

# ST. MARY'S COUNTY LIBRARY COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM ANALYSIS

## I. INTRODUCTION – SETTING THE STAGE

These are exciting times for public libraries. Never before in the 150 plus year history of the public library have our challenges and our opportunities been as great. Never before have we faced the competition presented by “big-box” bookstores, the Internet and the likes of search engines such as Google and Yahoo. What we know now and what we continue to learn is what it takes to make public libraries indispensable and irreplaceable in their communities. This evolving knowledge has a direct impact on the future of the St. Mary's County Library.

Our analysis begins with an overview of public library trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and then proceeds to look at the St. Mary's County Library as it is today and how the County will likely change in terms of population and demographics over the next ten years. We report on the needs and expectations of residents of the Library's service area that were shared through focus groups and stakeholder interviews. An assessment of the Library's current state of technology offers observations, findings, assessments, and recommendations. We provide an assessment and report on the physical integrity of the Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown buildings. A plan of service is provided that identifies enhancements and changes in library service offerings based on community input and the Library's current goals. We conclude with space needs requirements (based on service recommendations) for each existing library for the next 10, 20 and 25 years. The space needs requirements form the basis of our recommendations for improving current facilities and demonstrate the need to provide additional ways to deliver library service throughout the county.

### Public Library Trends for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

#### *Library Collections and Holdings per Capita*

Holdings per capita are shrinking as more information and even leisure reading materials are now available in electronic formats (Books on CD, online databases, e-books and downloadable content).

In the future, adult and young adult fiction collections will likely contain fewer copies of popular titles as library users begin to embrace e-books and downloadable books.

Media Collections (DVDs, Books on CDs, and music CDs) which currently have the highest and most consistent increases in circulation need to grow considerably for at least the next five years. As these physical formats are likely to evolve into being accessed virtually via MP3 platforms, libraries need to watch for the turning point at which this type of access becomes the norm for the vast

majority of library users. When this occurs a decrease in physical media collections in libraries will be necessary.

### ***Increasing Community Awareness and Use of the Library***

Public Libraries have been faced with competition with the dawn of the “big box” bookstores i.e. Barnes & Noble and Borders. Throughout the nation citizen participants in library focus groups strongly indicate a desire for public libraries to be more like “the big box bookstores” in their welcoming, relaxing and comfortable ambiance, including the cafe settings. Bookstores also offer preschool story-times, book discussion groups for adults and teens, and author presentations and signings.

Added to this is the proliferation of home computers and Internet access throughout the vast majority of American homes and communities. We are now hearing from large numbers of library users and seeing numerous library usage studies that confirm that “Google” is everyone’s first choice for finding needed information.

The question for public libraries becomes: “How do we secure our place and value in a world of incomparable convenience, immediate and instantaneous response expectations and increasing competition?” Phrased a bit differently, “how do we make our services indispensable and irreplaceable?”

The answer lies in truly knowing and understanding what our “customers” need and expect of us. In our competitive world, public libraries need to focus on “branding the library” and on aggressively “marketing” the library’s services and resources. We can no longer rely on the old standards of being “free,” of providing for the “common good,” of having specially trained staff, and of making resources available to the general public that they wouldn’t otherwise be able to access. In this new century, less is more!

Every public library needs to:

- identify what it does better than anyone else
- reallocate resources to support these areas of excellence
- engage in strategic partnerships (education, business, non-profits) to expand its reach in the community, and
- promote services beyond the walls of the library.

### ***Library as “Third Place”***

In 1995 Ray Oldenburg wrote *The Great Good Place* in which he introduced the concept of the “third place”. Third places are the informal gathering places people choose to be when they are not at home (first place) or at work (second place). They are central to local democracy and to the well-being of every community.

Today libraries, large and small, are identified as “third places.” They want and need to transform library services, activities and spaces to secure their position of the “third place” in the lives of people residing in the communities they serve.

### ***Target Service Populations***

Young children, from birth to age five, and their parents remain a core user group for public libraries. Public libraries are one of the very few institutions that actively and successfully impact early childhood literacy, strengthen the parent and caregiver role as their child’s “first teacher, and instill a love of books and reading in children and families.

Teens, a group that has been largely ignored by libraries for the past twenty-five years, have become a relatively recent focus for public libraries. Technology has brought teens back to the library and has led to the creation of dedicated “teen spaces” in libraries. In order to engage teens, these “fun” spaces are outfitted with comfortable seating, lots of technology, opportunities for social interaction, and programming. More importantly, the teens themselves have a hand in designing those spaces and in planning the activities. On staff is a “Teen Librarian” who understands this age group, relates to them, and is able to get them involved and engaged.

While the profession has discussed services for senior citizens for many years, retirees no longer imply persons living in assisted living facilities and nursing homes. Today’s 55 and over set is an active group. They want to be intellectually stimulated. They want to volunteer and give back to their communities. They want to socialize with friends and neighbors. They want to use technology to keep in touch with friends and loved ones, manage their investments, identify travel opportunities, take online courses etc. They now have more time to read new popular titles and catch up with things they have missed over the years of working and raising a family.

The “virtual” customer is just now beginning to be discussed by public libraries large and small. This group accesses the library and its services electronically and rarely, if ever, steps foot in a library building. The same questions related to market penetration addressed earlier apply to this group as well.

These are the issues and service groups with which all public libraries must not only be concerned, but also actively address as they plan for services today and for the future. These issues have direct impact on type and size of facilities needed, staffing and staff competencies, and the success of the public library as a relevant and valued publicly supported service.

## II. ST. MARY'S COUNTY LIBRARY – WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT OF 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LIBRARY TRENDS?

These are also exciting times for St. Mary's County as its population and economy continue to grow and flourish. As a result of this growth, the St. Mary's County Library has seen the usage of its services and facilities increase at significant rates. Looking toward the future, the Library wants to ensure that the County's library services and facilities continue to anticipate and be responsive to the growing needs and service demands of a community whose demographic profile is changing.

As we look forward to the future of the St. Mary's County Library a series of questions needs to be asked – and answered:

- What impact will these changes have on the Library's ability to maintain its valued role in the community?
- Is a new mix of services needed?
- How has the Internet and increased access to information via computers changed the public's use of the Library?
- Do collections, in both content and format, reflect the interests of all age groups?
- Are the current library facilities appropriately sized and located to optimally meet the needs of the residents of throughout the county?

PROVIDENCE Associates, Library Planners Consultants began working with the St. Mary's County Library in February 2006. Our work focused on the objectives identified in the County issued Request for Proposal document, section C-2 Objectives:

*"The purpose of the study is to conduct a comprehensive and integrated library system analysis to determine current levels of service and long-term infrastructure needs through 2016. The assessment and the forecast addresses functional, programmatic and performance requirements, service **area demands, space and customer needs, and use rates. The analysis and recommendations are based on the national averages and standards recognized by the public library profession.***

*The phrase "capital facilities" includes, but may not be limited to, the following: traditional full-service library buildings, storefront mini-branch operations, kiosks, mobile vans, information technologies, telecommunication infrastructure and any other method of delivering library services that has proven to be effective or is foreseen in the next 10 years.*

*This study includes but is not limited to the following:*

- A. Assessing the physical condition of the existing library facilities;*
- B. Assessing the condition of existing library information technologies and telecommunication infrastructure;*
- C. Identifying future library services and methods of delivery;*

- D. *Determining the adequacy of these facilities and resources to service the current county population and the projected population through the year 2015.*
- E. *Creating a timeline and cost estimates for the recommended capital projects.”*

As PROVIDENCE began our investigation, we brought to the assessment what we know to be the trends and changes in 21<sup>st</sup> century public library service as described in Section I. Our process of study included consideration of those trends as we:

- reviewed Library usage patterns over the last five years and peer comparisons with other Southern Maryland public libraries
- reviewed of the Library’s strategic plan and directions, and the St. Mary’s County Master Plan
- developed of a demographic profile and population projections for the next decade
- mapped current Library usage by individual branch library, and cross usage among the three branch libraries
- gathered direct input from the community concerning satisfaction with library services and facilities along with suggestions for improvements
- assessed the current state of the Library’s technology and needs for the next decade
- determined the physical condition of the Leonardtown and Charlotte Hall facilities, and
- assessed the adequacy of the size of the three library facilities based on the current and future mix of services and collections.

This comprehensive and integrated analysis of the St. Mary’s County Library is focused not only on answering the questions listed on p.4, but also on making recommendations that will secure the Library’s position and its value as an essential and irreplaceable community service for at least the next ten years.

We begin by preparing a demographic profile of St. Mary’s County along with population projections for the next ten to twenty years. As the community grows and changes library services and location of library facilities and service delivery methods need to be responsive to and accessible for all residents. We next describe the greater community’s Library experiences and their identification of the library’s strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement and change. This is followed by an assessment of the current state of the Library’s technology in terms of functionality, impact on staff, customer convenience, and availability and access.

### **III. What We Learned about St. Mary’s County: Demographic Profile**

#### ***Population***

The population of St. Mary's County continues to grow at a significant rate. This growth is being guided and managed according to the County's 2002 Comprehensive

Plan entitled *Quality of Life in St. Mary's County - A Strategy for the 21st Century*. The community vision presented in the plan is to:

*"Preserve and enhance the quality of life by recognizing and protecting the unique character of St. Mary's County as a rural Chesapeake Bay peninsula. Foster economic growth and creative atmosphere of excellence by focusing and managing growth to create vibrant, attractive communities, by protecting the rural character and economy of the countryside, by nurturing the shoreline and adjacent waters and by preserving and capitalizing on the other natural resources and historical quality of the county."*

Most of the County's growth is occurring in 8th Election District which includes Lexington Park. This District is and will remain the center of county population. The next largest area of growth is in Election District 6 which includes Hollywood followed next by Election District 3 which includes Leonardtown. Lexington Park and Leonardtown are identified in the Plan as "Development Districts" or primary growth centers in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The development districts are designated for intensive residential, commercial and industrial development supported by a priority provision of community facilities, services and amenities. Up to this point in time, the majority of new high-density residential and non-residential development, by design, has taken place in these districts. It should also be noted that Lexington Park has the capacity to embrace the projected growth.

Lexington Park has the youngest median age in the County, 34.3 years, and is the most ethnically diverse area of the County. Leonardtown has the highest median age in the County and Charlotte Hall falls in the middle.

The secondary growth areas are the Town Centers of which Charlotte Hall is one. The other areas identified as town centers are Hollywood, New Market, Mechanicsville, and Piney Point. They are designated for moderately intense residential, commercial and industrial development supported by provision of community facilities and amenities.

Village Centers are the third order of growth centers and include Callaway, Chaptico, Clements, Loveville, Ridge, St. Inigoes, and Valley Lee. These centers are the focus for rural community facilities, services and activities.

The continued high demand for housing in St. Mary's County is creating a challenge for the County as it attempts to maintain its rural character and preserve its farm land as stated in the Community Vision. This is evidenced by the increased availability of housing in the northern areas of the county which appeals to those willing to commute to the metropolitan areas of employment, such as the District of Columbia, Annapolis, etc.

In the next 10 years St. Mary's county will continue its pattern of significant growth. In September 2005, the Maryland State Department of Planning Data Services projected that St. Mary's County would have the following population and households by 2015.

Population	Number In 2015	Percent of Total Population	Change in Percent of Population from 2005
Total	119,900		
Ages 0-4	9,190	7.7%	-0.1%
Ages 5-19	23,750	19.8%	-2.3%
Ages 20-44	38,820	32.4%	-3.1%
Ages 45-64	32,810	27.4%	+3.4%
Ages 65+	15,330	12.8%	+3.0%
<b>Households</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Percent Change</b>
Total Households	45,300		30.0%
Size of Household	2.56		-4.3%

### Chart 1

The County's LUGM has used the 2006 projection data from the State's planning office and has developed population projections in five year increments through the year 2030 for each Election District.

Election District/Lib Svc Area	1990 Census	2000 Census	Election District average percentage of county total	2005 population estimate	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
1 Lexi Pk	5,382	5,691	6.8%	6,576	7,370	8,174	8,947	9,682	10,380
2 Lexi Pk	4,782	6,603	7.0%	6,705	7,514	8,334	9,122	9,872	10,584
3 Leontwn	9,065	10,900	12.3%	11,808	13,234	14,677	16,066	17,387	18,640
4 Char HI	7,237	9,583	10.3%	9,918	11,115	12,328	13,494	14,604	15,656
5 Char HI	9,474	9,966	12.0%	11,546	12,940	14,352	15,710	17,001	18,227
6 Leontwn	10,419	13,114	14.5%	13,899	15,576	17,276	18,910	20,465	21,940
7 Char HI	3,172	3,083	3.9%	3,724	4,174	4,629	5,067	5,484	5,879
8 Lexi Pk	26,172	27,003	32.9%	31,603	35,417	39,282	42,998	46,533	49,887
9 Lexi Pk	271	268	0.3%	321	359	399	436	472	506
Total	75,974	86,211		96,100	107,700	119,450	130,750	141,500	151,700

Source: Totals from Maryland State Data Center, updated through September 2006; election district breakdown from county staff based on 1990 and 2000 census counts.

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Prepared by PROVIDENCE Associates LLC  
March 20, 2007

## **Education**

Residents of St. Mary's County are well educated. According to the County's *Brief Economic Facts for 2005-2006*, 22.6 percent of residents have a Bachelor's Degree or higher and 85.3 percent of residents have, at minimum, a high school degree.

Educational institutions of all types are prevalent throughout the County.

Public Schools	24
Private Schools	29
2-Year Institutions	2
4-Year Institutions	1
Other Higher Ed Programs (Knox Center & Southern Maryland Higher Education Center)	12

The public schools anticipate continued significant growth in enrollments. The St. Mary's Public Schools have just completed an update of its Facilities Master Plan in order to meet the needs of the thriving and growing community. Public school enrollment in 2006 was 15,940. That figure is expected to increase to 17,181 in 2010 and 18,909 in 2015, a jump of 18.6 percent in nine years.

To meet this need, the school plans to construct three new elementary schools, replace an existing elementary school, and expand another to meet the growing capacity needs for the next six to nine years. Additional capacity at the secondary level is also required in the ten-year time frame. This will be addressed with a new high school and middle school.

## **IV. What We Learned About Library Usage in St. Mary's County and How It Compares with Peer Libraries**

Library usage in St. Mary's County has increased with the growth in population. Since 2001, the Library's total customer contacts (circulation + visits + programs) are up 27 percent with the greatest increases in the area of circulation of materials and customer visits to library facilities. While a 21 percent decrease is reported in program attendance, the decrease is not the result of lack of customer interest in this service, but rather that of the Library needing to better allocate existing staff to services that are in greatest customer demand. To accomplish this balance Library administration made the conscious decision to reduce the number of programs offered to the public, allowing staff to focus on services that are of higher priority with customers.



## Chart 2 - System Usage Patterns

**St. Mary's County Library – Six Year Review of Customer Contacts\* (Circulation, Visits, Program Attendance)**

System	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	%Change From FY01-06
<b>Circulation</b>	785,184	847,823	953,874	1,006,000	1,012,236	1,050,903	33.8%
<b>Visits</b>	NA	NA	NA	550,000	570,000	563,609	2.5%
<b>Program Attendance*</b>	36,570	40,714	45,593	51,562	40,678	33,105	-9.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>821,754</b>	<b>888,537</b>	<b>999,467</b>	<b>1,607,562</b>	<b>1,622,914</b>	<b>1,647,617</b>	<b>100.5%</b>

\*Reference Questions and Internet Usage are not included as they were not consistently reported over the six year period.

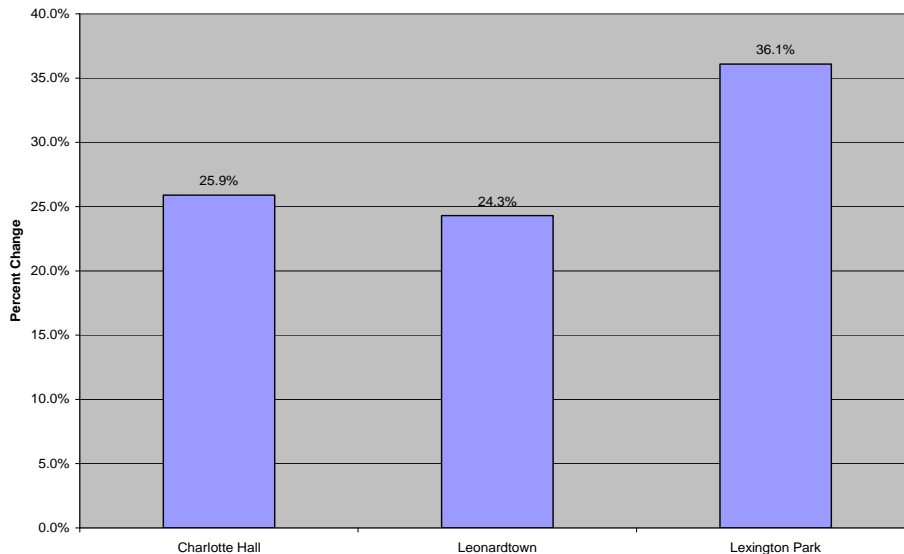
\*\*The decrease in Program Attendance reflects a management decision to reduce the number of programs offered in order to better manage staff workload, not a lack of community interest in programs offered by the library.

Over this same six-year time period (FY 2001-2006), customer contacts in each of the branch libraries have increased.

Charlotte Hall up 25.9 percent  
 Leonardtown up 24.3 percent  
 Lexington Park up 36.1 percent

### Chart 3

Percent Change in Customer Contacts by Branch  
FY 2001-2006



The following chart illustrates the progression of those increases. The decrease shown for both Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown again are reflective of reduced program

St. Mary's County Library Comprehensive and Integrated System Analysis  
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offerings. Lexington Park has maintained a steady progression of annual growth in usage in all areas. This is explained by the fact that Lexington Park is the newest facility and, as such, provides those spaces and amenities that make public libraries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century inviting destinations for people of all ages, e.g.

- separate children’s area and program room
- plentiful and flexible meeting room space
- dedicated teen area
- computer lab
- quiet study spaces, and
- a cafe.

### Chart 4 - Branch Usage Patterns

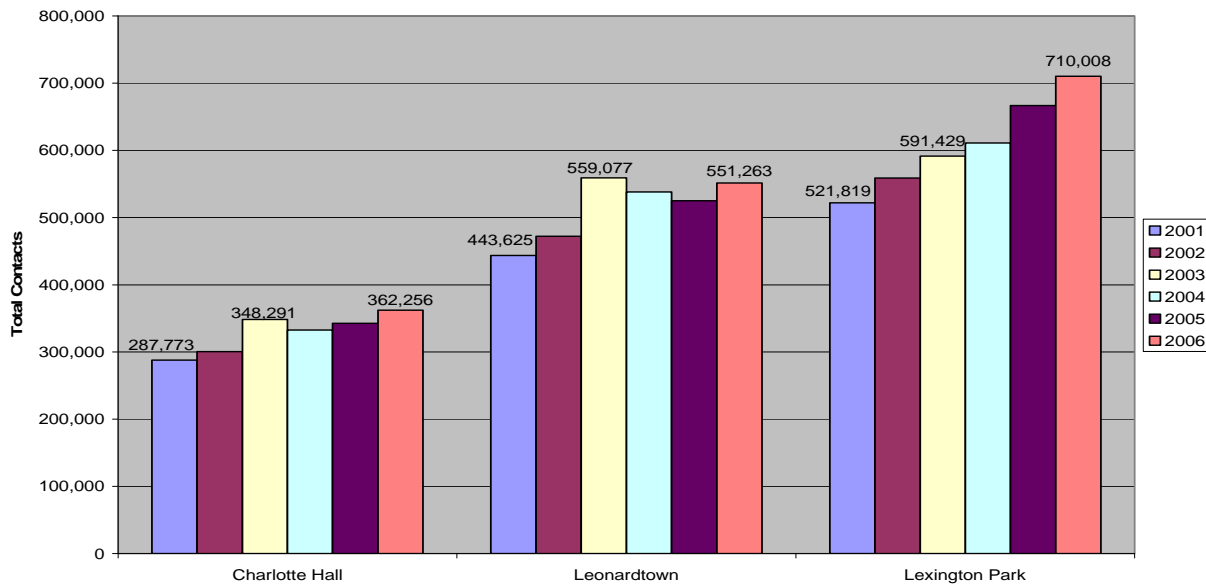
St. Mary’s County Library – Six Year Review of Customer Contacts by Branch\* (Circulation, Visits, Program Attendance)

	2001	2002	Percent Change	2003	Percent Change	2004	Percent Change	2005	Percent Change	2006	Percent Change	Percent Change FY01-06
<b>Char. Hall</b>	287773	300318	4.4%	348291	16.0%	332569	-4.5%	342403	3.0%	362,256	5.8%	25.9%
<b>Leonardtown</b>	443625	472235	6.4%	559077	18.4%	537994	-3.8%	525020	-2.4%	551,263	5.0%	24.3%
<b>Lexington Park</b>	521819	558957	7.1%	591429	5.8%	610944	3.3%	666614	9.1%	710,008	6.5%	36.1%

\*Reference Questions and Internet Usage are not included as they were not consistently reported over the five year period.

