

Strategic Plan

Glendale Public Library

Glendale, Arizona

May 20, 2005



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Executive Summary

Glendale is a dynamic city located in the rapidly growing northwest part of the Phoenix metropolitan area. The city is known for its excellent educational and medical institutions, beautiful neighborhoods and a diversified economic base. While the metro area's population has almost quadrupled since 1960, Glendale's growth rate has been three times faster. The city's population grew 48 percent during the 1990s. Today, Glendale has a population of more than 225,000.

The Glendale Public Library System is composed of three facilities: the Main Library, the Velma Teague Branch in downtown Glendale and the northern Foothills Branch. A fourth branch in western Glendale is slated to be built in 2009. Satellite collections are located at the Glendale Adult Center, the West Valley YWCA, the Glendale Community Center and the Glendale Adult Day Health Care Center.

The mission of Glendale Public Library, a service-oriented organization, is to provide free and equal access, without prejudice and discrimination, to each man, woman and child in the community. Residents receive courteous and professional services that will

- Make available the materials (in multi-languages), programs and services needed to meet their recreational needs
- Provide the most current technology and informational services needed to answer their questions
- Assist everyone to continue to grow and learn throughout their lives
- Enable people to gain a better understanding of their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others
- Offer space for community interaction
- Provide information that helps in the development of careers, non-profits and businesses

The service goals of the library are:

1. All Glendale residents will receive the information they want about popular culture and social trends and their desire for satisfying spare time experiences.
2. All Glendale residents will receive the information and answers to questions they need on a broad array of topics related to work, school and personal life.
3. All Glendale residents will have access to the information they need for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.
4. All Glendale residents will enjoy opportunities to gain an understanding of their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others.
5. All Glendale residents will have space to meet and interact with others in the community and to discuss current issues.
6. All Glendale residents will have the information they need to develop their careers or business pursuits.

The committee felt strongly that the service goals pertained to everyone in the community, but drew special attention to the populations of the Hispanic, Native Americans, Asians, African American and persons with disabilities. They also wanted the library to support the efforts of non-profits and small business owners and start-ups, especially entrepreneurial efforts by women and minorities.

Introduction

The standard public library planning process, the New Planning for Results, was used as a framework in creating the library's strategic plan. This plan is a collaborative effort between community residents and staff. First, a planning committee, made up of community members representing various stakeholders and constituencies, helped the library identify the community needs. Then the library staff used their skills to develop new programs and services to address the needs identified by the committee. Two trained facilitators kept the project moving forward. The whole process was completed within five months.

Beginning in January 2005, Library Director Rodeane Widom identified and invited 22 community leaders to participate in the first planning meeting. These leaders represented many facets of the community including government, business, the arts, social services, and education. Rodeane explained the extent of their involvement and the dates of the three community meetings.

Facilitators Bonny Bruce and Laura Thomas Sullivan met with the staff on January 11, 2005, to explain the strategic planning process. On February 25 the first community planning meeting occurred at the library. During the six-hour meeting, the committee worked in groups to create a vision of the perfect Glendale ten years in the future. They determined the city's current condition by doing a SWOT analysis—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to this vision. Then they identified the community needs necessary to reach this vision. The group selected needs that they thought the library could address. Finally, the group identified five particular library service responses that would link community needs with specific library services and programs.

During March, the library staff met to consider the preliminary service responses chosen by the committee. After careful consideration of the needs the committee felt the library was suitable to address and the services the library is currently providing, the staff identified three service responses overlooked by the committee. The library decided to make a response at the second planning committee that would include a recommendation of those three responses, plus three of the group's original choices. Librarians were selected to "champion" these six service responses.

The second committee meeting took place on April 1, 2005. After receiving more in-depth information about the selected service responses and the presentations by the

librarians for the six service responses they recommended, the committee made its final vote. The number of votes each response received set the priority. The director decided not to break any tie votes. They also discussed specific populations to target in marketing and programming.

During April and May, the staff worked on writing a library mission statement, goals and objectives. They decided on specific activities to carry out the goals and objectives.

The plan was written and presented to the committee for review and discussion at the final planning meeting on May 20. The library advisory board received the plan the previous evening. Suggestions were incorporated into the plan, and a copy will be sent to the Arizona State Library.

