

# **TIGARD PUBLIC LIBRARY PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Performance Audit Purpose

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This performance audit is designed to review work flow, materials flow, work processes, and staffing allocations for the Tigard Public Library in order to identify potential efficiencies. It is also designed to answer the question: Are Tigard residents receiving appropriate value for their investment in the Tigard Public Library?

The audit was conducted by gathering and reviewing background information such as the budget, performance measurements, statistics, and various reports, surveying all staff members regarding their work activities, processes and opinions, touring the library and observing work processes and activities, meeting a number of staff members, and interviewing library managers.

### Overall Assessment

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#### High Satisfaction, High Return on Investment

According to both the community and library surveys, the library is highly regarded by both Tigard residents and those who actually use the library. The satisfaction numbers are unusually high, signifying that the library is in touch with what the community and its users need and want. The fact that the city and the library proactively engage with the community to ensure that they are hearing from their constituents is very positive as is the fact that the city builds effectiveness measurements into its budgeting process and that the library conscientiously tracks them and uses them as it makes service and resource allocation decisions.



The library provides a return on investment of nearly \$4 for every tax dollar invested in its collections and services. This figure was computed using very conservative methodology and is deemed highly credible. In addition, the library is a key community institution in support of children and families, education, community building, the free and open exchange of ideas, the joy and utility of reading, and the pursuit of worthwhile leisure activities. There is no way to compute a monetary value but these intangible benefits are understood by both the community at large and library users and are reflected in the regard held for libraries in general and the Tigard Public Library in particular.

The library is staffed by highly competent, dedicated, customer service oriented employees and managers. The staffing level is neither severely deficient nor generous but basically adequate for the size of the facility, hours of operation, and programs and services provided. These paid employees are augmented by over 400 volunteers who donate the equivalent of seven full time positions. These volunteers provide essential services such as checking in returned books, reshelving books, searching for requested items, and processing and mending library materials. These are basic meat and potatoes services, not nice to

have extra's. Without these volunteers, the library simply could not function and the quality of service and customer interactions would suffer tremendously.

The library is well managed. It plans its work and works its plan. Managers know their numbers and work to reassess work practices and work flow. This is, of course, a never ending process and there is always room for fresh perspectives and additional review. However, the managers are open to this sort of analysis and hold themselves and their employees accountable for achieving articulated goals.

There are areas where efficiencies could be achieved but it's important for everyone involved to understand that the adoption of the kinds of suggestions and recommendations made in this report involve tradeoffs. The library and the City, for example, place a high value on providing responsive, personalized service to city residents. Time and money can be saved by using self-service technology but this could impact user satisfaction. The challenge will be to consider options within the larger context of the community's character and values system.

## Summary of Recommendations

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- Continue to conduct periodic trend analyses and comparisons to track the basic direction of fundamental indicators such as those shown in Appendix A and various tables throughout this report. The library's managers are aware of their effectiveness and work load measures and routinely track this management information. Conducting longitudinal assessments of both outputs (such as circulation, program attendance, questions answered) and inputs (budget for library materials, staff) will provide information with which to make management assessments and decisions.
- Continue to maintain a close connection between the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, which was derived through substantial citizen input, and the annual budget. The library is doing well with this and should continue this practice.
- Become more proactive in using the effectiveness and workload measures so that slippages are addressed rather than just noted. Utilize process improvement techniques to determine how the work is currently being done and to determine what steps can be altered or eliminated so that productivity can be maintained or even improved.
- Continue the annual library surveys. This commendable practice is comparatively rare in public libraries but is essential to maintaining responsive services. The Tigard Public Library is regarded as very effective because it routinely asks its users how well it's doing and makes service adjustments based on the answers received.
- Continue to carefully watch and monitor how volunteers are utilized with the goal of having both a strong volunteer program and ensuring, to the extent possible, that volunteer work is done as efficiently as possible. This is an area where there are tradeoffs that must be recognized and discussed.
- Work with city web staff and other city departments to create and support websites that are as dynamic and interactive as possible. Library staff are eager to create, deliver, and share content online using new tools such as blogs, podcasts, and wikis. Advocate for usability testing involving citizens and library users to ensure that the website and interfaces (such as the library catalog and electronic databases) are easy to use and allow users to find the information they are seeking.

- Work with WCCLS and SAM, the vendor of the PC management software to complete the installation of the software and its integration with Polaris (the cooperatively owned integrated library system) so that public PCs and printing through them can be managed as efficiently as possible.
- Continue to develop the roving/deskless reference concept so that reference staff move out from behind their desks and work proactively with library customers on the floor and at the study tables. This major change in service model will require continued training and discussion among library staff and managers.
- Accelerate the development of a comprehensive collection development/materials selection policy and attendant procedures so that staff who select materials have clear guidance and so that selection of age level and print and non-print materials are selected in a way that is consistent with identified community needs and wants and the strategic plan. Continue and refine the use of turnover rates and other collection usage statistics as the basis for both selection, replacement, and retention decisions.
- Utilize vendor provided selection and acquisitions services as extensively as possible for popular, high demand materials so that selectors can devote their time to sculpting a collection that meets local needs.
- Continue with the targeted approach to programming. The Tigard Public Library has developed sophisticated program plans that link both to identified community needs and the library's strategic plan.
- Utilize non-MLS degreed senior library assistants to supplement the desk, programming, and collection development work of librarians. This approach has begun but could be developed further. As library work has changed, this classification can play a larger role without a decline in service quality.
- As additional outreach services are planned and developed, investigate collaboration opportunities with other agencies and organizations to find ways to extend services beyond the physical confines of the library building. This approach is a key factor in community building and can often contribute to the economic development of the communities served, also. However, everyone involved must understand that developing such partnerships takes time away from other library activities. Care must be taken to backfill staff who are assigned to do this and/or to develop alternative staffing patterns, such as more extensive use of senior library assistants.
- Conduct process analyses of Technical Services and Circulation activities using techniques provided to library managers to decrease turn around time in both divisions. Besides knowledgeable, friendly, helpful staff, responsive customer service requires that materials be made available to the public as quickly as possible. Effectiveness measures must be revised so that materials are made available sooner.
- Review the purpose for various color codes, labels, collection locations and codes, etc. with public services staff. The handling and labeling necessitated by these add to the processing and reshelving time, thus impacting output in both Technical Services and Circulation.
- Take advantage of vendor provided processing and cataloging services. By using process analysis techniques, the true cost of doing this work in house can be compared with purchasing vendor services. If labels and other special handling is reduced, it will be less expensive both to do the work

in house and for the vendor to do the work. Many libraries use both approaches, which can result in material moving through Technical Services more quickly.

- Cross train Technical Services employees so that work can be assigned based on where it is backing up. Individuals may have expertise that others can call on, but the goal should be that all employees can perform the various tasks so that work doesn't back up if a particular employee is out ill, on vacation, etc.
- Experiment with the concept of a sorter (which could be a paid staff member or volunteer) in Circulation so that those checking materials in don't have to stop to place materials on the various shelving carts around the room.
- Determine whether or not a way can be found to determine the percentage of holds not picked up by library customers. Determine what seems to be an acceptable "cost of doing business" and track the figure to determine whether or not it exceeds this level. Consider using positively worded bookmarks and other methods for communicating with library customers, asking their assistance in managing this problem (such as cancelling unwanted holds, etc.).
- Working with WCCLS, develop workload and effectiveness measures related to the holds and delivery process. This is a time and labor consuming part of library work that is still relatively new. Good, standardized measures are not yet available which means that each library must work to develop its own.
- Implement the planned activities to raise awareness among library customers of the self-check option and its advantages to them. Review the placement of the machine(s) to ensure that they are visible and seem like a primary rather than a secondary option for library users. Arrange for several months worth of friendly, personal assistance so that library customers learn how easy the self-check option is.
- Review policies to be sure that they don't present barriers to the use of the self-check option.
- Shelf holds in a user accessible area near the self-check machines so that library users can pick up and check out their holds themselves rather than having to ask desk staff to retrieve them. Many libraries have now gone to this system and have been able to work out issues of security and confidentiality to the satisfaction of the vast majority of users.
- Set an ambitious self-check utilization rate of 20% by the end of 2007 and 40% by the end of 2008.

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# INTRODUCTION

## The Performance Audit Project

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### Scope of the Project

This performance audit is designed to review work flow, materials flow, work processes, and staffing allocations for the Tigard Public Library in order to identify potential efficiencies. It is also designed to answer the question: Are Tigard residents receiving appropriate value for their investment in the Tigard Public Library?

### Project Methodology

The consultant received background information provided by the library, including various reports, the budget, the union contract, and available service and output statistics. In addition, survey forms were prepared and distributed to all staff members. The survey asked for details about how each employee spent his or her time, requested information about work space and equipment, and asked for the employees' opinions on work flow and work activities. An extraordinary 100% return rate meant that the consultant was able to hear, through the confidentially submitted surveys, from every staff member.

This background information provided a beginning context for three days spent on site, conducting interviews with division managers, meeting a number of staff members, observing work processes and activities throughout the library, and observing staff and volunteer interactions with library customers. Additional information was then requested and analyzed along with the information gathered through the direct observations provided by the site visits.