### Chart 5

Customer Contacts by Branch FY 2001-2006  
Source: St. Mary’s County Annual Report to State Division of Libraries



Readers of this report are likely to want to know how usage of electronic information resources and services by the community is changing. This is a fair and expected question. Up until 2005, the reporting of electronic usage for the Library has been inconsistent. This is not the Library's fault. It is the result of not having the software to reliably and consistently document this type of usage. This is not just an issue for St. Mary's County but for all libraries across the nation. St. Mary's has recently acquired a new software package that, if reliable after testing, they will be using to establish a baseline measure for electronic usage.

The consultants also compared the Library with its adjacent neighboring library systems of Calvert and Charles counties and with the national average of libraries serving similar sized populations (see Chart 6). Through this comparison, we find the St. Mary's County circulation per capita, holdings per capita, percentage of registered borrowers as part of its total population, and building space per capita to be the highest among the three systems.

### Chart 6 - FY 2005 Peer Library Comparisons for Southern Maryland

Source: 2006 Public Library Data Service (PLDS) and 2005 Maryland State Department of Education Division of Library Development and Services Public Library Statistics

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>									
County	Total	Salaries	Salaries as % of Expenditures	Benefits	Other	Materials	Materials as % of Expenditures	Expend. Per Cap	Materials Expend/Cap
Calvert	2,654,825	1,622,793	61.1%	505,004	177,340	309,688	11.7%	\$31.23	\$3.64
Charles	2,515,478	1,651,952	65.7%	385,208	188,428	289,890	11.5%	\$19.50	\$2.25
<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>2,457,713</b>	<b>1,533,708</b>	<b>62.4%</b>	<b>385,043</b>	<b>279,766</b>	<b>259,196</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>\$26.71</b>	<b>\$2.82</b>
<b>PLDS Avg</b>							<b>12.7%</b>	<b>\$32.64</b>	<b>\$4.09</b>
<b>Personnel</b>									
County	Total Paid Staff	MLS Librarians	Other Staff	Staff per 1000 pop					
Calvert	42.9	8	34.9	0.50					
Charles	55	23	32	0.43					
<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>0.50</b>					
<b>PLDS Avg</b>	44.5	12.1	32.5	NA					
<b>Holdings</b>									
County	Total	Holdings/Capita							
Calvert	180,957	2.1							
Charles	142,067	1.1							
<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>211,667</b>	<b>2.3</b>							
<b>PLDS Avg</b>	238,357	3.3							
<b>Circulation</b>									
County	Total	Circ/Capita	#Registered Borrowers	%Pop as Registered					
Calvert	930,098	10.9	48,534	57.1%					
Charles	778,071	6.0	63,558	49.3%					
<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>1,021,603</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>54,730</b>	<b>59.5%</b>					
<b>PLDS Avg</b>	689,041	9.3	44,734	60.0%					
<b>Other Customer Contacts</b>									
County	Visits	Program Attendance	Annual Hrs						
Calvert	490,387	50,303	14,144						
Charles	354,367	30,718	11,648						
<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>570,000</b>	<b>40,678</b>	<b>10,504</b>						
<b>PLDS Avg</b>	410,442	21,752	7,326						
<b>Facilities</b>									
County	Main Lib	Branches	Bookmobile	Main SF	SF/Capita	Branch SF	Total SF		
Calvert	1	3	1	14,000	0.32	12,940	26,940		
Charles	1	2	1	12,000	0.37	36,300	48,300		
<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>54,007</b>	<b>54,007</b>		

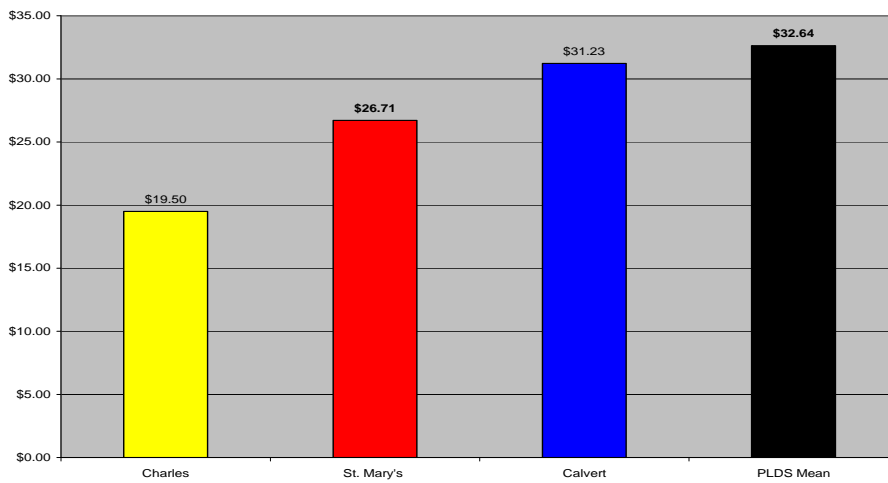
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There are, however, some key categories of support and funding in which SMCL is below average when compared with its peers. This may prevent SMCL from being as responsive to the needs and expectations of its current customer base and from being able to meet the needs that will result from the forecasted growth in the County.

This is most notable in the area of available operating expenditures. The Library's per capita expenditures for operations, in general, and library materials expenditures specifically, when compared with libraries serving similar sized populations are below average. Its per capita operating expenditure of \$26.71 is \$6.00 less than the national average of \$32.64 and is \$4 less than Calvert County.

**Chart 7**

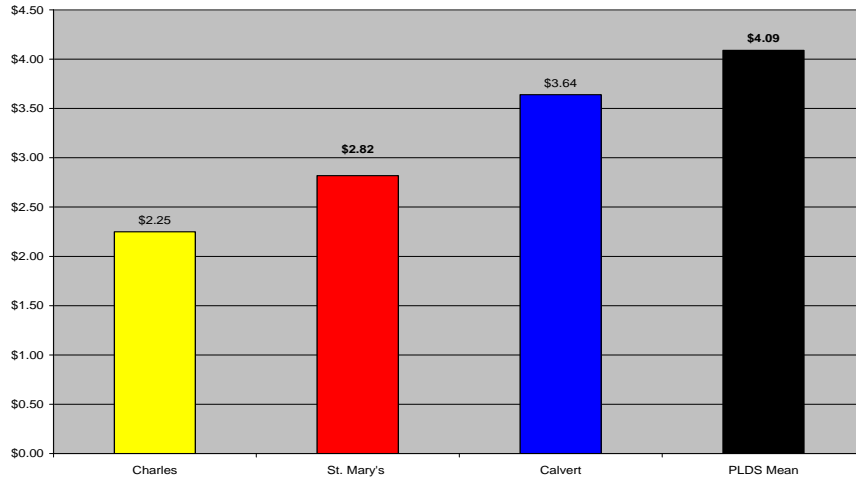
**Peer Comparisons Total Expenditures Per Capita FY 2005**



The Library's materials expenditure per capita of \$2.82 is \$1.27 less than the national average and almost \$1 per capita less than Calvert County. Where the national average for percent of operating budget spent on materials is 12.7%, St. Mary's County Library spends 10.5% of its operating budget on materials. Both Calvert and Charles County spend one percent more per capita than St. Mary's County on the purchase of library materials.

### Chart 8

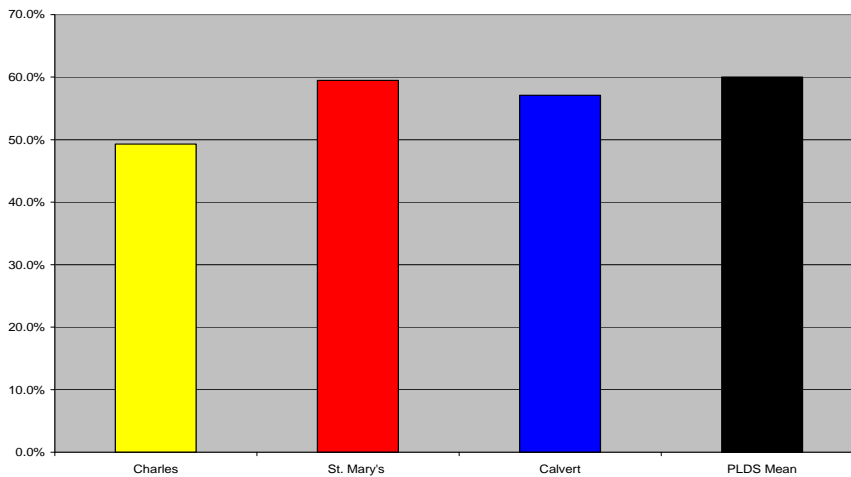
Peer Comparison Materials Expenditures Per Capita FY 2005



While the Library has the highest percentage of registered borrowers per total population among its peers, a market penetration of 60 percent indicates that 40 percent of county residents are not card carrying members of the library. We suggest that any public library strive to achieve, at minimum, a market penetration of at least 70 percent of their populations as registered borrowers. This can only be achieved by providing the right mix of services, resources and hours along with continuous and consistent promotion and outreach to the community.

### Chart 9

Library Card Holders as Percentage of Total Population FY 2005



## C. BRANCH LIBRARY SERVICE AREAS

Bill Wilson, our GIS and Demographic Mapping consultant secured the Library's circulation data from the Southern Maryland Regional Library for a representative four week period, March 1-31, 2006. Using zip code information, he plotted the location of library users for each of the three existing branch libraries. In addition, he plotted the interaction between and among branch libraries as well as providing a total system-wide overview of where the users of the St. Mary's County Library system reside.

We also studied the County's Comprehensive Plan by both development areas within Election Districts. Using the Election District boundaries and the usage mapping for each of the libraries, we have identified or defined what we believe to be the geographic service area for each of the libraries in St. Mary's County.

In addition we secured demographic profiles of each library service area (based on a seven mile radius from each library's street address) from DecisionWhere, a demographic profiling service that we use for the vast majority of our studies and whose data is based upon the same services and data used by state and local planning departments. All of these reports are included in a separate appendix to this report, available at each library in the county.

### **CHARLOTTE HALL LIBRARY**

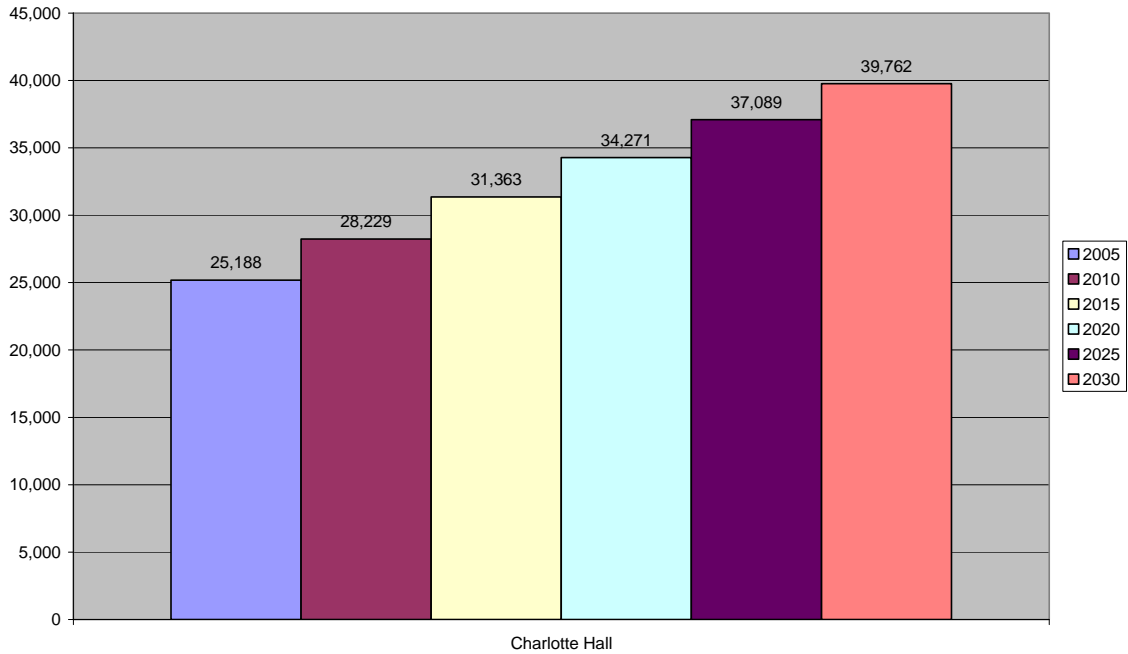
The majority of users come from Chaptico, approximately five miles south of the Library, followed by Mechanicsville and then the town of Charlotte Hall. The Library's service area is approximately a seven-mile radius. This Library is used more by persons residing within its service area than those residing immediately north, east, and west of the Leonardtown service area. Given its adjacency to Charles County, it is not surprising that approximately 150 to 200 users come from Charles County. *This library serves Election Districts 4, 5, and 7.*

The 2005 estimated population of the service area (Election Districts 4, 5, 7) based on the LUGM and State Planning data is 25,188. The service area population is expected to grow to 28,229 in 2010 and 31,363 in 2015. By 2025 the population is expected to reach 37,089\*. The ethnicity/race of the service area is currently 87 percent White and 11 percent Black with approximately 1% Asian and 1% Hispanic origin.

*\*According to the LUGM staff, growth in the 4<sup>th</sup> Election District may be less than what is shown by the projections as subdivisions such as Country Lakes and Wicomico Shores are building out and few or no major subdivisions are being created in District 4.*

## Chart 10

**Charlotte Hall Service Area Population Growth Projections by Election District  
2005-2030**



Today, according to the DecisionWhere report, 6.6 percent of the population is less than 5 years of age, 15.3 percent is between the ages of 5 and 14, and approximately 20 percent are age 55 and over. The median age is 38.6 which falls between that of the other two service areas.

The service area's education level of residents 25 years of age and over reflects 19 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher, 20 percent with some college but no degree, 5 percent with an associates degree, 38 percent high school graduate and 18 percent with no high school diploma.

There are an estimated 9,919 households in the service area today and the number of households in the year 2010 is projected to be 11,196. Median Household income is \$73,503 and median family income is \$78,966. The average household size is 3.05 with family households averaging 3.32 persons per household and non-family 1.75 persons per household. Forty-six percent (or 4,564) of all households have children and of those, 19 percent (864) are single parent households.

Eighty-five percent of the homes in the service area are owned and approximately 10 percent are rented with another 5 percent unoccupied. Eighty-one percent of households have two or more vehicles and only 3 percent have no vehicle.



## **LEONARDTOWN LIBRARY**

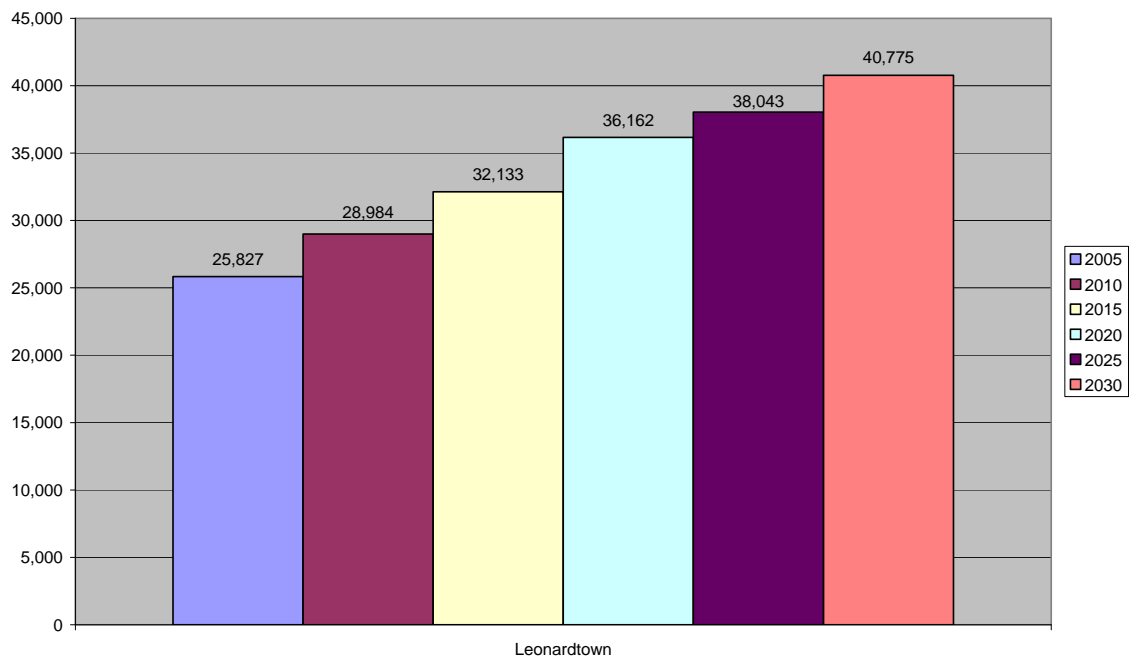
Usage is greatest from within a five to seven mile radius of the library. The greatest density of use is found in Leonardtown, Hollywood, and Loveville. The service area encompasses approximately a ten-mile radius from the building. Leonardtown also has a smattering of users, about 50 or so from both Charles and Calvert counties.

*This library serves Election Districts 3 and 6.*

The 2005 estimated population of the service area (Election Districts 3 and 6) based on the LUGM and State Planning data is 25,707. The service area population is expected to increase to 28,810 in 2010 and 31,953 in 2015. By 2025 the population is expected to reach 36,297\*. The ethnicity/race of the service area is 87 percent White and 10 percent Black with approximately 2 percent Asian and 1 percent Hispanic origin.

**Chart 11**

**Leonardtown Library Service Area Population Growth Projections by Election District  
2005-2030**



Today, according to the DecisionWhere report, 6.2 percent of the population is less than 5 years of age, 14 percent is between the ages of 5 and 14, and approximately 23.3 percent are age 55 and over. The median age is 42.1 making this service area the oldest among the three.

\*Growth in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District may accelerate beyond projections as development proposals within the town come to fruition as capacity is added to the town's sewer treatment plant in the next 5 yrs.

The service area's education level of persons 25 years of age or older reflects 29 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher, 6 percent with an associates degree, 19 percent with some college but no degree, 30 percent high school graduate and 16 percent with no high school diploma.

There are an estimated 10,989 households in the service area today. The number of households in 2010 is projected to be 12,142. Median household income is \$64,512 and median family income is \$72,085. The average household size is 2.71 with family households averaging 3.15 persons per household and non-family 1.47 persons per household. Forty percent (or 4,421) of all households have children and of those, 23 percent (1,008) are single parent households.

Seventy-four percent of the homes in the service area are owned and approximately 20 percent are rented with 6 percent unoccupied. Seventy percent of households have two or more vehicles and 5 percent have no vehicle.

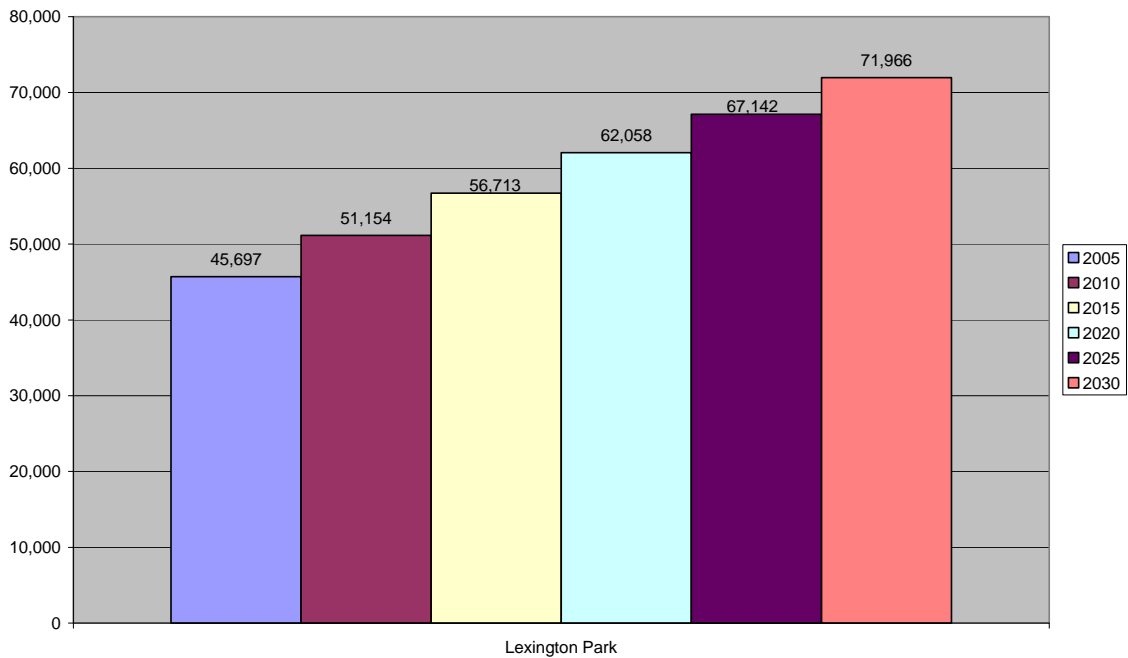
### **LEXINGTON PARK LIBRARY**

This Library's density of users comes from the area immediately surrounding the branch library and the area two miles to the west, four miles to the northwest, and four miles to the south and southeast. The service area encompasses approximately a seven-mile radius from the facility. This Library captures about 50 + users from Calvert County, the vast majority coming from the southern portion of the Calvert County peninsula. This is likely the result of persons who work at the military installation and in the technology industries in the Lexington Park community.  
*This Library serves Election Districts 1, 2, 8, and 9.*

The 2005 estimated population of the service area (Election Districts 1,2,8,and 9) based on the LUGM and State Planning data is 45,205. The service area population is expected to be 50,660 in 2010 and 56,189 in 2015. By 2025 the population is expected to reach 66,559. The ethnicity/race of the service area is 77 percent White and 17 percent Black with approximately 3 percent Asian and 3 percent Hispanic origin making the Lexington Park service area the most ethnically diverse in the library system.

