Delaware lives in one of the three counties and in the State of Delaware. Not every person lives in a municipality. Therefore, the ideal funding model for Delaware libraries should be seen as a combination of State and county funds.

Unless the State wishes to assume the primary burden for funding library services, it must encourage county investment in libraries. This can be accomplished by establishing an aid program that offers matching funding based on county investment in libraries.

Provide additional funding for independent libraries that become branch libraries of county library systems.

Delaware's goal should be to have between three and five public library governance units. Ideally, Delaware would move to a pure county-based service model similar to what has been implemented in the State of Maryland. The county model reduces tax and service inequities, offers economies of scale, and provides for greater coordination of services.

In fact, Delaware may not achieve the pure county-based model. Even Maryland has a "mixed model" in that there are two library systems in Baltimore County. The Enoch Pratt Library and its branch libraries serve the City of Baltimore while the Baltimore County Library serves the balance of the county. In a similar fashion, Wilmington and Dover may remain independent library systems.

Merging governance units is difficult at best. Nonetheless, the chances of this type of consolidation taking place are greatly enhanced if funding is available to reward streamlining governance structures.

Provide additional funding for the establishment of Anchor libraries.

The study has found that Delaware has too many libraries but too little space. The study has also documented the fact that larger libraries with a wider geographic area and a larger population often result in increased library use. Finally, the study found that some Delawareans lack convenient access to in-depth library resources and collections.

At least one Anchor library, sized between 40,000 gross square feet and 60,000 gross square feet in size is recommended for each county. The population in New Castle County is large enough to support three or four such facilities. Given rapid population growth, both Kent and Sussex counties may eventually require two anchor locations.

The consultants recommend that the State's contribution to the construction costs for Anchor libraries be set at 75% as opposed to the current 50% level. Funding for the construction of Anchor facilities could still be drawn from the Delaware Public Library Construction Assistance Act bond program if the construction of such facilities was established as the second highest priority for funding (only projects that achieve ADA compliance would have a higher priority).

The consultants believe that Delaware needs to take an additional step if it hopes to implement the Anchor Library concept. Because these facilities will be so much larger than all but two existing libraries in the State, it is unlikely that many libraries could appropriately staff such a facility when built given current operational budgets. Consequently, we recommend the provision of supplemental operational funding on a declining scale over a five year period.

Provide additional funding for libraries in close proximity to each other that are willing to merge.

It was noted earlier in this report that over half of Delaware's public libraries are within five miles of another library. It has also been noted that many of the State's libraries are severely crowded and that the large number of small libraries dilutes the effectiveness of staff.

Developmental policies and funding that reward consolidations are suggested. Consolidation projects should be third in priority for construction funding through the Delaware Public Library Construction Assistance Act bond program behind projects designed to achieve ADA compliance and anchor library projects. A 10% premium over the current 50% construction match is recommended as an incentive for mergers.

Provide additional financial support for addressing ADA deficiencies in libraries.

The building assessments that were performed identified many ADA compliance issues. Consequently, it is recommended that renovation projects that address ADA compliance issues should be funded at the 75% level. Furthermore, ADA compliance projects should be first in priority.

Provide additional financial support for projects that result in LEEDS™ certification.

Over the useful life of a structure, the use of sustainable architecture or "green" design and construction techniques will pay for the additional expenses involved in meeting LEEDS™ standards several times over. It is recommended that new libraries achieving basic LEEDS™ certification should receive an additional 5% of funding over and above the 50%, 60% or 75% funding provided for standard replacement projects, consolidations, and anchor library projects respectively. A 10% premium is

recommended for libraries achieving LEEDS™ Silver Certification.

Measures to be Used to Gauge Success in Meeting FINANCIAL/POLICY Objectives

The following methods and measures should be used to assess progress in meeting the FINANCIAL/POLICY objectives:

- Number and magnitude in dollars of performance-based incentive programs implemented
- Amount and percentage increase in county funding for library operations
- Amount and percentage increase in county funding for library capital projects
- Number of independent libraries that join county library systems
- Reduction in the number of 501 (c) (3) libraries with conversion of IRS non-profit status to foundations that carry out educational and fund-raising efforts for libraries
- Number of incentive programs and developmental policies that advance objectives in other perspective areas
- Annual review of the effect of developmental policies and incentive programs on other objectives in the Plan

LEARNING & GROWTH Perspective

The LEARNING & GROWTH perspective is about ensuring that Delaware libraries will have well qualified staff with the right skills and competencies to offer high quality library and information services and to lead Delaware libraries into the future. There are four objectives in the LEARNING & GROWTH realm. They are:

- Recruit and Retain Qualified Staff
- Develop Required/Emerging Competencies
- Develop Leadership
- Foster Innovation

The quality of public library services available in any community is closely related to the people who are providing the service. Although Delaware's public libraries have a extremely dedicated workforce, the comparative statistics presented earlier show that the First State's libraries are severely understaffed. You will recall that Delaware ranked 50th out of 51 in the nation in terms of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff per 25,000 population. Delaware also ranked near the bottom (43rd out of 51) in the number of librarians per 25,000 population and in the number of librarians holding a Master's degree in Library Science from an ALA accredited institution.

If Delaware is going to become a leader among the states in the quality of library and information services, the First State must invest the resources necessary to hire more staff and to ensure that all library workers have the skills and competencies they need to offer first rate service. Furthermore, the compensation and benefits provided to library employees will need to increase substantially if the State's libraries hope to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel.

The Delaware Division of Libraries and, to a certain extent, two of the three county library organizations have been active in providing continuing education and training opportunities. However, because the State's libraries are seriously understaffed, education and training must become an even higher priority. Delaware's librarians and other library staff must be equipped to perform at very high levels if they are going to satisfy the demands of customers who have higher and higher expectations of their libraries and who are increasingly more technologically sophisticated.

Finally, if the State wishes to excel in library service, it must develop the leadership skills and must foster the innovation required to move Delaware's libraries beyond where they are today.

There are many actions that can be taken to address the LEARNING AND GROWTH needs of a larger, more highly qualified public library workforce. Following is a list of some of the actions that the consultants believe should be taken:

- Develop a mechanism or mechanisms to ensure that all full-time library workers receive basic benefits including health insurance and that they are able to participate in a sound retirement program.
- Expand and enhance the current Library Associate Training Institute (LATI) program in an effort to “grow your own” highly qualified staff.
- Continue active participation as a partner in the Western Council of State Libraries in their Continuum of Library Education project.
- Adopt the Western Council’s Library Practitioner Certification structure for paraprofessional staff.
- Develop and implement a certification program for professional librarians and require professional certification for librarians serving as the director of libraries serving populations of over 10,000 people that are not branch libraries of a county library system.
- Provide personnel grants to libraries to assist them in meeting new certification requirements.
- Develop and implement a mechanism to award continuing education unit credits for education and training events offered by DDL and others.
- Continue involvement with other states in leadership institutes and programs and provide grants to enable Delaware librarians to participate in such events.
- Continue to foster innovation at the State level through DDL initiatives and programs.
- Develop and implement an award program to recognize libraries for innovative approaches to increasing productivity and customer satisfaction.

Develop a mechanism or mechanisms to ensure that all full-time library workers receive basic benefits including health insurance and that they are able to participate in a sound retirement program.

The consultants discovered many instances in which the compensation and benefits available to library workers, including directors, are clearly inadequate. While some librarians in the State are fairly compensated and do receive basic benefits, others, especially those who work in independent libraries, are poorly paid and lack even minimal catastrophic health insurance coverage. Many also lack retirement benefits and some people continue to work beyond typical retirement age simply because they can't afford to retire.

One solution to this problem is reducing the number of independent libraries by having them become branch libraries of county library systems. Library staff members who work for county governments often fare far better than staff members who work for independent libraries in terms of wages and benefits. Other options include providing the opportunity for library staff in independent libraries to become eligible for participation in existing health and retirement plans or the creation of an insurance group in which independent libraries could participate.

Expand and enhance the current Library Associate Training Institute (LATI) program in an effort to "grow your own" highly qualified staff.

Delaware already has a successful training program for library associates. The coordination of this program with the State's involvement in the Western Council's Continuum of Library Education project promises to improve the knowledge and skill possessed by library paraprofessionals throughout the State.

The LATI program can also be used to identify and encourage paraprofessionals to pursue a master's

degree in library science. Scholarships and compensation to libraries offering work-release programs that allow current employees to take classes leading to an MLS are also recommended.

Continue active participation as a partner in the Western Council of State Libraries in their Continuum of Library Education project.

Delaware is an official partner in the Western Council of State Libraries Continuum of Library Education project, which is funded through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). This project recognizes that many people who serve as “librarians” have little or no formal training in library science. The program’s goals include enhancing access to formal and informal library education and developing a certification program for library practitioners who lack the MLS degree. A number of accredited library schools across the nation are also partners in the program and are offering online opportunities for continuing education.

Delaware’s participation in this project enables the State to benefit from an organized effort to identify core competencies needed by librarians and to locate training opportunities that are specifically designed to address these needs easily.

Adopt the Western Council’s Library Practitioner Certification structure for paraprofessional staff.

As was stated above, one of the goals of the Western Council’s “Continuum” program is the development of a sustainable certification program for non-MLS library practitioners. As a partner in the Continuum program, Delaware can implement a relatively sophisticated certification program for practitioners in a very efficient manner by “piggybacking” on the Western Council’s efforts.

Delaware should adopt and /or adapt the Western Council practitioner certification model and should implement it a similar certification program.

Develop and implement a certification program for professional librarians and require professional certification for libraries serving populations of over 10,000 people that are not branch libraries of a county library system.