### Acknowledgements

The consultant was impressed with the openness, candor, and responsiveness to the project evinced by the library's managers and staff members. Library employees were aware of the project, participated fully in terms of completing the survey forms and providing requested information promptly and completely, and indicated that they are well versed in their job duties and responsibilities, proud of their contributions to their division's work efforts, and committed to providing quality, customer-oriented library services to Tigard residents.

## The Tigard Public Library

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Founded in 1963, the Tigard Public Library serves the 65,310 citizens of Tigard and surrounding areas through a 48,000 square foot building opened in 2004.<sup>1</sup> The library provides a broad array of library services, from the traditional loaning of books and audiovisual materials, answering of questions, and provision of children's programming to the "new basic" services of public PCs, classes in how to use technology, book discussion clubs and leading edge services such as downloadable books, coffee service, and free wireless access for those who bring their own laptops to the library.

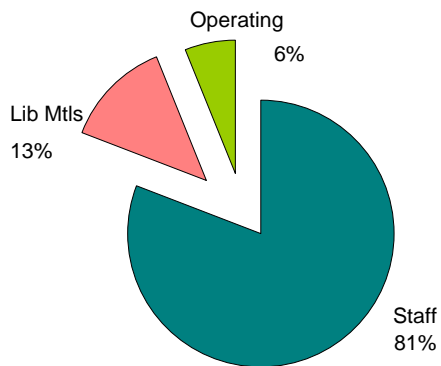


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<sup>1</sup> The current population of the City of Tigard is 45,500. The library's service population is larger than the population of Tigard alone.

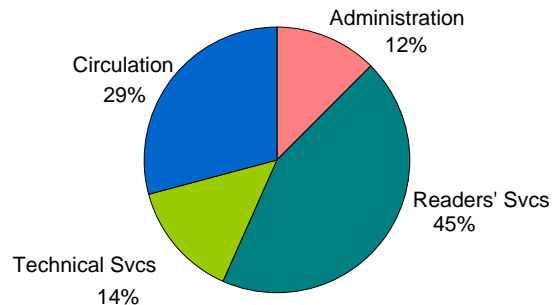
Since moving in to the new building, which is over three times larger than the old building, the library has seen a 24% increase in circulation and a 33% increase in visits by library customers.

The Library is a department of Tigard city government. Library services are planned, managed, and provided by 34.2 full time equivalent (FTE) staff members. A seven person citizen Library Board advises the City Manager and City Council regarding library policies, budget, facilities and community needs in support of providing quality library service. The function of the Library Board is established in the Tigard Municipal Code (2.36.030).



The library's FY 2006/2007 operating budget is \$2,819,251. The expenditure break down is shown by the pie chart to the left. The source of the operating budget is the City's General Fund. The annual operational budget for the Library is funded by the City General fund and redistributed tax dollars from Washington County. The funding the City receives from Washington County is based on a formula. This formula each year determines the amount of funding each public library in Washington County receives from the Washington County Library Cooperative System (WCCLS).

The library is organized into four divisions. The pie chart to the right shows the percentage of the budget allocated to each division.



Administration (12%) is responsible for overseeing library operations and managing the library's volunteer program and public information activities.

Readers' Services (45%) is responsible for selecting and managing library materials, providing professional assistance to library customers in using the library's collections and services, accessing resources beyond the library through arranging for loans from other libraries, and developing and producing programming for children, teens, and adults.

Technical Services (14%) is responsible for ordering, receiving, cataloging, and processing books and other library materials, maintaining the database of library holdings information, and mending damaged materials.

Circulation (29%) is responsible for checking materials in and out, answering customer questions about library facilities and programs, issuing library cards and collecting fees and fines, processing materials delivered from and returned to other libraries, finding requested materials (holds) in the library's collections, maintaining the database of borrowers' records, and reshelving returned library materials.



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# FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## Value for Resident Investment

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### **Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Citizens and policy makers want accountability from the service providers in which they invest taxpayers' money and from whom they receive public services. They also want to understand what they are buying with their investment. They want service providers to be willing and able to tell them what they do, how they do it, and how much it costs. They want to feel confident that the service is being provided in a cost effective manner.

Management literature often makes the distinction between “effectiveness” which is doing the right thing and “efficiency” which is doing things right.<sup>2</sup> Too often the jump is made immediately to efficiency before contemplating what effectiveness means.

### **Determining the Right Things to Do**

According to the library's strategic plan, *Mapping the Future: The Tigard Public Library's Strategic Plan 2005-2010*, the library's mission is as follows:

The Tigard Public Library serves the Tigard community by promoting reading and providing access to materials in all formats to meet residents' informational, cultural, educational and recreational needs. The Library fosters lifelong learning and provides an array of programs and services to encourage the development of well-rounded citizens.

This mission is complemented by the library's values statement:

Respect a variety of viewpoints and opinions and make them available to the public in the interest of promoting a healthy democracy.

Encourage library users to become comfortable in using information in a wide variety of formats and instruct them in using new technologies for information gathering.

Assist patrons in finding the information they want, when they want it and in a form that is most useful to them.

Develop partnerships with the community to ensure that library services truly respond to the needs and desires of Tigard residents.

During the strategic planning process which resulted in *Mapping the Future*, citizens assisted the Library Board and library managers and staff in identifying four service priority areas:

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<sup>2</sup> Peter F. Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices* (New York: HarperBusiness, 1993), 45.

- **Current Topics and Titles:** The Tigard Library helps fulfill the community’s appetite for information about popular cultural and social trends and their desire for satisfying recreational experiences.
- **General Information:** The Tigard Library helps meet the need for information and answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school and personal life.
- **Commons:** The Tigard Library provides an environment that encourages people to meet and interact with others in their community and to participate in public discourse about community issues.
- **Information Literacy:** The Tigard Public Library helps address the need for skills to find, evaluate and use information effectively.

These statements provide a picture of what the library is trying to accomplish, based on citizen input.

### How is the Library Doing?

Several tests can be conducted to ascertain whether or not the library is meeting its effectiveness goals:

- Does the library develop an annual plan, as reflected in its annual budget, which correlates with the goals and objectives articulated in its strategic plan? Yes, the budget and the effectiveness measures in the budget are clearly linked to the strategic plan.
- Do the library administration and division managers use the plan or is it simply placed on the shelf? Yes, the plan is used and referred to by the library director and her managers. While not all objectives (which are specific measurements associated with goal achievement in the planning model used)<sup>3</sup> carry the same weight and some have been adjusted, based on annual service priorities and available resources, they are clearly used as the basis for program development and evaluation.
- Are the effectiveness measures in the budget document being met? Effectiveness measures are developed and tracked as part of the City’s annual budget process. The library prepares effectiveness measures for each division of the library.

<b>Tigard Public Library Effectiveness Measures</b>				
	FY 2004-2005 Actual	FY 2005-2006 Actual	FY 2006-2007 Budget	FY 2007-2008 Projected
<b>Library Administration</b>				
Patrons who rate overall Library service as good or excellent (%)	88%	90%	90%	90%

<sup>3</sup> The Tigard Public Library used the Public Library Association planning model, Planning for Results, as the basis for its strategic plan. This model, fully explained in the book *The New Planning for Results* (ALA, 2001), defines an objective as "The way the library will measure its progress toward reaching a goal."

	FY 2004-2005 Actual	FY 2005-2006 Actual	FY 2006-2007 Budget	FY 2007-2008 Projected
Volunteers rating their experience at the Library as satisfying (%)	91%	93%	95%	95%
Staff rating volunteers as critical to the success of the Library (%)	95%	95%	95%	95%
Increase in annual circulation (%)	20%	30%	30%	30%
Weekly open hours	50.5	54-58	55	62
<b>Library Readers' Services</b>				
Increase in service interactions (%)	29%	1%	-10%	2%
Increase in Youth Services program attendance (%)	32%	-21%	35%	5%
Increase in Summer Reading Program registrants (%)	3%	78%	2%	5%
Increase in adult program attendance (%)	57%	0%	-11%	11%
Increase in computer class attendance (%)	471%	125%	-18%	9%
Increase in public computer use (%)	186%	42%	8%	8%
% of library patrons who rated reference service good or excellent	76.4%	77.3%	78%	78%
<b>Library Technical Services</b>				
Average number of days between orders being submitted and being placed	2	2.5	3	3
Average number of days between order being received and item being ready for circulation	33	36	40	35
Staff rating of services provided by Technical Services as good or excellent (%)	100%	N/A	100%	100%
<b>Library Circulation</b>				
Materials checked out on self-checkout machine (%)	25%	6%	10%	20%
Materials returned to shelf within 48 hours (%)	N/A	85%	85%	85%
Library patrons who rated service received as "good" or "excellent" at the Check Out Counter (%)	85%	90%	91%	92%

Note that some measurements were impacted by the library's move to its new building in August, 2004.

- Are Tigard residents and library users satisfied with the services provided? Yes, library residents indicated in the 2006 Community Attitude Survey conducted by

Riley Research Associates, that they were very satisfied with library services by giving the library an 8.9 mean rating out of a possible 10. In fact, 43% of the survey respondents gave the library a 10 out of 10 rating. The library rated the highest of any city service surveyed.