## Chart 12

Lexington Park Library Service Area Population Growth Projections By Election District  
2005 - 2030



Today, according to the DecisionWhere report, 7 percent of the population is less than 5 years of age, 15 percent is between the ages of 5 and 14, and approximately 18 percent is age 55 and over. The median age is 34.3 making this service area the youngest service area among the three.

The service area's education level reflects 33 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher, 20 percent with some college but no degree, 7 percent with an Associates degree, 27 percent high school graduate and 13 percent with no high school diploma.

There are an estimated 20,433 households in the service area today; the number of households in the year 2010 is projected to be 22,989. Median Household income is \$58,450 and median family income is \$65,401 making this the least wealthy service area in comparison to the other two.

The average household size is 2.66 with family households averaging 3.18 persons per household and non-family averaging 1.53 persons per household. Forty percent (or 8,173) of all households have children and of those, 31 percent (1,008) are single parent households, the highest among all service areas. This service area has the largest number of single parent households when compared to the other two branches.

Fifty-seven percent of the homes in the service area are owned and approximately 31 percent are rented with 12 percent unoccupied. Sixty-three percent of households have two or more vehicles and 6 percent have no vehicle.

## CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis of the demographic data provided by both LUGM and DecisionWhere demonstrates that growth in St. Mary's County, and the respective library services areas, will continue along the policy guidelines established by the county's Comprehensive Plan.

The differences in service area composition (age, education, income, ethnicity, families with children, automobile ownership, etc.) will require slightly different service emphases for each of the service areas.

Lexington Park will most likely need to focus on families with children and children from single parent households who may use the library as an unofficial after school day care. If any area can be described as "urban" in St. Mary's County, this would be it in terms of population density. As the Lexington Park community is more ethnically and racially diverse, its collections, services and marketing will need to take into consideration different languages and the different cultural backgrounds of its users. As the median income and family income is less than the other service areas, more computers will be needed to meet the needs of households that do not have technology, and they will likely need to provide classes to teach customers how to use computers and how to effectively search for information.

More family programming is likely needed to provide for increased cultural enrichment opportunities for children, their parents, caregivers and siblings. The demographics provide an opportunity for the Lexington Park staff to partner with local schools, county parks and recreation, Boys and Girls club in assisting library staff with library program offerings and technology education for the community.

Leonardtown has the oldest median age of all the service areas. Services and collections need to be somewhat more focused on an older population. Here again teaching users how to use computers for communicating via email and searching the Internet for information may need to be a focus. Book clubs, cultural programs, travelogues and other programs of interest would be valued by the community. Particular attention should be paid to shelving of materials that facilitates ease of access for older residents. That is not to say that the library doesn't need to offer collections and services to families and children for it does need to serve this group as well. However, their program of service requires recognition of the fact that the profile of the services area is of one that is aging.

Charlotte Hall falls right in the middle in terms of median age of service area. A balance of services for all age groups should be the focus. The somewhat more "rural" character of its service area increases the library's role as a "community gathering" place for people of all ages.

In the subsequent sections of this report we will:

- reveal what the residents of St. Mary's County need and expect from their libraries
- review and assess the state of the library's automation and technology
- assess the physical "health" of each of the branch library structures
- suggest an overall plan of library service for the next decade,
- assess the adequacy of current space to accommodate the plan of service for at least the next 10 years, and
- make recommendations to provide facilities that accommodate service for the future.

## II. THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS

The consultants facilitated a series of seven focus groups over a two-day period, April 27-28, 2006. Six of those groups were comprised of the general public and affinity groups reflecting the business community, community organizations (HOA, churches, etc.), senior citizens, educators, teens, parents of young children, as well as the Library Board and general users. A total of 72 persons attended these six meetings to share their opinions about Library services and facilities, including their likes, needs, expectations, and suggestions for improvements. A seventh focus group was comprised of 15 Library staff members. A summary of the staff session follows the public summary.

The participants in each focus group were asked to rank the importance of library service functions based on a modification of the service ranking that appear in the Public Library Association's *New Planning for Results* publication. A summary of the results also appears in this report along with commentary on how the public's ranking compare with that of the staff's.

The common issues and themes resulting from the community's input begin to answer the following questions.

- What are the services that are needed and expected by the citizens of St. Mary's County and how do they differ from the current offerings?
- How has the Internet and increased access to information via computers changed the public's use of the library?
- Do the library's collections, in content and format, reflect the interests of all age groups?
- Are the facilities appropriately outfitted and located to optimally meet the needs of residents of throughout the county?

### A. Community Focus Group Summary

#### *In Response to "What is good about the library?"*

- Excellent staff who are customer focused, friendly and caring
- Wi-Fi availability in all branches
- Meeting rooms at Lexington Park
- Computers and Computer lab at the Lexington Park Library
- Online database offerings
- Ability to use the library remotely from home
- Child friendly, the staff treat children as individuals
- Story times and dedicated children's areas at Lexington Park
- Vital resource for home school families
- Buildings that are generally well maintained
- Effective and important community partner in helping cultural groups reach larger audiences
- Library as the focal point or "hub" for each community where it has a presence

- Open to all and accessible
- Accessibility to computers and information for students
- Ability to get materials and information from anywhere via “Marina” the statewide interlibrary loan service
- Reference and research support
- New books
- Ability to download electronic books

***In Response to “What is needed at the Library?”***

- Small business development center
- Outreach to established and new business owners in the County
- Improved Web site and home page that functions as a portal for community and local business information
- Access to Census information at the local level
- Marketing of Library’ services with both a general and a targeted focus
- An electronic newsletter
- More Christian fiction titles
- More non-fiction books-on-tape/CD
- More Public Broadcasting System documentary/non-fiction DVDs
- More classic Children’s titles in the juvenile collections
- Newspapers in foreign languages
- Buildings that are more inviting and spacious
- Improved teen areas...more space, computers, areas to sit, talk, relax, listen to audio view videos/DVDs and play games
- More teen programming e.g. book clubs, poetry readings and open mike opportunities (disappointed that the Harry Potter club stopped)
- Reasonably sized story times for children (Lexington Park story times are too large thus minimizing their effectiveness)
- Self checkout machines that work

***In Response to “What should the Library be doing that it is not doing now?”***

- Provide outreach to seniors and adults through services and programs
- Consider adults and seniors when it comes to how materials are shelved (not on bottom or top shelves), types of assistive equipment to be acquired that will assist persons with low vision and reduced hearing in use of the library and when attending classes in Internet use, and programs.
- Expand partnerships with businesses to underwrite library programming and databases
- Collaborate with K-12 and higher education entities to compliment one another and avoid duplication of effort
- Focus on services and activities for middle school age group
- Expand hours and make them uniform in all locations
- Offer modern facilities that are well maintained

- Provide a Library in the Hollywood area
- Add a Bookmobile to reach underserved areas of the County
- Establish neighborhood centers in less densely populated areas of the County
- Develop continuous marketing and public relations to get the word out about the Library, e.g. the Library needs a LOGO and a brand
- Provide more and larger meeting rooms as well as small group meeting spaces
- Increase self-service opportunities for customers e.g. self-checkout
- Offer parenting classes and parenting materials
- Position the Library as a link to local government information including pod-casting of local government meetings

***In Response to “What areas does the Library need to address?”***

- Add more hours in general and Sunday hours at all libraries
- Add more computers
- Add more media
- Increase focus on adult and senior services and programming
- Provide service to homebound
- Realize that everyone looks to GOOGLE first for information
- Provide more downloadable resources and keep up with new technologies e.g. podcasts, downloadable books, music, RSS, etc.
- Monitor population growth and changes in demographics
- Address multicultural changes in the county
- Increase access to library services throughout the County with storefront libraries and bookmobile
- Adopt more of an “educator role” teaching customers in how to use the resources and technology
- Make better use of volunteers and increase their number
- Improve teen spaces
- Create a bookstore atmosphere with coffee bar or cafe in all branch libraries
- Provide warm and welcoming ambiance in all library buildings
- Improve general cleanliness in all libraries
- Off more space, add quiet rooms, meeting rooms, and study rooms
- Improve lighting inside and out
- Ensure staff keeps up with changing technology
- Use email more effectively to communicate with the public
- Provide more parking that is immediately adjacent to the buildings
- Construct well designed drive-up return and pick-up windows
- Provide dedicated computer helpers to assist customers
- Provide spaces and gallery areas to display work of local artists
- Offer community events that attract whole families
- Respond to customer comments submitted on “comment forms.”

**B. LIBRARY STAFF FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY**

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The staff was asked to respond to questions that identified trends impacting the delivery of library services and how those trends will change (over the next five years) the way staff currently delivers services. In addition, they were asked to comment on facility needs.

### ***Trends that will impact library service in next five years***

- Population growth throughout to county and changing demographics
- Increasing multicultural population in county
- Newcomers from more suburban and urban areas expect more and better services --  
-more hours, Sunday hours, more materials, more technology...
- Rapidly changing technology
- People who don't have technology in the home depend more and more on the library for their computing needs
- Increases in the number of adult students and use of distance learning technologies
- Increases in requests for exam proctoring
- Expectation and demand for staff to troubleshoot computers

### ***How the library is changing or needs to change***

- Add more technology
- Provide "viewing" rooms for DVDs
- Make video games available on computers
- Provide small meeting rooms, tutoring areas, interview areas
- Offer more self-check out stations,
- Provide more laptops to use in the library, also overhead projectors, video recorders
- Position the Library to be an access point for the community information
- Expand alliances with business community
- Offer videoconferencing abilities
- Offer more downloadable material

### ***Strengths of the library***

- Customer service
- Children's programs
- Staff who have a broad range of talent and backgrounds
- Ability to identify, respond to and solve problems and issues
- True "teamwork" throughout the organization
- Staff feel connected and valued

### ***New services and target populations***

- Develop life skills programs and materials
- Establish services for Teen mothers
- Offer early childhood development programs
- Reach out to local health community

- Create programs for Teens
- Develop programs that attract male teens
- Hire men as staff
- Offer storefront services in underserved communities
- Increase mobile library services
- Develop programs for single adults and married couples with no children
- Add coffee bars or cafes in all branches

***How jobs have or will change***

- More self checkouts—people seem to like them
- Reference and research questions (and answers) are more complex and require a different approach to reference
- Support self-directed service; need to do more to help people help themselves
- Continue to empower staff to make things work
- Continue to work as a system to improve the whole
- Become more proficient with technology

***Service and Facility Improvement Needs***

- House public computers together in one area rather than spread throughout the building
- Add cafes or Coffee bars
- Provide computer labs in all libraries
- Offer larger teen areas
- Provide downloadable materials of all types
- Create more display areas
- Construct or add more varied types of meeting space
- Create a “bookstore” ambiance
- Increase adult programming of all types
- Add sound equipment for meeting rooms
- Add more flexible shelving for buildings
- Create more seating areas in building for people to relax and read
- Focus on developing improved children’s collections
- Add more space
- Improve parking for all types of users
- Address the needs of an aging population and accommodate seniors in programming, shelving, seating, and general arrangement of library spaces
- Promote the library (what it has and does); get the word out to the community in a uniform and continuous manner
- Maintain the Library’s strongest asset --- the trust of elected officials and community

**C. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW SUMMARY**

The consultants conducted telephone interviews with three community “leaders” identified by the Library Director. The comments of these stakeholders echo those of

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the focus group participants as they relate to the excellence of staff, the need for more and up-to-date technology, the demand for increased outreach into the community, quality children's programming, good collections and the need to replicate the success of the Lexington Park Library and its Sunday service hours. These three individuals emphasized the importance/contribution of the library to the quality of life and strong educational fabric of the County.

The lack of public transportation was identified by all three as one of the main issues in the county. They commented the need to expand County services, including the Library, to more areas of the county. The Library's current mobile service is viewed positively and the expansion of mobile library service in general should be considered. Having a library presence in "village centers" was also mentioned.

Another important issue identified by the stakeholders is the need for the Library to continue to educate County government about the Library's value. This should include not only facts and figures, but also identify highlights illustrating the Library's significant contributions to the quality of life, economic well being and educational standing of the County. The Library must "continue to provide straight talk with the county and back it up with numbers." The community needs to "lobby" the elected officials to support the library.

#### **D. RANKING OF THE MOST AND LEAST IMPORTANT LIBRARY SERVICE FUNCTIONS**

All public focus group participants were asked to complete a library service function rankings exercise. Fifty-four rankings were completed. Out of 13 service functions typically provided by public libraries, each participant was asked to identify, in ranked order, the five most important service functions, and the three least important functions based on their personal opinions. The consultants weighted the responses so that the first most important service function was distinguished from the second most, third most and so on.

The ranking of **five most important Library service functions** in descending order of importance were:

- #1 Current Topics and Titles:** provides Current Topics and Titles addressing community's interests in recreational reading.
- #2 Formal Education Support:** offers collections and resources that assist students (grades pre-K through 12) and home schoolers in attaining their educational goals.
- #3 General Information:** meets community's need for information and answers to questions covering a broad array of topics
- #4 Lifelong Learning:** provides information and resources that support self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

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**#5 Community Commons:** provide spaces and an environment conducive for people to meet and interact with others in their community.

The **three least important Library service functions** in descending order are:

*Consumer information:* responds to the community's need for information to make informed consumer decisions.

*Government information:* offers government information related to local and state elected officials and governmental agencies.

*Cultural Awareness::* provides activities and programs that satisfy community residents' need to gain an understanding of their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others who live in the community.

The residents of and library users in St. Mary's County expect their public library to provide the most current fiction and non-fiction titles and information in formats that reflect popular interests and issues in today's world. They look to the public library to support formal learning for youth from pre-literacy through the completion of high school. The community looks to the library to provide answers to their questions on a wide variety of topics and to provide access to information and resources that facilitate lifelong learning beyond formal schooling. This lifelong learning function is extremely important to the new "boomer" generation of retirees who now, and will continue, to live active and intellectually stimulating lives. Last, but not least, they look to the library as a "third place," a welcoming and comfortable place to gather, interact, discuss and socialize with their families, friends and neighbors.

In comparing the Library staff's assessment of current services, collections and facilities with those of the public, common points of intersection were identified, most notable are:

- Increase technology access, market the availability of that access, and provide more opportunities for instruction in the use of information technologies
- Add more appropriate spaces which allow the community to use the Library for group meetings and informal interaction and relaxation
- Focus attention to services and spaces that attract teens
- Consider ensuring equity of amenities provided in each library facility
- Expand collections (the community was more specific in identifying these than the staff)
- Maintain customer friendly and well-trained staff
- Maximize access and delivery of service through opportunities provided by information technologies.

. This "match" in focus and approach is borne out in the Library's current Strategic Plan entitled "*Optimistic Realism Two 2005 – 2008: St. Mary's County Library...My*

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*Place to Learn, Discover and Relax!*” The direct input of the community as captured in the focus groups and their ranking of services support the Library’s Strategic Plan. The three goals of the plan – Library as “destination”, Library as community partner, and engaged skilled Staff are right on target when it comes to supporting the vision and mission of the Library. The Library’s current vision and mission accurately reflects the needs and expectations of residents of St. Mary’s County.

## Conclusions

First, the consultants want to commend the Library and the residents of the County,

- the Library, for its ability to identify and recruit engaged community members as focus group participants
- the focus group participants, for taking time from their busy lives to participate and offer thoughtful and sincere comments about the library, its services, and their expectations and needs related to those services.

The focus groups in St. Mary’s County were among the best attended based on our experience of the past two to three years.

The comments and input of the community and the staff during the focus group process are reflective of what we hear in similar settings throughout the country. The anecdotal comments captured in the focus groups are similar to those published in very recent national statistical research and studies<sup>1</sup>.

What the St. Mary’s County Library needs to address over the next decade is how to remain viable and indispensable to its community. Achieving that stature depends upon the services, collections, technology and facilities that the Library makes available. The information revealed in the focus groups is used in the next phase of the study to suggest the Library’s “plan of service” for the next decade. The Plan of Service will determine the types and sizes of facilities and service delivery methods for the St. Mary’s County Library.

Services must be designed to address the needs and expectations of a growing population throughout the County. The growth in the County is resulting in more demographically (age, education, income) and culturally diverse communities. This is reflected in the demographic analysis and population projections included in this study. Library services need to be diversified to best serve families, young children, teens, business community, adult learning community and senior citizens in the most meaningful of ways. This requires re-focusing and re-training staff, streamlining operations, developing strategic partnerships, increasing access to technology, and designing facilities that ensure optimum use.

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<sup>1</sup> @ *Your Library: Attitudes Toward Public Libraries Survey 2006*; American Library Association, 2006  
*Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public and Leadership Attitudes About LIBRARIES in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*;  
Public Agenda 2006

We find that the community focus group participants and the staff have the same awareness and understanding of how services, delivery of services and facilities need to change. This is a positive and important fact as, on occasion, we find a “disconnect” between the needs of the public and a staff’s perception of those needs. The fact that the community and the library staff are “on the same page” will result in a credible and powerful justification of why things need to change and of community-wide support for those changes. The community is poised to become effective “advocates” who will “lobby” elected officials for additional resources required to effect the change that are important to sustaining the Library as a vital quality of life resource and a valued lifelong education resource for the taxpayers of St. Mary’s County.

More specific recommendations related to the issues identified by both residents and staff will be addressed in the chapters devoted to the Plan of Service and Library Facilities and other Service Delivery recommendations.

# III. Technology Assessment and Recommendations

## Introduction

*The St. Mary's County Library uses information technology (IT) to:*

- Provide access to and to manage its resources through an integrated library system (ILS).
- Provide access to resources available locally and from other sources.
- Provide access to information about the library through its web site.
- Enhance staff efficiency and productivity.

The Technology Consultant visited the library in April 2006. Data were collected through interviews of the library staff in all branches, observations of library use, a tour of all of the libraries, a meeting with the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association (SMRLA) staff, a review of library documents provided by the library staff, and visits to the library's web site. The following report represents the consultant's observations, findings, assessment, suggested vision and recommendations in each of the areas in which the library uses technology i.e. IT Management /Network Infrastructure and Design, Integrated Library System, Technology for Staff, Technology for the Public and Digital Resources.

## Observations, Findings and Recommendations

The library uses technology to support:

- *“learning begins at birth” by providing computers in the library for all ages of library customers, with applications specific to their particular needs*
- *“education beyond the classroom” by offering computer training in the library and providing access to additional training resources through its web site*
- *“the library as a community hub” by providing meeting rooms equipped for computer presentations, spaces for small groups to view and listen to digital resources, and laptops for use in the library*

### **IT Management, Network Infrastructure and Design**

#### Observations and Findings

- In early 2006, the county connected each library via fiber to the county. County IT assumed the lead for this project and continues to support the library's wide area network.

- The library receives Internet access through Sailor, Maryland's Online Network.
- Most of the library's computers run Windows 2000. As new computers are installed, the library is migrating to Windows XP.
- File servers are located at Leonardtown and Lexington Park. A tape backup system is in place on the servers. However, the library's network manager is the only person who changes the tape, and since she is in the buildings on a rotating schedule, the backup is done manually on a periodic schedule. The library has the necessary applications and hardware to accomplish this, but needs to adopt a regularly scheduled automated backup and train staff to change the tape. An alternative is to purchase a tape loader which decreases the frequency with which tapes need to be changed.
- The library has a full time network manager who has multiple years of experience and A+ certification. The network manager is scheduled to spend one day each week at Leonardtown, one day at Charlotte Hall, and three days each week at Lexington Park. As of October 2005, the library had a total of 124 computers listed on its inventory. The result is a ratio of 1 FTE per 124 computers, which can begin to be challenging for one person to maintain stable, secure, and functioning networks and computers.
- The library has added a part time position of Public Technology Assistant (PTA). The position is in the adult services department and its purpose is to enable the librarians to return to their primary responsibilities and spend less time troubleshooting computer problems. The position is funded through AmeriCorps and the library.
- The first PTA was assigned to Lexington Park, but each library will have one PTA by fall 2006. The PTA has two primary responsibilities as identified by the Adult Services manager – assisting customers and making reservations for public computers for the public.
- Typically, about 15% of the library's computers are replaced each year, which translates to a replacement cycle that is more than six years. Industry best practices are a three to four year replacement cycle.
- As of spring 2006, the security for the public computers did not include a utility to manage system integrity. However, the network manager was planning to implement a product for this purpose. In the meantime, library staff members are performing maintenance on computers once each week, but these tasks would be eliminated by the use of applications such as Deep Freeze or PCRefresh.
- The network manager reported that problems with staff computers create issues, many of which seem to be related to downloading applications to the computer.