Delaware needs to increase the number of professional librarians working in the State's libraries. The consultants believe that the best way to accomplish this is through a program that would certify professional librarians (and recertify them over time based on ongoing participation in continuing education programs) and would require libraries serving population of more than 10,000 to have a certified library director. Current directors should be "grandfathered" to allow for a gradual implementation of the program.

Requiring this certification only for directors gives local libraries the option of becoming part of a county library system rather than hiring a certified librarian. In any event, one of two good things would happen: all but the smallest libraries would either be headed by a librarian holding an ALA accredited degree or they would benefit from professional leadership through joining a county system of libraries. As part of the certification program, Delaware should require branch library managers to hold at least "library practitioner" certification.

Provide personnel grants to libraries to assist them in meeting new certification requirements

Since the State would be imposing a new mandate on libraries, it is appropriate for the State to contribute to efforts to meet the mandate. Personnel grants should be available to all libraries with directors that hold an ALA accredited master's degree. The personnel grants would not have to cover the full cost of the

directors' salaries. They would, however, need to be large enough to cover the differential between hiring a non-MLS practitioner and a person holding an ALA accredited degree. In order to qualify for a personnel grant, libraries should be required to offer a salary equal to or in excess of the average entry level professional wage for libraries in the northeast as reported in the *Library Journal* in their annual Placements and Salaries Survey. This salary was reported to be \$ 38,618 for 2003 IN THE October 15, 2004 edition of *Library Journal*.

Develop and implement a mechanism to award continuing education unit credits for education and training events offered by DDL and others

Certification for library practitioners and for library directors should remain valid for a period of three to five years. Recertification should require the applicant to have earned a specified number of continuing education units (CEUs). In order to accomplish this, DDL will need to have a mechanism in place for assigning a CEU value to events ranging from workshops and programs sponsored by the county libraries to attendance at professional conferences and from formal courses offered by universities and colleges to training events offered by DDL.

Many other states have similar certification programs; requirements and procedures could be patterned after one or more of those programs.

Continue involvement with other states in leadership institutes and programs and provide grants to enable Delaware librarians to participate in such events.

Delaware needs to continue to develop leadership in the library community if it hopes to become a leader in offering quality library and information services. Delaware has been participating in a leadership training effort with Maryland, New Jersey, and

Pennsylvania. This regional model is an excellent one and should be continued. Furthermore, funds should be allocated to allow directors and other staff members from Delaware libraries to participate in such events.

Continue to foster innovation at the State level through DDL initiatives and programs.

In a number of instances, the Delaware Division of Libraries has been leading by example. This is particularly true in the case of the implementation of new technologies and the improvement of customer service. This is an appropriate role for DDL and should be continued.

Develop and implement an awards program to recognize libraries for innovative approaches to increasing productivity and customer satisfaction.

Innovation should be encouraged in Delaware libraries as well as at the Delaware Division of Libraries. An awards program should be developed to encourage libraries to take innovative approaches to improving customer service. Awards could be presented annually at one of the Library Town Meetings sponsored by DDL. The library or libraries winning the award could be asked to make a short presentation about their innovative approach to ensure that their ideas are shared with other public libraries.

Measures to be Used to Gauge Success in Meeting LEARNING & GROWTH Objectives

The following methods and measures should be used to assess progress in meeting the LEARNING & GROWTH objectives.

- Number of public librarians working in Delaware libraries holding an MLS from an ALA accredited institution

- Number of libraries headed by a director holding an MLS from an ALA accredited institution
- Wages and benefits per FTE library employee
- Turnover rate of professional and managerial staff (should decrease as wages and benefits increase)
- Number of participants in the Library Associate Training Institute (LATI)
- Number of staff participating in courses/workshops related to the Western Council's competencies
- Number of continuing education units awarded to library staff members
- Number of State of Delaware certified library directors
- Number of State of Delaware certified library practitioners
- Number of participants in state, regional, or national library leadership institutes
- Number of multi-state leadership events planned and implemented
- Number of public library staff serving in elected positions in the American Library Association or the Delaware Library Association
- Number of innovative products and/or services introduced to the library community and supported with incentives for adoption by DDL
- Number of libraries participating in innovative efforts sponsored by the State or by DDL
- Number of awards given to public libraries or to public library staff in recognition of their innovative efforts

INTERNAL Perspective

The INTERNAL perspective is about the improvement of resources and processes. It includes the enhancement of "inputs" such as library collections and the facilities from which services are offered. The INTERNAL perspective includes continuous process improvement and the improvement of public access to library and information services.

There are four objectives in the INTERNAL realm.
They are:

- Optimize Facilities
- Improve Resources
- Enhance Access
- Improve and Refine Internal Processes

To a great extent, the INTERNAL perspective is about resource allocation. It relates to the resources available to libraries and how those resources are used to achieve the maximum impact. Cost certainly plays a role in limiting what is and is not feasible. Access to library and information services would certainly be enhanced if funding was available for far more materials, unlimited staff, much larger facilities, and cutting edge technology. In fact, resources are limited; and while it is important to work to increase the size of the fiscal pie, how the pie is sliced is equally critical.

This portion of the plan attempts to sort out how resources should be allocated and how they can be used more efficiently. When resources are finite, choices typically pit one good thing against another. For example, it can be argued that access to library and information services would be enhanced if there was a library on every street corner. However, if having a library on every street corner meant that each could only be open a few hours a day, access is again restricted. Likewise, if each of those libraries had only a few books because materials were distributed among all of the libraries, access would also be limited.

On the other hand, one could imagine a single enormous library that contained all of the books published and that was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In this case, access would be very good for those living nearby but the existence of the facility would be meaningless to someone who lacked the time or the transportation needed to get to the central site. It is obvious that the optimum model would balance the resources to provide the greatest good to the largest number of people.

How resources are used is also critically important. The INTERNAL perspective speaks to getting the most benefit from the resources regardless of how they are allocated. The INTERNAL perspective looks at the optimum allocation of resources to get the desired results (effectiveness) and at the implementation of best practices and processes to get the most out of the resources that are available (efficiency).

One of the findings of the study that formed the basis for this Plan is that Delaware has too many libraries but not enough library space. Delaware libraries are also deficient in the number of volumes they own. You will recall that the 2002 NCES statistics ranked the First State 46th out of 51 in “Book and Serial Volumes per capita.”

There are a countless number of ways in which Delaware could allocate its library-related resources. Furthermore, there are numerous processes that are performed by library staff that could be refined. Following are the actions that the consultants believe would be most productive in moving library services in Delaware forward in the 21st Century.

- Encourage a reduction in the number of library facilities through consolidation of some libraries that are located in close proximity to each other by providing financial incentives for consolidation.
- Encourage larger, more efficient facilities through funding incentives for Anchor libraries.
- Improve the processes involved in facility planning.
- Improve and enlarge library collections by providing “Quality Aid” to libraries that meet collection targets for volumes per capita and turnover rate.
- Reduce the number of library automation systems used by Delaware libraries with the ultimate goal being a statewide shared online catalog.
- Improve physical delivery systems to reduce “cycle time.”

- Expand and improve the web presence of Delaware’s libraries by adding more content and improving design.
- Explore and implement new technologies that enable enhanced access to content (e.g., OverDrive®, mp3, NETFLIX®, etc.).
- Continue process improvement and involvement in “quality” initiatives.

Encourage a reduction in the number of library facilities through consolidation of some libraries that are located in close proximity to each other by providing financial incentives for consolidation.

Earlier in this document, we pointed out that only two libraries in the State of Delaware do not have at least one other public library within ten miles. Those two libraries are the Smyrna and the South Coastal libraries. At the other end of the scale, ten libraries in the State have **four or more** other libraries within a 10 mile drive. Over half of the libraries (17) are five miles or less from at least one other public library. Very few Delawareans have to travel a long distance to get to a public library.

Furthermore, the focus groups and surveys clearly demonstrate that many people use multiple libraries, not just the library that is closest to them. Others don’t use the library that is closest to them at all. They drive by their local library and go to larger libraries that have better resources. The mapping of library service areas adds to the argument for fewer but larger libraries in that the maps show that the distribution of users broadens as the size of the facility increases.

At the same time, there is no question that the people of Delaware love their local libraries. There are some people who would be unlikely to use a library located five or more miles away from their home. Their small town public library is one of the things that defines their community. They do not want to see “their” library closed.

While Delaware has a large number of libraries given its population, it also has too little library space. Only a handful of libraries meet or come close to meeting commonly applied facility standards for modern public libraries. Even some of the facilities that have been built in recent years are undersized and crowded.

Thirteen of the 33 libraries in the State are less than 5,000 gross square feet in size. Many of these buildings were not originally designed as libraries and are poor candidates for expansion. Still others offer no off-street parking for customers or staff.

Consolidation is recommended for a number of libraries that are in close proximity of one another. Included are the merging of the Frankford and the Selbyville libraries and the consolidation of the Greenwood and Bridgeville libraries. In the case of Selbyville and Frankford, the recently expanded Selbyville facility would serve an expanded service area and population. In the case of Bridgeville and Greenwood, a new combined facility is recommended.

There are other consolidations that should be considered. For example, the consultants believe that the new Woodlawn Library that is envisioned in Wilmington could do a better job of serving the Hispanic community than does the tiny, largely inaccessible Biblioteca del Pueblo Branch. The Corbit-Calloway Library might become a special history library when the Appoquinimink Community Library is replaced with a large Anchor library designed to serve southern New Castle County. The Kent County Library could be merged with a new Anchor library as a replacement for both the Dover Public Library and the current Kent County facility. However, there is probably enough population growth to support at least a "Community" library if not a "Regional" library south of the current Kent County location. Community libraries would be in the range of 10,000 – 12,000 gross square feet (GSF) in size and regional libraries would be 15,000 – 30,000 GSF

The State should provide financial incentives in the form of a higher percentage of match for construction costs to encourage consolidations. A 60% match is suggested.