Following submittal, the library director will reallocate resources, if necessary, determine new resource requirements and develop budget requests. She will monitor the progress toward the objectives and make changes as needed.

The planning committee and their affiliations included:

1. Joan Brainard – West Valley YWCA
2. Anne Buchmeier – City of Glendale Management and Budget Dept.
3. Nelda Crowell – Glendale Public Library Advisory Board
4. Raul Daniels – City of Glendale Parks and Recreation Dept.
5. Barbara Estrada – Family Service Agency
6. Susan Fitzgerald – The Bead Museum
7. Eleanor French – Glendale Public Library Advisory Board
8. Cathy Gorham – City of Glendale City Manager’s Office
9. Becky Jordan – Library user
10. Yvonne Knaack – State Farm Insurance and Chairman, Glendale Chamber of Commerce
11. Bo Larsen – Banner Thunderbird Medical Center
12. Mary Ann Lavine – Glendale Human Services Council/Committee on Aging
13. Joanne Lee – Library user
14. Elaine Maxon – City of Glendale Commission on Persons with Disabilities
15. Terry Mead – Attorney
16. Kathy Pastores – Glendale Public Library
17. Kent Rideout – Home Depot
18. Michelle Schrade – Glendale Public Library
19. Russ Sears – Glendale Community College
20. Janice Shanks – Glendale Elementary School District
21. Bill Walsh – Glendale Public Library Advisory Board
22. Donna White – Glendale Community College

Community Needs

Community Vision

The Glendale, Arizona envisioned by the committee in 2015, is a community that is full of cultural and recreational opportunities for its citizens, with an abundance of open space for recreational, environmental and educational needs.

There will be a community-gathering place, such as a cybercafé, where everyone can exchange ideas and interact, resulting in intercultural exchange. In addition, all cultures will have opportunities to explore commonalities and differences within the community, resulting in respect and understanding. All citizens will benefit from a world-class facility that attracts the general public; this building, which is accessible to all, contains technology, family services, and resources for teachers.

The workforce has a wide range of employment opportunities that result in a higher standard of living. Businesses will have small business education and vocational training forums and trade shows, resulting in more successful enterprises; this provides more tax revenue to make a better city.

Youth will have a variety of cultural, athletic and artistic programs available through a variety of means, including after school programs, resulting in more positively engaged youth and future citizens. The high school dropout rate will be reduced from 50 percent to five percent. At age 14, teens will be able to vote in local elections.

All residents will have comprehensive health care, including preventative medicine and wellness education, resulting in lower health care costs and a healthier population.

Residents live in a crime-free environment, having no fears for their safety.

Everyone, including the disabled, will benefit from an increased free transportation system; there will be no need for automobiles. With advanced technology, there are air-conditioned bus stops with computer access to multiple sites, including the library and information about bike paths.

Current Conditions

The committee discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the conditions in Glendale that would prevent the community from reaching its ideal vision. On the positive side, Glendale has a rich history and a diverse population. Its government is forward thinking and fiscally responsible, encouraging citizen participation in government decisions. The wonderful climate, good roads, low unemployment rate, excellent property values, diverse workforce, first-rate healthcare and abundance of green space and civic organizations add to an exceptional quality of life. Several institutions of higher learning are located within the city.

The committee did note a few weaknesses, which could prevent the vision from occurring. There was concern about the educational system and the high dropout rate in high schools. The committee noted the lack of an industrial base and too few large corporations located within the city. There is not enough affordable housing, with some

of the older neighborhoods in a state of decline. Public transportation could be expanded. There is concern about the emphasis on law enforcement versus social services. There are too few places for youth and teen recreation. Healthcare is not available for all residents. There is unease regarding crime, increased taxes, voter apathy, and growth of the community. The committee also noted that the community is not aware of a vision for the future of Glendale.

The group discussed potential scenarios that might occur as the city moves forward. Opportunities were noted for increased tourism, higher standard of living, community diversity, regional cooperation, more art and cultural events, new jobs and services, and improved transportation. Luke Air Force Base, the sports complex and Westgate development were also mentioned in bringing national recognition to Glendale.