- The library does use an antivirus application to minimize damage to the servers and computers.
- Patches to critical applications, such as the operating system, are done manually. Such an approach may be manageable when the quantity of devices is low and sufficient staffing exists to perform this task. However, as the quantity of computers increases, also increasing the demand on staff time, too often keeping security and update patches current on computers slips on the priority list. A more efficient approach is to automate this critical task. The library might consider using the patch management tools available from Microsoft at no cost, and approach used by many libraries.
- Library staff notes any issues in a log book, which the network manager reviews when on-site. Issues which require immediate assistance can be communicated via cell phone to the network manager.
- The regional library system, the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association (SMRLA), provides critical services to the library, including e-mail and the integrated library system. SMRLA also provides technology-related training for library staff.

## Assessment

- The Library has developed a good approach to staffing its IT needs with daily tasks assigned to in-house staff and backup support for in-house staff available from the County IT staff, as needed. While the addition of the PTAs may provide some assistance on routine IT support tasks, the ratio of 1 FTE per 124 computers is approaching the top of the range. A recent study which the consultant conducted showed ratios from 1:59 to 1:142 in other libraries. The library can benefit from additional automation of key IT management tasks, including data backup (rather than manual backups as is the current practice) and patch deployment.
- The library's practice has been to replace 15% of computers annually, or every six years. This is far behind the industry best practice of a three to four year replacement cycle, which the consultant finds to be a more typical practice in public libraries. The library needs to adopt a replacement cycle of every three-four years.
- While the library has managed to provide a stable network for staff and public, the focus is understandably on the day-to-day, given the amount of IT staff resources available in relation to the quantity and complexity of the installed technology. A written technology plan would provide the library with a blueprint for using existing and new technologies in the years ahead and help the library identify the financial resources needed.

## **Vision**

- The library continues collaborating with County IT on the development and on-going support of the library's technology, insuring that the library's technology is consistent with the county IT plan and that the library staff and customers have a full range of library services delivered through current and advanced technologies.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Protect the library's critical digital resources***

- Establish a backup plan that insures regularly scheduled automated backups of the library's servers. Additional staff should be trained on changing the tape and monitoring the backup.

### ***Minimize problems with staff computers***

- Establish protocols for acceptable use of staff computers, including installing additional applications.
- Establish a test station at each building which library staff in that building can use to download and test new applications rather than downloading directly to a staff computer. Have the library's network manager approve the installation on a staff computer after a successful test of the application on the test station.

### ***Improve the efficiency of the use of the library staff's time***

- Use an automated patch management tool to deploy patches on a regular basis.
- Use a system integrity application to maintain the correct image of the computer.
- Develop a plan to move to more centralized network management and implement practices and tools for improved management, such as application-generated e-mail alerts for critical applications and remote monitoring tools.

### ***Manage the library's IT resources to insure a stable, secure, and functioning network***

- Adopt a three to four year replacement cycle for computers and four to six year replacement cycle for printers.
- Review the network design and infrastructure every three years.

- Plan for additional IT staff at the network technician level or higher as the number of computers increases.
- Consider outsourcing as an alternative to manage the increase in IT responsibilities. There are several options which the library might consider in using outsourcing as a staffing technique, such as outsourcing the design, development, and implementation of new defined projects; outsourcing network design and monitoring; outsourcing to have a backup to the library's IT staff and additional coverage in an emergency; or outsourcing the need for temporary technician assistance, for example to deploy a large purchase of new computers.

## **Integrated Library System**

### **Observations and Findings**

- The library uses the Unicorn system from SirsiDynix. SMRLA hosts and manages the service for the three southern counties in the state.
- SMRLA and St. Mary's regularly review the ILS functions and new options.
- Library customers pay for fines and fees at the circulation desk, but library staff expressed interest in implementing a cash management system. Since the library already uses the print management system from EnvisionWare, which is the company that has partnered with SirsiDynix for the development of a cash management system, the library is in a position to implement this newer product and offer new customer services.
- Both Charlotte Hall and Lexington Park have self-check stations with plans to also add this service to Leonardtown. Units from two different vendors are used. Because self-check stations require technical support, as does any IT system, and because many customers are mobile and use more than one branch, having the same unit throughout the library will be efficient for both staff and for customers.

Self-check stations account for less than an average of 15% of the circulation in the two branches where they are installed. Use of the self-check at Lexington Park did increase after the unit was moved to the circulation desk and accounted for 17% of the circulation for March 2006. As the consultant has seen in other libraries, the location of the self-check is the most significant factor in its use. The best location for a self-check is at the circulation desk, which the library uses at Lexington Park. Self-service is increasingly an option that customers of retail, banking, and libraries choose to use. Other libraries that are committed to self-check have achieved circulation rates over 90% on the self-check stations.

The number of self-check stations which a library should have is dependent on

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St. Mary's County Library Comprehensive and Integrated System Analysis  
 Prepared by PROVIDENCE Associates LLC  
 March 20, 2007

several factors, most significantly the percentage of total circulation that the library desires to have occur at the self-check stations. If the goal is high, such as 80% or more, the library will have more self-check stations than it would have had staffed stations to handle the same quantity of circulation. Self-check stations would be located throughout the library, not just at the traditional circulation area, an approach which works well especially if the library has a materials security system in place.

- The library uses barcodes to manage its inventory and circulation. RFID could improve the efficiency of check out and check in operations. SMRLA would coordinate any RFID project but considers the cost prohibitive at this time.
- Notices of overdues and holds are sent via e-mail from the ILS. Library customers can renew materials via the web.

## **Assessment**

- Partnering with a regional library system and other nearby libraries has enabled the library to use one of the leading applications for its mission critical need to manage its collections and resources. The residents of St. Mary's County are the beneficiaries as the library is able to use a powerful application to deliver services and resources to them, which the library could not do as effectively on its own. Both SMRLA and the library are aware that they cannot allow the ILS to become stagnant and fall behind in meeting the ever-changing needs and interests of library customers. The library needs to continue to invest in the development of the ILS, adding new components and functions on a frequent and regular basis.
- While the library has begun to introduce self-service to its customers, with two branches now having a self-check station, the library needs to plan for the continued development of these services. Goals should be set to consistently achieve higher rates for check-out at the self-check stations. Plans should be made to introduce additional self-service functions, such as self-payment of fines and fees. Self-service not only allows the library to reallocate staff to more directly provide customer services and to efficiently manage the future growth in staffing, but it also responds to requests for more customer privacy.

## **Vision**

- The library continues developing the functions of, and services provided through, the integrated library system with emphasis on those that directly impact the library customer, such as self-service, delivery of information on available resources, and integrated access to resources from all sources.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Enhance services and increase the convenience to library customers***

- Implement a cash management system to enable customers to pay fines, fees and printing charges through self-service, including through the use of deposit accounts and credit cards.

### ***Improve the ease of management of inventory and circulation services***

- Implement self-check at all branches and set a goal for each branch to achieve over 50% of its circulation at the self-check within three to five years, increasing to 80% in seven to ten years.
- Standardize the self-check service throughout the county by using the same model of unit in all branches to minimize customer confusion and provided more efficient support and cost effective maintenance of equipment
- Increase the use of self-service through the use of CD/DVD security systems that are compatible with self-check. Consider all options, including CD/DVD dispensing systems. (It is best to check with your automation to identify the brand of equipment that is most compatible.)
- Continue to stay abreast of changes in RFID and review projects costs as prices change. Coordinate the investigation, future selection and implementation with SMRLA.

### ***Increase access to local and area resources and increase the library's investment in the ILS***

- Continue full participation in SMRLA for ILS services and actively participate in developing and enhancing ILS functionality and services.

## **Technology for Staff**

### **Observations and Findings**

- Staff members use home directories on the library's servers to store their files. However, some staff members may benefit from additional training on file management for improved organization, space savings and access.
- Computers and printers, both local and networked, are provided for the staff. Some staff members share computers, which can present a problem when the

computer is in use and when it requires service. Some problems can be resolved by having all staff applications on all staff computers.

- Library staff have most of the tools, both hardware and software, to do their jobs. Some applications are only available on certain staff computers but are needed on more, such as publishing applications. Lexington Park staff members have identified additional applications that would enable them to be productive in new ways. As examples, the list included video and graphic editing, music creation, web site editing and authoring, and publishing programs.
- Staff members have opportunities to attend computer training provided by SMRLA.
- Multiple methods are used for staff scheduling throughout the three branches, including whiteboards, calendars, and spreadsheets. Automated options exist which would make the process more efficient and make it easier to share information across departments and branches.
- Library staff use a variety of communication methods to communicate with each other and with library customers, including e-mail, fax, telephone, and the library's web site. In 2005, the library installed an upgraded telephone system, investing \$40,000 in the system. Communications technology continues to change, and the library will need financial resources again in the future to keep the system current.

## **Assessment**

- The library has provided the essential technology which its staff members need for their responsibilities. However, the library could provide additional tools which staff members could use, particularly related to presentation, publishing, and web site production and management, and the library should take steps to add them to the staff's resources. The library does offer staff members opportunities for training, and a variety of methods should be available to staff, including hands-on classroom training and self-paced, web-based training.

## **Vision**

- The library provides library staff with the proven technology tools to do their tasks today and also with the new and emerging technology tools that allow them to experiment and deliver information, resources, and services in new ways tomorrow.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Maintain the library's investment in library staff***

- Continue to provide each staff member with the time and opportunity to attend or participate in at least one technology-related training offering annually. Options could include online courses, off-site classes, and self-paced learning activities.
- Provide an orientation for new staff members on the library's technology systems and services. Include instruction on file management.
- Include facilities in each building for staff to participate in training and learning opportunities as a group. The space would include cable TV connection, video/web conferencing capability, and a smartboard.

### ***Support the library staff's desire to be productive employees, providing quality services to library customers***

- Identify applications needed by staff members who must share computers and provide those applications on all staff computers to improve staff efficiency.
- Phase in providing one staff computer for each staff member on duty at the same time. Provide computers at both the public service desks and in a staff member's office to enable the staff member to perform the job tasks.
- Annually review staff applications for use and identify additional applications needed to enable staff to perform their duties, as technology evolves to provide new opportunities and new efficiencies.
- Provide a production station at each library for library staff to develop multi-media productions. Such stations might include high end computer with larger display and video, photo, and graphic editing and authoring applications installed; flatbed scanner; CD/DVD burner; connections for digital camera and other input and output devices. Staff and public may share one production station in some branches.

### ***Reduce labor-intensive manual applications through technology***

- Implement an automated employee scheduling system. Many factors determine which system may be appropriate for the library, including whether the scheduling system needs to interface with the payroll system, whether shift-bidding is allowed, and the complexity of the work rules. One place to start on investigation is to determine if the payroll system offers an employee scheduling system.

***Enable staff collaboration and enhance customer service with new communication methods***

- Plan for and implement voice over IP phone system for increased functionality, cost savings and an integrated communication system. This is something to be explored in conjunction with the county for benefits to both organizations.
- Consider mobile communication devices for staff. Such devices are particularly useful for enabling library staff to respond to library customers or other library staff while away from a desk telephone, especially in larger facilities. Vocera is one example of a system used in other libraries. Other alternatives may be available from the provider of the library's telephone system, or the library could include such a request when next upgrading its telephone system.

**Technology for the Public**

**Observations and Findings**

- The library's public computers are a popular service and well used. For the period, July 2005 through March 2006, there were a total of 91,734 users of the library's 47 managed public computers. Each computer had an average of 1,952 users during this period, or more than 7.5 users on a daily basis. During this time, the ten public computers included in the count at Leonardtown had the highest concentration of use, followed by Charlotte Hall. The 31 computers at Lexington Park had the lowest concentration of users, most likely due to the fact that there is a higher concentration of computers to meet the demand.
- One way to gauge the quantity of public computers that a library should have is to apply a ratio based on the quantity of daily visitors to the library. A ratio of 1 computer per 25 daily visitors is the Basic service level, with 1:20 a Better service level, and 1:15 the Best service level. Using the "Library Visits" and the quantity of "Internet Terminals Used by the Public" as reported in the Maryland Public Library Statistics, the total quantity of public computers falls below the lowest level.



**20-Year Projection of St. Mary's County Library's Public Computer Needs**  
**Assumed Annual Growth In Patron Visits Per Year = 3.00%**

	Fiscal Year	Patron Visits Per Year	Annual Growth in Visits	Patron Visits Per Day	Actual Public Computers	BASIC (1 per each 25 daily visits)	BETTER (1 per each 20 daily visits)	BEST (1 per each 15 daily visits)
<b>ACTUAL</b>	2000	438,706	0.00%	1243	33			
	2001	455,980	3.94%	1292	34			
	2002	471,263	3.35%	1335	33			
	2003	509,212	8.05%	1443	44	58	72	96
	2004	550,000	8.01%	1558	50	62	78	104
<b>PROJECTED</b>	2005	566,500	3.00%	1605		64	80	107
	2006	583,495	3.00%	1653		66	83	110
	2007	601,000	3.00%	1703		68	85	114
	2008	619,030	3.00%	1754		70	88	117
	2009	637,601	3.00%	1806		72	90	120
	2010	656,729	3.00%	1860		74	93	124
	2011	676,431	3.00%	1916		77	96	128
	2012	696,724	3.00%	1974		79	99	132
	2013	717,625	3.00%	2033		81	102	136
	2014	739,154	3.00%	2094		84	105	140
	2015	761,329	3.00%	2157		86	108	144
	2016	784,168	3.00%	2221		89	111	148
	2017	807,694	3.00%	2288		92	114	153
	2018	831,924	3.00%	2357		94	118	157
	2019	856,882	3.00%	2427		97	121	162
	2020	882,589	3.00%	2500		100	125	167
	2021	909,066	3.00%	2575		103	129	172
	2022	936,338	3.00%	2653		106	133	177
	2023	964,428	3.00%	2732		109	137	182
	2024	964,428	3.00%	2732		109	137	182

*Source: Numbers of actual patron visits and public computers obtained from Maryland Public Library Statistics*

- Using reports of visitors to the individual libraries and quantities of computers as listed on the library's inventory, it is possible to project public computer quantities for each of the three libraries. Note that self-check units and Print Release stations are not included in the counts.
- An increase of two computers at Charlotte Hall would bring that library to the Basic Level.
- The quantity of public computers at Leonardtown meets the Basic Level but increasing the quantity by 5, to the Better Level, could provide computers in the teen area and increase the quantity in the children's area.
- Lexington Park's inventory did not include the wireless computers that the library circulates to library customers. When those are added, the library exceeds the Basic Level.

**20-Year Projection of Charlotte Hall's Public Computer Needs**  
**Assumed Annual Growth In Patron Visits Per Year = 1.00%**

	Fiscal Year	Patron Visits Per Year	Annual Growth in Visits	Patron Visits Per Day	Actual Public Computers	BASIC (1 per each 25 daily visits)	BETTER (1 per each 20 daily visits)	BEST (1 per each 15 daily visits)
<b>ACTUAL</b>								
	2003	115,981	0.00%	329				
	2004	113,999	-1.71%	323				
	2005	113,898	-0.09%	323	11	13	16	22
	2006	115,037	1.00%	326		13	16	22
	2007	116,187	1.00%	329		13	16	22
	2008	117,349	1.00%	332		13	17	22
	2009	118,523	1.00%	336		13	17	22
	2010	119,708	1.00%	339		14	17	23
	2011	120,905	1.00%	343		14	17	23
	2012	122,114	1.00%	346		14	17	23
	2013	123,335	1.00%	349		14	17	23
<b>PROJECTED</b>	2014	124,569	1.00%	353		14	18	24
	2015	125,814	1.00%	356		14	18	24
	2016	127,072	1.00%	360		14	18	24
	2017	128,343	1.00%	364		15	18	24
	2018	129,627	1.00%	367		15	18	24
	2019	130,923	1.00%	371		15	19	25
	2020	132,232	1.00%	375		15	19	25
	2021	133,554	1.00%	378		15	19	25
	2022	134,890	1.00%	382		15	19	25
	2023	136,239	1.00%	386		15	19	26
	2024	137,601	1.00%	390		16	19	26
	2025	137,601	1.00%	390		16	19	26

*Source: Numbers of actual patron visits and public computers obtained from St. Mary's County Library Monthly Statistics and PC Inventory*

**20-Year Projection of Leonardtown's Public Computer Needs**  
**Assumed Annual Growth In Patron Visits Per Year = 1.00%**

	Fiscal Year	Patron Visits Per Year	Annual Growth in Visits	Patron Visits Per Day	Actual Public Computers	BASIC (1 per each 25 daily visits)	BETTER (1 per each 20 daily visits)	BEST (1 per each 15 daily visits)
<b>ACTUAL</b>								
	2003	192,048	0.00%	544				
	2004	182,947	-4.74%	518				
	2005	185,333	1.30%	525	21	21	26	35
<b>PROJECTED</b>	2006	187,186	1.00%	530		21	27	35
	2007	189,058	1.00%	536		21	27	36
	2008	190,949	1.00%	541		22	27	36
	2009	192,858	1.00%	546		22	27	36
	2010	194,787	1.00%	552		22	28	37
	2011	196,735	1.00%	557		22	28	37
	2012	198,702	1.00%	563		23	28	38
	2013	200,689	1.00%	569		23	28	38
	2014	202,696	1.00%	574		23	29	38
	2015	204,723	1.00%	580		23	29	39
	2016	206,770	1.00%	586		23	29	39
	2017	208,838	1.00%	592		24	30	39
	2018	210,926	1.00%	598		24	30	40
	2019	213,036	1.00%	604		24	30	40
	2020	215,166	1.00%	610		24	30	41
	2021	217,318	1.00%	616		25	31	41
	2022	219,491	1.00%	622		25	31	41
	2023	221,686	1.00%	628		25	31	42
	2024	223,902	1.00%	634		25	32	42
	2025	223,902	1.00%	634		25	32	42

*Source: Numbers of actual patron visits and public computers obtained from St. Mary's County Library Monthly Statistics and PC Inventory*

**20-Year Projection of Lexington Park's Public Computer Needs**  
**Assumed Annual Growth In Patron Visits Per Year = 3.00%**

	Fiscal Year	Patron Visits Per Year	Annual Growth in Visits	Patron Visits Per Day	Actual Public Computers	BASIC (1 per each 25 daily visits)	BETTER (1 per each 20 daily visits)	BEST (1 per each 15 daily visits)
<b>ACTUAL</b>								
	2003	191,301	0.00%	542				
	2004	186,902	-2.30%	529				
	2005	216,591	15.88%	614	24	25	31	41
<b>PROJECTED</b>	2006	223,089	3.00%	632		25	32	42
	2007	229,781	3.00%	651		26	33	43
	2008	236,675	3.00%	670		27	34	45
	2009	243,775	3.00%	691		28	35	46
	2010	251,088	3.00%	711		28	36	47
	2011	258,621	3.00%	733		29	37	49
	2012	266,380	3.00%	755		30	38	50
	2013	274,371	3.00%	777		31	39	52
	2014	282,602	3.00%	801		32	40	53
	2015	291,080	3.00%	825		33	41	55
	2016	299,813	3.00%	849		34	42	57
	2017	308,807	3.00%	875		35	44	58
	2018	318,071	3.00%	901		36	45	60
	2019	327,613	3.00%	928		37	46	62
	2020	337,442	3.00%	956		38	48	64
	2021	347,565	3.00%	985		39	49	66
	2022	357,992	3.00%	1014		41	51	68
	2023	368,732	3.00%	1045		42	52	70
	2024	379,794	3.00%	1076		43	54	72
	2025	379,794	3.00%	1076		43	54	72

*Source: Numbers of actual patron visits and public computers obtained from St. Mary's County Library Monthly Statistics and PC Inventory*

- The quantity of public computers has increased since the library's statistics were reported to the state, and the library has plans to add more computers this year. Those additions will help the library move toward a more satisfactory ratio. Even so, during the consultant's visit, library staff in each branch mentioned the need for more public computers to satisfy the demand.
- Of course, new developments in technology may dictate changes to the formula in the future. Changes in population and demographics can also affect the public's use of the library's computers. Library staff should continually be evaluating the quantity of public computers compared to the public's needs.
- The library circulates laptops for use inside the library, and this is a popular service. However, as with all computer equipment, laptops have problems and are not always available for use. During the consultant's visit, only one of the three was available for service at Leonardtown. One was no longer functional, and the second was in for repair.
- All branches have computers located in the children's and adult areas, and some have computers located in an area designated for teens. Some teens use the circulating laptops.
- Computers in the children's area include "toddler PCs" which are used for learning games.
- Current public computers in Leonardtown and Charlotte Hall do not include any means for the public to download to a CD, which the public has requested.
- The library uses PC management tools to manage the public computers for time session limits and printing. The library staff is training library customers to make their own reservations, but some staff time is still required.
- Seating at the public computers is designed for one person per computer, yet there are times when two persons are working together.
- Public wireless access is available at all of the libraries, and library staff reports that it is a popular service.
- Library staff in at least two branches reported that they receive requests from the public for access to a flatbed scanner. Only one scanner exists in a public area, in the lab at Lexington Park, but it is only available for training.
- Color printing is not available at every branch, but users have requested it.
- The library has made a commitment to training the public to use computers. A regular schedule of training sessions is provided.