- Are library users satisfied with the library materials and services provided? Yes! For six years the Tigard Public Library has conducted non-scientific user surveys by distributing surveys to library users in the library, and through making the survey available through Cityscape and the library’s webpage. The survey is made available in both English and Spanish versions. In 2006, 2,325 people returned surveys. The table below summarizes key findings. Survey results are compiled (comments run to 88 pages) and analyzed by library managers and used as the basis for changes in services and policies.

<b>Summary of 2006 Library Survey</b>		
Frequency of use	At least once a month	83%
Is the Library Serving Your Needs?	YES	97%
	NO	3%
Age of Users	18 or younger	15%
	19-60	68%
	61 or older	17%
Rating of Availability of Internet Computers	Good to Excellent	61%
	Don’t Use	32%
Rating of Services of Checkout Desk	Good to Excellent	93%
	Don’t Use	3%
Rating of Services of Reference Desk	Good to Excellent	77%
	Don’t Use	20%
Rating of Services of Children’s Room	Good to Excellent	49.48%
	Don’t Use	49%
Rating of Library Web Page	Good to Excellent	59%
	Don’t Use	30%

## Return on Investment

A number of studies have been conducted over the last several years designed to determine the economic impact of public libraries in their communities.<sup>4</sup> One of the most recent and comprehensive was conducted by the public policy and taxation research firm of Levin, Driscoll & Fleeter for nine public library systems in southwestern Ohio. The economic benefits study, *Value for the Money: Southwestern Ohio's Return from Investment in Public Libraries*, released in June, 2006, provides a solid methodology for quantifying the economic return from library services. The researchers were scrupulous in developing a conservative valuation approach that would provide a fair statement of the direct benefits that a local community receives from its public library.

### Direct Benefits: 4 to 1 Return on Investment

Noting that public libraries are similar to other municipal services such as parks, schools and police protection because their benefits serve the residents who live within the services area of these public goods, the researchers selected the "return on investment" approach to their economic analysis. This approach estimated the value returned to a community for each dollar invested by the community. Of the various methods available for determining libraries' value, the "consumer surplus" method was chosen as the most accurate and appropriate. The consumer surplus method refers to actual costs of counterparts to library services in the local marketplace.

In FY 2005/2006, the residents of Tigard invested \$2,819,251 in General Fund monies to provide library services. Using the approaches and derived values of the Ohio study, the direct benefits (the value of a loaned item or a service such as a program or computer training) of the services provided by the Tigard Public Library can be computed.<sup>5</sup>

<b>Library Service</b>	<b>Estimated Value</b>
Circulation	\$4,237,545
Reference Services	\$2,474,326
Computer Use	\$817,440
Computer Training Programs	\$3,150
TOTAL	\$7,532,462

Computations based on FY 2005/2006 statistics.

This represents a Return on Investment of \$2.67 for every \$1.00 tax dollar invested in library services. The application of a conventional economic multiplier raises the total benefit for library services in Tigard to \$11,218,848 or a total return of \$3.98 for every dollar invested. The "household consumption multiplier" is used because the library materials and services provided by the library frees up \$7.5 million for households to spend on other items, activities, or services.<sup>6</sup>

Although other library studies have attempted to quantify the impact of public libraries on patronage and spending at local businesses and the benefits businesses, job seekers and personal investors receive from their use of library services and resources, no attempt is made here to do that. However, it's important to

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<sup>4</sup> The Library Research Services at the Colorado State Library provides links to these studies at their website <http://www.lrs.org/topics.asp#econ2>.

<sup>5</sup> The full report, Levin, Driscoll & Fleeter, *Value for Money: Southwestern Ohio's Return from Investment in Public Libraries* (Columbus, 2006) which includes detailed explanations of the formulae used and the basis for them, can be found at <http://9libraries.info/>.

<sup>6</sup> The multiplier of 1.4894 was used, the same household consumption multiplier used for the Ohio study.

note that there is tremendous value derived from the use of the information provided by library materials and services. For example, a library customer could both save the cost of purchasing expensive investment tools and profit from making a successful personal investment based on the information gleaned from the tools. A job seeker could use the library as a place to research job openings using the library's public computers, borrow books on resume writing and job interview preparation, and research the employer's financial statements using print and online reference sources, with a librarian's assistance. A book about installing a wireless network could save a local business owner the cost of hiring someone else to do it or the time lost if the business owner tries to do it without adequate information.

There is no method available to estimate the value of the information or entertainment provided by library materials. However, the fact that library materials are heavily used (circulation per capita is 12, well over the national average of 7.5) and that library customers are so overwhelmingly satisfied with the library appears to imply that they receive value from them.

### Indirect Benefits

The Tigard Public Library also provides a number of services to Tigard residents that cannot be readily quantified. In economic theory there is the concept of externality, the idea that activities have spill-over or side-effects. Some externalities can be negative (such as pollution caused by a local rendering plant) or positive. The precept behind public support of libraries is that they have a positive external effect. As the Ohio study notes "Some of these externalities include improvement in the level of literacy, deepening of job skills related to the ability to use information, promotion of understanding and tolerance among diverse groups in the population, and an overall enhancement in the level of civility and cultural awareness in society. In addition, the fulfillment of the library's role in the education of the public fosters an informed citizenry and promotes the republican form of government..."<sup>7</sup>



The many programs that the library provides are an example of the positive externalities related to the library's role in the community. Programs and activities for children include weekly programs for babies, toddlers and preschoolers, and family story times and pajama story times. Storytellers, puppeteers and musicians provide performances and there are book discussion clubs for kids, movies and crafts and even a chess group. The Summer Reading Program keeps reading skill levels up during the summer months and instills a love for reading for pleasure and personal fulfillment. Special classes and workshops are provided for teachers, caregivers and parents. A full slate of programs are also offered for teens and include movies, a book club, and poetry nights as well as informative workshops on choosing a college. Adults are offered cultural and educational programming such as the Portland Art Museum lecture series, history and poetry programs, book discussion groups, computer classes and an English conversation group for those who wish to practice their English speaking skills. Programs for seniors have included such timely topics as reverse mortgages, protecting financial assets, and making decisions about changing living arrangements.

All of these activities are designed to promote reading and learning and are consistent with the library's role as a community center, a place where people can come together to socialize, learn, and discuss issues

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<sup>7</sup> Levin, Driscoll & Fleeter, 25.

of community concern. There is not way to assign a direct benefit to these activities, but the impact on the community is enormous and clearly valued by community residents.

## Doing Things Right

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### Comparisons

There are no national standards for public libraries. The last formulaic national standards (e.g., two to four books per capita, as a book collection standard) were published over forty years ago. They were abandoned because public librarians felt that the minimums were often interpreted as ceilings rather than floors and because they didn't take into account differences among communities. Standards were replaced by community needs based planning models. As the Foreword to the first book on the new approach to public library planning declared "...what public librarians need now are not rules for sameness but tools which will help them analyze a situation, set objectives, make decisions and evaluate achievements."<sup>8</sup> Since then, public library planning has evolved through five models, each more focused than its predecessor on assessing community needs, on not taking on more than can be realistically achieved, and on matching resources with service goals.

While national standards are lacking, an array of statistics are collected by each state library and reported to the United States Department of Education. Many libraries also contribute to a publication of the Public Library Association, *The Public Library Data Service Statistical Report* (PLDS). Many library managers use the information in this publication to develop a sense of how their library compares to other libraries on the basis of any number of factors.

A software product called Bibliostat Connect provides access to all statistics collected by the state libraries, the national statistics, and a few other statistical sources. Bibliostat Connect provides a researcher with a convenient way to collect, compile, and analyze public library statistics.

At the same time that numeric standards were being eliminated at the national level, many librarians felt that they did need standards that would represent the best professional thinking on what is necessary to provide quality library service. Many states have developed such standards at the state level and in many states the standards are linked to the award of monies for local, regional or system library services. The Oregon Library Association appointed a task force in 1987 to develop standards for Oregon public libraries. The latest version was approved by the Public Library Division and the Oregon Library Association in 2000.

The availability of all this information means that the Tigard Public Library can be analyzed through a number of lenses: national, state, and regional. While such analyses can be informative, it should be remembered that every library's local situation is different. What each community needs and wants is different, local values and standards are different, and local capacity to pay for services is different. As public library planners have said throughout the evolution of the planning process, "excellence must be defined locally—it results when library services match community needs, interests, and priorities."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Mary Jo Lynch, "Foreword" in a *Planning Process for Public Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980), xii.

<sup>9</sup> Sandra Nelson, *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Process* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2001), 1.



## National Comparison

The *Public Library Data Service Statistical Report*, compiled annually by the Public Library Association, provides comparable information on a number of different measurements used by public libraries. Because the Tigard Public Library doesn't contribute to the report, information from the Oregon Library Statistical Report was used and compared to medians provided for libraries within the Tigard population grouping (99,999 to 50,000). The 2006 report contains data for fiscal year 2005. One hundred eighty-two public libraries within the Tigard population grouping reported.