Supplemental detailed materials regarding facilities project planning and materials describing the characteristics of the three classes of library facilities that are envisioned for Delaware (Anchor, Regional, and Community) follow the CUSTOMER perspective section.

Encourage larger, more efficient facilities through funding incentives for Anchor libraries.

Several new Anchor class library facilities ranging in size from 40,000 – 60,000 GSF are recommended. Included would be one in Dover that would be designed to provide in-depth services to much of Kent County. This facility could potentially also house the Delaware Division of Libraries. An Anchor class facility is also recommended for Sussex County. Georgetown is the best location for this Anchor library because of its central location and its status as the County seat..

Because of its greater population base, New Castle County can support three, and perhaps as many as four, Anchor facilities. Currently, the Wilmington Institute's Main Library, the Brandywine Hundred Library, and the Bear Library serve this kind of a function although the Bear Library is only 25,000 GSF. While the Bear Library's location makes it an excellent candidate for Anchor status, it is unclear whether expansion to 40,000 – 60,000 GSF is feasible. An expansion that would place it in the Regional Library category is probably more practical. A southern New Castle County Anchor facility as a replacement for the Appoquinimink Community Library is also recommended.

The consultants recommend that Anchor libraries should be encouraged by the State in two different ways. First, construction of such facilities should be

eligible for a 75% match through the State's bond program. Second, we recommend the provision of supplemental operational funding from the State for new Anchor facilities. This form of aid should total approximately \$ 250,000 (in 2005 dollars) for the first year and should decline by \$ 50,000 each subsequent year. To qualify for the aid in the second through the fifth years, the anchor library would have to increase its direct support for staffing by at least the \$ 50,000 in each of the years. The amount of this aid should be indexed to the Consumer Price Index to cover the declining buying power of the aid over time.

See the supplemental materials on facilities that follow the CUSTOMER perspective section.

Improve the processes involved in facility planning.

There is considerable room for improvement in the processes that have been used to plan library facilities in the past. For example, state bond funding has been awarded to projects that provide no off-street dedicated parking and to other projects built on sites that are too small to adequately support the size of facility needed to adequately serve their communities.

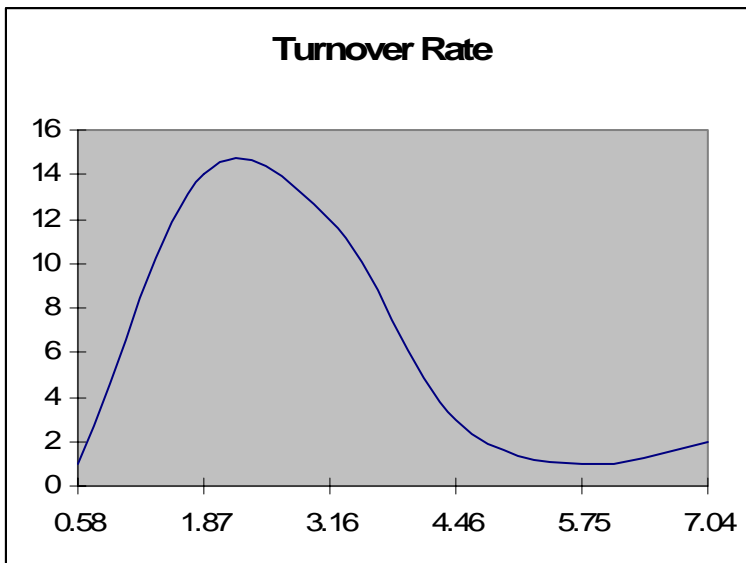
A new model for determining whether or not proposed building projects is recommended. The details of this new process can be found in the supplemental materials immediately following the CUSTOMER perspective section.

Improve and enlarge library collections by providing "Quality Aid" to libraries that meet collection targets for volumes per capita and turnover rate.

Delaware's poor performance related to volumes per capita has been mentioned several times. The consultants recommend that Delaware set a statewide target of reaching 3.09 items per capita

(including both books and non-print formats) by 2010. The target date may need to be set a bit further out because some libraries should initially “weed” their collections vigorously. The volumes per capita measure is meaningless if library shelves are filled with materials that are of little interest, or worse, with items that are dated and/or contain misinformation. For this reason, we are recommending that a combination of measures be used to determine eligibility for Quality Aid.

In addition to the statewide target of 3.09 volumes per capita, a second statewide target addresses turnover rate (the number of times an average item in the collection circulates in the course of a year). The following chart shows the distribution of turnover rates in Delaware libraries. The Delaware mean is 2.43; however, turnover rates range from 0.58 to 7.04!



A turnover rate of less than 1.0 indicates that the collection contains many items that are old and worn, that the materials are not well suited to the population, or that the library has a larger collection than is justified for the service area population. A turnover rate of 2.5 range means that the collection is being actively used. Turnover rates of 3.5 and above are an indication of very heavy usage and often suggest that the collection, while well chosen, is too small. The consultants

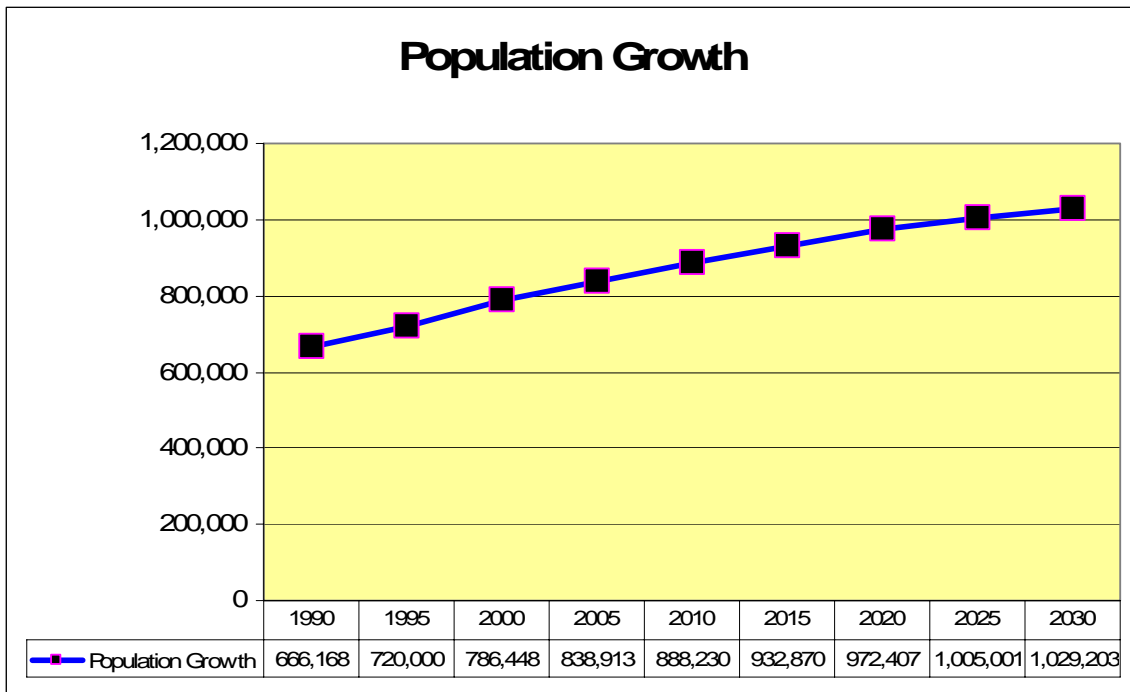
recommend that Delaware set an immediate statewide target of 2.5 with gradual increase to 3.5 by 2010. However, as indicated earlier, each library would have a target related to their current performance. The chart below shows the 2010 targets for each library

LIBRARY	TURNOVER RATE 2003	2010 Target
Appoquinimink Community Library	2.37	3.07
Bear Public Library	7.04	>3.50
Brandywine Hundred Library	3.35	>3.50
Bridgeville Public Library	4.30	>3.50
Claymont Public Library	3.54	>3.50
Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library	1.03	1.73
Delaware City Public Library	0.90	1.60
Delmar Public Library	2.62	3.32
Dover Public Library	3.09	>3.50
Elsmere Public Library	3.07	>3.50
Frankford Public Library	1.67	2.37
Georgetown Public Library	1.53	2.23
Greenwood Public Library	2.82	>3.50
Harrington Public Library	1.63	2.33
Hockessin Public Library	6.58	>3.50
Kent County Department of Libraries	1.82	2.52
Kirkwood Highway Public Library	4.63	>3.50
LaBiblioteca del Pueblo Library	0.67	1.37
Laurel Public Library	1.79	2.49
Lewes Public Library	2.65	3.35
Milford District Free Library	2.08	2.78
Millsboro Public Library	2.93	>3.50
Milton Public Library	2.23	2.93
New Castle Public Library	2.46	3.16
Newark Free Library	2.67	3.37
North Wilmington Library	0.58	1.28
Rehoboth Beach Public Library	1.72	2.42
Seaford District Library	1.47	2.17
Selbyville Public Library	0.90	1.60
Smyrna Public Library	1.44	2.14
South Coastal Public Library	2.94	>3.50
Wilmington Institute Library	0.72	1.42
Woodlawn Library	1.09	1.79

Libraries that already exceed the 3.50 long-range target would simply be expected to maintain their turnover rate above 3.50. Those below 3.50 would be expected to achieve a modest increase each year.

Once the 3.5 target is achieved, the goal for each library would be to move toward the 3.09 volumes per capita benchmark while maintaining their turnover rate above the 3.5 level. The chart on the next page shows 2010 targets for volumes per capita.

