

Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center

Long Range Plan

FY 2011-2015

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees on December 10, 2009

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Executive Summary

Beginning in August 2009, a community-based planning committee met and helped develop a five-year strategic plan for the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center. A library staff committee provided input and feedback to the community planning committee throughout the process. The final plan is a combination of ideas and effort by the community planning committee, the library staff committee, and library consultant Dr. Robert Burgin.

Mission Statement

The library opens windows to the world by encouraging expression, enlightenment, and exploration.

Library Service Priorities and Goals

EXPLORE AND KNOW OUR COMMUNITY

Goal 1: All library users will have opportunities to learn about the diversity of Cumberland County's people and resources through the services of the library, community agencies, and organizations.

Goal 2: All Cumberland County residents will have access to resources to increase their awareness of local, state, national, and world issues and events.

MAKE CAREER CHOICES

Goal 3: All Cumberland County teens and adults will have access to current resources in order to make informed decisions about careers.

VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE

Goal 4: All library users will have a welcoming place to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read, and will have current, useful, and attractive virtual spaces.

MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

Goal 5: All members of the community will have access to opportunities and resources to make informed decisions in personal health, finances, and other life choices to enhance their quality of life.

STIMULATE AND EXPRESS IMAGINATION

Goal 6: All citizens will have access to materials and programs that foster and stimulate the imagination and provide outlets for creative expression.

Introduction

Motivation for Planning

In June 2009, the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center received a federally-funded LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant to develop a strategic plan for its library system by implementing the planning process outlined in the Public Library Association's publication, *Strategic Planning for Results*.

The library was motivated by a desire to update its existing strategic service plan, which was approved by the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center Board of Trustees on January 20, 2005. The existing plan covered the period between 2006 and 2010, and a new plan needed to be in place by early 2010.

The Planning Process

The Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center chose to use the planning process outlined in *Strategic Planning for Results*. This planning process was developed by the Public Library Association of the American Library Association to encourage public libraries to define their services in light of the needs of the individual communities being served. *Strategic Planning for Results* was specifically written for small and medium sized public libraries and emphasizes a streamlined, community-based approach to planning.

The planning process outlined in *Strategic Planning for Results* is based on the assumption that excellence must be defined locally and that excellence results when library services match user needs, interests, and priorities. Consequently, *Strategic Planning for Results* process asks key community stakeholders to identify a vision for the community served by the library. This vision is intended to help library planners

determine how the library can make a contribution toward achieving the community vision.

Participants

The key community stakeholders for the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center's planning process formed the library's community planning committee. This committee included:

Daniel J. Ahern	Deborah Mintz
Charles Broadwell	Jon Parsons
Belinda Cashwell	Douglas S. Peters
Jane Casto	Juanita Pilgrim
Doug Earle	Phil Quinones
Les Griffin	Ole Sorensen
Brenda Jackson	Cynthia Wilson
Maxine McCoy	Bobby Wynn

A staff planning committee, made up of members of the staff of the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center, was also involved in the planning process. The staff planning committee included:

Brenna Armstrong	Sheila Rider
Judy Brown	Jody Risacher
Jane Casto	Cathy Rudelich
Martha Crawley	Sarah Sewell
Jillian Lashmett	Kellie Tomita
Brian Manning	William Weigel
Susan Parrish	

The Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center’s planning process was facilitated by Dr. Robert Burgin, a library consultant with more than 30 years of experience in library education, library consulting, and library administration.

Community Needs

The first task of the community planning committee was to determine the most important needs of the community being served by the library and to identify those that the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center is well suited to meet or provide support for.

These needs are listed below. (Those marked with two asterisks were the needs that the community planning committee felt the library was well suited to meet or provide support for. Those marked with one asterisk were those that the committee felt the library was partly suited to meet or provide support for.)

- Activities for teens **
- Beautification – Promote green areas, sidewalks, walking and biking trails, gutter systems
- Businesses with extended hours
- Community based schools not on major thoroughfares (safety, accessibility)
- Cultural venues and entertainment **
- Education needed to secure employment at a living wage **
- Healthcare *
- Improved arts education **
- Improved cultural facilities **
- Improved health care **
- Increased creative vitality – Evidence of public art **
- Job training for the unemployed **
- Jobs with futures **
- Living wage for the employed **
- Mass transportation
- More green space / Improved appearance *

- More tolerance **
- More upscale businesses
- Promote positive relations between military and community – externally *
- Public transportation and community
- Safe and secure community
- Seamless community with Fort Bragg and Pope AFB *
- Services and awareness of services to the disabled, etc. **
- Technology – Automated services – Become competitive technologically **
- Trained work force – Adaptive to change **

Library Service Responses

Based on the community needs identified by the community planning committee and its understanding of the library's strengths and weaknesses, that committee suggested a number of potential service responses for the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center, based on seventeen such service responses suggested by the authors of *Strategic Planning for Results* with input from the library community.