The table below provides a number of statistics (data elements) which are commonly collected by public libraries. Fiscal 2005 statistics are provided for Tigard Public Library. The arrows in the column on the far right indicate whether the Tigard Public Library is above, below or at the median when compared to public libraries in its population grouping.

“Turnover rate” is an important statistic that shows how relevant a library’s collection is to the community it serves. It is similar to “turn on inventory” and is computed by dividing the annual circulation of materials by the total number of holdings (# of units). “Total ILLs Provided and Received” refers to interlibrary loans made to other libraries and received from other libraries.

<b>Tigard Public Library Compared Nationally</b>		<b>PLDS 2005 Median</b>
<b>Data Elements</b>	<b>2005</b>	
# of FTE with MLS Degree	12.7	↑
# of Registered Borrowers	31,759	↓
# of Total Paid Staff FTE	33.2	↓
# of Total Units	125,906	↓
Circulation per Capita	11.54	↑
Circulation per FTE	21,928	↑
Percent of Op Exp spent on Library Materials	13.97%	↑
Population of The Legal Service Area	63,110	↓
Reference Transactions per Capita	0.82	→
Registered Borrowers as % of Population	50%	↓
Staff Expenditures as % of Operating Budget	81%	↑
Total # of Reference Transactions	51,710	↓
Total Circulation	728,003	↑
Total Collection Expenditures	\$312,790	↑
Total Collection Expenditures per Capita	\$4.96	↑
Total ILLs Provided	109,313	↑
Total ILLs Received	103,954	↑
Total Operating Expenditures	\$2,238,427	↓
Total Operating Expenditures per Capita	\$35	↑
Total Staff Expenditures	\$1,816,690	↑
Turnover Rate	5.78	↑
Visits	343,390	↑
Visits per Capita	5.44	↑



## State Standards

*Standards for Oregon Public Libraries: 2000* provides a touchstone against which local library managers and staff, local decision makers and local residents can measure themselves.<sup>10</sup> The standards address

- governance
- access
- staff
- materials and services
- technology
- community involvement
- facilities

Standards are articulated for three levels: Threshold, Adequate, and Excellent. Tigard Public Library is at the adequate level for most measurements and at the excellent level for staffing level, the percentage of staff with a Masters in Library Science degree, technology, and for the size of its facility. It is at the threshold level for the size of its collection and the number of hours open per week. The Tigard Public Library is currently open 55 hours a week. To raise itself to the adequate level, would require being open 60 hours a week. The excellent level for a library serving the size population Tigard serves would be 75 open hours a week.

## Regional Comparisons

The City of Tigard often compares itself or its departments against seven other jurisdictions: Beaverton, Gresham, Hillsboro, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, Oregon City, and West Linn. Library services are provided to Gresham by the Multnomah County Library so that comparable is not shown on the table below.

	Tigard	Beaverton	Hillsboro	Lake Oswego	Milwaukie	Oregon City	West Linn	MEDIAN
Population Served	64,041	115,130	153,791	43,201	30,127	52,635	25,892	52,635
Borrowers as % of Pop.	50%	61%	37%	75%	60%	44%	61%	60%
FTEs	34.2	46	55.16	34.2	12.63	6.01	16.15	34
Librarians	12.5	14.4	16.88	12.1	4.50	1.4	8.15	12.1
Librarians as % FTE	37%	31%	31%	35%	36%	23%	50%	35%
Total staff per 1000 population	0.53	0.40	0.36	0.79	0.42	0.11	0.62	0.42
Hours Open Per Week	55	49	54	65	52	23	53	53
Circulation	850,326	1,711,923	1,805,630	1,403,048	542,635	489,898	632,573	850,326
Circulation per Capita	13.28	14.87	11.74	32.48	17.93	9.31	24.43	14.87
Reference per Capita	0.78	0.94	0.52	1.33	1.18	0.32	0.97	0.94
Holdings per Capita	2.15	2.38	1.84	4.48	3.66	2.20	4.19	2.38
Visits per Capita	5.83	5.52	4.29	8.48	6.50	NA	11.92	6.16
Program Attendance per Capita	0.21	0.29	0.09	0.25	0.25	0.02	0.60	0.25
Turnover Rate	6.17	6.24	6.38	7.25	4.92	4.23	5.83	6.17
Operating Expenditures per Capita	\$37.17	\$40.13	\$33.54	\$70.06	\$51.47	\$12.89	\$46.70	\$40.13
Personnel Expenditures per Capita	\$29.87	\$27.22	\$21.38	\$48.87	\$27.83	\$8.63	\$38.07	\$27.83
Personnel Exp as % of Operating	80%	68%	64%	70%	54%	67%	82%	68%

<sup>10</sup> A copy of the standards can be obtained at [http://www.olaweb.org/pld/standards\\_intro.html](http://www.olaweb.org/pld/standards_intro.html).

	Tigard	Beaverton	Hillsboro	Lake Oswego	Milwaukie	Oregon City	West Linn	MEDIAN
Materials Expenditures per Capita	\$5.40	\$4.04	\$2.61	\$9.90	\$3.43	\$0.59	\$4.05	\$4.04
Materials Expenditure a % of Operating	15%	10%	8%	14%	7%	5%	9%	9%
Volunteers, Number of	410	296	373	353	64	35	123	296
Volunteer Hours	14,326	13,835	15,596	10,481	5,816	2,039	2,609	10,481
Volunteer FTE equivalents	6.89	6.65	7.50	5.04	2.80	0.98	1.25	5.04
Paid staff FTE per volunteer FTE	4.97	6.92	7.36	6.79	4.52	6.13	12.88	6.79

Statistics shown are for FY 2005/2006 as reported to the Oregon State Library. The population of Tigard's service area is slightly lower than the figure provided in the Introduction to this report because it is from the previous year.

For most measurements, the library is at or near the median for the seven city libraries. However, comparisons should be made judiciously, starting with questions rather than conclusions. For example, the higher percentage of the operating budget allocated for library materials is a positive finding. For decades the rule of thumb has been to strive for 15%, which Tigard has achieved. However, as salaries and benefits have increased and operating costs like utilities have gone up, most libraries have not been able to come close to this level, as the table indicates. Budget composition and local requirements will also influence proportions (for example, many facilities and operating costs are not charged to the Tigard Public library by the city), so conclusions cannot be reached without drilling much more deeply. All a comparison like this can really do is provide a starting point for questions and additional data gathering.

### Local Trends

The Tigard Public Library has undergone a number of changes over the past six years that are important to note. In August of 2004, the library moved into a new library building, over three times larger than its previous building. With this new building came increased usage, more service points and much more floor space for employees to serve and monitor, more public computers to manage (from 13 public computers in the old building to 65 in the new building), and many more library visitors. The table in Appendix A provides a full picture of the changes that have taken place over the last six years. The table below shows the changes in a number of key service indicators.

Data Elements	% Change in 6 Years
# of FTE with MLS Degree	56%
# of Registered Borrowers	-26%
# of Total Paid Staff FTE	-2%
# of Total Units	23%
Circulation per Capita	17%
Circulation per FTE	46%
Percent of Operating Expenditures spent on Library Materials	12%
Population of The Legal Service Area	22%
Public Service Hours	-13%
Reference Transactions per Capita	-4%
Registered Borrowers as % of Population	-39%
Staff Expenditures as % of Operating Budget	-1%
Total # of Public PC Uses	201%
Total # of Reference Transactions	16%
Total Circulation	43%

	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Data Elements</b>	<b>in 6 Years</b>
Total Collection Expenditures	61%
Total Collection Expenditures per Capita	32%
Total Hours in Typical Week Open	-20%
Total ILLs Provided	197%
Total ILLs Received	156%
Total Library Program Attendance per Capita	-9%
Total Operating Expenditures	44%
Total Operating Expenditures per Capita	18%
Total Staff Expenditures	43%
Total Staff Expenditures per Capita	18%
Turnover Rate	16%
Visits	49%
Visits per Capita	22%

At the same time as residents and staff were enjoying their new building, the library suffered a reduction in hours because of the failure of the countywide levy. This meant that library customers had fewer hours within which to make use of library services and collections. Despite the reduction in hours, circulation continued to increase. Reference use, while up overall, has declined with the reduction in hours, since people can't ask for assistance when the library isn't open. As will be noted in the next section, the number of reference transactions is also influenced by the new ways that people are using public libraries, with the variety of information services that are now available through the internet and the increased number of computers available to many users at home, work and school.

## **Workflow and Work Processes Review**

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Work flow, work processes and materials movement was reviewed and observed in the three library divisions that provide direct public services: readers' services, technical services, and circulation. The fourth division, library administration, provides overall direction and management of library services and direct management of the library's volunteer services and public information programs. These activities were not within the scope of this study and will be referred to only in general terms and as they impact the direct delivery of library services.

### **Staffing Allocations**

For Fiscal Year 2006-2007, Tigard Public Library staff are allocated to the divisions as follows:

	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>People</b>
Administration	3.3	10%	4
Readers' Services	12.2	36%	14
Technical Services	6.2	18%	8
Circulation	12.5	37%	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>44</b>

As part of the budget planning process, each division develops workload and effectiveness measures. The effectiveness measures have already been presented. Workload measures will be identified and reviewed as part of this section of the project report.

