



LEE COUNTY  
LIBRARY  
SYSTEM

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## Strategic Plan

*October 2007 – September 2012*

Adopted by the  
Lee County Board of County Commissioners  
November 27, 2007

**5-10 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON  
~ ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE  
RELEVANT FUTURE ~**

*In order to make progress toward the 10-15 year Envisioned Future, an organization must constantly anticipate the strategic factors likely to affect its ability to succeed, and to assess the implications of those factors. This process of building foresight about the future will help the Lee County Library System to recalibrate its view of the relevant future and provide a basis upon which to update the strategic plan. Because the outcome-oriented goals that form the basis of the long-range strategic plan will be based on this foresight, annual review of these statements will be an important method of ensuring the ongoing relevance of the strategic plan.*

**Social Values and Demographics**

1. Reading will continue to be essential for high quality of life for all ages.
2. There will continue to be population growth throughout the county specifically east of I-75 (Lehigh Acres), Ft Myers River District, N. Fort Myers, and N. Cape Coral.
3. Some areas of the county will lose residents due to factors such as weather, the high cost of living, and higher taxes.
4. There will be an increase in the number of immigrants in the county.
5. Traffic congestion challenges and other transportation issues will continue to increase within the county.
6. The number of older age residents will grow, but their proportion of the population will not significantly increase.
7. A seasonal population will continue to impact library services and usage.
8. There will be an increased number of year-round residents.
9. There will be more active retirees; there will be more retirees aging thus needing more specialized services.
10. The population of Lee County will continue to become more diverse with increases in the Latino, Haitian and Eastern European populations; the African American population will remain stable, and there will be a decrease in the non-Latino white population.
11. There will be an increased demand for multi-lingual services and interactions.
12. The number of younger families will continue to grow within the county.
13. There will be more two-income families in the county.
14. The public will increasingly look for places to socialize, access resources, and exchange ideas.
15. The public will increasingly desire opportunities for life-long learning and training.
16. The public will increasingly desire 24/7 services.
17. Libraries are increasingly competing with cultural and recreational institutions particularly "in season."
18. There will be less civility in interactions within the library and online leading to more confrontational experiences.
19. There will be more demand from patrons for input on how libraries function and the services provided.

20. Social values will continue to change with less constraint on subject matter.
21. Social values are becoming more polarized.
22. There will be an increased number of teens.
23. The creation and growth of two major universities in the county may lead to a younger and more educated demographic.
24. There will be an increase in the number of younger library staff members.

## **Business and Economic Factors**

1. More academic publishers will go paperless.
2. The service industry will continue to be the biggest employer in Lee County.
3. Business outsourcing will continue to grow.
4. There will be more demands on funding dollars.
5. Costs for social service infrastructure will grow.
6. There will be more opportunity for service organizations to partner with virtual businesses.
7. Tourism as a major source of income will continue in Lee County.
8. The cost of living will continue to increase in SW Florida.
9. Employers in the county will have greater difficulty hiring employees due to such issues as the lack of affordable housing, a limited skilled and/or highly educated workforce, and low unemployment rates.
10. Low income housing will increase, but may not keep pace with the need.
11. The housing market in SW Florida will be cyclical.
12. Fuel prices will continue to fluctuate.
13. Businesses will continue to focus on the environmental issues.
14. Seasonal employment will continue to be necessary.
15. There will be an increased need for health and custodial care services for all ages in the county.
16. There will be an increased need for mass transit within the county.
17. There will be an increase in the number of informational formats available to the public.
18. There will be an increased need for Lee County employers to offer competitive salaries.
19. Property and sales taxes and cost of insurance will continue to have an impact.
20. Increased global competition will be a factor in shaping the local economy.

## **Technology and Science**

1. There will be an increase in the number of remote technology users.
2. The technology gap will continue to be a challenge.
3. There will be an increase in customer expectations for web-based interactive services.
4. There will be an increased need for technology training.
5. Customer's' expectations for technology functionality will continue to increase.
6. There will be an increased demand for technology services by mobile users.
7. There will be an increased demand for support of different software/hardware.
8. There will be an increased need for integrated software capabilities that are user friendly.
9. There will be an increased demand for utilizing technology in conducting meetings, training, and streamlining existing processes.
10. There will be increased use of technology to introduce users to library services.

11. There will be an increased expectation for the availability of computers within libraries.
12. There will be continued ignorance regarding the quality of information found on the Internet.
13. The cost of technology will continue to decrease, but the number of technology initiatives will continue to increase.
14. There will be an increased demand for and variety of online services provided by the library.
15. There will be an increased demand for digitized materials and collections.
16. The speed of technology development will continue to increase.
17. The public will be living longer due to increased medical advances.
18. Emphasis on environmental impacts will continue pressuring the libraries to become "greener."
19. The expectation for collaborative environments will outweigh privacy concerns.
20. Increased use of technology in libraries will attract a more tech oriented workforce.