The chart on page 28 presented a national look at volumes per capita. The chart suggested that the Statewide average for volumes per capita should increase to at least 3.09 by the year 2010. This may seem like a modest increase. One must remember, however, that Delaware's demographics are working against improvement in per capita measures.



As the population grows, it will likely be a struggle for Delaware's to continue improving on an ongoing basis. Following is the chart showing individual volumes per capita targets for each of the public libraries in the State. On a Statewide basis, Delaware should target matching the national mean by 2025.

Below are the volumes per capita targets for each library for the year 2010.

LIBRARY	Total Volumes per capita 2003	2010 Target
Appoquinimink Community Library	1.85	2.89
Bear Public Library	1.02	2.06
Brandywine Hundred Library	2.38	>3.09
Bridgeville Public Library	2.14	>3.09
Claymont Public Library	2.48	>3.09
Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library	6.52	>3.09
Delaware City Public Library	7.50	>3.09
Delmar Public Library	2.58	>3.09
Dover Public Library	1.54	>3.09
Elsmere Public Library	2.17	>3.09
Frankford Public Library	4.75	>3.09
Georgetown Public Library	2.27	>3.09
Greenwood Public Library	2.90	>3.09
Harrington Public Library	3.21	>3.09
Hockessin Public Library	2.08	>3.09
Kent County Department of Libraries	0.39	1.43
Kirkwood Highway Public Library	1.46	2.50
LaBiblioteca del Pueblo Library	4.54	>3.09
Laurel Public Library	3.26	>3.09
Lewes Public Library	2.75	>3.09
Milford District Free Library	2.85	>3.09
Millsboro Public Library	1.08	2.12
Milton Public Library	2.14	>3.09
New Castle Public Library	1.25	2.29
Newark Free Library	1.36	2.40
North Wilmington Library	3.77	>3.09
Rehoboth Beach Public Library	3.92	>3.09
Seaford District Library	2.35	>3.09
Selbyville Public Library	3.36	>3.09
Smyrna Public Library	0.82	1.86
South Coastal Public Library	2.98	>3.09
Wilmington Institute Library	3.87	>3.09
Woodlawn Library	5.24	>3.09

As you can see, it may be relatively easy for some of the libraries to meet the 2010 target. In some cases

their number of volumes per capita may actually decrease as libraries weed out the “dead wood” in their collections. However, one must also remember the pressure that increasing population will have on per capita measures.

The long term goal for Delaware libraries would be for each library to have 4.0 volumes per capita while maintaining a turnover rate of 3.5 or better.

Reduce the number of library automation systems used by Delaware libraries with the ultimate goal being a statewide shared online catalog.

The ability to get materials from other libraries through intralibrary loan (between branch libraries of the same library system) or interlibrary loan (between two libraries that have different governing entities) is extremely popular with the public. The fact that the holdings of all 33 of the State’s public libraries in the State are on a total of four automation systems has made resource sharing in Delaware relatively easy. Delaware’s highest ranking in the FSCS statistics is in the category “Interlibrary Loans Received per 1,000 population.”

While Delaware’s automation model of four automation systems has worked reasonably well, focus group attendees clearly indicated that they would like to see a single Statewide system. DDL has been working toward this goal, and while a single system may not become a reality in the short term, a reduction in the number of automation systems to two or three is still beneficial in that it would offer access to a broader selection of materials with a single search.

Improve physical delivery systems to reduce “cycle time.”

An efficient system for the physical delivery of materials is an essential component of a good resource sharing system. At the current time, the

delivery of materials within Delaware's three counties is acceptable. However, Delaware's size and topography make having an **exceptional** delivery system quite possible. Many states invest large amounts of money to facilitate the movement of library materials between and among libraries. Delaware should strive to have the very best library delivery system in the country at a very modest cost.

Reducing the amount of time materials are in transit increases user satisfaction because they get what they want more quickly. Reducing "cycle" time also means that popular materials become available for customer use more quickly.

Furthermore, a number of studies have demonstrated that the usage of materials increases when delivery is faster. An additional benefit of a higher volume of traffic is that the cost per item moved between libraries actually falls as volume increases.

Expand and improve the web presence of Delaware's libraries by adding more content and improving design.

When taken as a whole, the web presence of Delaware's public libraries is rather poor. A few of the library websites are adequate (the Dover Public Library and the New Castle County Library have two of the better sites in the State). A few others are at least attractive and offer library information and an access point to the automated catalog and to the DelAWARE databases. A few Delaware libraries do not have websites at all and most of the others fail to present Delaware's public libraries as being technologically advanced or as entities capable of delivering quality information services.

As information agencies in the information age, public library websites need to be exceptionally good and content rich if they are going to be seen as serious information providers. The large number of libraries relative to the State's population and the lack of adequate staffing certainly contribute to the problem.

The county libraries in New Castle and in Sussex County do offer attractive entry points to information about the libraries in their respective counties. However, even these website are rather rudimentary when compared to robust library websites. Good examples of robust library websites are the Phoenix Public Library (AZ) and the Central Rappahannock Regional Library (VA). They can be found at: <http://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org> and at <http://www.librarypoint.org>.

We understand that no library in Delaware is near the size of the Phoenix Public Library. However, by pooling staff expertise and effort, Delaware libraries could develop websites that retain the personalities of individual libraries but, at the same time, take advantage of collaborative efforts. The Delaware Division of Libraries should take a leading role in researching how successful cooperative websites are developed and maintained and by convening a summit of libraries willing to participate in the effort. The result could be a powerful public awareness tool in addition to being a powerful information tool for all Delaware residents.

Explore and implement new technologies that enable enhanced access to content (e.g., OverDrive, mp3, NETFLIX, etc.).

If public libraries hope to remain relevant, they will need to embrace emerging digital formats. The Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) should explore the possibility of building a consortium or a buying group for the purpose of licensing access to digital content. DDL should also recruit libraries to serve as test sites for new technologies on an ongoing basis. A small group of libraries could become the research and development arm for libraries throughout Delaware. They could test real products with real library users and the staff in these libraries could be trained to critically evaluate the benefits as well as the drawbacks to new technologies, products, procedures, and services and to report on their findings to the library community.

Continue process improvement and involvement in “quality” initiatives.

The State of Delaware has been active in promoting innovation and continuous process improvement within State government. The Delaware Division of Libraries has embraced the quality concept and is attempting to build innovation and continuous process improvement components into everything that it does. This plan provides DDL with an opportunity to engage the entire library community in a pursuit of excellence.

The balanced scorecard format of the Plan is scalable. Libraries throughout the State, and the DDL itself should be able to build on the plan by examining the plan’s objectives and attempting to determine the role that their respective organizations will play in improving library services.

In addition, DDL has already started to share the plan’s components with other state library agencies in an effort to build partnerships that can work together toward accomplishing as much as possible in the most efficient manner possible.

DDL should identify other state library agencies as potential benchmarking partners. A simple way to begin would be to identify the strengths of nearby states and to work with them to identify ways they perform well. For example, public libraries in the State of Maryland do exceptionally well on measures that relate to reference and information services while Delaware’s performance is poor. Identification of the factors that contribute to the differences between the two states will help DDL determine what must be done to improve the performance of Delaware libraries.

Measures to be Used to Gauge Success in Meeting INTERNAL Objectives

The following methods and measures should be used to assess progress in meeting the INTERNAL objectives.

- Number of Anchor libraries
- Average Size of Facilities
- Square Feet per capita (progress toward 1.0 GSF/capita)
- Volumes per capita and turnover rate (targets for 2010 of 3.09 volumes per capita with a turnover rate of 3.5)
- Number of public access computers with Internet access
- Number of library web pages offering significant informational content
- Population proximity to Anchor libraries
- Population proximity to Regional libraries
- Convenience of hours of operation
- Number of intra and interlibrary loan transactions handled by shared automation system(s) and subsequently filled
- Average frequency of interlibrary loan deliveries
- Mean delivery time (cycle time) for requested materials
- Processes targeted for review and improvement (Quality, not quantity is the key)
- Number and duration of benchmarking contacts made related to continuous process improvement

CUSTOMER Perspective

The CUSTOMER perspective is about the quality of services that users of Delaware libraries receive and about the value that customers place on those services. It involves being in touch customers, understanding their needs, and providing relevant services that they value highly.

There are three objectives in the CUSTOMER realm. They are:

- Expand Customer Base
- Retain Existing Customers
- Increase Value to Customer

The customer is at the pinnacle of our balanced scorecard. All of the effort and activity that goes into achieving the objectives outlined under the other perspectives point to the ultimate objective of meeting the public's needs.

Delaware's public libraries have many stakeholders. The visitor to the State who stops at the library and picks up a paperback book to read at the beach is a stakeholder. The pre-school child and the senior citizen, the parent and the teacher, the high school student and the business person are just a few of the types of people who are significantly affected by what public libraries do.

However, people who never use public libraries are stakeholders as well. The property owner who never darkens the door of the library is a stakeholder by virtue of the taxes that she or he pays. The State legislator is a stakeholder regardless of whether they use the library or not in that she or he has a say in how State revenues are distributed.

Pleasing such a diverse array of people is difficult, if not impossible. Andrew Carnegie has been credited with saying "The public library outranks any other thing that a community can do to help its people." The public library is a significant institution that belongs to the entire community.

For the most part, the public seems to agree with Carnegie's perspective. In the Statewide telephone survey conducted by the University of Delaware, nearly ninety-three percent (92.7%) of library users said that libraries were either essential or very important to the quality of life in their community. However, one might expect that people who frequent libraries would think that they are important. What

about those who do not use libraries you may ask? Among Delawareans who had not visited a library in six months or more, over eighty-four percent (84.1%) put libraries in the essential or very important categories.