## Library Administration

Library Administration is responsible for overseeing the operations of the library and for managing the volunteer program and public communications. This division is staffed by a Library Director, an Executive Confidential Assistant, a 20 hour a week Information Coordinator, and a 32 hour a week Volunteer Coordinator. This staffing level is very appropriate for a library the size of the Tigard Public Library and for the activities performed by this division.

<b>Library Administration Workload Measures</b>				
	FY 2004-2005 Actual	FY 2005-2006 Actual	FY 2006-2007 Budget	FY 2007-2008 Projected
Population served (includes non-City residents)	68,143	69,000	65,310	66,000
Annual Visits	360,000	380,000	400,000	410,000
Number of volunteer hours per year	13,444	14,325	15,000	15,500
Value of volunteer hours	\$235,942	\$258,423	\$277,500	\$294,500

### *Heavy Use of Volunteers*

It should be noted that the volunteers who assist paid staff at the Tigard Public Library are an essential rather than a supplemental part of the library's operation. Many libraries have turned to volunteers to assist them, as budgets have been cut or have remained stagnant while demands for services have increased. The Tigard Public Library's use of volunteers is at the far end of the utilization spectrum. Volunteers carry a major part of the load in the provision of core activities such as checking books in, shelving returned books and other materials, searching the shelves for requested materials, and processing and mending materials. The hours volunteered are equivalent to nearly seven full time equivalent (FTE) positions, which means that there is a volunteer for every five paid FTEs. This utilization rate can be compared to the Sonoma County (CA) Library which is also heavily reliant on volunteers which has a ratio of 1:7 or the Multnomah County Library, which also has an extensive volunteer program, where the ratio is 1:15. Many of the other seven regional comparables have also experienced tight budgets and are also finding their use of volunteers is increasing.

The use of volunteers is clearly a highly regarded library and City value.<sup>11</sup> It is a practice that must be carefully watched and monitored, however. While it is wonderful to have citizens donate their time and effort, it does take paid staff time to train, schedule, plan and lay out work, and ensure quality control. Many volunteers work in two hour shifts, which means there is time lost to starting up and finishing up various activities and the need for numerous communications between volunteers and paid supervisors. The pace of work performed also appeared to be noticeably slower than in other libraries. Volunteer A, who works a two hour shift once a week, does not have the same sense of urgency as an employee who will face the same mound of unfinished work the next day if it isn't completed. As is typical, many volunteers are older than the average paid staff member and some also have physical disabilities that limit

<sup>11</sup> One of the goals enunciated by the City of Tigard Vision Task Force states: "The City will maximize the effectiveness of the volunteer spirit to accomplish the greatest good for our community."

their pace of work. Volunteers were also observed taking the time to peruse or read materials, a practice which paid staff are not allowed to engage in but which is difficult to dissuade someone who is donating their time from doing.

On the other hand, there is no question that volunteers are essential to the successes of the Tigard Public Library. Good use is made of both individual donations of time and groups who wish to donate blocks of time or work on a one-time project and heavy use is made of individuals who are assigned to do community service.

### ***Management Excellence***

It should also be noted that the library director and division managers are dedicated, focused managers who are aware of trends and innovations in public library service, knowledgeable about the community they serve, and very conversant with the workload and effectiveness measurements in their divisions. The TPL managers, unlike managers in many public libraries, truly function as managers: they monitor workload and various performance and effectiveness measures, they write comprehensive monthly reports, and they perform personnel evaluations. These are typical expectations of managers but many public library managers do not effectively carry out these functions either because their time is stretched so thin or because the expectation has not been set that they will or they are not held to it if set.

Several innovations are worth noting. All employees are now involved in “shadowing” projects so that they can observe what co-workers do. This is not designed as cross-training but as a method to increase understanding and appreciation among staff members. Short, ten to fifteen minute “stand around” meetings are held each morning. All staff attend and quickly learn about major activities in the building, any absences or activities that will take staff out of the building, projects or issues that need to be addressed, and one or two pieces of good news about accomplishments or exemplary service interactions. Persons in Charge (PICs) are assigned for every open hour, so staff always know who to turn to if there is an emergency or a question or customer interaction that requires a higher level manager. PICs also handle building issues, monitor the facility, ensure appropriate usage, etc. White boards are used as communication devices throughout the building. This is particularly useful, because changes in policies, procedures, work assignments and so on have to be communicated to a large number of staff, volunteers, and hourly employees.

### ***Constraints on Public Communication and Information***

An area of constraint mentioned by some library managers and staff was the library’s web presence. This presence is managed by the city, as it is for all other city departments. Library staff who mentioned this said that they would like a more dynamic, interactive web page. The library’s webpage has a “second generation” brochure ware look to it. Basic information is provided and hours and a link to the library catalog are prominently displayed, but the page is very dense and cluttered. The page does nothing to invite a viewer to use the library or its services. As librarians contemplate the Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 world they desire websites that provide the possibility of substantially more interaction and communication between users and library staff and users and other users. Features such as blogs, wikis, podcasts, and RSS feeds are becoming more common on library and local government pages.

A more sophisticated web presence requires additional resources, however. Four distinct skill sets are required for modern website design and development:<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Information provided by Jim Barrentine, President, Information Partners, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in library technology. Mr. Barrentine recommends the websites of the Phoenix Public Library, Maricopa County Library, Hennepin County Library, Las Vegas Clark County Library District, and the Pikes Peak Library District as examples of good library websites. While these are much larger libraries, the design principles still hold.

- Information Architect – this is the person who knows how people use electronic information and how to design websites that are easy to navigate for both the novice and experienced user
- Content Provider/Coordinator – this person provides the actual content that appears on the website
- Web Developer – this is the person who turns the information architects’ design and the content into the actual website
- Web Programmer – most websites are now interactive with a database. To achieve this requires programming skills to access the database and place the retrieved information in the appropriate place on the web page.

Plans for the city’s website may involve developing the kinds of interactivity that the library staff is requesting. Library representatives should be active participants in any website planning and ongoing development discussions and decision-making. They should advocate for usability testing involving citizens and library users to ensure that the website and interfaces (such as to the library catalog and electronic databases) are easy to use and permit users to find the information they are seeking.

## Readers’ Services

This division is responsible for selecting and managing all library materials, providing professional assistance using the library’s collections and electronic resources, accessing additional resources through borrowing materials from other libraries (interlibrary loan), and providing children’s, young adult, adult, and intergenerational programming to enhance lifelong learning and recreational experiences. This division is staffed by a Division Manager, two Library Services Supervisors (one each for adult and youth services), a Senior Librarian, 6.7 FTE Librarians, and 1.5 FTE Senior Library Assistants.

The Readers’ Services division provides staffing for three public service desks, which are located in the children’s, adult and teen areas. The teen desk is only staffed during certain hours. The adult desk is usually staffed with two librarians while the children’s services desk is staffed with one or two librarians, depending upon the time of day, whether or not there are programs or school visits, etc. The division’s staffing level is at a basic level for the size building, number of public service desks, and mix of activities that are carried out.

<b>Readers’ Services Workload Measures</b>				
	FY 2004-2005 Actual	FY 2005-2006 Actual	FY 2006-2007 Budget	FY 2007-2008 Projected
Number of service interactions	78,391	78,581	70,623	72,035
Interlibrary loan transactions	1,956	2,006	1,479	1,552
Youth Services programs	304	384	330	346
Youth Services program attendance	15,199	11,990	16,218	17,028
Summer Reading Program registrants	1,014	1,805	1,846	1,938
Contacts with children in school and childcare	6,558	1,883	807	1,008
Adult programs	34	37	42	56



	FY 2004-2005 Actual	FY 2005-2006 Actual	FY 2006-2007 Budget	FY 2007-2008 Projected
Adult program attendance	1,008	1,009	894	994
Computer classes	43	84	84	56
Computer class attendance	297	669	546	596
Public computer use sessions	76,114	108,133	117,414	126,807

### ***Changing Nature of Public Services Work***

Reference and public service work has changed considerably in public libraries over the last ten years. With the advent of the Internet, widespread availability of computer resources and Internet connection at home, school, and work, and the development of exceedingly user friendly services like Google, libraries have seen a drop in the number of traditional reference and information questions being asked at public service desks. At the same time, the need and desire for access to computers and Internet resources has not abated but has increased (the use of public PCs has increased over 200% in the last six years). Most users simply expect that the public library will have a number of PCs, with fast internet connectivity and a number of programs and services available for their use. A PC with fast connectivity is seen as a utility: I have well functioning plumbing available at home, work, school, etc., and I expect the same at the library. While users of traditional library services and materials may lament this development, it is pointless to fight it. It must, instead, be well managed.