Threats to achieving the vision included citywide gangs, citizen apathy in getting involved with community issues, the problems of rapid growth and the unwillingness to raise taxes. There was concern over the legislature and the possibility of the end of shared state revenues. Social issues dealing with poverty, mobility of the population, crime, drug/alcohol abuse, and school dropouts were mentioned. Pollution and diminished water resources were environmental issues the citizens brought up. There was also concern about empty stores, the large number of apartment building, a loss of history and the community growing too large to retain its intimate atmosphere. Concerns were voiced about zoning restrictions and whether city leadership represents all segments of the community.

Community Needs

The planning committee compared the vision statement with the current conditions. From these comparisons, community needs were identified. These needs were used as the criteria against which various library service priorities were measured. The needs are grouped in the following categories: education and youth, peoples with disabilities, business and career, cultural diversity, health and wellness, and general.

Education and Youth

To combat the high dropout rate, tutoring for reading needs to begin at the elementary school level. There should be continuous programming on alcohol and substance abuse prevention. There is a need for more youth programming and multiple one-stop places for teens. Parents need to understand the value of education and the high school diploma. Youths and parents need information on grants and scholarship opportunities for higher education. The library should collaborate with the schools and respond to teen interests and needs. Determine which organization has the best service model and practices for teens. The library/City needs to expand the teen councils and listen to the teens. An advocacy effort needs to be established for youth issues.

Peoples with Disabilities

There is a need for transportation to access adaptive technology and for equal access to equal services citywide. Information should be readily available about

community services that are available for persons with disabilities. The committee sees a need to bring adaptive technologies to the people who require them.

Business and Career

Businesses have a need for better communication about the classes, seminars and resources available. There can be more partnering of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce with public and private organizations, including City of Glendale departments. There is a need for a formal mentoring program between members of the Chamber of Commerce and new business owners; a mentoring program also needs to be set up between youth and the business community. The Chamber and the library need to collaborate on tradeshow. Personnel from large and small businesses need to provide career counseling.

Cultural Diversity

There is a need to identify the various cultural groups in Glendale and connect with them. The community needs to gain an appreciation of other cultures through programming and a variety of formats. The city needs a forum/information center to promote diversity of all types, including special needs; gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender; ethnic. The library needs to support the introduction of diversity into the classroom curriculum.

Health and Wellness

Citizens need for a variety of ways to receive information on healthcare. The committee thinks that there is a need for health fairs to provide services such as immunizations and dental care.

General

There is a need for a community-gathering place that includes a cybercafé; this could be a public venue for people to hear issues and exchange ideas. Town halls could be held on local issues. Programs need to be funded through partnerships and collaboration. Funding priorities need to change. There is a need for more open space for recreational and cultural opportunities; recreation centers need to be enlarged and new ones added. Libraries and recreation centers need to be located in the same complexes. The community needs more citizen involvement in high crime areas.

Glendale Public Library Mission Statement

Glendale Public Library is a service-oriented organization whose primary responsibility is to provide free and equal access, without prejudice and discrimination, to each man, woman and child in the community. Residents receive courteous and professional services that will

- Make available the materials in multi-languages, programs and services needed to meet their recreational needs
- Provide the most current technology and informational services needed to answer their questions

- Assist everyone to continue to grow and learn throughout their lives
- Enable people to gain a better understanding of their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others
- Offer space for community interaction
- Provide information that helps in the development of careers, non-profits and businesses

Goals and Objectives

1. All Glendale residents will receive the information they want about popular culture and social trends and their desire for satisfying spare time experiences.
 - a. Each fiscal year (FY), the acquisition of popular topics and titles will be increased by 3 percent.
 - b. Each FY, at least 85 percent of the library customers surveyed will express “satisfaction” or “extreme satisfaction” with the materials they found.

2. All Glendale residents will receive the information and answers to questions they need on a broad array of topics related to work, school and personal life.
 - a. Each FY, at least 90 percent of the customers using the library for homework or research needs will indicate that they found the information they needed.
 - b. Each FY, the usage of the electronic databases will rise by 5 percent.

3. All Glendale residents will have access to the information they need for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.
 - a. Each FY, the number of selected Internet sites on the library’s web site will increase by 5 percent.