### **Structure and Competition**

1. The public will continue to compare libraries to other information sources.
2. Libraries will be designed more like bookstores in terms of physical space and displays.
3. The library will serve more as an entertainment provider in terms of materials and programs.
4. The possibility of the BN library separating from the LCLS could change the structure.
5. There will be an increased expectation for on-demand and customizable 24/7 services.
6. Library customers will have a growing number and variety of choices in how to spend their leisure time.
7. Communicating the library's services internally and externally will be a greater challenge due to increased communication overload.
8. Library governance structures will be challenged as a result of changing needs and preferences.

### **Legislation and Regulation**

1. There will be a tightening of money available for libraries from federal, state and local sources.
2. There will be tensions between privacy and national security issues.
3. There will be continued controversy over the Patriot Act.
4. There will be continued efforts to restrict freedom of information (censorship) and government interpretation of 1st Amendment rights which will be actively defended by library associations.
5. Regulations regarding Internet access will continue to affect the way libraries operate.
6. Hiring practices for professionals may change due to government pressure and socio-economic factors. .
7. Government may require public buildings to meet hurricane standards and serve as shelters.
8. There will be legislation for public transportation and mass transit.

9. Citizenry will increasingly demand justification for funds expended (ROI).
10. Limited resources will create a greater need for collaboration among government departments.
11. There will be a dramatic cut in Federal spending as a result of an increased strain on social security and Medicare due to aging baby boomers.

<b>10-15 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON</b> <b>~ CORE IDEOLOGY &amp; ENVISIONED FUTURE ~</b>
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*Core ideology describes an organization's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements - **core purpose** – the organization's reason for being – and **core values** – essential and enduring principles that guide the organization. **Envisioned future** conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the organization. It consists of a **big (hairy) audacious goal** – a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort – and a **vivid description** – vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.*

## **Core Ideology**

### **Core Purpose:**

Strengthening our community by informing and enriching individuals.

### **Core Organizational Values:**

- Ensure equal and open access
- Defend intellectual freedom and the right to privacy
- Ensure that an individual's economic status does not deter library use
- Commit to meeting customer needs
- Foster a climate of mutual respect and trust
- Value and support individual initiative
- Promote cooperation, collaboration and connections
- Promote reading and life-long learning
- Practice financial accountability
- Support the county's vision, mission, and values

## Envisioned Future

### **BHAG:**

To be valued by everyone as indispensable in providing connections between the community, its people, and resources.

### **Vivid Description of the Desired Future:**

The Lee County Library System (LCLS) is the definitive place to go, physically and virtually, for information, enrichment and life-long learning. We provide a variety of services, resources, and programs to meet the diverse needs of the County's growing population. Access to programs and services is convenient, saving patrons time and money. Lee County residents recognize the libraries as part of the fabric of their daily lives and as a primary source for reliable and trustworthy information.

Lee County libraries are viewed by residents as vital places for community interaction and growth. We develop and maintain relationships with organizations and businesses within the community. To strengthen services, we expand partnerships with local, statewide and national library organizations and other information providers. Our well-designed, strategically placed facilities strive to be safe, secure public places, offering diverse areas for both individual and group users, including spaces for quiet reflection. Lee County residents are advocates for the LCLS, recognizing the vital role it plays in making the community a better place to live.

LCLS staff plays a vital role in the success of the libraries. Perceived by patrons as knowledgeable and responsive in providing services, we find the library to be an enjoyable place to work. We are committed to promoting the library through our involvement in the community, our interactions with library patrons and our relationships with each other. We are committed to our professional development and life-long learning. Patrons and staff enjoy a relationship based on mutual respect. LCLS is recognized universally as a leader in library services and innovation.

**3-5 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON**  
**~ OUTCOME-ORIENTED GOALS, OBJECTIVES,**  
**AND STRATEGIES ~**

*The following are goals for the next five years. These goals represent areas of focus and outcomes in which the Lee County Library System will explicitly state the conditions or attributes it wants to achieve. These outcome statements define “what will constitute future success.” The achievement of each goal will move the organization toward realization of its vision. The goals are not listed in priority order.*

*Objectives provide direction and strategies suggested actions on for how the organization will accomplish its articulated goals. Objectives are considered in the 3-5 year planning horizon while Strategies are considered within the 1-3 year planning horizon. Accomplishment of goals and objectives are measured annually while strategies are reviewed regularly.*

## **Goals, Objectives and Strategies**

### **Goal Area: Services and Resources**

**Goal Statement:** The library’s content and services are authoritative, trustworthy and relevant.

**Key Measures:**

- Customer experience surveys
- Collection and ROI Statistics
- Program and Staffing Evaluations

Objective 1: Enhance reference service by ensuring accuracy of information and consistency in customer interactions.