The staff planning committee then met to consider these suggested service responses. The staff planning committee examined the strengths and weaknesses of the library as well as the opportunities and threats presented by the suggested service responses. After consideration of these issues, the staff planning committee gave its support to five of the responses suggested by the community planning committee:

- Explore and Know Our Community, which combines the library's role in providing users with a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations and the library's role in providing the information that users need to support and promote democracy, to fulfill their civic responsibilities at the local, state, and national levels, and to fully participate in community decision-making
- Make Career Choices, which focuses on the library's role in providing teens and adults with the skills and resources they need to identify career opportunities that suit their individual strengths and interests.
- Visit a Comfortable Place, which focuses on the library's efforts to provide users with welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit

quietly and with open and accessible virtual spaces that support social networking.

- **Make Informed Decisions**, which emphasizes the library's role in providing users with the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.
- **Stimulate and Express Imagination**, which combines the library's role in helping users who want materials to enhance their leisure time by assisting them in finding what they want when and where they want them and by providing them with the help they need to make choices from among the options and the library's role in providing the services and support that users need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment. For the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center, the primary focus of this service response is youth programming.

The responses selected by the staff planning committee were taken to the community planning committee, which recommended that the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center adopt these five service responses. The community planning committee then provided input on a mission statement for the library and on goal statements for each of the recommended service responses.

The staff planning committee then met to discuss the recommendations of the community planning committee. With input from the complete staff, the staff writing team (a subset of the staff planning committee) began drafting a mission statement for the library and identifying goals, objectives, and activities to implement the service responses over the next five years. The mission statement, service responses, goals, objectives, and representative activities are listed below.

Mission Statement

Based on the discussions of the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center's community planning committee, the staff's understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the library system as well as the opportunities and threats presented by the environment in which the library system operates, and the service responses recommended by the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center's community planning committee, members of the community planning and staff planning committees created the following mission statement for the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center.

The library opens windows to the world by encouraging expression, enlightenment, and exploration.

Service Priorities, Goals, Objectives, and Representative Activities

The goals, objectives, and activities of the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center support the service responses that were developed and approved by the community planning and staff planning committees.

Library Service Priorities and Goals

EXPLORE AND KNOW OUR COMMUNITY

Goal 1: All library users will have opportunities to learn about the diversity of Cumberland County's people and resources through the services of the library, community agencies, and organizations.

Goal 2: All Cumberland County residents will have access to resources to increase their awareness of local, state, national, and world issues and events.

MAKE CAREER CHOICES

Goal 3: All Cumberland County teens and adults will have access to current resources in order to make informed decisions about careers.

VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE

Goal 4: All library users will have a welcoming place to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read, and will have current, useful, and attractive virtual spaces.

MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

Goal 5: All members of the community will have access to opportunities and resources to make informed decisions in personal health, finances, and other life choices to enhance their quality of life.

STIMULATE AND EXPRESS IMAGINATION

Goal 6: All citizens will have access to materials and programs that foster and stimulate the imagination and provide outlets for creative expression.

**EXPLORE AND KNOW OUR COMMUNITY:
Community Resources and Services**

Goal 1: All library users will have opportunities to learn about the diversity of Cumberland County's people and resources through the services of the library, community agencies, and organizations.

Objective 1.1: Annually, at least four programs and four publications will be offered at library facilities which promote, or instruct on, the activities or resources available in Cumberland County.

Objective 1.2: At least 80 per cent of the customers surveyed at the completion of the community-related programming (Objective 1.1) will state that they know more about Cumberland County's resources than before the program.

Objective 1.3: Annually, staff members from each branch, either individually or in conjunction with its sister branch, will participate in at least one outreach program to promote awareness of information available through the library and its various resources.

Representative Activities Supporting Goal 1:

- Staff will invite local community and governmental agencies to present information on timely topical issues.
- Staff will partner with community agencies and will cross-promote through shared outlets for publicity.
- The Youth Services staff will plan programs that provide an exploration and appreciation of other cultures.

- The Local and State History staff will plan programs that illustrate aspects of local or state history.
- Staff will continue to provide annual presentations to the high school and middle school faculty on the use of available library resources.
- Staff will actively seek participation in job fairs, health fairs, etc. offered by county agencies.
- Staff will participate in community outreach programs, such as Spring Lake's "Spring Fling," the schools' "Did You Know" nights, etc.
- Staff will revise and create promotional materials for outreach programs.

Goal 2: Cumberland County residents will have access to resources to increase their awareness of local, state, national and world events.

Objective 2.1: The library's Web site will offer at least one Web page each quarter and every branch will present one book display each quarter about resources and materials currently available at the library that address current issues at the local, state, national, and/or world levels.