- Lexington Park has a separate lab which is used for training and is available for public use when no training is scheduled.
- Lexington Park has nicely equipped small group rooms, some of which contain DVD players and TVs.
- Lexington Park has nicely equipped large meeting rooms.
- Library staff expressed the desire to have consistency among all of the public computers. In fact, at least two staff members stated that it was their number one frustration. This is a common request in almost every public library that the consultant has visited, demonstrating both the strong desire for consistency and the difficulty in achieving it.

## **Assessment**

- The library is close to meeting the basic ratio of 1 public computer per 25 daily visits in Lexington Park and Charlotte Hall, and actually meets this ratio in Leonardtown. However, the library should strive to not only achieve this minimal ratio but improve the ratio which will require additional resources for the purchase of more computers. The use of circulating laptops is a great service, and expanding the program is one way to increase the number of public computers without impacting space.
- Offering wireless access to the public positions the library with libraries across the country that have become early adopters of this technology and leaders in offering this service to not only residents but business persons and others traveling through the county.
- The library should respond to patron requests to allow downloading at public computers at all of its branches, a service which is common in most public libraries. The library must continually develop its technology offerings for the public if it is to be responsive to public needs and be seen as a technology leader. Scanners and other media production tools are examples of technology that other public libraries offer.

## **Vision**

- The library continually refreshes the technology for the public, providing a full range of hardware and software that provides both the access to, and use of, library and remote resources and also the design and development of customer-created resources.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Continue and develop the technology training program***

- Subscribe to online technology-related training databases and services.
- Continue to update and refresh the section of the library's web site related to technology training.
- Develop a mobile lab to take training into locations inside the library, such as the meeting rooms. Laptops could circulate inside the library when not being used for training.
- Partner with other training services and agencies that provide training to promote use of the library's training labs and further promote the library as a partner in workforce development.
- Develop a training lab in each library. Equip the training labs with whiteboards, screens, ceiling mounted projectors, and presenter stations.
- Provide facilities for phone and web based video conferencing, including large screens for group viewing, web cameras, and conference phones. These should be available for both the staff and public to use.
- Produce the library's training curriculum for distribution in new ways, such as streamlining video downloads and podcasting.

### ***Increase library customers' access to and use of information and digital resources***

- Increase the quantity of public computers to a minimum ratio of 1 computer to every 25 visits. Increase the quantity in all areas of the library in each branch – adult, teen, and children's.
- Continue the laptop checkout program, and increase the quantity of laptops that are available.
- Develop a minimum number of public desktops/images, such as toddler, teen, adult Internet, and adult word processing, and use imaging to deploy and maintain a consistent desktop within these groupings. There are several imaging applications, such as Symantec Ghost, from which the library might choose. An imaging application allows the staff to select a suite of applications and design a desktop for a particular user group with access to that particular suite of applications. The advantages of using imaging are that the process of deploying applications to public and staff computers is more efficient, there is greater consistency and uniformity among the group of computers designed for one group



(such as children), and the image can be used to address computer problems.

- Upgrade the public computers in groups, using the desktop groupings, to provide more consistency.
- Provide color printing at each branch.
- Continue to encourage self-service in reserving and using public computers.

***Promote the library as the place to find, collect, and use digital resources***

- Provide options for library customers to download and store information, such as download to CD, DVD, flash drives, and other media as will be used in the future.
- Provide a flatbed scanner for public use at one station in each branch.
- Provide a production station at each library for library customers to develop multi-media productions. Such stations might include high end computer with larger display and video, photo, and graphic editing and authoring applications installed; flatbed scanner; CD/DVD burner; connections for digital camera and other input and output devices.

***Use technology to support the concept that learning begins at birth***

- Increase the number of children's learning games available in the library.
- Develop interactive content for the library's web site that involves young readers.
- Provide multiple computer stations at each branch where two persons can work together. Characteristics of these stations include allowing more floor and desktop space than the other stations to more easily accommodate multiple persons, providing multiple headsets for the station, and consideration of placement of the station so that other nearby users are not impacted. For example, a workstation that could accommodate multiple persons might be located at the end of a range as opposed to in the center of a grouping. Such an arrangement is particularly helpful where parents can work with youth.

**Digital Resources**

**Observations and Findings**

- The library's collection of digital resources is increasing, with an increase in the quantity of CDs and DVDs in particular.

- Online databases, e-books, and digital audio books collections are available through the library's participation in SMRLA. Vendors of e-books and digital audio books continue to develop and offer new services, such as downloadable video, including feature films.
- The library promotes its services and resources through a web site. A translation tool allows users to translate the web site to a number of languages.
- Digital resources enable the library to provide services 24X7.

## **Assessment**

- The library has a basic offering of digital resources, comparable to what similar public libraries provide. However, new online databases continually become available, new media formats become available, and the library should regularly assess new offerings to maintain customer interest and respond to changing needs. The library has a basic web site which should be continually refreshed to maintain user interest. A look at other public library web sites shows that libraries are adding original content, such as children's stories created just for the library's web site, are including interactive features, and are using new technologies to inform customers of services and resources, such as RSS. St. Mary's needs to prepare to join these leading libraries and to continually evolve its web site.

## **Vision**

- The library continues developing its collection and use of digital resources to provide access to a full range of services and resources to users both inside and outside of the physical library, whenever and wherever the library customer needs them.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Increase access to the library's resources from locations outside of the library***

- Continue participation in consortia to more cost effectively develop collections of digital resources.
- Stay abreast of changes in media formats and new methods of directly delivering digital resources to library customers in their locations.
- Add downloadable video to the collection of digital resources as residential bandwidth rates increase.

### ***Increase access and improve ease of access to remote resources***

- Develop the library's ILS user interface and the ILS system's federated search capabilities as the primary tool for access to all resources, both the library's own and remote resources.
- Move into Web 2.0 services to provide more online interaction for customers by implementing new methods of informing customers of services and resources, through the ILS and library web site i.e. RSS feeds, wikis, blogs, video clips, podcasts, etc. that are now prevalent throughout cyberspace.

***Provide an easy access point to library information and resources, regardless of customer location***

- Use the library's web site as the primary method of distributing information about the library and the central point of access to library resources.
- Increase the visibility of the library and access to its resources by promoting linking to library's web site from web sites of other county agencies, community groups, businesses throughout the county, and on any publicly accessible computer in the county.
- Continually refresh and update the library's web site.
- Evaluate and redesign the web site at least every three years.

## IV - ST. MARY'S COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

Edmeades-Stromdahl Architects of Bel Air, Maryland conducted facility and property assessment of the Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown libraries. The corresponding reports and cost estimate matrix of repairs to be completed over the next ten years follow.

### CHARLOTTE HALL BRANCH

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Charlotte Hall Branch is located at 37600 New Market Road (Maryland Route 6) just west of Maryland Route 5. The building was built in 1987 and is a one story structure of approximately 24,400 gross square feet. The basic geometry of the building is rectilinear with recessed areas at the front and rear of the building. The Building houses the Southern Maryland Regional Library Resource Center and the Charlotte Hall Branch of the St. Mary's County Library System. The entrance lobby is designed to serve both functions and contains the main toilet rooms. A multipurpose room also opens onto the entrance lobby and is designed to be used independently from the library functions when the library is closed.

#### CODE ISSUES

##### General

The building construction is as follows:

- Structure: Steel columns and beams.
- Floors: Concrete slab on grade.
- Roof: Metal trusses with metal deck.  
Wood trusses with wood deck in some areas.
- Walls: Masonry wall construction (brick veneer and CMU backup) with furring and gypsum wallboard inside.

##### Building Code

The drawings indicate that the building was originally reviewed under the 1984 BOCA code as an A-3 use group. If the building were reviewed under the IBC 2003 code the use group would be the same A-3 use group and the construction classification would have to be V B because of the wood roof framing in part of the building as indicated on the drawings. The permitted area per floor is calculated using formulas in Section 506 and based on the allowable areas found in table 503. Using the increase in floor area permitted for sprinklers and perimeter access, the allowable area permitted for the building would be approximately 28,500 square feet. Since the current floor plan is approximately 24,400 square feet the building complies with the floor area limitations of the code.

##### Life Safety Code

An extensive review of the Life Safety Code is beyond the scope of this study but the building was originally designed in accordance with the 1985 version, NFPA 101 Life Safety Code and appears to comply with the physical exiting requirements of the current code.

## **ADA Code**

With the new parking lot recently installed there are now five handicapped parking spaces provided in close proximity to the entrance to the building. It appears from the drawings that the spaces meet the cross slope requirements and are well within the maximum sidewalk slope for access to the building. The toilet rooms are not handicapped accessible as required by the current ADA code. Much of the door hardware in the building is not code compliant.

## **SITE ISSUES**

### **Parking**

According to our count and including the new parking lot the total number of parking spaces on the site is 96 including five handicapped spaces. The existing parking lot appears to have met the zoning code requirements but did not satisfy the parking needs for the building. The old parking surfaces appear to be in good condition but there are some sections such as an area near the dumpster pad where the paving is cracked and should be repaired.

### **Drainage**

Site drainage around the building is a problem. The first issue is that the exterior grade is very close to the building floor level. Generally the exterior elevation should be held below the floor elevation to prevent water from migrating into the building and except for one small area on the east side of the building in the staff lounge, we saw no indication of water damage. Because of the high grade at the building weep holes to drain the inside of masonry wall were sometimes below grade. The rear courtyard to the north of the building is not adequately graded. The downspouts in the courtyard are fitted with flexible and rigid PVC extensions in an attempt to divert the water away from the building but the effort does not appear to be successful. As a corollary to the grade problem we noted moss growth on the walls near the ground in numerous locations. This is a further indication of moisture problems which will lead to deterioration of the building. It appears to us that the grades should be altered around the perimeter of the building and the courtyard should be extensively regraded to drain water away from the building.

### **Landscaping**

For the most part, landscaping is kept away from the building walls. This condition should be maintained. Plantings too close to the building cause moisture retention and can lead to additional deterioration of the brick.

## **BUILDING ISSUES**

### **Structure**

The building structure appears to be in good condition.

### **Roof**

Much of roof is a standing seam metal roof that appears to be in good condition. In the center of the building there is an 85 feet by 45 feet flat roofed area which contains much of the mechanical equipment for the building. The roofing system is a low sloped ribbed metal roof which drains to a central metal gutter which extends the length of the flat roofed area. The central gutter connects to internal rain leaders through the interior of the building. The ceilings in the building spaces under this gutter show water stains along the length of the gutter indicating that there is a problem with the

gutter. On the roof there is a substantial evidence of the problem as well. Water appears to stand in some areas and numerous areas and seams were caulked in attempts to correct the problem. There are vertical metal walls around the perimeter of the mechanical space in which louvers are located. The flanges of the louvers are located on the outside rib of the metal wall panels which creates an avenue for water penetration. Each of these louvers appears to have been repeatedly caulked to prevent the leakage. It appears that this roof will need extensive alteration to correct the problems and provide a water tight system.

### **Walls**

**Interior:** The interior walls appear to be in good condition. The walls are mostly gypsum wall board painted.

**Exterior:** The exterior walls are brick veneer and are in good structural shape except for the moisture and moss conditions noted above.

### **Building Openings**

#### **Exterior:**

The doors and window glazing systems are in good condition. The exterior sealant around the windows has exceeded its life expectancy and has deteriorated. All exterior windows and doors should be recaulked with the appropriate sealant.

#### **Interior:**

The interior doors are in good condition but as noted above much of the hardware does not meet current ADA codes.

### **Finishes**

#### **Ceilings:**

The ceilings in most of the building are acoustical ceiling tiles. The condition varies. In the Library Resource center a number of spaces have been recently renovated and the ceiling tiles are in good condition. In the older areas including the St. Mary's County Library the ceiling tiles are in fair condition.

#### **Walls:**

The interior gypsum board walls are generally in good condition. In many areas the walls need to be painted and in some areas vinyl wall covering needs to be replaced. The ceramic tile walls are all in good condition.

#### **Floors:**

The floors are carpeted in the public areas and offices with ceramic tile in the toilet rooms, VCT in the multipurpose room and lounge. The main lobby is covered with rubber tiles. The floor tile condition is similar to the ceilings. In the Library Resource Center the carpet appeared to be in good condition while the St. Mary's portion showed a number of areas of significant wear and should be replaced.

## ***Mechanical and Electrical Evaluation***

- ***General***

The building was built in 1987 and has had no significant upgrades. All electrical and plumbing equipment is original. Most of the HVAC equipment has been replaced. As such, the deferred maintenance list is not extensive.

- Heating System

Heating is furnished via rooftop packaged heat pump equipment.

A horizontal electric unit heater serves the loading dock area.

- Cooling System

Building cooling is provided by rooftop packaged heat pump equipment. There are five units serving the library and office areas. The attached table summarizes the equipment capacities. No dehumidification sequences are available with the current equipment. The units were not running for the duration of this visit because the fans were not set to run via the thermostat positions.

Three of the five-rooftop units have been replaced in the last five years and are in excellent condition. Two of the units are original and are in fair condition.

There are also six split system heat pumps serving the front entry areas, the meeting room and office and support areas. All except one of the outdoor heat pump units have been replaced in the last 5 years and are in excellent condition. The indoor units are original and are in fair condition.

There are two ductless split system units serving the computer room. These units were installed in 1997 and are in good condition

The original air conditioning equipment has reached its expected service life.

The cooling systems for the facility appear to be appropriately sized. This is based only on a square foot basis at this time; cooling calculations were not performed as part of this effort.

- Humidification System

No humidification systems exist.

- Air Distribution Systems

Air distribution systems are constant air volume without zone terminal units. Future upgrades should include converting these systems to systems with dehumidification controls and enthalpy economizers.

There are transfer air grilles in corridor walls to return room air to the HVAC systems. This does not meet code.

An exhaust system exists for the toilet rooms, which includes an in line centrifugal exhaust fan is ducted to wall louvers.

Ductwork includes galvanized steel and preinsulated flexible ducts. Visible ductwork and its insulation is in good condition. Duct penetrations through the metal roof areas should be recaulked.

- Ventilation

Equipment is sized to accommodate 15% outdoor air. This amount of air meets current code.

- Controls

Each HVAC system has a standalone electric thermostat. The thermostats were all set so that the equipment was not operating with the exception of the computer room during our visit. This means that the library was unventilated. Areas did have stagnant and musty odors. A new control system is recommended.

A 6" sprinkler main exists. A separate 2" domestic main exists. The water piping includes copper (domestic) and ductile iron/black steel (sprinkler). Domestic water piping is generally insulated with fiberglass pipe wrap with all service jacket. Water service originates in a single potable well and is distributed to a tank and pump system located in an underground vault. Sprinkler water is also distributed through a storage tank and pressurized by an air compressor. The outdoor vault water system reportedly experiences frequent nuisance alarms. One of the tanks or its piping is leaking and has created a pond outside of the building.

A single 4" sanitary sewer serves the building which is routed to an on site septic tank which discharges to a septic field across the street.

A single electric storage type water heat serves the facility. The system does not include an expansion tank (this would be required under current Code). The water heater is a 50-gallon, 9KW unit and is fair condition. The domestic hot water circulator pump has been removed from service. A new circulator should be put in service.

General use toilet rooms do not include ADA fixtures. Flush valves are manual type. The lavatories include non-metered dual level faucets. Water coolers are non-ADA.

The incoming sprinkler and water mains and all other plumbing systems are original. They are in good to fair condition. The water heater has reached its expected service life.



- Storm Water

Rainwater is routed through exterior downspouts and piped underground to an on site storm water management pond. Several main leaders spill to grade and cause water infiltration in the building because of site grading. There is also an internal building rain gutter with interior roof drains. This is a source of building water infiltration also. The building storm water main is indicated to be clay; this line should be televised.

- Sprinkler System

The facility is fully protected by an automatic wet pipe sprinkler system with recessed white heads. There is no fire pump in the facility.

- Electrical Distribution

The electric service includes a 1200 AMP, 480 Volt, 3-phase service via an exterior pad mounted transformer and interior meter and C/T cabinet. The service feeds a main distribution panel and is distributed to various panel boards. The distribution equipment is manufactured by General Electric and is original. The panels were generally full with few spaces available for additional circuits.

Power distribution will not support additional computers in the library areas; however, the power service to the building is adequate to accommodate new equipment.

- Interior Lighting

Fluorescent lighting is provided in most areas. The lighting includes non-energy efficient T-12 ballasts and lamps. Emergency egress lighting is provided throughout via wall and ceiling mounted battery powered lights. Lighting appeared to be well distributed and adequate. Switching is manual.

- Exterior Lighting

Parking lot lighting is original and includes shoe box pole mounted fixtures with metal halide lamps. The building also includes recessed incandescent fixtures and entrance bollards. No code required lights exist at egress doors. Exterior lighting is controlled via photocell and time clock.

- Fire Alarm System

An original Gamewell system is still in place. The lobby includes an LED fire alarm annunciator panel. A fire alarm control panel and dialer are installed in the main electric room. The system does not meet current ADA Code. Pull stations are installed at egress doors including the interior doors separating the County and Regional library areas.

- Security System

An entry access system exists. The system is installed at exterior doors as well as at interior doors separating the Regional and County library areas.

- Telephone and Data System

A complete phone system is installed which includes all copper wiring. There are four T-1 lines; one for phone and 3 for data service. A new Comcast data line has been installed which may phase out the 3 T-1 data lines.

- Emergency Power System

Emergency power for emergency lighting and fire alarm systems is provided by batteries.

- Current Code Issues and System Deficiencies

One of the water tanks or its associated piping is leaking.

Transfer air grilles utilize egress corridors for return air. This does not meet current code.

The existing HVAC systems serving offices only do not comply with current energy Code. There is no Code requirement to retroactively replace or upgrade these systems. However, obtaining quotes for Code compliant upgrades may be in the County's best interest in order to reduce energy bills as well as to increase comfort.

- ADA upgrades are needed for all systems.

Site grading allows water to infiltrate the building.

The interior roof gutter should be eliminated if possible.

The HVAC controls should be upgraded to include timeclock controls so that the building is properly ventilated and climate controlled. The domestic hot water circulator has been removed; a new circulator should be put into service.

# LEONARDTOWN BRANCH LIBRARY

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Leonardtown library is located at 23250 Hollywood Road ( Maryland route 245) north of Leonardtown Road ( Maryland Route 5).The building was built in 1954 as an armory and was renovated for library use in 1985. In 1998 additional renovations were made for library uses. The basic geometry of the building is rectilinear. The building is a two story structure with the first floor containing approximately 15,300 gross square feet and the second floor containing approximately 4,000 gross square feet. The building has its main entrance/exit on the west side of the building facing Hollywood road and a second entrance/exit on east side facing the parking lot. The information/circulation desk is located in the center of the space and staff offices are located along a corridor at the front of the building. At the end of the corridor is a meeting room with a direct exit to the exterior on the north side of the building. The library workroom is located on the south side of the building in most recently renovated areas. The staff lounge is also located in this area and contains the only toilet room in the building that meets the ADA regulations. The second floor is not fully utilized but contains additional library office space and storage.

## CODE ISSUES

### General

From the drawings we have in our possession and our observations we believe the construction is as follows:

Structure: CMU bearing walls, steel and wood beams.

Floors: First floor: Concrete slab on grade.

Second: Combination of steel and wood framing with concrete floors over.

Roof: Metal roof trusses with wood deck covered with roll roofing.

Walls: The walls are CMU furred, insulated and covered with gypsum wall board on the inside.