The public library is seen as a public good. Many see it as an essential service. Part of the reason is that libraries change lives. What value can be placed on a pre-schooler's introduction to the world of books and reading? What is the value of the support a librarian gives a school child as she struggles through her first research paper? For that matter, what is the worth of a quiet night at home with a good book in hand?

What is the value of the services received by the public. A recent study conducted at the University of South Carolina calculated the public's return on its investment in public libraries. The study concluded that the public received almost \$ 4.50 in benefits for every dollar that was spent on public library services and facilities.

While libraries and librarians should be pleased that people think so highly of them, they have to earn this praise day after day by providing real people with services and materials that are relevant to their lives.

There are many things that libraries can do to make sure that they remain connected to the public they serve. The Plan recommends these five actions:

- Provide ample opportunities to receive input from the public (both users and non-users).
- Offer enhanced services that surprise and delight customers.
- Communicate with the public on a regular basis.
- Use technology and an enhanced web presence to reach current and potential users.
- Use technology to inform decision-making.

Provide ample opportunities to receive input from the public (both users and non-users).

One of the best ways to find out what people want and need is to ask them. Libraries should routinely use techniques such as quick response surveys, focus groups, mail surveys, and telephone surveys to keep in touch with their communities. It is often difficult or expensive for a single library to carry out these kinds of data gathering efforts. Delaware's libraries should work together, either within their counties or on a statewide basis, to keep in touch with public concerns and expectations.

The large influx of people from other states presents a new challenge to Delaware's libraries. Many newcomers are coming from places that have traditionally offered more sophisticated public library service and they are bringing their expectations with them. This makes it even more important to provide opportunities to listen to what people say about services the libraries should be providing.

The DDL may have a role to play in developing or in coordinating the development of surveys or organizing public meetings at which the public can express their opinions.

Offer enhanced services that surprise and delight customers.

One of the most frequent positive comments heard in focus groups was that library staff members know many of their customers by name and know what they like to read. While larger libraries are far more efficient and, in fact, are more heavily used by more people, it is very easy to lose the "high touch" atmosphere offered by smaller libraries.

Staff in larger libraries can create a high touch environment if they want to and if they are provided with the tools that they need to do the job. Ongoing staff training in customer service techniques is critical to the long-term success of larger libraries.

Furthermore, those who are least likely to have the opportunity to attend workshops, the front line desk staff, are the people who have the greatest need for training. Customer service training needs to go to the people rather than waiting for the people to come to the training. Customer service training should be offered in each library at least once each year. This should be supplemented with teaching tools that can be used at any time. Some components of the training could be offered online or by video. However, these resources should be viewed as supplements. In person training is essential.

Libraries should not be entirely predictable. Occasional unexpected events at the library can create a sense of magic. An unannounced string quartet playing in the library's lobby on a Saturday afternoon or an artist creating a still life in the library's reading area can help break the stereotypes so often associated with libraries.

Communicate with the public on a regular basis.

Traditional communications mechanisms such as library newsletters often amount to "preaching to the choir." While library newsletters can be valuable tools, libraries should communicate in other ways as well. Libraries that are using e-mail for notification of reserves and overdues have found that many library users are quite willing to receive an electronic newsletter on a regular basis. These e-mail addresses can also be used to conduct occasional web surveys by imbedding a link to the survey in the e-mail message.

People like being asked their opinion about things that are important to them. Many libraries have formed Teen Advisory Committees to connect with that hard to reach population. These advisory committees are often quite successful and, in some cases, the teens plan their own programs and promote them with their peers. The advisory committee method can be used to communicate with other groups as well.

Health care professionals can be asked to review the libraries' collection to determine which items are dated or contain misinformation. Soccer coaches can be asked to review videos for possible purchase. These activities provide a service to the library but also serve to engage people who otherwise may have been non-users.

Use technology and an enhanced web presence to reach current and potential users.

New technologies offer opportunities to engage new users and to cement the bond with current users. Libraries should strive to make their websites so useful and attractive that people set it as their home page. Simple things like the local temperature and weather conditions are useful information. Including these types of features on the library web site can begin to create a link between the need for information and the library as a supplier of that information.

Libraries should band together to create robust library websites. DDL should convene a group of librarians to examine successful commercial web sites and good library websites to develop ideas that can be used by Delaware's libraries. Templates should be created that would allow local libraries to maintain their own identity while offering content and a wide variety of links to well-respected information sources. By dividing the labor for maintaining the site among a number of people (each of whom would maintain a few pages), library users could have ready access to enhanced content and would also make a connection with their local library.

Use technology to inform decision-making

Too few libraries make use of information that is readily available to them in making decisions regarding materials to purchase. For example, most integrated library automation systems can track

unsuccessful queries to the library catalog. Collecting and analyzing this information once or twice each year can reveal a great deal regarding the changing interests of library users.

The mapping that was done as a part of the study that resulted in this plan is another example of using data that has already been collected. A close examination of usage patterns over time can reveal subtle population shifts and can provide valuable information for planning facilities and or services. Understanding the demographics of the library's service area is also essential. The consultants recommend that an analysis of service areas and their demographics be conducted at least annually.

The installation of the Smart Access Manager (SAM) program for managing public access computers can also provide new information regarding user behaviors. The fact that the same software will be used throughout the State will enable DDL and local library staff to understand the needs and behaviors of computer users better.

Web surveys are a very inexpensive way of gathering public opinion. Again DDL may have a role to play in developing and/or facilitating the development of surveys that could be used by all libraries.

Measures to be Used to Gauge Success in Meeting CUSTOMER Objectives

The following methods and measures should be used to assess progress in meeting the CUSTOMER objectives.

- Total number of registered borrowers
- Number of children registered
- Registered borrowers as a percentage of the service population
- Comparison of registrations to baseline registrations
- Number of pre-school story hour "graduates" that participate in programming for older children

- Periodic in-library survey results
- Service units per capita
- Electronic resource use
- Number of contacts with users and potential users in the process of determining customer needs

Detailed Facilities Recommendations

The following pages contained detailed recommendations regarding facilities:

Project Recommendations

DELAWARE DIVISION OF LIBRARIES					
STATEWIDE MASTER PLAN					
FACILITY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS					
Priority Order	Library	County	Specific Project	Estimated Project Cost	Notes
1	Dover - Option 1	Kent	New 50,000 SF Anchor Library w/surface parking	\$18,220,000	
	Dover - Option 2		New 60,000 SF Anchor Library w/surface parking, to include space for Kent County Library Administration and Bookmobile operations.	\$21,470,000	
	Dover - Option 3a		New 75,000 SF Library building w/surface parking, to include space for Kent County Library Administration and Bookmobile operations, and Delaware Division of Libraries operations.	\$27,345,000	
	Dover - Option 3b		Same as 3a except with a parking structure	\$30,160,000	
2	Bear	New Castle	Renovation of existing building and feasibility study to determine potential for viable expansion of at least 10,000 SF	\$2,750,000	Includes \$250,000 for feasibility study.
3	South Coastal	Sussex	Renovation and expansion of existing building.	\$11,830,420	Add about 25,000 SF of new space.
4	South County Anchor	New Castle	New 55,000 SF Anchor Library w/surface parking	\$22,790,000	Includes \$2 for site acquisition.
4	Appoquinimink	New Castle	Replaced by new South County Anchor Library		
5	Greenwood/Bridgeville	Sussex	New 30,000 SF Regional Library	\$13,335,000	Includes \$1M for site acquisition
5	Bridgeville	Sussex	Merged with new Greenwood/Bridgeville Regional Library		
6	New Castle	New Castle	Renovation and expansion of existing building	\$6,923,000	Add about 13,500 SF of new space.
7	Wilmington Institute	New Castle	Needs Assessment Studies	\$50,000	For LaBiblioteca del Pueblo and possible new East Wilmington Library.
8	Georgetown	Sussex	New 50,000 SF Anchor Library w/surface parking	\$19,705,000	Consider joint use with DTC.
9	Corbit-Calloway	New Castle	Convert to museum with small popular collections for adult and children	\$460,000	
10	Frankford	Sussex	Merge with Selbyville Community Library		
10	Selbyville *	Sussex	Merge with Frankford Library	\$35,000	For new signage, added computers, etc.
11	Harrington	Kent	New 10,000 SF Community Library w/surface parking	\$5,138,000	
12	Wilmington Institute	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	For Main Library.
13	Millsboro	Sussex	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
14	Claymont	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
15	Smyrna	Kent	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
16	Elsmere	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
17	Milford	Kent/Sussex	Implement Recommendations of FY2006 Needs Assessment Study		No projected cost at this time.
18	Kirkwood Highway	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
19	Lewes	Sussex	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
20	Newark	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	

* Selbyville to receive, over a five-year period in decreasing amount, state aid (and ideally Sussex County aid) that was going to Frankford. Every effort made to absorb Frankford staff with Selbyville.

Project Recommendations

DELAWARE DIVISION OF LIBRARIES					
STATEWIDE MASTER PLAN					
FACILITY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS					
<i>Priority Order</i>	<i>Library</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Specific Project</i>	<i>Estimated Project Cost</i>	<i>Notes</i>
21	Laurel	Sussex	Needs Assessment Study	25000	
22	Delmar	Sussex	Implement Recommendations of FY2006 Needs Assessment Study		No projected cost at this time.
23	Kent County	Kent	Implement Recommendations of Needs Assessment Study		No projected cost at this time.
24	Brandywine Hundred	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
25	Seaford	Sussex	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
26	Wilmington Institute	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	For North Wilmington Library.
27	Rehoboth Beach	Sussex	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
28	Delaware City	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
29	Milton	Sussex	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
30	Hockessin	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	
31	Woodlawn	New Castle	Needs Assessment Study	\$25,000	

FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

GOALS TO ACHIEVE BY 2025

The following nine goals are recommended. The goals are achievable by 2025. They are:

- Library space equal to one gross square foot (GSF) per capita
- Ninety percent of the residents living within 10 miles of a Community or Regional Library
- Eighty percent of the residents living within 20 miles of an Anchor Library
- Library materials collections (all formats) equal to 3.09 items per capita
- Personal computers (PCs) equal to one PC for every 20 visits per day per building (a building with an average of 500 visitors per day would need 25 PCs for public use)
- Library parking spaces equal to one space per every 200 SF of building space per building for Community and Regional libraries
- Library parking spaces equal to one space per every 300 SF of building space per building for Anchor libraries
- All buildings to be fully ADA compliant
- All new buildings to be LEEDS™ certified or to consider “sustainable architecture” approach to “green buildings”

THREE TYPES OF LIBRARY FACILITIES

Three different types of library facilities, and thus three different sized library facilities, are recommended. They are:

- Anchor Library
- Regional Library
- Community Library.

