

Paris-Bourbon County Library Long-Range Plan, 2006-2011

The Long Range Plan

The purpose of this long range plan is to provide the Library Board, the library staff, and the library patrons and community with a clear indication of the direction and goals of the present library as it strives to achieve continued excellence in the future. Though the areas of focus identified herein should not be viewed as prescriptive or circumscriptive, it needs to be stated and understood that they do provide some base-level benchmarks and a methodology for measuring library achievements in the upcoming years. Recognizing that all things are changeable and even fallible, especially in our world of fast-paced technology, this plan will be re-evaluated and updated as necessary and at least every five years to ensure that its goals are consistent with the direction of the library and its services.

Members of the Planning Committee

Mark Adler, Executive Director

Charles Harper, Library Board Secretary

Lucy Cooper, Library Board Vice-President

Susan Eades, Circulation and Local History

Bonnie Sousley, Treasurer of the Paris-Bourbon County Friends of the Library

Elaine Jacobson, representative of the Mom's Club of Paris

Governance and Organization

The Paris-Bourbon County Library was established in 1904 and operates in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal laws. The Board of Trustees has the policy-making, financial, and legal responsibilities for the Library. The five trustees on the Library Board are selected to serve four-year terms of office by the Bourbon County Judge. Trustees may serve two consecutive terms. Current trustees are:

Frank McCracken, President

Lucy Cooper, Vice-President

Charles Harper, Secretary

Cheryl Dryden, Treasurer

Patricia Wilson

Library Collections and Services

The Library purchases materials in multiple formats, including hardback and paperback books, books on cassette and CD, video on VHS and DVD, and microfilm. In addition, the Library provides access to the Internet and in- and out-of-Library access to multiple databases. Though some materials are out-of-date and therefore slated to be weeded from the collection and replaced by more appropriate and up-do-date materials, the fact remains that the Library is already woefully out of space to provide best-level service to its patrons. A future where nothing is done to alleviate the space issues will only promise operations in which still current items must be weeded to make way for the newest popular fiction and non-fiction. The data in the charts below only support the statement that the library is currently providing less-than-best service due to space limitations.

General Facilities and Services Information

	2005 Annual Report	KDLA Recommendation*
Total square feet	11,336	0.7 sq. ft. per capita
Estimated population	19,623	
Number of registered borrowers	9,739	
Books	38,262	
Books per capita	1.95	2.5
Books on tape and CD	1,594	
Magazine/newspaper subscriptions	77	
Video on VHS and DVD	2,175	
Public Internet access terminals	7	1 per 2,500 people served
Public catalog access terminals	4	
Public meeting space	2 rooms	
Number of groups using space	33	
Number of meetings held	85	
Hours open per week	50.5	
Public service hours per year	2,626	

*From *Minimum Facilities Standards for Kentucky Public Libraries*

General Circulation Trends Over a Three-Year Period

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Population Served	19,576	19,598	19,623
Total Circulation Transactions	95,271	100,569	113,039
Circulation per capita	4.87	5.13	5.76
Circulation per hours open	36.28	38.30	43.05
Number of programs held	292	336	338
Total program attendance	4,946	6,360	7,237
Program attendance per capita	0.25	0.32	0.37

The data above clearly indicate that, though the Library has less space and fewer volumes than recommended by the State Library, circulation trends indicate more use of the Library by a greater number of people. The only appropriate response is an increase in facility space to allow for more materials and even greater patronage.

More specifically, the State Library recommends a bare minimum of 0.7 sq. ft. per capita, we currently are operating with 0.58 sq. ft. per capita (it needs to be mentioned that the reported 11,336 total sq. ft. appears to be a rather generous estimate). Based on the minimum standards, we should currently have no less than 13,376 sq. ft. which does not take into account any future growth in the county.

The book collection size is also glaringly small when compared to the minimum standards. Though we have just over 38,000 books, the State recommends no fewer than 49,058. One need only look at the shelves to see clearly that there is no room for 11,000 more books in the Library.

However, things aren't all bleak. As mentioned, the Library enjoys much success as is evidenced in the general circulation trends. Over a three-year period, general circulation has increased 19% and program attendance has shown an even sharper growth. All of this has occurred during a time when the population only increased by 0.24%.