### Building Code

The building was built originally in 1954, with additions done in 1985 and 1998. We do not have records of the code searches performed for the building but we have several observations regarding the current code requirements. Under the current IBC 2003 code the use group is A.3 and the construction classification is III B. The III B classification requires 2 hour exterior bearing walls and allows wood components to be in the floor and roof systems. The building is not fully sprinkled so the allowable area per floor calculated using only the perimeter access is 16,625 gross square feet per floor and the maximum number of stories permitted is two in accordance with Table 503. Since the existing building contains approximately 15,300 square feet on the first floor and 4000 square feet on the second floor, the building complies with the height and area regulations of the current code. We believe that there are issues with the exiting from the second floor of the building. The 2003 IBC permits a stair from a second floor to exit through a lobby on the first floor, but in order to do it, the lobby needs to be sprinkled and separated from all other areas of the building. It does not appear that the current configuration meets the current code requirements. With the code requirements for this building the provisions of the Maryland Rehabilitation Code will provide some relief from the

requirements of the IBC 2003 Code, but we wanted to use the IBC 2003 to establish a base line interpretation for reference.

### **Life Safety Code**

An extensive review of the Life Safety Code is beyond the scope of this study but a brief review of the current NFPA 101 2003 code indicates that the same exiting issues mentioned above are issues with the Life Safety Code

### **ADA Code**

There are numerous issues with ADA compliance in the building. There is a parking lot to the east of the building with two handicapped spaces adjacent to the building. According to our field observations the slopes of the spaces and the access to the building are in compliance with the slope requirements. Within the building there appear to be problems with the doors. The hardware on most of the doors except for the 1998 renovation do not meet the ADA code. In addition each of the existing doors should be checked for correct width for ADA access. Currently there are issues with all the toilet rooms except for the staff toilet in the 1998 renovation. The other toilet rooms are not configured to provide the required access according to ADA. Some of the toilet rooms do not have the space required by the ADA code and in others the toilets are not located properly. ADA regulations require elevator access to the second floor in a public governmental building. In our opinion continued occupancy of this building should include the construction of an elevator.

## **SITE ISSUES**

### **Parking**

Using the site plan information provided and analyzing the site photographs it appears that there are approximately 35 to 40 spaces to the east of the building and 15 to 16 spaces to the south of the building. These spaces appear to meet the zoning code requirements but depending upon the usage may not be adequate. The parking surfaces are in fair condition with some low spots which appear to pond water.

### **Drainage**

The site is relatively flat with the east side of the site slightly higher than the west side. Water appears to surface drain around the building toward Hollywood Road and is adequate except for the area to the north of the building which ponds water. It would appear that this area should be regraded to direct the water toward Hollywood Road.

### **Landscaping**

For the most part, landscaping is kept away from the building walls. This condition should be maintained since plantings too close to the building cause moisture retention in the walls and leads to deterioration.

## **BUILDING ISSUES**

### **Structure**

The overall structure appears to be in reasonably sound condition. We did not notice any visual indications of major structural problems

## **Roof**

The roof is a combination of a rolled roofing over the trusses that spanned the old armory and flat roofed areas. We were not able to inspect the roof areas but we understand that the flat roofed areas have been recently reroofed. On the inside of the building is evidence of water leakage, cracking in the masonry walls, and water stains. It appears that this condition existing for a period of time and we feel it would be wise to inspect the areas for mold growth.

## **Walls**

Interior: The interior CMU, glazed CMU, and gypsum board walls on the first floor appear to be in good condition. The CMU walls on the second floor are generally in reasonably good condition but have cracks and water stains in some areas as we noted above.

Exterior: The exterior walls are brick veneer which appears to be in good condition. We noticed some mortar joints that needed repointing. The building should be thoroughly inspected to determine the extent of repointing that is necessary. Of more concern is the condition of the precast concrete base, copings, sills and veneer facings at the entrances. Much of the precast has visible cracks and spalls which indicate significant deterioration. Attempts have been made to point and repair the cracks but the deterioration appears to continue in spite of the remedial actions.

## **Building Openings**

### **Exterior:**

The doors appear to be in acceptable condition but the windows are in need of extensive work. Even though an exterior glazing panel has been placed over many of the existing windows, the original windows are badly deteriorated. Paint is peeling from the windows and the putty holding in the single pane glass is severely cracked. We believe these windows should be replaced with a new energy efficient glazing system. Care should be used when working with the old windows because of lead based paints used when the building was originally built.

### **Interior:**

The interior openings appear to be in acceptable condition.

## **Finishes**

### **Ceilings:**

The ceilings in the building are varied. There are areas of acoustical ceiling tile, gypsum wall board and textured plaster. In the main library space there are a number of rectangular bulkheads which extend below the gypsum wall board ceiling approximately two feet. Inside the bulkheads the ceilings are acoustical ceiling tile. While some of the areas are in good condition, most of the ceilings are only in fair condition.

### **Walls:**

A variety of wall conditions exist inside the building, Included are exposed CMU, glazed CMU, and gypsum wall board. While some of the areas are in good condition many wall areas are only in fair condition. As an example the exposed CMU walls inside the library are the CMU walls that were exposed inside the old armory. These walls were appropriate for the armory but in our opinion while they are in acceptable physical condition they do not have the appearance or presence for a library space for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Floors:**

The floors are carpeted in most of the public areas and the offices. The toilet rooms have ceramic tile. The main lobby is covered with quarry tile and an area in front of the information/ circulation desk is wood. On the second floor several rooms are covered in what appears to be asbestos containing tile. Generally the floor finishes are in fair condition except for the recently renovated areas which are in good condition.

***Mechanical and Electrical Evaluation***

- General

The building was built in 1954 and was completely renovated for the library use in 1985. A portion of the building was renovated in 1998. HVAC, electrical and plumbing equipment dates to the various renovations. Part of the main electric service is original (1954).

- Heating System

Heating is furnished via heating water. A fuel oil fired forced draft boiler was installed in the 1998 renovation and is in excellent condition. Heating water is circulated by two sets of zone circulating pumps to air handling units, unit heaters and under window convectors. Some of the piping system is original but is not visible since it is installed in a pipe tunnel.

- Cooling System

Building cooling is provided by split system DX equipment. There is one unit serving the main library area. The 1998 renovated area of the library and support areas are served by another split system as are some of the upper level office and support spaces. The lower level front offices and magazine areas are served by packaged through wall units where ventilation is via operable windows. The attached table summarizes the equipment capacities. No humidistats are installed although dehumidification sequences are available with the current equipment.

The cooling systems for this facility are marginally sized. This is based only on a square foot basis at this time; cooling calculations were not performed as part of this effort. The facility is not provided with sufficient mechanical ventilation to all areas.

- Humidification System

No humidification systems exist.

- Air Distribution Systems

Air distribution systems include constant air volume without zone terminal units. The systems do not meet current energy Code since economizers are not present. Future upgrades should include converting these systems to systems with dehumidification controls to comply with current ASHRAE and International Energy codes.

The areas beyond the 1998 renovation air conditioning equipment has reached its expected service life.

Exhaust systems exist for the toilet rooms, which include in line centrifugal exhaust fans. There is no mechanical ventilation in the boiler room.

Ductwork includes galvanized steel and preinsulated flexible ducts.

- Ventilation

The split system HVAC equipment is capable of 20% outdoor air which meets code. The areas served by PTAC equipment are ventilated naturally by operable windows which meets code but is not good for books because of lack of humidity control.

- Controls

Each HVAC system has a stand-alone electric control system furnished with the equipment. A time clock or central energy management system should be installed.

- Water and Waste Systems

A separate 2" main serves the domestic water system. A 4" sprinkler main exists to serve a single second floor meeting room. (This was originally designed as an Archive Storage Room). The sprinkler and domestic water mains do not include any backflow protection. The water piping includes galvanized, copper (domestic) and ductile iron/ black steel (sprinkler). Domestic water piping is generally insulated with fiberglass pipe wrap with all service jacket. The insulation was not in good condition in many places. The galvanized piping does not meet current code.

A single 4" sanitary sewer serves the building.

Multiple electric storage type water heaters serve the facility. The systems not include expansion tanks (this would be required under current Code).

General use toilet rooms do not include ADA and standard fixtures. Flush valves are manual type. The lavatories include non-metered single lever faucets. Fixtures are also not water conserving type. Water coolers are non-ADA.

The incoming water mains and most other plumbing systems are original. They are in fair to poor condition.

- Sprinkler System

The facility is partially protected by an automatic wet pipe sprinkler system. The system was recently installed and serves only the upper floor meeting room. There is no fire pump in the facility.

- Electrical Distribution

The electric service includes an 800 AMP, 208 Volt, 3-phase service via exterior pole mounted transformers and interior meter and C/T cabinet. This service was installed under the 1998 renovation and back feeds the original building services. The service feeds two main distribution panels and is distributed to various panel boards. The distribution equipment is manufactured by Square D and is the age of its associated renovation. Westinghouse manufactured the 1954 gear. The panels were generally full with few spaces available for additional circuits.

- Interior Lighting

Fluorescent lighting is provided in most areas. In 1985 areas are lit by non-energy efficient T-12 lamps and ballasts. The 1998 renovation includes T-5 Energy efficient lamps and ballasts. Emergency egress lighting is provided throughout via wall mounted battery packs and battery inverter ballasts in ceiling troffers. Lighting appeared to be well distributed and adequate.

- Exterior Lighting

Parking lot lighting appears to date to 1985 and includes decorative pole mounted fixtures in front and shoe box fixtures in the rear lot with metal halide lamps. The building also includes wall mounted metal halide fixtures and decorative sconces and mercury vapor down lights in the soffits. No Code required lights were evident at egress doors.

- Fire Alarm System

The 1985 system is still in place and is not up to present code requirements in the non-renovated areas. The system was modified and extended to serve the 1998 renovations. The lobby includes an LED fire alarm annunciator panel. A fire alarm control panel and dialer are installed in a utility room.

- Security System

No security system exists.

- Telephone and Data System

A complete phone system is installed which includes all copper wiring.

- Emergency Power

There is no emergency generator. Emergency power for life safety systems is provided by batteries.



## Current Code and Deficiency Issues

- The existing HVAC systems serving the facility do not comply with energy Code. There is no Code requirement to retroactively replace or upgrade these systems. However, obtaining quotes for Code compliant upgrades may be in the County's best interest in order to reduce energy bills as well as to increase comfort.
- ADA upgrades are needed for all systems.
- Mechanical ventilation does not meet current code.
- Some water piping is galvanized.
- The facility does not include a sprinkler system (a limited area system serves the upper level meeting room which was designed as an archive room).
- The electric systems do not have capacity for expansion lighting in the non-renovated.

## V. PLAN OF SERVICE

The Library's mission states: "St. Mary's County Library...leading the way...expanding its communities' possibilities, one person at a time."

The Library's vision for St. Mary's County is a "community of readers and learners."

The Library's core values are to provide cost effective, equitable access for ALL county residents; to design services in accord with customer's needs and lifestyles including convenience, appropriate technology and current materials; and to ensure that customers find the materials and information they want.

To support its mission and core values and to achieve its vision, the Library has identified three goals to be reached by the end of FY 2008, or within the next one and a half fiscal years.

- I. St. Mary's County Library is a source for services and resources which meet the educational, professional, and personal needs of our diverse community.*
- II. St. Mary's County Library is a valued and responsible partner.*
- III. St. Mary's County is a rewarding place to work and is staffed by skilled professionals.*

In order to determine future service delivery and the facilities needs for the St. Mary's County Library, the consultant has developed a 10-year Plan of Service serving as the foundation for our recommendations. The Plan is intended to support the Library's current as well as and future mission, vision and goals, and defines what functions the Library should fulfill and what services should be provided to customers for at least the next five years, and to be reviewed for relevancy in the next five. It incorporates the direction and the signature elements of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Library as described in Part I of this report.

The Plan is based upon the community's expression of library needs and expectations as captured from focus groups and stakeholder interviews, and from our review of usage trends, the projected population growth of the county, the demographic profile of the community, and the county's comprehensive plan. While library buildings are important as "place," it is the relevancy of services that are provided, the activities that occur and the furnishings, amenities and ambiance that make the library building a "destination" for county residents.

The Focus Groups facilitated by the consultants assisted in identifying library service needs and expectations of St. Mary's County residents. While we gleaned information from approximately 72 residents of varying age, ethnic background, and areas of residence in the county, we are also able to easily identify common issues, themes and trends related to library services on which to base our recommendations. Moreover,

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St. Mary's County Library Comprehensive and Integrated System Analysis  
Prepared by PROVIDENCE Associates LLC  
March 20, 2007

what we heard from the St. Mary's library users is strikingly similar to the issues, themes and trends we here from library customers in our work throughout the nation.

To reiterate, the five most important library functions as ranked by Focus Group participants, Library staff and Board members were:

**#1 Current Topics and Titles:** The Library provides Current Topics and Titles addressing community's interests in recreational reading.

**#2 Formal Education Support:** The Library offers collections and resources that assist students (grades pre-K through 12) and home schoolers in attaining their educational goals.

**#3 General Information:** The Library meets community's need for information and answers to questions covering a broad array of topics

**#4 Lifelong Learning:** The Library provides information and resources that support self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

**#5 Community Commons:** The Library provides spaces and an environment that is a destination for people in their community to meet and interact with one another.

Our recommendations should serve as guideposts for the Library to seriously consider in re-defining or reordering its services, staffing and facilities to better match the greater community's interests and expectations regarding public library service over the next ten years. The recommendations are designed to position the library to be an essential and irreplaceable publicly supported service. It also means that the Library, its Administration, Board and staffs must consider changing if it wants to be a viable and relevant 21<sup>st</sup> century public library.

We learned that all county residents consider the Library's staff to be its number one asset. Everyone feels welcomed by the current staff. Staff is described as excellent! Staff is friendly, helpful and focused on the customer. Staff is especially sensitive and respectful in their interaction with children. Community members also mentioned that it was important that the staffs' skills be continuously upgraded and retooled to keep up with new technologies and the rapidly developing, more effective and efficient methods of delivering services to the county's growing and increasingly diverse community.

In the area of technology, library users are pleased with the "Wi-Fi" (wireless) telecommunications access available in every St. Mary's County library, with access to online information databases, public use computers and the ability to access the Library from home. They appreciate the fact that they can get materials from anywhere in the state and nation through MARINA, the online Interlibrary Loan service provided by the State's Library Resource Center.

County residents also appreciate the fact that students of all ages have access and are able to use the Library's computers to support their learning. Library users value and take advantage of the ability to download books to their home computers and PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants). The collection of new books and research materials is positively spoken of by residents as are the reference/research support provided by staff, and the story times for young children.

In terms of improvements, special mention is made of having a separate and dedicated children's area and children's programming room in every branch library. Every library should have a computer lab. Every library should offer multiple community meeting rooms, group study rooms and quiet study rooms. Most of these amenities are available at the Lexington Park Branch Library. Participants overwhelmingly stated their desire to see these same equity of functions and spaces replicated at each of the Library's other two facilities.

While the Library does provide many services that resonate with their customers, e.g. the Children's Outreach Van, the list of what customers need and want exceeds what is currently offered. The Library's current goals are, for the most part, in keeping with the needs and expectations of the community it serves.

For each of its current and future goals, the Library must develop measurable objectives and strategies for each of these goals over at least the next five years to reveal how they will implement what is of greatest importance to library users. This next step is necessary to engage public support for the funding resources needed to make 21<sup>st</sup> library service a reality in St. Mary's County over the next ten years.

For the St. Mary's County Library to achieve its goals and respond to needs expressed by the community, we recommend that the plan of service be based on the service functions that will constitute relevant quality library services for the next 10 years. The recommended Plan of Service is organized according to each of the Library's current stated goals. For each goal we first list, in a bullet format, issues or recommendations that arose as themes and trends from the focus groups. Following that bulleted list, in every instance, are the consultant's recommendations to be addressed by the Library over the next five to 10 years.

***GOAL 1. St. Mary's County Library is a source for services and resources which meet the educational, professional, and personal development needs of our diverse community.***

Many residents of St. Mary's County view the Library as the "hub" of the community, but not as a "destination" place. To solidify the Library's being viewed as a primary source for services and resources, we relate comments (bullets) taken from the focus group discussions. We next provide the consultant recommendations (alphabetical), for consideration by the Library, as they relate to those comments by functional category, but in no specific order.

## **COLLECTIONS**

- Increase the availability of popular media e.g. DVDs, music CDs, computer games
- Increase the availability of fiction and non-fiction titles on audio CDs
- Increase feature film and documentary film titles on DVDs (i.e. PBS, A&E and others)
- Increase the availability of popular print copies of classic children's titles
- Increase the availability of Christian fiction titles
- Provide books and resources in each library whose subject matter supports the learning needs of children and youth that are home-
- Downsize reference and non-fiction collections by weeding those resources that are accessed online via search engines and licensed electronic databases subscribed to by the Library or made available through the State Library Resource Center.

### **Consultant Recommendations:**

- a) SMCL should use all available resources to review its circulation data, selection policies, and budget allocations to accommodate adding more media titles and more copies of these titles to its collections in all locations. Media formats represent the largest growth in circulation for public libraries nationwide. St. Mary's County library users indicated that they want a wider variety and increased availability of media formats.*
- b) SMCL should sample circulation records of fiction titles by popular genre for all ages (Christian, classics, etc.); monitor requests for new titles not owned; and examine ILL requests to identify areas of the fiction collection needing more representative titles or more copies of a title.*
- c) SMCL staff should continue to review and adjust the Library's non-fiction print holdings to determine the most appropriate size of that collection given that many persons in the community indicated they prefer and choose to meet their information needs by accessing the Internet (e.g. Google and Yahoo) rather than visiting or calling the library for that information.*
- d) SMCL staff should continue to regularly review and adjust its reference print holdings based on the same rationale stated in the previous item, and the fact that electronic information resources are replacing print versions. The electronic versions are more up to date and easier to search and find information.*
- e) SMCL staff should continue to review its non-fiction print holdings and reduce them based on the community's preference for meeting their information needs by accessing the Internet (e.g. Google and Yahoo).*

- f) *SMCL staff should continue to regularly review its reference print holdings and continue to reduce them based on the same rationale stated in the previous item.*
- g) *SMCL staff should continue to review its Periodical Back File and maintain back files of no more than the current year plus one year for all publications that are available online in full text.*
- h) *SMCL should continue its regular and frequent schedule for weeding out-of-date print materials on health, the pure sciences, and technology as, in the rapidly changing world in which we live, the most up to date information will be found online.*
- i) *SMCL should continue to expand its offerings of downloadable books, movies, music and provide access to podcasts and other downloadable formats that are compatible with an increasing variety of personal portable devices e.g. PDAs, MP3 players, smart phones, home computers, etc. (This also falls into the next Technology category)*

## **TECHNOLOGY**

- Increase the number of public access computers in every location
- Provide computer labs for instruction in all branches for the purpose of teaching customers how to use the Internet, software applications (email, word processing, Windows, etc., basic web design, etc.) and electronic library resources for all age groups
- Increase self-directed service opportunities such as online library card registration, self-check machines in every library, payment of fines and fees online, etc.
- Offer federated searching (single search applied to all library resources simultaneously, i.e. catalog, electronic databases, Internet)
- Provide for credit card payment of Library fines and fees both in person at the Library and online.
- Enhance technologies and consistently provide upgrades that support new technologies, e.g. downloadable books and music, blogs, games, social networking, RSS (really simple syndication feeds), podcasts, teleconferencing, etc.
- Provide adaptive technologies that support use by persons with low vision and by physically challenged customers
- Redesign the Library's website so that access to the Library's electronic information and resources is intuitive, transparent and easy to locate.
- Offer video-conferencing in all meeting rooms
- Check out laptops for in-library use in all of the library's facilities.
- Track the technology of the new generation of e-book readers as a possible lending service

### *Consultant Recommendations:*

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- a) *SMCL should determine the “level of computer access” they aspire to provide either as a system or in each library based upon the “basic, better, or best” scenario identified in the Technology Report section of this report. It is important to note that the community expressed a strong desire to have computer labs in all locations and many more computers on the floor located in one area rather than spread throughout the library. The exception is the desire to have dedicated computers in both Children’s and Teen areas.*
- b) *SMCL should develop a formal Technology Plan that looks ahead three to five years and defines technology enhancements the library will accomplish in response to the community’s needs and expectations. The plan will prioritize technology goals and identify capital and operational costs needed to implement the Plan.*
- c) *SMCL should quickly move to more self-directed, less staff intensive services such as self-check for the majority of circulation, online library card registration, online payment of fines and fees, online program registration, etc. to free up staff time to the more human interactive service needs of customers.*
- d) *SMCL should strive for at least 90% circulation of library materials through self-check and provide the hardware to make this possible, and at least 60% of new card sign-ups and 70% of payment of fines and fees taking place online.*
- e) *SMCL should explore, in conjunction with SMRLA, the full functionality of the Sirsi/Dynix ILS to enhance self-service opportunities for library customers, including by not limited to library card registration, computer sign-up and print management, credit card payment of fines and fees, RFID compatibility, federated searching, etc.*
- f) *SMCL should employ a full-time web designer/web master (or contract out the work) to design and maintain an intuitive, transparent, interactive web site that serves as the “virtual” branch of the SMCL, as well as a portal linking to organizations in the community, e.g. school systems, higher education institutions, local government, community services, etc. Notable (as cited in national professional library publications) public library web sites to view as models are the Ann Arbor Public Library (MI) and the St. Joseph Public Library (IN).*

## **SERVICE TO ADULTS**

- Increase outreach to the small business community promoting the online and print resources that support their development
- Increase outreach and program offerings for adults age 55+
- Develop programming that attracts 20-30 year old adults (the millenials) who don't have children

- Offer more book discussion groups for adults, in the library and promote the online book discussion groups
- Enhance and expand volunteer recruitment of retiring baby boomers and senior citizens
- Consider adults and seniors when it comes to shelving materials, types of equipment e.g. visual aids, classes in Internet use, and communication skills
- Position the library as the citizen's link to local government information including podcasting local govt. meetings
- Provide a variety of methods to deliver books and media to the homebound
- Adopt more of an "educator role" by teaching customers in how to more effectively and efficiently use library resources and technology

*Consultant Recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should increase its use of Friends and volunteers in planning and presenting programs and in facilitating book discussion groups. There are many adults in the community who have varied talents, who have traveled internationally, or have other experiences to share that are of interest to many adults. This will reduce the amount of staff time needed to plan and present programs.*
- b) *SMCL should create a Young Professionals or Millennial division of the Friends of the Library that would plan programs and events to attract this age group to the library by offering book discussion groups, wine and cheese nights in the "stacks", cooking for one or two demonstrations, open-mike nights, etc.*
- c) *SMCL should partner with the County's Information Office for the Library to provide podcasts of County Council meetings and other important government meetings so community members who are unable to attend can have access to the actual session.*
- d) *SMCL should increase its use volunteers to assist with programming for all ages, assisting customers using self-check machines, etc.*
- e) *SMCL should partner with other education-based organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit, and identify community volunteers to be able to increase and enhance the teaching of computer literacy for adults.*
- f) *SMCL should continue to use its computer classrooms as a venue for frequent sessions of computer classes for adults at no or low cost.*
- g) *SMCL continue to foster and expand partnerships with the local business community in having them sponsor and/or underwrite library program offerings that appeal to children, families and adults.*

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

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- Continue to offer, promote and increase the visibility of both parenting programs and parenting resources for parents and caregivers.
- Ensure quality pre-school story hours by limiting the number of attendees for those sessions for young children and their parents
- Continue the Library's focus on its Birth to Five initiative throughout the county and expand its capacity, especially in the Lexington Park service area based on its demographics.