Anchor Library

An Anchor Library will be the largest type – in every respect – in the State. It is recommended that there be at least one Anchor Library in each of the three counties, and the more populated counties may well have two to four anchor libraries within the 20-year timeframe of these recommendations.

Anchor libraries will have the:

- Largest and strongest collections of library materials in terms of depth of all types (print, media, and electronically-accessible)
- Largest staff due to extended hours, extensive usage by the public, and the support role for the Regional and Community libraries within their respective counties
- Greatest number of professional staff (librarians with a master's degree from a graduate program accredited by the American Library Association [ALA])
- Computer training facilities and "classes" for public and staff
- Most meeting room and conference room space for public and staff usage.

Anchor libraries will be:

- Full service facilities
- Sized from 40,000 – 60,000 GSF
- Open seven days a week, 52 weeks per year, 90 hours per week, as follows:
 - Monday – Thursdays – 8:00 AM – 11:00 PM
 - Friday – Saturday – 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM
 - Sunday – 12:00 noon – 10:00 PM.

Anchor library collections should be developed as follows:

- Collection Emphasis (print)
 - Consumer health
 - Do-it-yourself (gardening, household projects, vehicle repair, etc.)
 - Management (business)
 - Marketing, public relations, and salesmanship
 - Parenting
 - Personal finance
 - Political science
 - Religion
 - Travel
 - State, county, and local history
 - Genealogy (if interest is present within the county in sufficient numbers)
 - Children's literature
 - Teen literature
 - Fiction, including genre (mysteries, science fiction, westerns, romance)

- Large type books according to demographics of the service area.
- Collection Emphasis (media)
 - DVDs *
 - CD literature *
 - CD music
 - Cease the purchase of videocassettes and books-on-tape effective July 1, 2005 (but retain existing collections of those titles that have a solid circulation history).
 - Libraries should be monitoring and implementing licensing of “downloadable” content as that market begins to clarify.
- Collection Emphasis (magazines and newspapers)
 - Magazines – one current subscription for every 300 residents in the service area
 - Newspapers – included in above formula, with four to five Delaware papers, four to five regional papers, e.g. Baltimore Sun, Philadelphia Inquirer, Washington Times, Richmond Times-Dispatch, and four to five national papers, e.g. USA Today, Los Angeles Times, New York Times, St. Louis Post Dispatch, Washington Post as examples.
- Collection Emphasis (electronic resources)
 - Internet connectivity
 - Productivity Software such as Word™, Excel™, PowerPoint™, and printing and scanning capabilities
 - Access to three or four licensed databases beyond those included in the DeLAWARE licenses.

Regional Library

There may be from two to four or five Regional libraries within a county, depending upon the projected population and demographics, density, transportation network, and infrastructure of a county.

Regional libraries will have:

- Reasonably large and strong collections of library materials in terms of all types of materials (print, media, and electronically-accessible)
- Adequate staff for the hours of usage, the services to be provided, the anticipated usage, and the size of the building
- Two to four professional staff depending upon the building size, the population to be served, and the demographics of the service area
- Computer training facilities and “classes” for public and staff
- Meeting and conference rooms for public and staff usage.

Regional libraries will be:

- Full service libraries
- Sized from 15,000 – 30,000 GSF
- Open six to seven days a week, up to 72 hours per week, (depending upon regional demographics, population served, etc.) as follows:
 - Monday – Thursdays – 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM
 - Friday – Saturday – 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
 - Sunday – 12:00 noon – 6:00 PM.

Regional library collections should be developed as follows:

- Collection Emphasis (print)
 - Consumer health
 - Do-it-yourself (lawns, household projects, vehicle repair, etc.)
 - Management (business)
 - Parenting
 - Personal finance
 - Political science
 - Religion
 - Salesmanship
 - Travel
 - State, county, and local history
 - Children’s literature
 - Teen literature
 - Fiction, including genre (mysteries, science fiction, westerns, romance)
 - Large type books according to demographics of the service area.

- Collection Emphasis (media)
 - DVDs *
 - CD literature *
 - CD music

* Cease the purchase of videocassettes and books-on-tape effective July 1, 2005 (but retain existing collections of those titles that have a solid circulation history).
- Libraries should be monitoring and implementing licensing of “downloadable” content as that market begins to clarify.
- Collection Emphasis (magazines and newspapers)
 - Magazines – one current subscription for every 200 residents in the service area
 - Newspapers – included in above formula, with two or three Delaware papers, two or three regional papers, e.g. Baltimore Sun, Washington Times, Philadelphia Inquirer, and three or four national papers, e.g. USA Today, New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times as examples.
- Collection Emphasis (electronic resources)
 - Internet connectivity
 - Productivity Software such as Word™, Excel™, PowerPoint™, and printing and scanning capabilities
 - Access to two or three licensed databases beyond those included in the DELAWARE licenses.

Community Library

Community libraries will be the smallest of the three types of facilities. There may be anywhere from three or four up to eight to ten community libraries in a county depending upon such factors as population, geographic size of the county, transportation network, etc.

Community libraries will have:

- Collections of library materials responsive to the direct library and information needs of the community being served
- Adequate staff for the hours of usage, the services to be provided, and the anticipated usage

- One or two professional staff depending upon the population to be served and the demographics of the service area
- Meeting and/or conference rooms for public and staff usage.

Community libraries will be:

- Sized from 10,000 – 12,000 GSF
- Open six days a week, 56 hours per week, as follows:
 - Monday – Thursdays – 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
 - Friday – Saturday – 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM.

Community library collections should be developed as follows:

- Collection Emphasis (print)
 - Consumer health
 - Do-it-yourself (gardening, household projects, vehicle repair, etc.)
 - Parenting
 - Personal finance
 - Travel
 - Local and county history
 - Children’s literature
 - Fiction, including genre (mysteries, science fiction, westerns, romance)
 - Large type books according to demographics of the service area.
- Collection Emphasis (media)
 - DVDs *
 - CD literature *
 - CD music

* Cease the purchase of videocassettes and books-on-tape effective July 1, 2005 (but retain existing collections of those titles that have a solid circulation history).
- Libraries should be monitoring and implementing licensing of “downloadable” content as that market begins to clarify.

- Collection Emphasis (magazines and newspapers)
 - Magazines – one current subscription for every 200 residents in the service area
 - Newspapers – included in above formula, with two Delaware papers and two national papers, e.g. USA Today, New York Times, Washington Post as examples.

- Collection Emphasis (electronic resources)
 - Internet connectivity
 - Productivity Software such as Word™, Excel™, PowerPoint™, and printing capabilities
 - Access to one licensed database beyond those included in the DeLAWARE licenses.

PROJECT GUIDELINES

In order to receive matching funds from the Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) for a capital improvement project the following guidelines are recommended:

- The project **must** be included in this Statewide Master Plan (see Building Project Recommendations elsewhere in this report)
 - The end result of a project **must** be a building that is, at minimum, 10,000 SF in size*
 - A Needs Assessment Study **must** first be prepared and approved by the DDL (see Needs Assessment Study Component guidelines below).
- * If an existing building is, for example, 4,500 SF in size, and a proposed project would double the size of the building to 9,000 SF, such a project **would not** be eligible for DDL funding. However, if an existing building is, for example, 20,000 SF in size, and a proposed project would increase the size to 27,000 SF, such a project would be eligible for DDL funding.

FUNDING

The Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) will continue to pay 50 percent of the following costs:

- Site acquisition (see Library Site Selection Criteria section of this report)
- Building program (see Building Program Components below)
- Architectural design if prepared by an approved architect/engineer (see Architectural Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Process below) including furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) plan and specifications
- Construction, including parking and landscaping.

The DDL will pay 100 percent of the cost of a Needs Assessment Study, with \$25,000 being the normal cap.

Other than the Needs Assessment Study, all other payments will be made **after** the task, e.g. building program, conceptual design, etc. has been completed and approved.

Local (municipal and/or county) tax dollars **must** account for 15 percent of the remaining 50 percent during the first five years of this Plan, or through

FY2011*. Effective FY2012 the local funding level **must** increase as follows:

- Effective FY2012, 20 percent of the remaining 50 percent
- Effective FY2017, 25 percent of the remaining 50 percent
- Effective FY2022, 30 percent of the remaining 50 percent.

Private sector funding may provide the balance of the needed funds. However, the practice of the reliance on significant amounts of private funding for capital projects is not encouraged.

* As an example, for a FY2008 Community Library project, assume the following:

- Total project cost of \$3 million (Needs Assessment Study previously funded and completed)
- Eligible DDL reimbursement costs of \$2.6 million
- DDL pays 50 percent of \$2.6 million, or \$1,300,000
- Local tax dollars pay 15 percent of remaining \$900,000, or \$195,000
- Local funds, tax dollars and/or private sector funding, pays the remaining 35 percent plus the \$400,000 in project costs not eligible for DDL funding, or a total of \$1,505,000.