4. All Glendale residents will enjoy opportunities to gain an understanding of their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others.
 - a. In FY 2005-06, there will be a minimum of 36 cultural programs and displays, which will increase by 5 percent each year.

5. All Glendale residents will have access to meet and interact with others in the community and to discuss current issues.
 - a. Each FY, the number of teens using the teen spaces will increase by 5 percent, with the numbers increasing when the new library opens.

6. All Glendale residents will have the information they need to develop their careers or business pursuits.
 - a. Each FY, the number of participants attending business programs will increase by 5 percent.

Selected Activities

The following activities were selected to support the service goal of providing materials and programs aimed at satisfying the public's desire for information on current topics, titles and spare time experiences:

1. Continue to offer reading incentive programs for all ages.
2. Implement a book-leasing program to meet the demand of bestseller/current titles.
3. Provide a variety of book discussion groups for various ages and interests.
4. Shelve bestsellers and Quick View DVDs more frequently during the day.
5. Create book displays, book lists and bibliographies featuring current topics and titles.
6. Devise programming on current topics for all ages (examples include Harry Potter release party, One Book AZ activities, and Earth Day).

The following activities were selected to support the service goal of helping residents receive information and answers regarding school, work or personal life:

1. Spotlight specific databases/websites with bookmarks, fliers and other marketing tools.
2. Fully implement Serial Solutions to provide integrated access to periodicals and newspapers.
3. Partner with outside agencies for informational programming.
4. Intensive staff training on the online databases.
5. Periodically survey the public to identify collection needs.
6. Identify feasible options to provide information for special needs populations, including those with disabilities and non-English speaking individuals.
7. Library website will be redesigned to update the look, relevancy, and the currency of topics.

The following activities were selected to support the service goal of supporting lifelong learning opportunities:

1. Create bookmarks, fliers, pathfinders, and table displays to provide assistance in locating information (print, media, and on-line sources) for school assignments, research topics, and hobby/avocation pursuits.
2. Expand and promote the range of selected Internet links on the library's web site.
3. Offer "Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library," a program on emergent literacy, for parents and childcare providers.
4. Foster a lifelong love of reading through the Book Buddies program that links teens and young children.
5. Provide health and wellness information for English and Spanish-speaking populations by various means, including new and on-going partnerships with medical and educational institutions.
6. Promote library resources and expertise to educators and homeschoolers with teacher collections, Mobile Masterpieces, multiple copies lists, and other means.

7. Offer specialized computer classes to teens to increase their technology skills.
8. Expand outreach to Luke Air Force Base personnel.

The following activities were selected to support the service goal of fostering an understanding of one's own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others:

1. Promote an understanding of diverse cultures through collaboration with The Bead Museum on displays and beading classes.
2. Plan programs that reflect various ethnicities; examples include Live at the Library, All the World's a Stage, East Meets West: Exploring Chinese America, Kitabu Reading Loom: A Literary Tapestry of the African Diaspora, Diverse Verse: Multicultural Book Discussion Group, African Tam Tam, Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros, Yuletide Trees, Celebration of African American Authors.
3. Continue "Let's Talk English" classes.
4. Expand the exposure to different cultures through book displays, music programs, activity and craft classes, and speakers.
5. Develop links among the libraries and various local cultural groups to devise special cultural activities at the libraries.
6. Promote the cultural programs through a variety of means, including the library's on-line web events calendar, fliers, and media.

The following activities were selected to support the service goal of providing meeting space for the public to interact with others:

1. Acquire a new web-based events calendar and meeting room management system.
2. Start a "Food for Thought" teen discussion forum that considers thought-provoking and current topics.
3. Implement wireless Internet access at all three libraries.
4. Provide additional computers in the teen areas.

The following activities were selected to support the service goal of providing information for residents to develop their careers or business pursuits:

1. Set up a web site for Women Business Builders that will advertise the library's business programs.
2. Start a mentoring program for women business owners with the Glendale Chamber of Commerce and Women's Business Builders.
3. Host a monthly breakfast event with the Glendale Chamber Foundation to support opportunities for minority and women business owners.
4. Offer classes on resume writing and interviewing techniques
5. Offer seminars for non-profits