

Long Range Plan

for the

Cleveland County Memorial Library

FY 2010 – 2014

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Executive Summary

Beginning in March 2009, a community-based planning committee met and helped develop a five-year strategic plan for the Cleveland County Memorial Library. 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

It is the mission of the Cleveland County Library System to offer access to a comprehensive collection of materials, in a safe and welcoming environment, to encourage social, economic, cultural, and intellectual growth. Through the careful use of resources and a knowledgeable staff, the Library will contribute to the overall quality of life and meet the ever-changing needs of the citizens of Cleveland County. By encouraging an atmosphere of lifelong learning through traditional library services and emerging technologies, the library will continue to be a relevant part of our community.

Vision Statement

The citizens of Cleveland County will have a welcoming and customer-oriented public library system that:

- Encourages lifelong learning
- Nurtures the joy of reading
- Contributes significantly to job and career development
- Connects citizens to up-to-date and relevant technologies.

Library Service Priorities and Goals

CREATE YOUNG READERS

Goal 1: The children of Cleveland County will be provided with the books, media, electronic resources, services, and programs they need to ensure that they are ready to read, write, and listen upon entering school, based on individual needs.

Goal 2: The parents and childcare providers of Cleveland County will have programs, resources, and materials that will enable them to encourage children to be excited about reading.

MAKE CAREER CHOICES

Goal 1: The young adults, adults, and the unemployed of Cleveland County will have resources, materials, and programs that strengthen their career development skills.

CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD

Goal 1: All citizens of Cleveland County will have access to sufficient public workstations and the software needed to meet their Internet or online needs.

SATISFY CURIOSITY

Goal 1: All citizens of Cleveland County will have the resources needed to explore topics of personal interest and encourage life-long learning.

Goal 2: High school students in Cleveland County will benefit from the library's expanded role in the county schools' "Senior Projects."

VISIT A WELCOMING PLACE

Goal 1: The citizens of Cleveland County will have a library that is welcoming, safe, and comfortable.

Goal 2: The citizens of Cleveland County will have more access points for library services.

STIMULATE IMAGINATION

Goal 1: The users of leisure reading, listening, and viewing collections in Cleveland County will have current materials of interest.

Goal 2: The citizens of Cleveland County will benefit from a variety of programs for adults, teens, and children on leisure reading, listening, and viewing topics.

Introduction

Motivation for Planning

In January 2009, the Cleveland County Memorial Library 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 Planning Process

The Cleveland County Memorial Library 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 Cleveland County Memorial Library's planning process formed the library's community planning committee. This committee included:

- Mary Accor, Kings Mountain
- Stan Anthony, Shelby
- Eddie Bailes, Shelby
- Gracie Blackley, Shelby
- Nancy Blalock , Boiling Springs
- Annabel Davis, Shelby
- Mary Degree, Shelby
- Taylor Edwards, Shelby
- Swanetta Fink, Cherryville
- Janet Heavner, Lawndale
- Jymmye Keating , Shelby
- David Carson Putnam, Shelby
- Teeairia Shell, Shelby
- Jasmine Spikes, Shelby
- Cassie Tarpley, Shelby
- Cheryl Vagnozzi, Kings Mountain

A staff planning committee, made up of members of the staff of the Cleveland County Memorial Library, was also involved in the planning process. The staff planning committee included:

- Carol Wilson, Library Director
- Kathy Alexander
- Linda Hooker
- Jymmye Keating
- Kimberly Logan
- Debbie Page
- Barbara Wakefield

The Cleveland County Memorial Library'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 Vision and Community Needs

The first task of the community planning committee was to identify a community vision for Cleveland County and to use that vision to identify the most important needs of the community. The community planning committee then identified the needs that the Cleveland County Memorial Library is well suited to meet or provide support for and suggested service responses for the library.

The community vision consisted of the following statements, which embody the dreams that the members of the library's community planning committee, as representatives of all the people of the community, have for the place that they, their children, and the residents of the entire community will inhabit in the future.

- All children will benefit from a nurturing environment.
- All citizens will benefit from more help for illiteracy and prevention of illiteracy.
- Everyone will benefit from a Highway 74 bypass.
- Everyone will benefit from health care.
- Everyone will benefit from more industry.
- Everyone – especially children, the police, and DSS – will benefit from no crime or child abuse.
- Families and the community will benefit from better education and training.
- Senior citizens will benefit from comfort with and access to computers and the Internet.
- The work force will benefit from plenty of jobs with decent wages.

After considering the current state of Cleveland County relative to this community vision, the community planning committee identified the following community needs.

