



**Broward County Board of County Commissioners  
Community Services Department  
Libraries Division**

**Broward County Library  
Customer Service Improvement Plan  
2010-2014**

**State Aid to Public Libraries Program  
Required Document  
September 2009**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Guidelines provided by the State Library of Florida for the State Aid to Public Libraries Program require the submission of a five year strategic plan to receive state aid (approximately \$2 million annually). Broward County Libraries has chosen the title and theme of “customer service improvement” as the primary focus and objective to meet this particular requirement.

This document consists of an aggressive, ambitious plan to improve customer service in a large number of areas through a variety of steps, strategies and activities; all directed towards positive public benefit and improved public services across the board.

The completion of all Objectives is the responsibility of the Director of the Libraries Division.

Every successful effort the Libraries Division makes in these areas ultimately contributes to the established Goals of the Broward County Board of County Commissioners and the quality of life in Broward County.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS**

Broward County Libraries will incorporate a variety analyses, techniques and methods to instill an organizational culture centered on customer service and the ease of access to library services, library collections, programs and facilities. The library’s primary objectives will be “customer led”: what customers need or desire as the highest priorities will be the highest priorities of the Division.

Several public input mechanisms have already been put into place to receive customer requests and meet needs. Additional mechanisms include a formalized county wide annual customer feedback evaluation in spring 2009 and touch screen survey units in all of the larger libraries.

Broward County Libraries intends to be the most rapid service provider, best innovator in service delivery and the most aggressive, forward moving, customer friendly and customer centered public library in the nation.

## **IMPROVEMENTS TO FACILITIES**

As a result of the 1999 Library Bond Issue for \$139 million dollars approved by the voters in 1999, along with several other capital projects approved by the Board of County Commissioners, Broward County Libraries Division has been involved in a massive construction program the last decade.

Since 2000, thirteen completely new and replacement libraries have been constructed and opened to the public, including as Bond projects: the West, South, Southwest and Northwest Regional Libraries (70,000 square feet each); the Tamarac, Miramar, Weston and Hollywood Branch Libraries (30,000 square feet each); the Lauderhill Towne Centre, Tyrone Bryant and Northwest Branch Libraries (10,000 square feet each) and as capital projects, the North Lauderdale Saraniero and Stirling Road Branch Libraries (20,000 square feet each) and the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center (64,000 square feet).

A cooperative public library/private university library venture with Nova Southeastern University has resulted in the construction and opening of the new joint-use and funded Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center. This facility is over 325,000 square feet in size.

Other projects that will be completed during the next planning period:

**Objective A: Complete all voter approved new construction bond projects.**

- 1A. Open the Sunset Strip Branch Library in 2011.
- 2A. Open the new Lauderdale Lakes Branch Library by 2010.
- 3A. Open the new Lauderhill Mall/Cultural Center Branch by 2012.

**Objective B: Complete all approved Capital Projects.**

- 1B. Open the new joint use facility with Young at Art by 2012.
- 2B. Complete the capital projects related to the Main Library.
- 3B. Complete the inclusion of the Hispanic Center at the Main Library by 2010.
- 4B. Open the new Dania Beach Branch by 2010.
- 5B. Open the new Pompano Beach Branch Library by 2013.

The above remaining bond and capital projects add approximately 132,000 square feet of new construction to the Broward County Libraries Division.

**TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Broward County Libraries has a county wide library automated system which controls and manages materials inventory, customer files, provides catalogs and produces various reports and overdue notices. Over 3,000 public access Internet computers are provided and the library provides a well used, expanding and improving Home Page on the County's web site. On-line, remote and interactive services continue to increase. Library customers can now access wireless internet service at all Broward County Library locations.

Other projects requiring research and/or implementation within the planning period:

**Objective C: Continue to implement Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology.**

- 1C. Maintain the RFID pilot project at the Stirling Road branch.
- 2C. Continue to monitor RFID technology and how it might best serve Broward County Libraries.

**Objective D: Continue to include wireless technology in all Broward County libraries.**

- 1D. Develop methods to include laptops in all Broward County libraries, especially in community rooms after school for student use and also on weekends for general customer use.

**Objective E: Continue the computer replacement project, adding as many computers as possible through private or public means, to improve public service.**

**Objective F: Continue to improve and expand the library's Home Page and on-line services to provide increased levels of customer interest, access and service.**

- 1F. Develop a team to evaluate new on-line services and add new features throughout the planning period.