The DDL will pay for 75 percent of the eligible capital costs for new Anchor Libraries, local (county and/or municipal) tax dollars **must** pay the remaining 25 percent. Ideally, Anchor Libraries should be County operated libraries or, if they are municipal or independent libraries, should at least receive specific County support for fulfilling their role as a countywide resource.

For projects that result in the merger of two existing libraries into one new library the DDL will pay an additional ten percent of the eligible costs.

For existing buildings that, through renovation, strive to become ADA compliant the DDL will pay 75 percent of the renovation costs.

For **new** buildings that seek LEEDS™ certification, the DDL will pay an additional five percent for basic certification and an additional ten percent for silver certification.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY COMPONENTS

The guidelines for A Needs Assessment Study are as follows, and a study **must** include the following components:

- Population and demographic projections and analysis for at least ten years into the future (with 20 years preferred)
- Adequate resident input early in the study via focus group discussions, “town hall” meetings, stakeholder interviews, and/or surveys (telephone, in-library, mail, and/or web)
- Adequate staff and library board (and Friends groups if in place) input via interviews and/or focus groups
- Adequate input from key local and/or county officials such as administrators, elected officials, and/or appointed officials
- Adequate analysis of existing facility(ies) which may entail architectural and/or engineering analysis to determine code compliance, structural integrity, infrastructure adequacy, and the like
- Outline program plan of service for the next three to five years at a minimum (program plan of service means what services the library will offer and those that are of most importance based upon the above)
- Space needs projections based upon the outline program of service and sound space planning guidelines
- Cost projections for both capital costs and operational costs that will be needed, including cost escalation depending upon the projected implementation timetable the study recommendations.

BUILDING PROGRAM COMPONENTS

A building program **must** include the following components:

- Brief history of the library and the project (if available)
- Discussion with regard to the exterior elements, e.g. parking, signage, that have the potential to affect usage of the building
- Discussion with regard to the interior elements, e.g. acoustics, lighting, plumbing, and the like that will potentially affect the sustainability of the building as well as its usage
- Specific definition of each space within the building indicating function, projected occupancy, furniture and equipment needs, adjacencies, engineering and environmental issues, and space projections in at least net assignable and building gross square footages
- Capital cost projections for both construction and total project costs
- Any relevant other information included as appendices.

APPLICATION PROCESS

There will **not** be an application process.

Projects will be approved and funded on the following basis:

- Recommendations of the Statewide Master Plan with regard to priorities
- Projects seeking total ADA compliance will be **first** priority projects
- Projects resulting in anchor facilities will be **second** in priority
- Projects resulting in the consolidation of two facilities into one will be **third** in priority
- Projects (new buildings only) seeking LEEDS™ certification will be **fourth** in priority behind ADA compliance, Anchor Library projects, and consolidation projects
- Projects will have to result in a total building size of at least 10,000 SF of space and meet other goals as set forth above
- Project **must** have completed an approved Needs Assessment Study
- Project **must** follow the defined RFQ process for the selection of architects (see below)
- DDL will review and approve, prior to issuing reimbursement checks, the following project deliverables:
 - Building Program
 - Conceptual Design
 - Schematic Design
 - Developed Design and Outline Specifications
 - Construction Documents and Specifications
 - FF&E Plan and Specifications.

ARCHITECTURAL REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) PROCESS

The selection of architectural services for building projects, including renovation, renovation/expansion, and new construction, will be pursued as follows:

- A national notification process will be established and executed with the goal of alerting as many qualified architects/engineers as possible about future library design projects in Delaware
- All architects/engineers, regardless of location and size of firm, are eligible to submit their qualifications
- Submittals will be reviewed and an interview list developed
- Interviews will be held in Dover, or one or more other pre-determined locations within the state

- Following the interviews a pool of architectural firms will be established
- Local libraries will be “free” to invite from three to five firms from the pool to submit qualifications for their specific Anchor, Regional, or Community library project
- Local libraries, based upon their evaluation process and existing procurement policies for professional services, will be “free” to select and enter into contract negotiations with the firm of their choice from the pool
- DDL will review and approve the contract with the architect/engineer prior to its being signed by the local library and the architect/engineer.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

The Statewide Master Plan suggests the following:

- Consideration should be given by the DDL to engaging the services of at least one, and possibly three (one for each county) construction management firm(s) (CMs) to be part of the building teams for the various projects
- The CM firm(s) should have library building project experience and should have a national practice
- A RFQ process somewhat similar to that described above for architects/engineers should be followed.

STATEWIDE PROCESSING CENTER AND DELIVERY SYSTEM

The Statewide Master Plan recommends the following:

- A statewide processing center, to include space for the storage of existing seldom used materials, to be located within the State, located in an existing industrial-type building and located near a major north/south roadway.
- A statewide delivery system, operating in the early evening/night, should be housed at the center with the goal of having any circulating item from anywhere in the State delivered to the requesting customer’s library within 48 hours. The delivery system could be state owned and operated, or provided via contract with a commercial enterprise.

LIBRARY SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

It is critical to approach the site selection process for a new public library with care. The ultimate success of any new library facility, if success is measured in terms of usage of library services, will be determined to a large degree by where it is located. Public libraries are similar to other institutions that need to be used to be effective – where they are located is of prime importance.

As a successful private developer would say, the three most important ingredients of any project are location, location, and location. A bank that is poorly located will not prosper, nor a food store or an apparel shop. Neither will a public library. Acquiring anything less than a good site will prove a false economy in terms of the life-cycle costs of the library. Anything less than a good site will also hinder public use of this important community resource.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

The criteria listed below should be taken into account as each candidate site is evaluated. The consultants have developed these criteria based upon their considerable experience and observation.

Site Capacity, Now and the Future - The site should be large enough to provide a sufficient square or rectangular library footprint; the required parking for users, staff, and volunteers; future expansion; the necessary allowances for setbacks, zoning requirements; and suitable landscaping. The resulting building should look like it belongs on the site, not forced on a plot of ground that is too small. If future expansion of the building is anticipated, then the site should be at least five times the initial BGSF (building gross square feet).

Parking Potential, On-site and Off-site – This is a companion to Site Capacity. However, in addition to the pure size of the site, are there or may there be in the foreseeable future, restrictions to having an adequate number of parking spaces?

Accessibility - The site should be easily accessible by automobile and public mass transit, and within walking distance of some potential users. However, pedestrian access will always be secondary. Adequate parking is a key element of vehicular accessibility.

Visibility by Passers-by - A prominent location is required to attract the largest number of people to the library. A highly visible site, along a major roadway, with easy accessibility, is ideal. If the site involves other buildings, such as a joint-use complex, the library should be able to be oriented in a portion of the site with high visibility.

Development Cost – What will it cost to develop the site? These costs could make a site that first appears to be desirable less so upon further analysis. The issues to consider include:

- The dollar value of the site, including the potential revenue loss if income producing property is replaced by a non-taxable structure
- Demolition costs of any existing facility(ies) on the site
- Relocation costs of any existing business or residential units currently on the site
- Any unusual site development costs that may occur, such as from a site with underground utilities and/or water, a buried petroleum storage tank, etc.
- The cost of providing sufficient utility service to the site
- Any extra construction costs that will occur due to such things as:
 - Poor soil conditions
 - Limitations of the site, such as underground versus surface parking
 - Site configuration resulting in a more expensive building solution
 - Excessive drainage and/or earthwork
 - Construction of drives and roads needed to fully access the site once the building is located on the site.

Building “Fit” into Fabric of the Community, Now and the Future - Will the library be a good neighbor? Is the neighborhood fully developed? If so, how will the library fit into the neighborhood? If there is development in the future, will it be compatible with the mission and goals of the library?

Views, Distant and Close – What does one see from the library site looking outward, across the street, and several blocks away? Conversely, what does the library site look like from across the street and from blocks away?

Legal Matters - The existence of easements or other restrictions can serve to minimize the buildable area of a site. A site owned by several persons and/or entities could be difficult to acquire. Zoning restrictions can hamper development, including parking and/or entrance and egress to and from the site.

Physiography - The suitability of the soil, the topography of the site, and solar orientation are important considerations in construction and operational costs. Orientation considerations include the avoidance of west sun on the books, or the necessity of a north entrance that may offer little winter sunlight and exposure to the cold northern winds. Other factors to consider include these:

- Prevailing breeze
- Solar potential (passive and active)
- Sun angles
- Trees and landscaping.

RANKING THE SITES

Once the site selection criteria have been agreed upon, the next step in the process is to assign a point value to each of the above nine criteria. The sum total of the nine should be 100. Within each major factor, points can be assigned to the sub-factors. The sub-factor points should equal the sum of the major factor point total.

As an example, a library site study might conclude that Site capacity, followed by Accessibility, Visibility by passers-by, and Building “fit” into fabric of community were the four most important factors, worth 20, 15, 12, and 12 points respectively. Within Site Capacity, the two most important sub-factors might be Usable Site Area and Expansion Capacity, worth, in order, seven and five points. Therefore, if the usable site area of Site A were considered to be near perfect, it would receive a ranking of six or seven points. Conversely, if Site B was considered poor in this area the ranking might be zero, one, or two.

Each factor and sub-factor should be given a point value. The site that receives the most points is determined to be the best site. If two or more sites were within eight to ten points of each other, then cost effectiveness needs to be taken into consideration.

Each area within a county, municipality, or community where a new library may be considered may have a different ranking point system. The demographics, geographic size, and potential population of the area should be considered before assigning point values.

Tie-Breaking Factors

The land cost – purchase price criteria should be dealt with last, and should be in addition to the 100 points of the other criteria. The reason for this is that pure land cost should not be the first consideration inasmuch as the cost of the site will most likely be the least of the project costs for a new (or replacement) library facility when spreading the costs over the life span of the facility.