- Affordable housing
- Affordable recreation and entertainment for teens to keep them out of trouble
- Attention to road maintenance (New Highway 74)
- Better education

- Community police (Safety in community)
- Economic stimulus by attracting responsible businesses
- Knowledge of and access to community resources
- More job opportunities
- More jobs and training
- More teachers
- Provision for more cultural and educational opportunities
- Resources to help people learn to read and write

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 Cleveland County Memorial Library, 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:

- Create Young Readers, which focuses on the library's role in providing preschool children with the programs and services needed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.
- Make Career Choices, which emphasizes 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.
- Connect to the Online World, which focuses on the library's efforts to provide residents with high-speed access to the digital world to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.
- Satisfy Curiosity, which emphasizes the library's role in helping residents have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.
- Visit a Welcoming Place, which emphasizes the library's role in providing safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support social networking.

- Stimulate Imagination, which focuses on the library's role in helping residents 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.

The responses selected by the staff planning committee were taken to the community planning committee, which recommended that the Cleveland County Memorial Library adopt these six 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. 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 Cleveland County Memorial Library'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 Cleveland County Memorial Library's community planning committee, members of the community planning and staff planning committees created the following mission statement for the Cleveland County Memorial Library.

It is the mission of the Cleveland County Library System to offer access to a comprehensive collection of materials, in a safe and welcoming environment, to encourage social, economic, cultural, and intellectual growth. Through the careful use of resources and a knowledgeable staff, the Library will contribute to the overall quality of life and meet the ever-changing needs of the citizens of Cleveland County. By encouraging an atmosphere of lifelong learning through traditional library services and emerging technologies, the library will continue to be a relevant part of our community.

Vision Statement

In addition to the mission statement, which reflects the long-term value of the library to the community, members of the community planning and staff planning committees created the following vision statement for the Cleveland County Memorial Library, which reflects the desired outcomes for the library over the next five years.

The citizens of Cleveland County will have a welcoming and customer-oriented public library system that:

- Encourages lifelong learning
- Nurtures the joy of reading
- Contributes significantly to job and career development
- Connects citizens to up-to-date and relevant technologies.

Service Priorities, Goals, Objectives, and Representative Activities

The goals, objectives, and activities of the Cleveland County Memorial Library support the service responses that were developed and approved by the community planning and staff planning committees.

Library Service Priorities and Goals

CREATE YOUNG READERS

Goal 1: The children of Cleveland County will be provided with the books, media, electronic resources, services, and programs they need to ensure that they are ready to read, write, and listen upon entering school, based on individual needs.

Goal 2: The parents and childcare providers of Cleveland County will have programs, resources, and materials that will enable them to encourage children to be excited about reading.

MAKE CAREER CHOICES

Goal 1: The young adults, adults, and the unemployed of Cleveland County will have resources, materials, and programs that strengthen their career development skills.

CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD

Goal 1: All citizens of Cleveland County will have access to sufficient public workstations and the software needed to meet their Internet or online needs.

SATISFY CURIOSITY

Goal 1: All citizens of Cleveland County will have the resources needed to explore topics of personal interest and encourage life-long learning.

Goal 2: High school students in Cleveland County will benefit from the library's expanded role in the county schools' "Senior Projects."

VISIT A WELCOMING PLACE

Goal 1: The citizens of Cleveland County will have a library that is welcoming, safe, and comfortable.

Goal 2: The citizens of Cleveland County will have more access points for library services.

STIMULATE IMAGINATION

Goal 1: The users of leisure reading, listening, and viewing collections in Cleveland County will have current materials of interest.

Goal 2: The citizens of Cleveland County will benefit from a variety of programs for adults, teens, and children on leisure reading, listening, and viewing topics.

CREATE YOUNG READERS

Goal 1: The children of Cleveland County will be provided with the books, media, electronic resources, services, and programs they need to ensure that they are ready to read, write, and listen upon entering school, based on individual needs.

Goal 2: The parents and childcare providers of Cleveland County will have programs, resources, and materials that will enable them to encourage children to be excited about reading.

Objectives:

- Over the next five years, the library will increase the circulation of appropriate materials for children, parents, and childcare providers by 5 per cent.
- Over the next five years, the library will increase the number of children's programs by 5 per cent.
- Beginning in 2010, the library will develop and implement new evaluation tools for one library program and one library service for children and their caregivers each year.

Representative activities:

- The library will provide two programs a year where children, parents, and/or caregivers will interact to encourage pre-reading skills.
- The library will weed out-of-date or worn-out materials.
- The library will provide evaluation tools for each program.
- The library will make the public more aware of opportunities for children, parents, and childcare providers through increased publicity, displays, and signage.

MAKE CAREER CHOICES

Goal 1: The young adults, adults, and the unemployed of Cleveland County will have resources, materials, and programs that strengthen their career development skills.

Objectives:

- The library will provide quarterly programs on resume writing and interview skills.
- Over the next five years, the library will increase its written resources on job seeking skills by 20 per cent.
- The library will offer monthly computer classes on basic computer skills and word processing.