Strategies:

- Identify ways to enhance service interpersonal skills.
- Assign Objective to the Reference Group to review and revise strategies.
- Develop supervisory skills training for consistency of evaluations and service delivery.
- Investigate time and staff levels at reference service points.
- Explore the possibility of making “Fugitive Facts” available to the public.

Objective 2: Enhance circulation service by ensuring accuracy of information and consistency in customer interactions.

Strategies:

- Identify ways to enhance (polish) service interpersonal skills.
- Evaluate system-wide automation training for purposes of consistency.

- Assign Objective to the Circulation Task Force to review and revise strategies.
- Investigate opportunities to streamline circulation procedures.
- Investigate the development of guidelines for customization/empowerment of service.
- Develop circulation supervisor training for consistency of evaluations and services delivery.
- Implement RFID technology system-wide.
- Investigate time and staffing levels at circulation service points.

Objective 3: Enhance the relevancy of library collections.

Strategies:

- Review overall library system definition to clarify system-wide collection development strategy.
- Investigate and streamline branch (Staff/Customer) involvement in material selection.
- Assign Objective to the Library Collections Task Force to review and revise strategies.
- Investigate ways to improve patron's ability to gather relevant results from all resources in a simplified manner.
- Develop and implement an online purchase suggestion process.
- Implement new ILS.
- Investigate the possibility of floating collections.

Objective 4: Ensure that programs are designed to meet the needs of targeted user groups.

Strategies:

Identify targeted groups.

- Examine library services to older adults (boomers and up).
- Investigate options for improving services for new immigrants and limited English speakers.

Objective 5: Increase opportunities for interactions among patrons and between patrons and the library.

Strategies:

- Establish new and targeted Advisory Groups.
- Investigate and implement patron interactivity through the use of electronic methodologies.

**Goal Area: Marketing and Communications**

**Goal Statement:** Residents recognize the Lee County Library System as integral to their daily lives and to the strength of the community.

**Key Measures:**

1. Community surveys

2. Patron Surveys and Comments
3. Media Coverage/Impressions

Objective 1: Increase the focus of marketing materials to reflect the connection between programs and services and the individual's daily life.

Strategies:

- Create a marketing committee with equal branch representation including outreach.
- Develop a process for each branch to identify key audiences and population sub-segments.
- Implement the processes at the branches
- Develop a plan for a coordinated and unified marketing strategy .
- Create and begin implementation of a marketing strategy.
- Develop methods to evaluate success of marketing strategies.

Objective 2: Increase the residents' understanding of how the LCLS strengthens the community.

Strategies:

- Create a marketing committee with equal branch representation including outreach.
- Develop a process for each branch to identify key audiences and population sub-segments.
- Implement the processes at the branches
- Develop a plan for a coordinated and unified marketing strategy .
- Continue to develop system-wide tools and resources/branding tools that are flexible enough for branches to adapt to specific audiences.
- Identify partnerships to increase LCLS visibility.
- Increase outreach to community organizations.

Objective 3: Increase staff awareness of the array of services offered and our marketing strategy.

Strategies:

- Develop a method for educating staff on library services.
- Improve communication to staff on marketing efforts.

**Goal Area: Accessibility**

**Goal Statement:** Library services, programs, and facilities are accessible.

**Key Measures:**

- Statistics on Virtual Access
- Changes to Physical Plant and Impact of physical presence
- Growth and Impact of New Delivery Options

Objective 1: Increase virtual access to library services.

Strategies:

- Evaluate existing virtual services.

- Identify gaps in virtual services.
- Expand virtual services available.
- Investigate possible partnerships with other organizations.

Objective 2: Enhance the library's physical presence throughout the county.

Strategies:

- Develop a plan for the equitable distribution of physical resources (include buildings, staff, equipment, materials, and hours of service)
- Investigate current use of space in individual locations for optimal use.
- Implement Plan from strategy #1
- Develop a plan to expand partnership opportunities.
- Implement plan from strategy #4

Objective 3: Increase the variety of delivery options.

Strategies:

- Identify additional delivery options.
- Research and identify success stories.
- Identify potential partners.
- Investigate resources required.
- Develop a plan for implementation.