*Consultant's Recommendations*

- SMCL should offer more toddler story hour sessions per week for ages 1 to 2 ½ with smaller numbers of children (no more than a total of 20-25 children accompanied by a parent or caregiver) attending so that each session is maximizes the child's developmental learning through books and activities and caregiver-child interaction rather than numbers served at any one time.*
- SMCL should continue to expand its partnerships with local social service and health agencies to introduce the library and its parenting and early childhood resources to young mothers helping them to be effective first teachers in preparing their children for learning.*
- SMCL should Invite health care providers, parenting counselors and other to present programs that focus on improving parenting skills.*
- SMCL should ensure that parenting corners in the children's area of each library are well identified and prominent in each library.*

**TEENS**

- Provide larger and better outfitted teen spaces in every SMCL building
- Create "advisory" groups of teens who are engaged in the library and will assist staff in designing teen spaces, activities and programs
- Ensure that design and furnishings of all teen spaces are colorful, comfortable, engaging and foster conversation
- Provide dedicated computers for use by teens only in all branch libraries
- Offer computer games for teens
- Allow teens to listen to music in teen areas that area enclosed and conditioned for sound
- Increase teen programming (e.g. book clubs, creative writing, poetry open-mike events, etc.) and involve teens in the planning

*Consultant recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should hire, identify from among existing staff, or seek volunteers from the community individuals who relate well to teens and would like to focus on working with teens in the library.*
- b) *SMCL should create teen advisory councils at the Lexington Park, Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown and use these councils to actively assist in the planning and redesign of teens spaces (colors, furnishings and technology) and the planning of teen programs/activities in the library.*
- c) *SMCL should provide games on those computers designated for teen use in the library.*

## **FACILITIES**

- Conveniently locate facilities
- Provide plenty of parking with handicapped parking adjacent to the building
- Replicate the atmosphere of bookstores (Barnes & Noble, Borders)
- Increase merchandising of library books and media
- Make all library facilities welcoming and inviting
- Adapt shelving to facilitate older adults' access to books
- Provide comfortable seating that is easy to get in and out of
- Improve indoor and outdoor lighting for all facilities
- Provide public meeting spaces that accommodate larger and smaller groups
- Provide quiet study areas and group study rooms
- Maintain all facilities
- Offer space to display the work of local artists and artisans
- Provide drive up service windows
- Provide a café or coffee bar in every library
- Offer modern facilities that are well maintained
- Expand hours and make them uniform in all locations

### *Consultant Recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should expand library hours, including Sundays, and make them uniform for all library branches.*
- b) *SMCL should seriously consider planning for the implementation of the facilities needs recommendations as identified in Section VI of the report document to ensure optimum access to library services throughout the County.*
- c) *SMCL should require that any facility that is renovated, expanded or newly constructed must be programmed and furnished to reflect those elements and qualities (welcoming, comfortable, interactive, self-service, etc.) that make the Library a "destination" in the community.*

- d) *SCML should ensure that all renovated, expanded and new space will be, first and foremost, flexible. This is the most significant requirement for 21<sup>st</sup> century libraries in that it allows for future changes in function and configuration in the most cost efficient and least disruptive manner.*
- e) *SCML should engage in a process that continues to review and define the parameters and the size of its service areas identified in this study and consider the recommendations in this report that will support the most practical and cost-effective method of delivering services in each of the service areas based on the facilities recommendations in the report.*
- f) *SMCL should support the objectives defined in the County's 2002 comprehensive plan: Quality of Life in St. Mary's County - A Strategy for the 21st Century. This plan is likely to be reviewed and revised over the next few years and SMCL should be involved in that process.*

## **MARKETING AND OUTREACH**

The *Field of Dreams* adage of “if you build it, they will come” holds true, for a period of time for new public library facilities. However, for existing facilities in a community that is growing and is dependent upon a motor vehicle to access services as is true for SMCL, the library must aggressively promote services that are available from branches and from the virtual realm of cyberspace.

In our vast experience around the country, we often hear from a majority of residents, “I didn’t know the Library has that. I didn’t know the library could do that. I didn’t know the Library offers that service. I didn’t know the Library was open then.”

In this chaotic world in which everyone is vying for visibility in the community, the library must engage in self-promotion that is active not passive. It requires active outreach by library staff that informs, demonstrates, and delivers services outside of the physical library. A staff member armed with a laptop and access to the library’s website is a “walking” library reaching people where they learn, work, shop, and play.

To become a true destination, the community needs to know the who, what, when, where, why and how about the library. What is it that sets the Library apart from the bookstore, from the Internet café, from the school library, and even computers and computer access in the home? The who, what, when, where, why and how must speak to and connect with every person in a way that makes a difference. Hence, marketing needs to be a major function of SMCL.

- Develop a Marketing and Publicity Plan
- Create a logo and “brand” the library
- Respond to citizen comment cards
- Promote services and electronic resources
- Use email to communicate directly with customers

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- Create an electronic newsletter
- Increase visibility through outreach (e.g. attending PTA, Neighborhood Association, Community club, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)
- Increase the Library's participation in community events
- Increase promotion of and methods of delivery of library services to the homebound
- Market to established and new business owners in the county
- Provide delivery service to the homebound residents

*Consultant Recommendations*

- SMCL should develop a marketing and publicity plan that addresses and actualizes the ideas listed above.*
- SMCL should identify, prioritize and increase its outreach activities along with what is needed (staff, volunteers, technology, library web site, etc.) to provide those activities.*
- SMCL should continue its Children's Outreach Van services focused on serving young children, their parents and caregivers.*
- SMCL should expand its hours of service both weekdays and on Sundays after having surveyed each library service area as to prioritized service hours.*
- SMCL should provide a "Books/Media by Mail" service to homebound customers and remote customers.*
- SMCL should investigate a partnership with Meals on Wheels, and other home delivery services in the county, to deliver library books and media to their clientele.*

**GOAL II. St. Mary's County Library is a valued and responsible partner.**

Residents of St. Mary's County have identified via the focus group discussions several areas in which they would like the Library to partner with other organizations, institutions and government agencies in St. Mary's County. Those community comments are reflected in the bulleted lists below. Therefore, to strengthen existing and expand partnerships the consultant recommendations (alphabetized), in no specific order, should be considered by the Library.

**COLLECTIONS**

- Offer resources in all formats that supplement and support ESL programs and classes

- Expand, within reason and practicality, resources that support the K-12 curriculum
- Strengthen and expand Home Schooling curricula content in all formats
- Strengthen and enhance Small Business development and sustainability resources
- Support community-wide Distance Learning or E-learning

*Consultant Recommendations:*

- SMCL should partner with local agencies addressing the needs of “new Americans” in St. Mary’s County to bring the Library to their clients, and their clients to the Library.*
- SMCL should provide collections and resources that support learning of English (spoken and written) and provide materials in the native languages of the county’s New Americans.*
- SMCL should network and partner with the county school system, the local home-school associations, parochial and private schools, and higher education institutions to promote resource sharing, avoid unnecessary duplication of resources, and to promote those public library resources and technologies which support formal education throughout the county.*
- SMCL should network and partner with the County’s economic development office, the Chamber of Commerce, business associations, and local Small Business Development Centers to make those small business owners and local entrepreneurs aware of library resources, both print and electronic, that provide demographic, marketing and other information that contributes to their success.*

**TECHNOLOGY**

- Link to the County’s Web Site
- Link to the Chamber of Commerce’s Web Site
- Link to County school system Web Site
- Link to the most up-to-date local, state and regional census data

*Consultant Recommendations:*

- SMCL should enhance its web site by providing highly visible links to and from as many county-based resources as possible that support the information and life long learning needs of all residents.*
- SMCL should provide access to commercially available online book discussion services and reader recommendation web sites that are accessible to library users via the Library’s web site and Internet.*

- c) *SMCL should partner with local and state colleges and universities to provide links to distance educations and e-learning opportunities for local residents.*
- d) *SCML should offer links to the web sites of as many community organizations as possible and have the Library's web site be a reciprocal link on each of those agency's web sites.*
- e) *SCML should create web links on social networking sites such as MySpace.com, the local Craig's List, Flickr, etc.*

### **SERVICE TO ADULTS**

- Expand the computer and information literacy training for adults
- Expand and grow relationships with business community who will underwrite library programming

#### *Consultant Recommendation:*

- a) *SMCL should partner with other education-based organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit, and identify community volunteers to be able to increase and enhance the teaching of computer literacy for adults.*
- b) *SMCL should offer its computer classrooms to the above organizations as a venue for frequent sessions of computer classes for adults at no or low cost.*
- c) *SMCL should seek partnerships with the local business community in having them sponsor and/or underwrite library program offerings that appeal to children, families and adults.*

### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

- Provide Homework Centers in every library
- Work with K-12 and higher education entities to compliment not duplicate access to electronic resources.

#### *Consultant Recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should partner with the local school system, private schools and local corporations to under-write, furnish, equip and promote dedicated "Homework Center" areas that offer both electronic (via dedicated PCs and a targeted subset of the Library's web site) and print content supporting curricula and "live online homework help" services for children in grades 4 through at least grade 9. This center should be located adjacent to Children's department in all branch libraries.*
- b) *SMCL should continue its focus on collections, activities and dedicated library spaces within its children's areas for children ages birth to 5 and their parents*

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**TEENS**

- Attract Teens to the Library

*Consultant Recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should seek partnerships with local radio stations, game stores, comic book outlets, etc. frequented by teens to provide programs, events, workshops, contests, and give-aways at the library.*
- b) *SMCL should engage the faculty and staff at local colleges and universities in offering workshops for teens in creative writing, web design, gaming, creating media presentations, etc.*
- c) *SMCL should consider coordinating use of teen volunteers, through the schools, to assist with children's activities, teaching technology to adults, organizing teen advisory councils, etc. as a means for teens to meet their state required "community service hours."*

**FACILITIES**

- Provide consistent and helpful interior and exterior signage for all buildings
- Create naming opportunities as a means to raise funds to create and equip library spaces
- Offer cafes in each facility

*Consultant Recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should seek partnerships with local sign companies to provide uniform flexible interior and exterior signage, at reduced rates if appropriate, for all libraries.*
- b) *SMCL should partner with local museums and other cultural organizations to provide displays of documents, artifacts, costumes, etc. in the libraries*
- c) *SMCL should consider naming opportunities for spaces and stacks as a means of fundraising when libraries are renovated or constructed, and to support enhancement of furnishings, fixtures, collections and technology.*
- d) *SMCL should replicate its current arrangement of leasing "café" space to local vendors in each of its expanded or newly constructed branch libraries.*

**MARKETING AND OUTREACH**

- Develop the Library brand and a recognizable logo
- Write a monthly Library column in the local newspaper and online
- Develop an electronic library newsletter to distribute to targeted groups e.g. Chamber of Commerce, hospitals, local government employees, senior centers as well as to be included on the Library's web site
- Function as the "de facto" Community Information Clearinghouse

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- Become the community's resource for health information

*Consultant Recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should seek a pro-bono or reduced fee arrangement with a local public relations firm to assist in the development of a "library brand" and logo that conveys the essence of the library in the lives of the community and is easily recognized by the community.*
- b) *SCML should seek and establish partnerships with local media (radio, newspaper, cable TV, community websites) add Library links to local online information sites e.g. Craig's List, Judy's Page, etc. and increase the Library's visibility through print, PSAs (public service announcements), televised and podcast story times, book review programs, monthly newspaper columns, etc.*
- c) *SMCL should create a monthly electronic newsletter with interesting articles highlighting services, collections and a program calendar, to be emailed to customers as well as easily accessed from the library's web site.*
- d) *SMCL should seize the opportunity to be a significant health information resource by partnering with hospitals and local medical organizations to offer health information programs in the library and reciprocal links to the health information provided by those organizations and by the library.*

**GOAL III. St. Mary's County Library is a rewarding place to work and is staffed by skilled professionals.**

Residents of St. Mary's County commented most favorably about the friendliness and helpfulness of library staff. The Library must make every effort to maintain that customer service emphasis for all staff and ensure staffs' knowledge of information technology and computers to be able to help library users be successful in their search for information. All of the Goal III recommendations (alphabetized) are in response to the numerous community focus group comments (bulleted) related to staffing and to the national trend of library staffs needing to be transition, through training, to be able to assist customers in their use of and success with library resources. The Goal III recommendations are combined in one list, rather than broken into the categories in the sections above.

- Reference and research questions (and answers) require that staff approach reference differently
- Continue to empower staff to make things work in the customer's favor
- Continue to work as a system to improve the all library operations and services
- All staff need to become proficient with in those technologies and electronic database offerings to better assist customers in using electronic resources and helping them adapt to self-service technologies such as self-check, online

payment of fines, online library card registration, etc., all of which enhance the customer experience with the library.

- Non-fiction, Reference collections and Periodical Back Files can be decreased in number as much of the information is available and is more current online.
- All staff should be able to assist customers with all aspects of downloadable content e.g. audio books, music, podcasts, RSS feeds, etc.
- Promote reference/research assistance and support
- Help adults be successful in use of self-directed services
- Increase self service opportunities for customers e.g. self-checkout
- Maintain child friendly service by continuing to have staff respect and treat children as individuals
- Offer more teen programming (e.g. book clubs, poetry readings and open mike opportunities)
- Ensure as many staff as possible are trained and proficient in new technologies to be able to assist and teach customers
- Position trained staff on the floor, stationed to assist users of computers
- Provide more self checkouts—people seem to like them in grocery stores, Home Depots, airports, ATMs, etc.
- Become more proficient with technology
- Improve Web page/site – develop the site as a portal for both community and business information
- Increase number of volunteers and make better use of them
- Continuously review staffing to ensure that SMCL has the right staff managing, coordinating and delivering the services desired and expected by county residents.
- Offer outreach to established and new business owners in the County
- Increase outreach to seniors and adults through services and programs

It is important to emphasize in this section that a growing community is going to require additional staff to support services in the recommended larger facilities if the Library is to meet the service needs and expectations of the vast majority of county residents. The Space Recommendation (Section VI) of this report indicates the increases in staffing that will be required (Space Requirements Spreadsheets) to deliver the services we have identified over the next twenty years. With total use of self-check equipment and future adaptation of RFID and materials handling options, staffs that currently provide circulation services can be re-trained and reassigned to focus on other customer service areas, thus maximizing the use of existing staff.

Moreover, our recommendations to train “all” (meaning as many as possible who have the abilities) staff in methods of serving the public and to increase the use of volunteers the Library may not need to employ paid staff at the levels we suggest. We made a conscious decision to include number of staff required assuming no addition of self-check, expanded training of staff, or increased use of volunteers as we do know and cannot know if and when these recommendations will be implemented by the Library. While our staffing recommendations are based on size of building and services provided,

they have an impact on the Library's annual operating costs and budget, not on our capital improvement costs.

Currently, our recommended increases in staffing required by 2016, assuming implementations of our recommendations, are as follows.

	2006(current)	2016
Administration	6.00 FTE	<b>8.00 FTE</b>
Charlotte Hall	9.63 FTE	<b>12.59 FTE</b>
Leonardtwn	13.26 FTE	<b>16.89 FTE</b>
Lexington Park (existing)	14.45 FTE	<b>12.91 FTE</b>
Branch Library #4	NA	<b>17.23 FTE</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>43.44 FTE</b>	<b>67.62 FTE</b>

*Consultant Recommendations:*

- a) *SMCL should maintain its current emphasis on customer service for all age groups and ensure that all new hires are trained in and accountable for using preferred customer service techniques.*
- b) *SMCL should maintain its philosophy of training all staff to be service providers for a variety of areas and age groups, so that all staff are able to use available information technologies in assisting customers with finding what they want or need.*
- c) *SMCL should train as many staff as possible in the use of customer centric technologies, in effective online searching, and in downloading electronic content to flash drives, MP3 players, and PDAs. "Reference, as we have known it, is dead"<sup>1</sup>*
- d) *SMCL should provide regular training to keep staff current in latest upgrades and modules of the Sirsi/Dynix system for maximum efficiency, productivity and analysis of collection usage data.*
- e) *SMCL should assign staff to be on the floor rather than stationed at a desk to provide point of service assistance to customers in the stacks and at computer stations.*
- f) *SMCL staff should continue to regularly use and introduce electronic resources when assisting customers in locating information.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Planning and Design of Public Libraries, Harvard University School of Design, Sacramento, CA, November 6 - 9, 2006. Quote from Joan Frye Williams, Library Consultant and Futurist.

- g) *SMCL should maximize its use its circulation staff and enrich and add variety to current job tasks, by preparing and training them to assist customers out on the floor, to participate in community outreach activities, and to engage in program planning and delivery. The opportunity is a direct result of the transition to self-checkout and increased self-directed services.*
- h) *SMCL should hire a professional coordinator of volunteers who will coordinate this service, revise the Library's Volunteer Plan ensuring that specific job tasks, that assist with and expand public service, are identified and defined, along with the talents, skills and experiences required to perform them. The use of quality volunteers frees up paid staff to focus on more complex services and on outreach.*
- i) *SMCL should review its organizational structure to ensure that Marketing/PR, Virtual Library services, and Volunteers are a management focus along with the traditional collection development, children's and teen, and programming services.*

## VI – LIBRARY SPACES AND LOCATIONS

### Introduction

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, libraries remain facility centric. As described in the introduction to this report, public libraries are “third places” in the lives of residents of all communities. It is the place for:

- meeting friends and neighbors
- attending community meeting,
- engaging in quiet study and group study
- having cup of coffee and reading a newspaper or magazine
- taking young children to the library to read to them and borrow books
- improving parents’ roles as the first teachers of their children
- attending informative and entertaining programs aimed at a variety of age groups
- using high speed access to the Internet and specially selected online resources
- hands-on learning to effectively search electronic resources, create content and expand perspectives
- accessing computers for preparing homework assignments, job resumes, email, etc.
- linking to distance learning courses
- volunteering services and talents of the community
- doing homework and getting homework help
- researching family history, local history
- finding community information related to services and activities
- teens to gather, chat, play computer games, engage in creative writing, listen to music, and volunteer
- finding good books to read or listen to in your vehicle.

At the present time there are three branch libraries that comprise the St. Mary’s County Library system. The three libraries – Charlotte Hall, Leonardtown, and Lexington Park – have a combined square footage of 51,855. The total 2006 service area population for the three libraries is estimated at 97,000. This produces a space per capita figure of 0.54 SF. It is this consultant’s experience over the last 7 to 10 years that guidelines for sizing new public library facilities recommend at least 1 square feet of space per capita. In fact there are many libraries under construction and many libraries in the United States that purposely have at least 1.0 square feet per capita of space. The Los Angeles Public Library was the first library to adopt a 1 SF per capita space guideline in order to accommodate the full array of traditional and technology based library services. Hence, based on a guideline of 1 SF per capita (ascribed to by this consultant), St. Mary’s County has even less capacity than it should if it were to accept the 1 SF per capita guidelines for sizing libraries. For this project, given the ten year time frame and the capital costs required to achieve space needs based on service functions, the consultants are recommending 0.87 SF per capita by 2025 for St. Mary’s County. We believe that this significant increase in space will serve residents of St. Mary’s County through 2025.