Representative activities:

- The library will implement training on Resume Wizard or similar computer programs.
- The library will set up a job and career center in the libraries.
- The library will market new resources and programs through handouts and brochures and through the local media.
- The library will develop an evaluation tool for each program.
- The library will create handouts of websites for job seekers.
- The library will encourage the use of Learn-A-Test.

CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD

Goal 1: All citizens of Cleveland County will have access to sufficient public workstations and the software needed to meet their Internet or online needs.

Objectives:

- The library will better market its online services to increase usage by 5 per cent over the next five years.
- The library will conduct an annual survey of library users, and at least 90 per cent of respondents will indicate that they are satisfied with the library's computer hardware and Internet access.
- The library will increase its bandwidth by 50 per cent over the next 5 years.
- The library will replace 10 per cent of its computers each year.
- The library will replace 10 per cent of its computer monitors with flat-screen monitors each year.
- By July 2010, the library will provide wireless Internet access at the Spangler branch library.

Representative activities:

- The library will add partitions between the public computers.
- The library will replace its current PAC stations with Internet-accessible computers.
- The library will maintain its hardware within the guidelines of its Computer Replacement Policy.
- The library will provide appropriate high-speed Internet access.

SATISFY CURIOSITY

Goal 1: All citizens of Cleveland County will have the resources needed to explore topics of personal interest and encourage life-long learning.

Goal 2: High school students in Cleveland County will benefit from the library's expanded role in the county schools' "Senior Projects."

Objectives:

- Over the next five years, the library will increase the circulation of its nonfiction collections by 5 per cent.
- The library will conduct an annual survey of library users, and at least 80 per cent of respondents will indicate that they found something of interest to them.
- The library will offer at least quarterly programs on topics of interest to adults and school-aged children and youth.
- By 2014, the library will have made a presentation to all high school teachers about the services connected to the "Senior Projects."
- By 2011, the library will develop and present two programs per year on plagiarism and project management.

Representative activities:

- The library will create special displays to highlight topics of interest.
- The library will create bookmarks and pathfinders on topics of interest.
- The library will write a bi-weekly newspaper column.
- The library will find out more about the continuing education classes at Cleveland Community College to help with collection development and program coordination.
- The library will weed its adult nonfiction collections for out-of-date and worn-out materials.

- The library will work with teachers and administrations to identify the resources that it can provide for projects.
- The library will make more teachers aware of its Assignment Alert Service.
- The library will develop and present programs on project management skills and plagiarism.

VISIT A WELCOMING PLACE

Goal 1: The citizens of Cleveland County will have a library that is welcoming, safe, and comfortable.

Goal 2: The citizens of Cleveland County will have more access points for library services.

Objectives:

- The library will conduct an annual survey of library users, and by 2014, 90 per cent of respondents will indicate that the libraries are safe and welcoming.
- By 2014, the library will contract with a consultant for a space needs study of the Main Library in Shelby.
- By 2014, a branch library for western Cleveland County will be on the county's capital project list.
- By 2014, a branch library for southern Cleveland County will be on the county's capital project list.

Representative activities:

- The library will replace the front doors at the Main Library in Shelby with electric doors to accommodate the elderly and handicapped.
- The library will improve signage at its locations.
- The library will provide directories at its locations.
- All library staff will attend a workshop on excellent customer service.
- The library will apply for an LSTA Planning Grant to hire a consultant for a space needs study of the Main Library in Shelby.
- The library will replace the carpeting and relocate the stacks and furniture at the Main Library in Shelby according to the space needs study.

- The library staff will have meetings with the county Board of Commissioners and interested citizens to determine how best to get branch libraries for western and southern Cleveland County on the county's capital projects list.
- The library staff will seek powerful partners to help advocate for more access points, for example, the school system and Gardner Webb University.

STIMULATE IMAGINATION

Goal 1: The users of leisure reading, listening, and viewing collections in Cleveland County will have current materials of interest.

Goal 2: The citizens of Cleveland County will benefit from a variety of programs for adults, teens, and children on leisure reading, listening, and viewing topics.

Objectives:

- Over the next five years, the library will increase the circulation of its adult and juvenile fiction collections by 5 per cent.
- The library will conduct an annual survey of library users, and at least 90 per cent of respondents will indicate that they are satisfied with the library's programs in this area.

Representative activities:

- The library will weed its adult and juvenile fiction collections of worn and out-of-date materials.
- The library will market its adult and juvenile fiction collections through displays, bookmarks, and other means.
- The library will promote Novelist to its users and will train the staff in its use.
- The library will purchase more pleasure reading materials in Spanish for adults.
- The library will provide monthly programs from September through May and summer reading programs for all ages.