Objective 2.2: Annually, staff members offering reference services will participate in at least two training sessions on the use of library-created resources, services, and programs.

Representative Activities Supporting Goal 2:

- The Web Team will track hits on the Web site's topical pages for both library users in the library and hits from outside the library.

- The Web Team will use online “comments” made by customers to provide suggestions to programmers about topics of customer interest for upcoming programs.
- Staff will create book displays relevant to current issues posted on the Web site.
- Staff will select materials in all formats and for all ages that address current issues at the local, state, national, and global levels.
- The library will partner with agencies in joint programming on topics of local history, state, national, or global interest.
- The Youth Services staff will plan programs that provide an exploration and appreciation of other cultures.
- Staff will maintain the online Answer Book, either through software permitting agencies to update their information or by staff review as necessary.
- Staff will complete a refresher training course/program about using library-created resources for locating referral information on services offered by local governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations.
- New training modules will be developed as needed for revised or new resources created by the library.
- The staff training program, “23 Things,” will be implemented.

**MAKE CAREER CHOICES:
Job and Career Development**

Goal 3: All Cumberland County teens and adults will have access to current resources in order to make informed decisions about careers.

Objective 3.1: Each year during the plan, the library will provide 100 new career resources for adults and teens for use in the general collection and at system-wide Career Centers.

Objective 3.2: Each year during the plan, the usage of career-related online resources, including career databases and the “Employment and Business Skills” Web pages on the library Web site, will increase over the usage in the base year established during FY 2011.

Objective 3.3: Each year during the plan, 80 per cent of customers seeking job or career information at library programs and online will state on a survey that they feel better equipped to perform their job seeking, update their skills, or find information about a new career after attending the program.

Representative Activities Supporting Goal 3:

- The Web Team will update online career resources posted on the library’s Web pages.
- The Web Team will add more dynamic content to the career-related Web pages on the library Web site.
- The Career Center Coordinator and Information Services Council will update and add career-related pathfinders and brochures.

- The Collection Development and Public Services Division Manager will purchase current career-related titles for adults and teens.
- The Teen Services staff will develop displays within the library facilities to promote career and job resources.
- The library will promote online career resources at outreach programs and in-house programs related to careers.
- Annually, the library will provide outreach programs to Cumberland County middle and high school students, during which online career resources will be promoted.
- The Database Task Force will seek and evaluate new resources on job skills and careers.
- The Adult Programming Council and Teen Council will partner with local agencies and organizations to provide in-house programs on jobs and careers for adults and teens.
- The library will maintain and update system-wide Career Centers in order to meet customer needs for job and career information.

**VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE:
Public and Virtual Spaces**

Goal 4: All library users will have a welcoming place to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read, and will have current, useful, and attractive virtual spaces.

Objective 4.1: On an annual survey of teen library users, at least 80 per cent of survey respondents will rate the physical teen spaces at each branch as good or better.

Objective 4.2: On an annual survey of teen library users, at least 80 per cent of survey respondents will rate the library's virtual teen spaces as good or better.

Objective 4.3: The number of hits on the library's teen Web site will increase every year of the plan after the base year of FY 2011.

Objective 4.4: Each year the library will provide teen programs at least equal to the FY 2010 total.

Objective 4.5: The number of hits on the library's Web site will increase every year of the plan after the base year of FY 2011.

Objective 4.6: On the annual customer satisfaction survey, at least 80 per cent of library users will rate the physical environment of each branch as welcoming.

Objective 4.7: The number of hits to the children's Web site will increase every year of the plan after the base year of FY 2011.

Objective 4.8: On an annual survey of parents and caregivers, at least 80 per cent of survey respondents will rate the physical children's spaces at each branch as good or better.

Objective 4.9: On an annual survey of parents and caregivers, at least 80 per cent of survey respondents will rate the library's virtual children's spaces as good or better.

Representative Activities Supporting Goal 4:

- Staff will develop a plan to improve computer access for teens.
- Staff will evaluate teen spaces to ensure a welcoming and teen-friendly environment.
- Staff will collect and post stories from teens about using library materials and spaces or attending programs.
- The Youth Services staff will select materials of interest to youth and provide dynamic displays.
- The Teen Services staff and the Web Team will continue to work to maintain a Web site that is useful and attractive to teens with an increase in interactive features.
- Staff will offer a wide variety of programs for teens.
- Staff at each facility will establish a Teen Advisory Board to consult about programming, developing teen spaces, and the teen Web site.