Libraries who have conducted studies regarding the amount of time that reference personnel now spend on computer related activities (scheduling, assisting with use, handling equipment problems, explaining how to use electronic services, etc.) have found that it can be as high as 40-45% of their time. This is a workload figure that has not traditionally been gathered and for which there are no uniform definitions or methodologies for collecting. The Tigard Public Library has been proactive in addressing this workload by acquiring and installing PC reservation and timing software and a printing card vend machine, thus reducing the impact on public services staff. Some

additional work should be done to make the PC reservation module fully implemented, but that requires coordination with WCCLS and the vendor, so has not yet been completed.

Public access computers have brought new users into the library, particularly those who do not have access elsewhere. These users are often not familiar with conventional modes of behavior in public library settings and can sometimes present behavioral problems that must be dealt with by library staff, supervisors, and managers. In most cases there are not behavioral problems but there are issues that arise when scarce resources must be rationed and managed. Developing and enforcing use policies, issuing temporary cards so users can log into the computers, managing the print vend machine, selling disks upon which materials can be saved, developing and maintaining adequate security, and safeguarding equipment and components are just a few of the management issues that must be addressed.

While these changes have been taking place, the demand for programming for all age levels has not declined. In fact, as the user population ages, the demand for services such as book groups, author programs, programs on how to effectively use computers and the Internet, is increasing. Readers' advisory services (recommending good books, DVDs, or books on CD) is also growing, as library customers realize that trained library personnel can assist them in working through the abundance of informational and leisure options available to them to find the title that is just right for them. Readers' Services keeps and analyzes the kinds of interactions they have at their desks and knows that about 55% are now reference or informational and the other 45% are directional, related to the use of public PCs, or informational at a level that doesn't require extensive expertise or the use of sophisticated reference resources. There are staffing implications for this change in transaction mix. Consideration is being given to developing senior library assistant positions that could assist librarians at the reference desk. Staff in these positions would be able to handle the directional and less difficult information questions and could assist patrons with public PC issues. This type of staffing is a trend in public libraries, as they see their traditional reference use fall and new kinds of interactions and transactions presented to them.

Readers' Services is also experimenting with "roving reference" which means providing reference service by moving out from behind a desk and directly asking people if they need help on the library floor. Time is now structured into the adult reference desk schedule for periodical visits to the floor. Libraries that have adopted this service strategy have found that their reference transaction numbers have gone up. Most people don't ask for help in the library. However, when help is offered to them in the stacks or at their table they often do have questions that staff can assist them with answering. This concept should be developed further and integrated fully into the service delivery approaches used.

### ***Specific Assignments***

The Readers' Services division employees have three basic job responsibilities: to assist library customers at public service desks, to select library materials and maintain library collections, and to develop and present library programs. The Tigard Public Library is well managed in that time and assignments are structured so that these activities are equitably distributed among available staff. Desk assignments take about 50% of employees' time with the other major responsibilities and activities such as attending meetings, communicating, serving on committees, and handling special projects taking up the other half.

All librarians are involved in selecting new and replacement materials, developing collections to meet community needs, and weeding out unused, outdated or worn out materials. These activities are carried out using broad policy statements concerning the types of items that will be purchased to fulfill the library's mission. Work has begun to develop a comprehensive collection development/materials selection plan and the policies to go with it. This is an important activity that is very time consuming. Every effort should be made to keep this process on schedule so that a comprehensive collection development process and plan is in place by the end of FY 2011-2012.

Books and other library materials are selected and ordered according to a written schedule, with dollar amounts assigned to each selector and each order cycle. Selectors routinely analyze usage patterns and adjustments to materials allocations are made in response to usage trends. Materials budget funds are monitored to ensure that materials are selected according to plan and to make sure that the Technical Services division receives new materials in a roughly uniform way, so that they aren't overwhelmed by large influxes of new materials. Again, this can sound like a common sense way to manage this process, but many public libraries are not so well organized.

Public libraries select new and replacement materials by dividing the work up among a number of staff members (as Tigard does), by centralizing the process by having only a few staff members select materials (as the Multnomah County Library does), or through some sort of combination (adult fiction



and popular audiovisual may be centralized, with nonfiction subject divided up among other staff, for example). The argument for decentralized selection is that librarians can develop in-depth expertise in their subject areas, that those who work directly with library customers can make the best selection decisions, and that selecting materials and developing collections is a primary professional responsibility (and, frankly, one that most librarians enjoy). The argument for centralized selection is that it is more efficient because fewer people are involved, that one or two selectors can provide a broad oversight of the library's collection, and that the collection development processes can be conducted in a more consistent way. There is no one right way and the approach a library takes (and many libraries swing back and forth across the centralized/decentralized continuum) should ultimately relate to the library's service philosophy, its available resources, and objective measurements of collection usage. The Tigard Public Library comes out well: circulation is high, library customer satisfaction is extremely high, and the collection turnover rate is healthy. While Tigard has a smaller collection than Oregon standards or national rankings call for, its collection is well maintained and timely. In other words, other libraries may have larger collections, but these collections could contain more outdated and little used materials than Tigard's.

Every adult services librarian is expected to develop and present eight computer classes and eight other programs during each year and children's librarians and senior library assistants present a wide variety of programs targeted at all ages, infants through grade 12. These programs are specifically designed to develop and reinforce literacy skills, are based on current cognitive development and brain theories, and link precisely to strategic service plan goals and objectives. With the new structure and oversight that has come with new Readers' Services management, programming attendance levels should once again meet targeted levels.

### ***Additional Staff Needed***

At the current staffing level, Readers' Services is just barely able to keep up. Fewer staff or more open hours without additional staff would mean a diminution in service quality. Either the public service desks won't be staffed at current levels, there will be fewer classes and programs, or collection development will suffer. Library managers have projected additional staffing needed for the seven proposed additional open hours planned now that the WCCLS levy has passed. The projections are reasonable and will allow the library to provide services at the current level.

At the current staffing level the library hasn't been able to engage in the level of outreach activities the community has asked for. In response to expressed community needs and wants, the library would like to provide additional services to community schools and day care centers and to senior citizens. There are also opportunities to collaborate more extensively with other community agencies and organizations and to work to find ways to extend services outside the physical confines of the library building. Exploring options and developing the most promising possibilities requires additional staff time.

### **Technical Services**

This division is responsible for ordering, receiving, cataloging, processing and mending books and other library materials, and maintaining the library's holding information in the countywide shared catalog. This division is staffed by a Library Services Supervisor, a Technical Services Coordinator, a .5 FTE Librarian, two Senior Library Assistants, 1.2 FTE Library Assistants, and a .5 FTE Library Aide. Over the last seven years, the number of items handled has doubled while staffing has increased only about 25%. This is a typical pattern. Public libraries try to put any increases in budget into public service hours, services and library materials and look towards their Technical Services managers and staff to find innovative ways to streamline their work operations in order to handle increased workloads.

In many ways Technical Services (and to a lesser extent, Circulation) are the “factory floors” in libraries. The work done can be standardized, there is usually more control over materials flow, processes can be batched, and there are many vendor provided services and technologies that can be taken advantage of. For example, years ago clerks had to type and file catalog cards, make any corrections by hand, type, burst and file multi-part order forms, type invoices by hand and post expenditures by hand, etc. Now these processes are done electronically.

<b>Technical Services Workload Measures</b>				
	FY 2004-2005 Actual	FY 2005-2006 Actual	FY 2006-2007 Budget	FY 2007-2008 Projected
Orders placed	20,496	21,987	22,500	28,000
Orders received (including standing orders)	20,708	22,714	23,000	28,500
New titles added to catalog	6,775	8,444	9,500	10,100
New items added (includes periodicals and donations)	21,976	26,356	27,000	31,500
Materials withdrawn	9,794	14,890	11,000	12,000

The Technical Services division is taking advantage of technology by using the Polaris acquisitions module, building selection carts with its major vendor, Ingram, and using OCLC Connexion for cataloging. Minimal vendor provided processing is obtained for some materials (book jackets and security strip), with volunteers assisting with processing most materials. Workflow and work processes are routinely reexamined and changes made as workload warrants and vendor services appear in the market.

***Throughput is Slowing Down***

However, even with this the effectiveness measures are slipping. The average number of days between receiving an item and its becoming ready for circulation is now over a month. Backlogs of materials were observed at most stages of the Technical Services processes. Work slips were observed on December 18 showing receipt dates of October 16, more than two month’s earlier. Work slips are color coded and dated once a week, so staff and volunteers can easily see which are the oldest materials. This coding and the way materials are handled necessitates quite a bit of shelving in the workroom.



Volunteers assist with physical processing and mending. As with other library assignments, most work in two hour blocks, which means considerable time is spent in setting up and putting work items away. Paid staff time is spent in training, laying out work, managing work flow, communicating, and correcting the work of volunteers. While the contribution of volunteers is essential to the throughput of materials, it is not without cost in paid staff time.

### ***Customization is Costly***

Public service staff have asked for a number of location codes, labels and other designators. Some materials, such as new DVDs, will be placed in the Browsing Collection initially and later recataloged and relabeled for the general collection. One staff member suggested placing nonfiction and foreign films and other less popular titles directly into the general collection and this seems like an idea worth considering. Every handling of an item and every change to a bibliographic or item record must be reviewed in terms of real (not conjectured) benefit to the library customer. Adding location codes, labels, sticker, and creating specialized collections are all forms of customization that cause additional time and expense as materials are ordered, cataloged, and processed. The greatest efficiencies can be achieved when all materials can move through one processing stream. Whenever an item has to take a detour because it must be handled differently, costs and time mount up.