In addition, volunteer and civic involvement in the Library has been steadily increasing. For example, 2003 marked the revitalization of the Friends of the Library, a group that in just a couple of years has become active in the community, pushing the Library's mission and services, and funneling funds into Library programs and special purchases.

The past three years have also marked a time of increased partnership with outside and non-Library organizations. In effort to eliminate duplication of effort, the Library has begun working collaboratively with the schools, the Adult Education Center, and other libraries to share and spread the informational wealth that has been grown and fostered by the Library. This has strengthened our standing in the local community and amongst other libraries throughout the state.

The Paris-Bourbon county Library recognizes that it plays an important role in assisting the public's efforts to learn about and use new technology; as such, the Library strives to provide access to appropriate technologies and tools such that staff and patrons are edified and entertained. The Paris-Bourbon County Library will continue to explore and offer access to appropriate new technologies and multi-format materials as they become available.

However, the library also recognizes the importance of traditional services and continues to provide materials in print, audio, and video formats for library patrons of all ages and interests.

These critical issues are addressed in the following list of goals and objectives for 2006 - 2011. The Planning Committee believes that the Paris-Bourbon County Library is a well-managed, cost-effective public agency which is well-regarded by the people it serves. The intent of this plan is to continue to provide the highest possible level of service while investigating and implementing changes that will enable the library to improve and develop along with the community.

Context for Planning

As background for planning, the Committee discussed many issues relating to public library service in the 21st century.

Technology

Technology is becoming increasingly important. As the Library has seen, the automated system is the backbone of all library operations and provides valuable data for much of the decision-making and planning. Careful stewardship of the automated system is vital as is the ongoing exploration of other systems that may offer the Library better service and greater access to important data/statistics.

The Library board understands that the development and implementation of new technological standards, equipment, and services will require the teaching of new skill sets to patrons and staff. As such, the board is dedicated to providing appropriate funding to ensure that staff and patrons are educated to use any and all Library systems, services, and materials.

In addition, the Library is witnessing a demand to provide many materials in multiple formats. Though the Library has not begun purchasing e-books or e-audios, the staff and board understand that purchasing these and other new formats/items may require dedicated monies and additional shelf/storage space in the future.

New administrative technologies are being introduced rapidly; though most may not be applicable to the Paris-Bourbon County Library, some will likely be and will therefore require initial purchasing budget and subsequent training monies provided. Though guesswork isn't normally productive, it seems plausible to suggest that the administrative technology looming largest in the near future is likely RFID (radio frequency identification); RFID could dramatically facilitate the circulation and especially the annual inventory of Library items. As soon as standards for RFID are developed, the Library will need to explore possible implementation.

Communication and Public Relations

Because the Library is continuously offering new services and paths to information, proper advertising is important. Because the Library is located in a fairly small, rural community, staff often relied on hands-on assistance, a warm smile, and a few encouraging words to adequately relate our services to our patrons. This indeed has historically been the greatest advertisement for our services. In fact, this friendliness has often been what separated our Library from larger, urban libraries that can afford to offer more services and materials. Today, however, people are more mobile than ever. Because of this, excellent communication skills and a progressive public relations campaign that seeks out new and creative advertising venues will be critical to successfully carrying out the Library's mission. That stated, the board still recognizes that we are still a rural library and insists on the provision of professional, friendly, and interactive service to any and all persons who enter the facility.

In addition to communicating in traditional ways, the Library also provides much via the Internet. The Library maintains a web site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The web site promotes many library events, provides general information about the library and its policies provides access to databases and links to information, and provides a way for patrons to reserve and renew items online. In the future, the Library will need to seek new and exciting ways to offer a greater number of services online. Currently, the Library is in the process of offering access to a greater number of online databases as well as e-newsletters that highlight library holdings and events.

Continuing Education

Continuing education of staff is a requirement, not only ethically but also by state mandate. In order to provide competent, professional service, all library staff must keep themselves informed and proficient in changing technologies, new service offerings, and general changes in the field and philosophy of librarianship.