- Staff will establish relationships with other organizations that serve teens.
- The Information Services staff and the Web Team will review the Web site content on a regular basis to maintain currency and accuracy.
- The Web Team will continue to work to maintain a pleasing and user-friendly Web site.
- Staff will promote the library's Web site during interactions with customers and through displays.
- The Web Team will survey customers about the Web site's utility and ease of use.
- The Database Task Force will continue to test new databases of interest to the public.
- Staff will conduct an annual customer service survey.
- Staff will monitor library maintenance to ensure clean and safe buildings.
- Staff will evaluate and maintain attractive, effective, and consistent signage.
- Staff will evaluate the furniture arrangement to provide adequate and comfortable seating for groups and individuals.
- Staff will receive regular security training and the security manual will be updated as needed, and staff at facilities will maintain the manuals. Managers will have regular discussions of security issues at staff meetings.
- Staff will maintain clean conference and activity rooms that are easy to reserve.
- The Web Team and the Youth Services staff will redesign the library's children's Web pages to make them more child-friendly.

- The Youth Services staff will maintain a dynamic Web site with regular updates and useful links for parents and children based on children's activities and issues.
- The Youth Services staff will look for new databases and electronic resources of interest to children.
- Staff will evaluate children's spaces to ensure a child-friendly environment.
- Staff will continue to create pleasing and child-friendly displays.
- The Youth Services Staff will select materials of interest to children.
- The Youth Services staff will provide a variety of age-appropriate programs throughout the year.

**MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS:
Health, Wealth, and Other Life Choices for All Citizens**

Goal 5: All members of the community will have access to opportunities and resources to make informed decisions in personal health, finances, and other life choices to enhance their quality of life.

Objective 5.1: Each branch will provide a minimum of one display quarterly, highlighting current resources for designated life choice topics to aid the community in identifying risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.

Objective 5.2: The library will provide a minimum of three programs quarterly to address designated life choice topics, including health-related and finance-related issues.

Objective 5.3: Once each quarter, the library will develop and post electronic resources that provide information to aid customers in making life decisions.

Representative Activities Supporting Goal 5:

- Staff will present workshops on health-related topics such as obesity in children, teens, and adults; nutrition; exercise; and mental health issues.
- Staff will present workshops on finance-related topics such as creating a budget; understanding your credit score and ways to improve it; the differences between stocks and bonds; 401K's and CD's; and retirement planning.

- Staff will measure the number of people who attend these programs.
- Staff will populate Web pages with links to topics related to making life decisions, such as estate planning, wills, assisted living FAQs, and “marriage and family.”
- The Web Team will measure the usefulness of all Web page links, based on the number of hits to these Web pages.
- Staff will survey users of these Web pages to determine their satisfaction with the usefulness of the information.
- Staff will provide a “Suggestions and Comments are Welcome” section to help develop and maintain Web pages.

**STIMULATE AND EXPRESS IMAGINATION:
Reading, Viewing, and Listening for Pleasure;
Create and Share Content**

Goal 6: All citizens will have access to materials and programs that foster and stimulate the imagination and provide outlets for creative expression.

Objective 6.1: Each year the library will provide children's programs at least equal to the FY 2011 total. These programs will continue to contain an interactive component.

Objective 6.2: Each branch will present at least one interactive teen program quarterly that demonstrates a creative use of library collections.

Objective 6.3: At the beginning of each year of the plan, the collection development team will target and enhance one area of the collection relating to creativity, imagination or leisure activities. By the end of each year, the average publication date for the area selected will increase by at least 3 years.

Objective 6.4: Each year, the Adult Programming Team will plan and conduct a minimum of one program per quarter that incorporates new materials from the targeted area. (See Objective 6.3.)

Representative Activities Supporting Goal 6:

- The Youth Services staff will plan and conduct programs with themes or components relating to dance, music, art, writing, and other creative expressions.

- The Youth Services staff will create and maintain a Web page of suggested activities and library resources related to programs that help parents engage creatively with their children.
- The Youth Services staff will select picture books, j fiction, j nonfiction, and media which stimulate creativity and imagination in children.
- Under the direction of the Assistant Youth Services Coordinator, the Information Services and Youth Services staff will continue to plan and conduct participatory programs, such as Poetry Slams, Librari-Con, and “Read It, Write It, Share It.”
- The Assistant Youth Services Coordinator will continue to maintain the teen blog on the library Web site and will add new content to highlight teen programs and teen library resources.
- Each branch will create a teen board to allow teens to express their own programming ideas.
- The Teen Services staff will select materials in all formats to stimulate creativity and imagination in teens.
- The Adult Programming Team will incorporate newly purchased works in the targeted areas into appropriate adult programs, including book discussions, adult computer programs, and writer’s groups.
- Each branch will create displays to highlight the targeted collection area and associated library programs.
- Under the direction of the Web Team, assigned Information Services staff will add new content to the Reader’s Corner Blog that highlights newly purchased works in the targeted collection areas.

- The Adult Services Collection Team will select materials in all formats to foster imagination and creativity in the adult reader/viewer/listener.