Circulation staff requested color coded labels to make it easier for volunteers to learn and remember collection locations. Again, these special labels add to processing time and to training time for both volunteers and paid staff.



Customized processing also means that the library is less able to take advantage of vendor provided processing and cataloging services. Numerous labels and special local cataloging practices will either make it too costly for the vendor to provide the service or impossible for them to do so. The library loses an opportunity to cut costs and reduce time to shelf if it can't consider purchasing these services.

### ***Efficiencies Come Through Process Analysis***

The only way that more work can be done with the same number of staff or that increased work can be handled by the same or only slightly more staff is through analyzing work processes. Step by step procedures and forms to use in doing so are provided in *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*.<sup>13</sup> It appears that Technical Services has kept detailed production statistics. These should be analyzed and coupled with timing studies so that the library can determine how long it takes to perform various tasks and what the steps involved are. For example, the statistics provided indicate that it takes longer to process and catalog juvenile books than video recordings or recorded books. This is the opposite of what is found in most libraries. Careful analysis of how the work is done and the time that various steps take for various kinds of materials will provide information that can be used to streamline workflow and reduce the number of steps and times that an item is handled. This analysis will also provide information that can be used to develop cost data that can then be used to compare the cost of performing tasks in-house versus buying processing, cataloging or both from library vendors.

Using vendor provided services can be a mix and match process. Many libraries purchase adult and juvenile fiction fully processed and cataloged. These materials can then be quickly finished in the library and put out for library customers to borrow within a few days. This frees library staff to spend their time on more complex cataloging and processing tasks.

In an effort to balance workload and ensure that materials move through the department, library staff have been assigned categories of materials to catalog and process. This practice should be reexamined as

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<sup>13</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002).

processes and work flow are analyzed and vendor products are considered. Most libraries have moved to a generalist concept, so that all materials are handled by all staff members. This ensures that backlogs won't occur if someone is on vacation and that everyone is familiar with how to catalog and process the various kinds of materials that come through the department.

A model approach, developed by the Phoenix Public Library, will be shared with the Library Director and Technical Services Supervisor. Phoenix knows exactly how long it takes to place an order, catalog an item, etc. and is able to both set and meet its internal standards and to make detailed comparisons between what it costs to perform various tasks and what vendors charge for various services.

### ***Recalibrate Effectiveness Measures***

The current effectiveness measure for moving materials through Technical Services upon receipt is not a worthy performance standard because it is much too long. It appears to be a measurement that is reported after the fact rather than used to stimulate achievement. The concept of a throughput standard should be revisited and addressed proactively by both Technical Services and staff members from Readers' Services and Circulation. Technical Services staff can't do the impossible. Expectations and requirements must be negotiated so that a reasonable standard can be developed. Other libraries have set standards such as "95% of the time materials will move through Technical Services within ten days of receipt by the department." Such a standard gives other staff an understanding of the timeframes involved so they don't inquire about materials until the timeframe has been exceeded and gives Technical Services staff motivation to develop approaches that allow them to maintain these standards. As materials budgets increase, everyone will know what the quality level has been and what it takes to maintain it so that resources can be identified to enable Technical Services to continue to meet the standards.

## **Circulation**

Circulation is responsible for checking materials in and out, answering users' questions about library facilities and programs, renewing and shelving all library materials, collecting fines, issuing new library cards, reconciling patron records, and answering general questions. Circulation staff track down and retrieve lost and missing items and maintain accurate patron records in the countywide database. Circulation staff are also responsible for processing patrons' requests (reserves or holds). This division is staffed by a Division Manager, two Supervisors, 1.4 FTE Senior Library Assistants, and 7.7 FTE Library Assistants. These paid staff members are supplemented by a number of volunteers who check in library materials, search for requested materials, and shelve returned materials.

The Circulation division provides staffing for three public service points: the entry point, welcome desk and the circulation desk. The entry point is staffed primarily by volunteers. This is a first point of contact for many library visitors. Material return slots are at this point and simple directional information can be provided. The Welcome Desk is where new cards are issued, the telephone is answered, guest passes are issued for public computer use, and many questions about library policies are answered. Library materials are checked out at the Circulation Desk, fines are collected or negotiated there, and holds are retrieved from shelves behind the Circulation Desk. Returned materials and materials that arrive through the delivery are processed in a work room behind the circulation desk area. For many library users, the staff and volunteers in Circulation are the first, last, and often only contact they have with library staff. Customer service is a critical feature of the work done in this division. Circulation is the "face" of library service to most users.



<b>Circulation Workload Measures</b>				
	FY 2004-2005 Actual	FY 2005-2006 Actual	FY 2006-2007 Budget	FY 2007-2008 Projected
Materials checked out per year	728,250	850,000	918,540	1,032,891
Materials checked in per year	568,280	722,500	734,832	745,375
Materials checked out per week	14,005	16,346	17,864	19,863
Materials checked in per week	10,928	13,894	14,131	14,334
Materials renewed per week	2,408	3,923	3,886	3,937
Library cards issued per week	131	110	130	116
Materials checked out per week on self-checkout machines	1,065	981	1,300	3,973
Materials shelved per week	10,928	13,894	14,131	14,334
Intralibrary loans per week (crates)	115	123	125	130
Yearly checkout per staff member (FTE)	56,019	70,833	73,483	73,778

### ***Heavy Reliance Upon Volunteers***

Most of the library's check in and shelving is done by volunteers. Because of the large number of individuals involved in these activities, the supervisors spend much of their time managing work flow and materials flow in the circulation work room. Volunteers work mostly in two hour shifts, so there is quite a bit of coming and going and communication that must take place as people perform various tasks. The supervisors must ensure that the materials continue to move and that necessary tasks are being done. Most volunteers only work once a week, so the kind of continuity found with regular employees is missing. Managers and staff have devised a number of techniques, often involving labels and color codes to assist volunteers. As in the Technical Services work area, this necessitates considerable space for materials (shelf space in Technical Services and book cart space in Circulation). The circulation work room is large and would be the envy of many libraries, but it feels very cluttered and crowded because of the number of carts, work stations, and perimeter shelving units (for overflow shelving) housed there.



Volunteers check in items, then takes stacks to the appropriate carts, which are labeled with shelving locations and arranged around the room. This careful sorting on to carts is a time consuming activity that interrupts the flow of check in and takes time as people walk to and from the carts. The Circulation Manager has suggested the use of a sorter (which could be a paid or volunteer position) to move materials

from the check in stations to the carts, sorting as they are placed on the carts. This is an idea that should be considered but in the context of a total analysis of work processes and work flow within the workroom. As in Technical Services, *Staffing for Results* should be consulted for techniques and work forms to use to carry out this analysis.

### ***Circulation Work Has Also Changed***

The type and mix of work in the Circulation Division has changed as it has in Readers' Services. With the shared online catalogs, library customers are able to place holds (requests) on items which are not currently available at the Tigard library or from any other library in WCCLS. A daily courier service delivers and returns items among the thirteen WCCLS libraries. Being able to request items which are out and items from other libraries is a wonderful service and tremendously popular. About 15% of the total circulation is now generated by Holds.

Tigard is a large library, with a number of collection locations, so locating requested items can take quite a bit of time. There are from 200-300 items on each daily holds list. Workflow has been reconfigured to ensure that the list is completed each day. If an item isn't found, a second search is made (usually by an experienced, paid staff member) and ultimately a third search will be made before an item is declared missing. After items are retrieved from the shelves, they must be processed so that slips can be printed out with the borrower's name, and then filed on shelves. A clever change in the filing process has just been made so that staff are facing towards rather than away from the Circulation Desk while shelving or retrieving holds. Unfortunately, a certain amount of this work goes to waste, as staff estimate that approximately 10% of holds are not picked up. Libraries are struggling with this phenomenon and a certain percentage will have to be accepted as the cost of business. However, this percentage should be tracked and some efforts made to communicate positively with library users about how they can manage holds by cancelling those they no longer use, etc.

The entire holds process has become a significant part of the work done by Circulation, but standardized, meaningful statistics have not yet been developed or consistently collected and reported. The difficulty of doing this is magnified by the cooperative arrangement among WCCLS libraries and the shared database. The Tigard Public Library is working on finding the most accurate way to measure this workload and plans to develop workload and effectiveness measures around the holds service.

Locating holds, processing delivery materials, searching for missing items, and processing a number of other lists related to managing the library collection are all very detailed, time consuming activities performed by Circulation. There are opportunities to analyze these processes and continuously question the utility of processing various lists. There are always tradeoffs. Close stewardship of the collection may have to be given up in favor of other activities that are more closely related to customer service, such as reshelving materials in a timelier manner.