Maintenance of Facilities

The library facility, a 100+ year old Carnegie building, is as important to some patrons as the materials and information contained therein. A public library should be at the heart of the cultural, intellectual, and civic life of the community. All residents should feel welcome and comfortable, finding an area appropriately designed for their activities and interests, both inside and outside the building. The prominent location of the library requires that its appearance make a contribution to the beauty of the community, as well as providing equal access to all.

Service Responses for Public Libraries

In defining the Library's long range plan, the Library consulted with many sources of information, including patron opinions, annual and other library reports, local demographic statistical data, staff opinions, and the opinions of special needs groups. During the process, the Planning Committee consulted and used *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Approach* as a guide for obtaining, analyzing, and structuring the data gleaned.

Additionally, the Planning Committee has come to understand there is just too much out there that needs to be done by libraries and not enough money to do it all. Therefore, the Committee hopes to

steer decisions to support those materials and services that are most desperately needed and desired by the community.

In order to assist public libraries in the evaluation of their program and the selection of those services most needed by their communities, the Public Library Association defined thirteen (13) “service responses” which clearly define the various roles that public libraries serve. Based on the consideration of information derived during the process, the following service responses have been selected as the focus for the five year planning period:

Lifelong Learning: a library that provides Lifelong Learning service helps address the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

Current Topics and Titles: a library that provides Current Topics and Titles helps to fulfill community residents’ appetite for information about popular cultural and social trends and their desire for satisfying recreational experiences.

General Information: a library that offers General Information helps meet the need for information and answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school, and personal life.

Paris-Bourbon County Library Long-Range Goals

The Library has adopted seven broadly defined goals that will serve as a focus to activities over the next five years. Input will constantly be sought from multiple sources, including patrons, staff, and the board. Information provided will allow for the transformation of individual goals into the full and successful implementation of desired services.

Services and Collection: The Library will continue to broaden both the number of services and access routes to those services. Library staff will warmly invite and encourage patrons to use the library’s resources, which over time will include a larger, more diversified collection that more accurately represents the needs of all patron groups.

Staff: The Library will provide its patrons with qualified and appropriately trained staff who are knowledgeable about library holdings and trends and who enjoy working directly with a diverse public.

Community Outreach: Library staff will be included in the programming process; as such they will be responsible for designing appropriate programs and services and will seek input from members of all community groups to help create programs that meet the needs of a plurality of groups and individuals.

Public Relations: Library staff will consistently work to make the public aware of the Library’s services, programs, and holdings.

Technology: The Library will continue to explore and implement appropriate technologies. Appropriate training will be provided to staff and patrons alike. The Library will also diversify the collection and offer materials in the formats that the patrons prefer.

Library Foundation: The Library board and Director will work collaboratively with local interest groups and individuals to explore the feasibility and desirability of establishing a library foundation whose focus is the continuation of library operations into the future and who provides support by the careful collection and administration of funds.

Facilities: The library will present a welcoming environment that is easy to access by all library patrons. The Library board, Director, and Foundation when one is present will work to ensure that Library facilities provide enough space to meet the needs of all library operations and collections.

Long-Range Goals and Objectives, 2006 – 2011

Services and Collection: The Library will continue to broaden both the number of services and access routes to those services. Library staff will warmly invite and encourage patrons to use the library's resources, which over time will include a larger, more diversified collection that more accurately represents the needs of all patron groups. The Library staff and board will:

- Provide multiple copies of the most popular materials to meet demand
 - Monitor the expanded best seller collection to maintain balance with patron requests and overall book collection
 - Monitor the need for more copies of popular children's and young adult materials
- Investigate new technologies to introduce the public to new media and resources
 - Continue to follow the development of new hardware and software that may be appropriate for use in the Library
 - Monitor local demand for new technologies including e-books and e-audiobooks
- Carefully select materials to present a broad spectrum of ideas
- Seek authoritative sources to provide balance of points of view on controversial issues
- Monitor the need for Spanish and dual-language materials and implement those that are most appropriate
- Allocate collections monies to purchase materials in support of the needs and desires of all patron groups
- Proactively notify users of new services/technologies as they become available