CONCLUSION

The consultants cannot over-emphasize the importance of an objective site selection process. There is nothing, aside from the informational content within a library building, that will have a greater impact upon the overall success of a library than where it is located. Since success of a library building is measured by usage, the more a building is used, the more cost effective it is. A good site will go a long way toward ensuring the operational success of a library facility for the community residents.

TOOLS FOR THE ONGOING ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES

The following pages contain tools that can be used for the ongoing assessment of library facilities.

LIBRARY BUILDING ASSESSMENT SURVEY

BUILDING:

ADDRESS:

**NAME OF DIRECTOR OR MANAGER
OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:**

NOTE: Most of the responses can be a simple Yes or No. However, please feel free to add any comments you believe are important and the consultants should be aware of.

BUILDING EXTERIOR:

1. Is there adequate and safe access to the building:
 - a. for pedestrians? _____
 - b. for vehicular traffic? _____

2. Any problems with parking striping, pavement, or sidewalks? _____

3. Adequate accessible ramps for handicapped patrons? _____

4. Any problem with curbs or curb cuts? _____

5. Is there adequate parking:
 - a. for patrons (including handicapped)? _____
 - b. for bicycles? _____
 - c. for staff/delivery vehicles? _____

6. Any problems with the exterior building materials/ elements?
 - a. doors? _____
 - b. windows? _____
 - c. cracks/gaps/drafts? _____
 - d. electrical/gas service equipment/conduits? _____

- e. roof leaks? _____
- f. gutter/snow guard problems? _____
- g. insect/rodent infestations? _____
- h. paint/stain problems? _____
- i. signage problems? _____
- j. exterior lighting? _____
- k. parking lot lighting? _____
- l. site flooding/drainage? _____
- m. other (please explain)? _____

7. Door Hardware? (knobs, levers, panic devices, hinges, etc.) _____

8. Window Hardware? (locks, cranks, counterweights, etc.) _____

9. Masonry/stone deterioration? _____

10. Any problems with any exterior book drops? _____

- a. separate "slots" for books and media? _____

11. Problematic landscaping elements? (example: trees obscuring windows; inadequate shading of outdoor areas, etc.)

BUILDING INTERIOR:

FINISH MATERIALS

12. Any problems with flooring materials? (i.e. cracks, unevenness, tripping hazards, stains):
- a. carpeting? _____
 - b. base? _____
 - c. tile/stone? _____
13. Any problems with ceiling materials? (i.e. sags, cracks, missing/damaged tiles, stains) _____
- _____
- _____
14. Wall surface problems? (e.g. paint, wall coverings, drywall, plaster) _____
- _____
- _____
15. Is interior signage adequate? _____
- _____

ACCESSIBILITY

16. Adequate handrails at interior stairs or ramps? _____
17. Adequate space between stacks? _____
- a. what is the typical aisle width? _____
18. Adequate space in toilet rooms? _____
- a. separate toilet room(s) for children? _____
 - b. toilet rooms have diaper-changing tables? _____

ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

- 19A. Is there adequate number of outlets for:
- a. power? _____
 - b. data? _____
- 19B. Are the outlets where they now need to be? _____
- 19C. Any problem with "Spaghetti Wiring"? _____
20. Are the light levels adequate in:
- a. staff areas (task lighting & general lighting)? _____
 - b. bookstacks? _____
 - c. circulation desk area? _____
 - d. reading areas? _____
 - e. computer stations? _____
 - f. any problems with glare? _____
 - g. is the lighting energy efficient? _____
- _____
21. Any problems with lighting (e.g. non-functioning sockets, light "flutter")? _____
- _____
22. Any problems with power outlets (e.g. non-functioning)? _____
- _____
23. Any problems fire or smoke alarms/detection/warning devices? _____
- _____
24. Any problems with exit signs? _____
25. Is the telephone system adequate in terms of:
- a. number of telephone instruments? _____
 - b. number of telephone lines? _____
 - c. do they all function adequately? _____

- d. are there public pay telephones? _____
- e. do they all work properly? _____
- f. are they accessible for persons with disabilities? _____
- g. for children? _____

HVAC SYSTEMS

- 26. Excessive odors at toilet rooms? _____

- 27. Any flooding in toilet rooms? _____

- 28. Any temperature fluctuations throughout building? _____

- 29. Excessive HVAC equipment noise? _____

- 30. Air quality OK? _____

- 31. Any problems maintaining existing HVAC equipment? _____

PLUMBING

- 32. Is there adequate water pressure? _____

- 33. Any leaks at plumbing fixtures or roof drains? _____

- 33. Toilet fixtures conservation efficient? _____
- 34. Water faucets conservation efficient? _____

TABLES AND CHAIRS

- 35. Are tables in good shape? _____

36. Are chairs adequate? _____
a. if upholstered, soiled/stained? _____
37. Do you have the right "mix" of seating, e.g. 4-place tables, study carrels, lounge (soft) seating?

38. What about seating at computers and OPACs? _____
a. adequate? _____
b. right type? _____
39. Is furniture in offices and workrooms adequate? _____

SAFETY AND SECURITY:

40. Is there a fire suppression system (sprinklers)? _____
a. when was it last tested? _____
41. Are there smoke alarms? _____
a. when were they last tested? _____
42. Is there an intrusion alarm system? _____
43. Is there a library materials theft system? _____
a. does it have "gates"? _____
44. Is there a closed circuit surveillance system? _____
a. are the cameras full-motion color? _____
b. is the system monitored during all hours the building is open? _____
c. for what period of time are the tapes retained? _____
45. Are the exit door(s) clearly marked? _____
46. Is there more than one way to an exit in case of emergency? _____
a. are all of the exit signs visible and properly lighted? _____
b. is there a clearly posted evacuation plan? _____

47. Are there fire stair(s) if the building is multi-level? _____
- a. does the stair(s) "deposit" a person outside the building? _____
 - b. is there a landing within the fire stair(s) where a physically challenged person can be placed that is free from smoke and fire until rescue? _____

48. Is there an "after hours" library materials return room within the building? _____
- a. is the room a 2-hour fire rated? _____
 - b. does the room have a separate fire suppression system? _____

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

49. Is the building historically significant?

a. if Yes, what is the significance?

OTHER:

50. Is there anything else about the building that should be stated here? _____

Signature

Date

FACILITIES CHECKLIST

Library Name _____ **Year Opened** _____

Address _____
Street #/name City Zip Code

Name of person in charge of building _____

Persons' Telephone # _____ **E-mail address** _____
Area code Number

**Checklist can be completed by checking appropriate column.
Space for Other Comments below.**

Element Question	Yes	No		
Site			Location of building:	
			On a corner	___
			Mid block	___
Exterior Signage			Parallel to street	___
			Perpendicular to street	___
			Also (or only) on face of building	___
			Also Only	___
Parking			Parking for public on site	___
			Parking for staff on site	___
			Clearly marked handicap spaces	___
			Parking spaces clearly striped	___
			Parking area(s) lighted at night	___
Sidewalks			Around the site	___
			Leading to the entrance	___
			Condition of sidewalks good	___
Landscaping			Adequate landscaping	___
			Adequately maintained	___
Building Entrance			Clearly visible from street	___
			Clearly visible from parking	___
			There is a foyer	___
			Entrance door(s) easy to open for all	___
			Entrance doors are single-width	___
			Entrance doors are double-width	___
Interior Signage			Signage is visible, clear, meaningful	___
			Signage is professional in execution	___
Lighting Adequacy			For use of computers (no glare)	___
			For bookstacks	___
			For study	___

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Accessibility	Ramp to entrance	___	___
	If yes, Ramp is ADA compliant (1" rise/12" length)	___	___
	If yes, there are handrail(s)	___	___
	Elevator if multi-level	___	___
	Doors have levers or handles, not knobs	___	___
	Interior doors have levers/handles, not knobs	___	___
	Restrooms are ADA complaint	___	___
	Bookstack aisle spacing is 36" or more	___	___
Safety and Security	Fire suppression system (sprinklers)	___	___
	Smoke alarms	___	___
	Intrusion alarm system	___	___
	Library materials theft system	___	___
	Closed circuit surveillance system	___	___
	Exit door(s) clearly marked	___	___
	More than one way to exit in case of emergency	___	___
	Fire stair(s) if multi-level	___	___
Bookstacks	Height appropriate for different ages	___	___
	Materials are crowded, jammed	___	___
Furniture, Condition of	Tables, chairs, etc. in good condition	___	___
Technology	No visible spaghetti wiring	___	___
	Seating adequate for use by public	___	___
	Seating adequate for use by staff	___	___
Spaces for Public	Appropriate space for children	___	___
	Adequate space for children	___	___
	Appropriate space for teens	___	___
	Adequate space for teens	___	___
Meeting Space	Multi-purpose meeting room	___	___
	Adequate meeting room space	___	___
	Conference room(s)	___	___
	Adequate conference room space	___	___
	Other room/space	___	___
Spaces for Staff	Staff break room	___	___
	Staff break room adequate	___	___
	Off desk work space(s)	___	___
	Off desk work space(s) adequate	___	___
	Maintenance/custodial space(s)	___	___
	Maintenance/custodial space(s) adequate	___	___
	Loading dock/area	___	___

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Offices/Workrooms for Staff	Building manager (person in charge)	___	___
	Building manager space adequate	___	___
	Adult services head	___	___
	Adult services space adequate	___	___
	Children's services head	___	___
	Children's services space adequate	___	___
	Other	___	___
	Other space adequate	___	___

Other Comments _____

 Signed by manager/supervisor

 Date

 Signed by library director

 Date