### ***Reshelving Standard***

The reshelving standard currently is to reshelve 91% of returned materials within 48 hours. Besides volunteers, on call library aides and regular staff also shelve materials. There are 1.5 FTE on call library aides budgeted. This level is not sufficient to meet the current or projected standard of 91-92% reshelved within 48 hours. By way of comparison, the Hollywood Branch of the Multnomah County Library employs 5.25 FTE shelvers to handle the equivalent circulation level. Continuous process improvement must be done to make sure that the standard doesn't slip. Even at the current level, considerable staff time is wasted in looking for items on the reserve list that haven't yet been reshelved and in explaining to library customers why items that are shown as "on shelf" in the catalog aren't there.

### *Underutilization of Self-Check*

One of the options that is now available for handling increasing circulation workload is self-check. These machines allow library customers to check their materials out themselves. The use of self-service checkout in libraries has developed in parallel with similar systems in the retail world. Just as in retail, some customers appreciate the fact that self-checkout allows them to perform their transactions quickly and confidentially, while others aren't comfortable using a machine and/or prefer human interaction.

Providing a self-service option is now common in many public libraries and their experiences can be used to increase utilization at Tigard. The San Jose Public Library in California has been very successful in incorporating self-check and reports that 85-90% of its circulation is now done on self-check machines. Locally, the Multnomah County Library averages around 30% of circulation going through self-check, for those branches that have the machines. Libraries in Canada, western Europe, Singapore and Hong Kong also report very high utilization rates, as high as 90-95% in some instances.

The keys to acceptance and use are these:

- Machine location and placement: self-check must be designed as the primary rather than secondary method for checking out materials. They must be easy to find by library users.



Self-check at San Jose Public Library

- Machine environment: library customers are very used to using ATMs. Self-check machines should have similar cabinetry and convenience features such as a shelf to place materials on.
- Sufficiency of machines: there need to be enough machines (at least two) so that most of the time users can walk up and use one, thus eliminating

the need to line up for either in-person or self-check out.

- Self pick-up of holds: Because holds are such a significant portion of circulation, many patrons have holds. If they have to go to the Circulation Desk so that staff retrieve holds for them, they can't use the self-check machines. Many libraries have now put holds out for library customers to retrieve themselves (CDs and DVDs are often exceptions if they don't have security tags). Issues of confidentiality, security, and filing arrangements have been resolved by many libraries. Tigard can benefit from the experience of those who have pioneered this approach.
- Review of policies and limitations: The goal is to make it possible for the majority of library users to use self-check. Fine thresholds, alerts, etc., should be reviewed so that people receive alerts if they have fines or overdue items but that they aren't stopped from checking items out until they've reached a reasonable threshold level. For example, if people are blocked from using self-check at the \$5 level many more will be blocked than if the level

were set to \$25. Threshold levels are set collectively for WCCLS members. The current fine threshold is \$9.95

- Machines that will check out and handle security for audiovisual items: Earlier self-check machines either couldn't handle security tags or conflicted with them. Since many libraries put some sort of security tag on high theft items, the self-check machine must be able to handle them and perform the necessary desensitization process so that items can be taken through security gates. The Tigard Public Library has begun to place security strips in most audiovisual material (CD's & DVD's) so that self-check machines can be used and to protect materials from theft.
- Good staff training: Staff acceptance and understanding of self-check is essential to its being embraced by library users. Staff must understand why the machines are being used, what the utilization targets are, and how their jobs will change. Management must understand that staff who work with library customers will need additional training and the right customer service competencies because if self-check is heavily used, the users staff deal with will have problems with fines or overdues or other issues that prevent them from using the self-check machines.
- Floor assistance to library customers: A successful roll-out of self-check requires several months of friendly, positive assistance by staff or volunteers (similar to docents). Self-check must be presented as a positive, time saving benefit not as one more way that public employees are trying to shirk their work or shift it to the public. The Tigard Public Library did provide such an introduction last spring and plans another, even more focused process this coming spring. Another benefit that many libraries have heard expressed by their users is that people appreciate the confidentiality of self-check because no one sees the books or subjects they are borrowing. This benefit should be emphasized, in addition to the convenience and time-saving aspects of self-check.

The Tigard library has tried some of these suggestions and has tried to position the machine it has closer to the circulation desk. However, the machine is obscured by people waiting to check materials out and is not available until one comes to it, if there is a line. In other words it's not a clear first choice option.

The size and placement of the Circulation Desk announces "this is the place to check materials out". It will be difficult to get customers to use the self-check machines until a rearrangement and redesign is completed.

The FY 2006 utilization rate was 6% and the target for FY 2007 has been set at 10%, with future targets ultimately moving up to 35-40%. This goal should be rethought. There is an opportunity to utilize staff in other ways if self-check were utilized at a higher level.



Self-check machine is not visible from the line.



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# CONCLUSIONS

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The Tigard Public Library is valued highly by both its users and Tigard residents. According to the latest survey of library users, library users make heavy use of the library and indicated by a resounding 97% that the library is meeting their needs. Tigard residents indicated in the 2006 Community Attitude Survey that they were very satisfied with library services by giving the library an 8.9 mean rating out of a possible 10. In fact, 43% of the survey respondents gave the library a 10 out of a 10 rating.

The library provides nearly a four to one return on tax payer dollar investment. In addition to the quantifiable return on investment, library materials and services provide information that provides tangible benefit to users as well as enriches their lives. The library also provides numerous, unquantifiable benefits to users and the community by supporting literacy and the love of learning, serving as an important community center that allows everyone to be together in a positive, neutral environment, and providing information and programs of interest to community members of all ages.

When compared to other libraries at the national, state, and regional level, the Tigard Public Library does better than average in many areas of comparison and is at average in most others. Because of county-wide budget restrictions, some measures have slipped in recent years, but performance should improve in these areas as monies from the recently approved tax levy come in.

The library compares well to other public libraries its size in terms of the quality of its management. Staff and management take seriously and conscientiously their commitment to providing excellent customer service in a community that places a premium on community involvement and engagement and expects and supports personal service.

While a number of recommendations are made in this report designed to improve service efficiency, they are made within the context of a library operation that is regarded as highly effective by its users and the community and that appears to be appropriately staffed for the current service offerings, open hours, and building size and configuration.

## Tigard Public Library - 6 Years' Statistics

Source: Oregon Statistics as reported by BibliostatConnect

Data Elements	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	% Change in 6 Years
# of FTE with MLS Degree	8	8.2	7.9	9.2	12.7	12.5	56%
# of Registered Borrowers	43,428	46,703	50,041	29,739	31,759	32,207	-26%
# of Total Paid Staff FTE	35	30.6	30.65	28.9	33.2	34.2	-2%
# of Total Units	112,339	108,571	107,781	114,400	125,906	137,908	23%
Circulation per Capita	11.14	11.03	11.27	10.55	11.54	13.02	17%
Circulation per FTE	17,027	21,872	22,317	22,561	21,928	24,863	46%
Percent of Op Exp spent on Library Materials	13.04%	12.67%	13.21%	13.68%	13.97%	14.54%	12%
Population of The Legal Service Area	53,519	60,676	60,676	61,808	63,110	65,310	22%
Public Service Hours	3,282	3,462	3,474	3,047	2,716	2,866	-13%
Reference Transactions per Capita	0.8	0.86	1.06	0.99	0.82	0.77	-4%
Registered Borrowers as % of Population	81%	77%	82%	48%	50%	49%	-39%
Staff Expenditures as % of Operating Budget	81%	81%	81%	82%	81%	80%	-1%
Total # of Public PC Uses	35,930	54,051	68,752	66,411	76,114	108,133	201%
Total # of Reference Transactions	43,017	51,966	64,258	60,995	51,710	50,056	16%
Total Circulation	595,935	669,297	684,023	652,004	728,003	850,326	43%
Total Collection Expenditures	\$214,900	\$234,233	\$247,357	\$251,356	\$312,790	\$346,075	61%
Total Collection Expenditures per Capita	\$ 4.02	\$ 3.86	\$ 4.08	\$ 4.07	\$ 4.96	\$ 5.30	32%
Total Hours in Typical Week Open	69	69	69	61	55	55	-20%
Total ILLs Provided	56,807	83,172	97,241	101,538	109,313	168,614	197%
Total ILLs Received	50,842	67,472	84,245	90,835	103,954	130,172	156%
Total Library Program Attendance per Capita	0.23	0.22	0.24	0.2	0.25	0.21	-9%
Total Operating Expenditures	\$1,648,568	\$1,848,304	\$1,872,620	\$1,837,487	\$2,238,427	\$2,380,450	44%
Total Operating Expenditures per Capita	\$31	\$30	\$31	\$30	\$35	\$36	18%
Total Staff Expenditures	\$1,333,085	\$1,499,500	\$1,523,269	\$1,504,735	\$1,816,690	\$1,912,796	43%
Total Staff Expenditures per Capita	\$ 24.91	\$ 24.71	\$ 25.11	\$ 24.35	\$ 28.79	\$ 29.29	18%
Turnover Rate	5.30	6.16	6.35	5.70	5.78	6.17	16%
Visits	250,175	276,023	281,574	268,916	343,390	373,176	49%
Visits per Capita	4.67	4.55	4.64	4.35	5.44	5.71	22%