Staff: The Library will provide its patrons with qualified and appropriately trained staff who are knowledgeable about library holdings and trends and who enjoy working directly with a diverse public. The Library staff and board will:

- Continue to fund and encourage staff to participate in continuing education opportunities
- Encourage all staff members to work towards achieving at least Paraprofessional state certification
- Ensure all staff are cross-trained to create awareness of library services
- Annually rewrite job descriptions to most accurately reflect duties being performed
- Work to ensure that all staff meet the core technological competencies
- Provide no fewer than one annual in-house training workshop for Library staff; where possible, include other local libraries to foster interlibrary relations and staff understanding of other library's operations
- Employ a creative recruitment process that balances community needs and is cognizant of:
 - The trend of hiring full-time professional librarians who are dedicated to and understand the modern applications of librarianship
 - The community interest to hire people who understand and wish to actively participate in a rural community
- When appropriate create new positions to assist in achieving the goals and objectives of this plan

Community Outreach Library staff will be included in the programming process; as such they will be responsible for designing appropriate programs and services and will seek input from members of

all community groups to help create programs that meet the needs of a plurality of groups and individuals. The Library staff and board will:

- Expand the volunteer possibilities to include all appropriate age groups
- Consider the creation of a young adult group that provides recommendations to steer Library operations and services for the young adult population
- Work closely with the Friends of the Library group to disseminate the Library's message to the community
- Notify community organizations of the availability of library staff as program speakers
- Continue working collaboratively with other community groups; expand the number and types of groups with whom the Library partners
- Expand and diversify programming for all age groups
- Use circulation statistics and reference questions to design programs in specific areas of interest, such as home office technology, gardening, etc.
- Expand the number of persons and types of organizations served by the mobile outreach van; advertise the service more vigorously and widely
- Develop new pathways to collaboration with the local schools
 - Develop ways to reach parents with promotional materials distributed through schools

Public Relations: Library staff will consistently work to make the public aware of the Library's services, programs, and holdings. The Library staff and board will:

- Work to find creative advertising venues in the community and community organizations, including but not limited to the local schools.
- Foster a closer relationship with local media outlets to ensure that public relations blurbs are published when and as requested
- Conduct more public speaking engagements in local organizations and the schools
- Offer orientation programs/tours of library
- Create a logo for consistent branding of the library image to be used on all promotional materials and letterhead

Technology: The Library will continue to explore and implement appropriate technologies. Appropriate training will be provided to staff and patrons alike. The Library will also diversify the collection and offer materials in the formats that the patrons prefer. The Library staff and board will:

- Explore new library technologies and work to implement them when appropriate
- Conduct regular training sessions on topics important to both staff and patrons
- Explore ways to add more computers to better facilitate public Internet access
- Explore new media formats for library materials
- Better use electronic delivery systems for Library advertising and public relations

Library Foundation: The Library board and Director will work collaboratively with local interest groups and individuals to explore the feasibility and desirability of establishing a library foundation whose focus is the continuation of library operations into the future and who provides support by the careful collection and administration of funds. The Library staff and board will:

- Identify key individuals who can assist with the process of creating a Foundation

- Provide clear-cut documentation of the mission of the Foundation to ensure that the all public officials and community members are aware

Facilities: The library will present a welcoming environment that is easy to access by all library patrons. The Library board, Director, and Foundation when one is present will work to ensure that Library facilities provide enough space to meet the needs of all library operations and collections. The Library staff and board will:

- Work with library patrons with special needs
 - Identify and purchase aids to facilitate use of library materials and equipment by library patrons with disabilities
- Continually monitor and improve use of space for library visitors, emphasizing through furniture and decoration the intended audience for specific areas.
 - Consider need for new or different signage
 - Investigate re-assignment of existing space for new uses
 - Continue to shift collections, furniture, and equipment to better utilize space and to facilitate use by the public
- Establish plan for building project
 - Work with Friends of the Library, Library Foundation, public officials, and other appropriate organizations and individuals to identify possible funding sources
 - Hire an architect to work on initial building design and other areas
 - Identify possible building locations and, when available, purchase land for future construction/expansion