**Objective G: Digitize unique collections for on-line public access.**

- 1G. Develop a team and program to identify the appropriate collections and time line. Seek private funding.

**Objective H: Maintain the highest data transmission speed possible.**

**Objective I: Research new technologies for public benefit throughout Broward County Libraries.**

- 1I. Develop a team to study and present new applicable technologies for public benefit to library management, including wireless equipment for library staff and hand held units. Seek private funding for bold enterprises.
- 2I. Implement a pilot project of roving/roaming/concierge service staff to serve customers wherever they are in the building and wherever they need assistance.

**Objective J: Install additional touch screen customer feedback and survey units in all large libraries.**

- 1J. Maintain equipment in good working order for improved customer service.

## **EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT**

Broward County Libraries provides a very high and successful level of public programming, the highest level in Florida and one of the highest in the nation. Through expert selection, library collections, consisting of over 3.4 million items, are responsive to public needs. Through a variety of methods and procedures, library collections are well maintained.

Library staff, the Division's greatest asset, receives continuing educational benefits from Broward County, plus financial support from the Broward Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library to pursue additional education and professional growth.

Both the Friends and the Foundation also provide general financial support for many library programs and initiatives, totaling over \$800,000 annually. Broward County Libraries is especially strong by working together with a large number of partners.

Additional projects and plans need to be evaluated and pursued during the planning period:

**Objective K: Selection practices must be as cost effective, streamlined and as rapid as possible. Continuing plans will be put into place to accomplish this end.**

**Objective L: Collections will need to be more diversified as the population diversifies.**

**Objective M: As the public uses more on-line electronic services and more non-print materials, the library's selection practices need to adapt and adapt more quickly.**

**Objective N: Aggressive recruiting of highly skilled candidates and their continuing development and training are high priorities for the out years of this plan.**

- 1N. Continuing aggressive actions to fill vacancies with the most qualified candidates, especially those that are fluent in Spanish and/or Creole.
- 2N. The library should encourage and support existing staff in acquiring foreign language skills (Spanish and Creole/French).
- 3N. Evaluation of the management structure, management classifications, the levels of library management and the kind and level of the library professional and clerical work force needed will be evaluated and changed as needed within the planning period.
- 4N. Increase support for any new employees and offer continuing education opportunities to increase retention.
- 5N. Maintain the employee Communication Plan but evaluate and explore new communication methods.
- 6N. More library employees will be exposed to leadership and management training, within existing resources.
- 7N. More library staff will be exposed to customer service training, within existing resources.
- 8N. Employee recognition programs need to expand within existing resources.

**Objective O: Library program initiatives need to continue to reflect the County's cultural diversity but new program initiatives and exhibits need to incorporate new ideas and reach new horizons.**

- 1O. Recognizing that the digital divide still exists, the Library will seek creative funding sources to expand the number of computer instruction classes offered and will provide them in a variety of languages.

**Objective P: All library branches should have after school programs and literacy programs. Grants and private funding must be pursued to this end.**

**Objective Q: The library will do all it can to facilitate the expansion of revenues from the Foundation and Friends.**

- 1Q. The library will be more aggressive applying for grants.
- 2Q. Library visibility in the communities served needs to be increased via private or joint ventures.
- 3Q. Volunteers need more recognition.
- 4Q. Foundation, Friends and the Libraries Division need to seek and obtain more and new program sponsors.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY/STREAMLINING**

Through a series of submissions, reviews, checks, evaluations, appraisals and audits, the performance and effectiveness of the Broward County Library is measured and evaluated frequently.

During the planning period additional improvements will be made:

**Objective R: True Outcome Measures will be developed which will reflect library service customer impact. Meaningful performance measures must be used, eliminating any of doubtful use.**

**Objective S: Any duplicate operation will be eliminated and like operations will be consolidated.**

**Objective T: Within existing resources and innovative agreements with partners, hours of operation will be expanded.**

**Objective U: Within existing resources, customer wait periods will be reduced and items returned will be made available to the public rapidly.**

**Objective V: Within existing resources, every effort will be made to ensure that all library facilities are neat, clean, safe, easy to use and efficient in operation.**

**Objective W: Within existing resources, new materials will be available to customers rapidly.**

- 1W. Expand a pilot project of customer self service holds.
- 2W. Implement a pilot project of floating/shared rotating collections.