The total collection holdings of the Library system (as of June 2006) numbered 211,969, equal to 2.19 items per capita. The generally accepted standard is now at least 2.0 items per capita and not more than 3 items per capita for non-research libraries.

## OVERVIEW OF SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

Although this study is a 10-year plan, the consultants have projected needs for 20 years because it may take more than 10 years to accomplish all that needs to be accomplished. Moreover, any public capital investment for library buildings should, at minimum, have a life cycle of at least 25 to 30 years. Typically library buildings last for much longer. That said the 20-year; projected 2025 population for St. Mary's County is 141,500.

PROVIDENCE Associates recommends four full-service libraries for St. Mary's County by the year 2017. These recommendations, as implemented, will meet the County's library service needs through the year 2025. The recommendations are in no particular order.

- 1) Charlotte Hall – retain the existing building, and begin to initiate discussions with the BOCC, DLDS and SMRLA for the Charlotte Hall Library to utilize all of the 24,400 SF of facility space to provide for the public library services and amenities needed and expected by the community.
- 2) Leonardtown – construct an all-new building totaling approximately 44,465 SF (includes 5,293 SF of space for Library Administration offices).
- 3) Lexington Park – retain the existing building of 25,000 SF and continue to improve use of existing space for greater responsiveness to community needs and revamp the drive-up service area to truly function as intended.
- 4) Branch 4 – construct an all-new building of 30,174 SF in the California/Hollywood/Lexington Park service area to accommodate the significant growth resulting from the County's Master Plan. This library should be located on a piece of property sized to allow for another 10,000 SF of expansion, if needed, in year 2027 or beyond,

These recommendations, if implemented, will result in a total of 124,039 SF of public library space for St. Mary's County equal to 0.87 square feet per capita by 2025. The consultants believe this to be a reasonable and achievable goal. Given that it is impossible to expand the current Charlotte Hall and Lexington Park libraries on their present sites, the ability to achieve 1.0 SF per capita of library space in the County is not doable under this plan. However, the eventual expansion of Branch 4 by 10,000 SF in 2030 will provide 0.88 SF per capita. If the current Charlotte Hall Library is relocated and designed as a 35,000 – 40,000 SF building, the library space per capita will increase to 0.95 – 0.98 SF per capita.

The recommended timeline for completion of construction in the next ten years is:

By 2010 an expanded (24,400 SF) Charlotte Hall Library

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By 2010 a new Leonardtown Library of 44,654 SF  
By 2012 complete reprogramming of space at the existing 25,000 SF Lexington Park Library  
By 2016 a new 30,179 SF Branch 4 to be constructed in the California/Hollywood/Lexington Park Service Area

The total collection size, all formats exclusive of electronically accessible databases, by 2025 should total a projected 374,793, or 2.46 items per capita for the service area population.

The estimated capital costs, based upon the recommended occupancy dates for each project, totals \$37,268,897.

This project cost represents all site development, construction, furniture, equipment, fees, owner costs, and contingencies for each project. It **does not** include site acquisition. The cost per capita for the existing 2006 population would be approximately \$385; for the projected 2025 population figure the cost would drop to approximately \$263. If bonded over 20 years, the cost per capita would be in a range of \$19.00 to \$21.00 per person per year.

The detailed recommendations for each of the existing libraries and the proposed new Branch 4 Library follow below.

## **CHARLOTTE HALL LIBRARY**

Charlotte Hall is currently the *smallest* of the three existing libraries, sharing space with the Southern Maryland Regional Library operations. There is only 8,560 square feet (SF) of space or 0.34 SF per capita dedicated for public library use. This does not include the Staff Lounge that is shared with SMRLA and is located on their side of the single-level building. The oversize Lobby area, now basically unused, is not included in the above figure. The Main building lobby is approximately 1,400 SF; the Main building foyer is approximately 108 SF and the Library only Lobby is 180 SF. Therefore, even if the total lobby area were recaptured as library space, the Charlotte Hall Library will still be the smallest facility at 0.39 SF per capita.

With 53 parking spaces the Library has a surplus of 10 spaces for its current size. An additional 43 spaces have been constructed (primarily to serve the weekend crowds at the Farmer's Market).

The Branch Library portion of the building is overcrowded. Charlotte Hall is currently undersized by a total of 5,046 SF based on the functions, collections and furnishings that are provided. The attached spreadsheet details the space shortfall for the existing conditions as well as projections (based on population growth) for 2011, 2016, 2021, and 2025.

The adult book stack capacity is now at 80 percent. However, the Children's Collections, both Easy/Picture Books and Fiction/Non-fiction/Reference are either at capacity (Fiction/Non-fiction/Reference) or beyond (Easy/Picture Book) at an estimated 90 percent level. The Books-on-Tape collection is at 80 percent capacity, CDs at 70 percent, DVDs at 65 percent, and Videocassettes at 90 percent. Multi-media collections in public libraries are those experiencing the greatest growth based on public demand for this format.

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Not only is Charlotte Hall the smallest of the three libraries, it is also the least used. Moreover, based on the mapping of circulation data reported in Section I of this report, approximately 18 percent of its customers reside in Charles County (for which St. Mary's County receives no compensation). It is a proven fact in the library world that overcrowded conditions result in less circulation of library materials and less time spent in the library as it is more difficult for customers to easily identify the materials they are seeking on over-crowded shelves and remain in a facility that is less welcoming in terms of seating and amenities such as a coffee cart or café, separate children's area, quiet and group study spaces, and more technology,

The Southern Maryland Regional Library operations occupy more space, than the Charlotte Hall Library. During the consultant's site visit a brief walk through of the SMRLA space was included. It appears that there are additional areas on the SMRLA side of the building that can be shared with the Charlotte Hall Library to provide enhanced services for the Charlotte Hall community of library users, e.g. the large meeting room and the computer lab.

### **Space Recommendations for Charlotte Hall Library**

1. Begin with reprogramming the existing 8,560 SF of space, along with the oversized and underused building Lobby to initially increase the percent Charlotte Hall Library space.
2. St. Mary's County (BOCC and the Library) should begin discussions with the Maryland Division of Library Development and Services (DLDS) to identify how the St. Mary's County Charlotte Hall Library can expand into all of the space now devoted to SMRLA within the next two to three years. This is essential for the Library to provide relevant library services, collections and technology resources for service area residents.
3. If the St. Mary's County Library is able to gain the use of all of the 24,400 SF of the space that comprises the existing building, the service area population, by 2025, will experience an increase in library space per capita from the existing 0.34 to nearly double that – 0.66 SF per capita.

If expansion into all of the SMRLA space is not possible, then the Library system will likely need to consider constructing a new 35,000 SF library facility located somewhat south of the current Charlotte Hall service area if it is to best meet the current and future needs of the Charlotte Hall service area which also includes Mechanicsville, Chaptico, Helen, Morganza, Loveville, etc. We have *not* provided cost estimates for that eventuality in this report.

It is the opinion of this consultant that regional operations, such as SMRLA, which provide support services to the three southern Maryland counties, are best housed in leased space centrally located to serve each of the three systems.

### **Recommendation**

Use the entire 24,400 square feet for public library services effective no later than 2010.



Recommended Charlotte Hall Improvements:

- Increase in public library space by 15,840 square feet (ideally), or 185 percent
- Increase in total reader/computer seating by 77, or 122 percent
- Increase in computers for public use by 33, or 206 percent
- Increase in print collections by 24,732, or 51 percent
- Increase in media collections by 5,026, or 56 percent
- Projected increase in circulation by 2025 is 251,296, or 113 percent
- Provide separate space for Teen Services
- Provide separate space and program room for Children's Services
- Add a small Conference Room and Computer Training Room
- Add a Quiet Room for public use
- Add two Group Study Rooms
- Add two rooms for Research/Tutoring
- Provide space for a Supply Room and a Storage Room
- Provide space for the Friends of the Library and a Library Store
- Provide a Coffee Cart for public use
- Consider the potential for Drive-up Materials Return and Checkout.

Estimated 2008 Capital Costs (with escalation to 2010)\*

- 2008 Project Costs - \$1,904,778
- 2009 Project Costs - \$2,047,637
- 2010 Project Costs - \$2,201,210

\* See Charlotte Hall Library Estimated Capital Costs – 2008 estimate (This estimate may be increased if the Library is expanded based on the fact that a “payback” of funds to the State may be required as a result of the agreement made when the State paid for the construction of the Charlotte Hall/SMRLA building.)

There will also be, of course, long-term capital costs which the consultant team estimates (in 2006 dollars) to be in a range of \$300,000 - \$325,000. Long-term is defined by the consultants to be in a three to ten year timeframe, and will include such items as replacement of the metal roof, painting, carpet replacement in the other portion of the building, replacing the fire alarm and security systems. See the appended spreadsheet for additional information.

## LEONARDTOWN LIBRARY

This is the oldest of the three buildings and the only one of the three that was not designed as a library. It was built originally as a National Guard Armory facility. It is the only two-level building in the Library system. It is a proven fact that operating a two story library, if public service is delivered on two floors is more expensive than operating the same space on a single level.

With a total of 19,447 SF of library-use space (includes space now used by the 3,034 SF. The under-sizing does not include space now occupied by the administration of the County Library.

Three of the collections are at 100 percent capacity; reference (all ages), Books-on-Tape, and CDs. Three are below capacity – adult, children’s, and teens circulating fiction and non-fiction books.

There is a fair amount of completely unused space on the upper level. However, it is not enough to come close to meeting the overall short fall of space.

The 66 existing parking spaces are 25 fewer than should be available today for the public library use portion of the building.

### **Space Recommendations for Leonardtown Library and Library Administrative Offices**

1. The physical assessment of the building identifies numerous problems. A conservative estimate of the dollars needed to bring the building into total ADA compliance and meet present building code ranges from \$400,000 - \$500,000. This work should be done within the next six to 24 months. When completed, the building would still be over 50 years of age, and still provide less space than the projected population needs. These costs and timeframe do not include other improvements such as converting the storage space currently occupied by the voting machines into library use space, or the removal of the major restroom facility on the second floor and finishing out all of the second floor space for library use. This work would likely add another \$250,000 - \$300,000 to the total cost.
2. In addition, the consultant team has identified long-term (3 – 10 years) improvements costing (in 2006 dollars) approximately \$210,000 - \$220,000. An expansion of the building could be undertaken, but that would be, in all probability, on the ground level and would further diminish available parking while increasing probable use. And, there would remain the larger portion of the building approaching 60 years of age.
2. An all-new, 44,465 square foot, single-level facility is recommended with 149 parking spaces. A new site may be needed. If a new site is required, the site may include co-location with another county office, co-location on a large school campus, or inclusion as part of a commercial shopping center development, etc.

It has been recently brought to our attention that there is County-owned land behind the current Leonardtown Library may be sized, in conjunction with the current library property, appropriately to accommodate a new 44,465 SF building and the 149 parking spaces. If this is the case, then constructing the brand new larger library in the same location may be an option.

We understand that there may be some sense of nostalgia within Leonardtown to expand the existing facility and keep the current façade that identifies it as the former National

Guard Armory. We strongly recommend against this. The new single level library needs to be a signature building that represents externally, as well as internally, what a 21<sup>st</sup> century public library is all about. The single level façade may somewhat resemble the current architecture but should also convey a welcoming facility that is as transparent on the outside as it is on the inside. In deference to the honor of the Armory building, an attractive marker could be placed on the site.

3. If a new facility is to be built on the current expanded site, the Library will need to consider relocating library services to a temporary location while the existing facility is torn down and the new facility is constructed, a time period of 18 to 24 months. This will add some cost to the project in order to lease temporary space or place a portable trailer on the edge of the site to provide service.
4. The administration of the St. Mary's County Library currently occupies about one-third of the second level space of the Leonardtown Library. There is no elevator up to the space making it completely inaccessible by ADA standards.

The current arrangement of staff offices and the limitations for reprogramming much of this area results in the need for the Library Administration to have its own dedicated space in the new Leonardtown Library. This space will be more easily accessible to staff, other city department staff and the public and will be totally ADA compliant.

The condition of the space needs to reflect a more efficient workflow and a more professional environment that is characteristic of administrative spaces.

## **Recommendation**

Plan, design, construct, furnish, and equip a new 44,465 square foot building to include the Library's Administrative offices and operations, effective no later than 2010.

We understand that the County is recommending a Capital Improvement Project that would fund a design study that addressed the feasibility of co-locating a new Leonardtown Library and a new Senior Center. The concept of shared and mixed use service facilities is one that is becoming more prevalent among county and municipal libraries as a way to increase customer convenience and to engage in more cost effective approach to land acquisition, construction and service delivery.

Recommended Leonardtown Improvements:

- Increase public library space by 20,877 square feet, or 114 percent
- Increase in total reader/computer seating by 77, or 122 percent
- Increase computers for public use by 36, or 171 percent
- Increase print collections by 50,856, or 90 percent
- Increase media collections by 4,089, or 37 percent
- Increase in circulation by 2025 to 315,030, or 93 percent
- Provide separate space for Teen Services

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- Provide separate space and program room for Children's Services
- Increase seating capacity of Multi-Purpose Meeting Room by 45, or 60 percent
- Add a small Conference Room and Computer Training Room
- Add a Quiet Room for public use
- Add three Group Study Rooms
- Add three rooms for Research/Tutoring
- Provide 5,293 SF of space for Library Administrative Operations
  - Provide space for a Supply Room and a Storage Room
  - Provide space for a -receiving/loading dock
  - Provide space for Administrative conference room Include a Conference Room and Computer Training Room in the new Administration space
  - Include office and workspace for a second Ordering Clerk in Technical Services and a Buildings Supervisor
  - Include space for a Supply Room and a Storage Room
  - Provide space for a computer room
  - Provide space for an Administrative reception area
- Provide space for the Friends of the Library and a Library Store
- Provide a Coffee Cart for public use
- Consider potential for Drive-up Materials Return and Checkout.

Estimated 2008 Capital Costs (with escalation to 2012)\*

- 2008 Project Costs - \$15,593,441
- 2009 Project Costs - \$16,762,949
- 2010 Project Costs - \$18,020,170
- 2011 Project Costs - \$19,371,683
- 2012 Project Costs - \$20,824,559

\* See Leonardtown Library Estimated Capital Costs – 2007 estimate

## LEXINGTON PARK LIBRARY

This is the newest, largest, and most heavily used of the three libraries. It represents the types of space that residents throughout the County want to have in their local libraries. During the focus group sessions, participants frequently stated that they want multiple meeting rooms, a dedicated children's area separate from the adult area, a café, small conference rooms, comfortable seating, and a drive-up service window similar to what is provided at the Lexington Park Library.

This is not to say that Lexington Park needs no improvement. In fact the library is undersized by 4,426 SF for the service functions currently being provided. The Fire Station has just completed a project that, when its parking is included (though probably not always available), will provide a slight surplus of parking for the Library.

While, the adult circulating collections, children's fiction/non-fiction/reference collections, and CD collections are all below capacity, the balance of the collection is at, or exceeds, capacity. Having said this, the consultants are aware of the concerted effort being made by staff to reduce the size of those collections that are at capacity.

The interior layout of the Lexington Park Library is not as effective as it could be by today's library layouts standards. The staff workroom is oversized, thus increasing the overcrowding of the public space. There is no dedicated children's program space (although the connection to the meeting room is somewhat of an enhancement).

The way the building has been placed on the site, and the areas surrounding the building – coupled with its newness – makes expansion of this facility impossible – at least in the foreseeable future.

There is a drive-up book return. However, the design of the drive to the return feature and the turning radius make it difficult to use as intended. If the drive and turning radius were to be properly designed, the drive-up return could become a workable drive-thru service.

### **Space Recommendations for Lexington Park Library**

1. Continue the re-programming of the interior space of the library, as has been undertaken by staff, for improved customer access to collections and services, and for streamlined operations and staff work flow.
2. Re-design the drive and turning area in order to achieve a true drive-thru service option.

### **Recommendation**

A modest renovation of the existing 25,000 square foot building is in order to provide for additional computers for public use, more merchandising of collections, and a program room for Children's Services to be effective no later than 2009.

Recommended Improvements:

- Increase total reader/computer seating by 77, or 122 percent
- Increase computers for public use by 5, or 13 percent
- Increase circulation by 2025 to 315,030, or 93 percent
- Provide separate space for Teen Services
- Provide separate space and program room for Children's Services
- Add a small Conference Room and Computer Training Room
- Add one room for Research/Tutoring
- Add space for the Friends of the Library and a Library Store

Estimated 2009 Capital Costs (with escalation to 2012)\*

- 2009 Project Costs - \$1,131,945
- 2010 Project Costs - \$1,216,841
- 2011 Project Costs - \$1,308,104
- 2012 Project Costs - \$1,406,212

\* See Lexington Park (existing) Library Estimated Capital Costs – 2009 estimate

## **BRANCH 4 (in the California/Hollywood/Lexington Park Service Area)**

The consultants recommend a fourth branch library for St. Mary’s County within the next six to ten years. The new library will be needed due to the rapid increase in population of the greater Lexington Park service area. The site may include co-location with another county office or within a county service center, co-location on a large school campus, or included as part of a commercial shopping center development, etc.

An option to get closer to the industry best practice of 1SF per capita would be to eventually have the new Branch 4 expand to become a 40,000 SF facility. The first step would be to construct the 30,174 SF building and site and design that facility on a piece of property that will accommodate a 10,000 SF expansion, if needed in the outer years 2024-2025.

### **Recommendation**

Plan, design, construct, furnish, and equip an all-new 30,174 square foot facility. To be effective this should be constructed no later than 2016.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Provides new public library space – 30,174 square feet
- Total reader/computer seating – 154
- Computers for public use – 59
- Print-on-paper collections – 85,033
- Media collections – 15,000
- Projected circulation by 2025 – 600,000
- Multi-Purpose Meeting Room for 120
- Separate space for Teen Services
- Separate program room for Children’s Services
- Small Conference Room and Computer Training Room
- Two Group Study Rooms
- Two rooms for Research/Tutoring
- Space for a Supply Room and a Storage Room
- Space for the Friends of the Library and a Library Store
- Coffee Cart for public use
- Potential for Drive-up Materials Return and Checkout.

Estimated 2014 Capital Costs (with escalation to 2017)\*

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- 2014 Project Costs - \$14,707,742
- 2015 Project Costs - \$15,810,823
- 2016 Project Costs - \$16,996,634
- 2017 Project Costs - \$18,271,382

\* See Branch 4 Library Estimated Capital Costs – 2014 estimate

## SYSTEMWIDE SPACE UTILIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Place a greater emphasis on marketing and merchandising the collections in all three libraries. **All space projections accomplish this.**
2. Increase the number of computers for public use by at least 25 percent in each building. **With the exception of the existing Lexington Park Library all of the space recommendations greatly exceed the 25 percent goal – and the proposed new Branch 4 in the California/Hollywood/Lexington Park service area will, when combined with the existing Lexington Park Library, also exceed the goal.**
3. Establish a space in each building that is relevant to today’s teenagers. **All space recommendations accomplish this goal.**
4. Establish an enclosed program space for children in each building. **All space recommendations accomplish this goal.**
5. Study, design, and implement an external and internal signage program that serves to both (a) improve accessibility and (b) serve to brand the libraries. **The cost estimates include funds (although not so identified) that can lead to the accomplishment of this goal. An complete signage program, designed and implemented, will cost in a range of \$2.00 - \$4.00 per square foot depending upon (a) the amount of signage to be installed and (b) the quality of the signage materials.**

## LIBRARY LOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

One might question why the consultants have focused on relocating, expanding and constructing new facilities in roughly the same areas where existing libraries reside. Based on site visits, review of the County’s Master Plan including transportation improvements, demographic profiles and consideration of focus group comments, we view St. Mary’s County as one, now and in the future, in which the vast majority of residents must travel by car to reach the services they need e.g. shopping, medical, religious, flea markets, garage sales, etc. It is a mobile environment. This is also evidenced by the fact that the vast majority of residents own between one to three vehicles per household.

Therefore equitable, efficient and cost-effective access to library services for all county residents is based on providing larger full-service libraries located within easy reach of the large population development districts and the Charlotte Hall town center, hence, our recommendations. The need for two facilities in Lexington Park is a result of the fact that the County's growth plan identifies this area as the one which will accommodate the vast majority of population growth in the county.

We believe that the need expressed by focus group participants for a library in the California/Hollywood area can be met either by relocating the replacement library for Leonardtown on a site that is easily accessible by both communities or by locating Branch 4 in the northern area of the Lexington Park development district. For the more remote communities, we suggest the Library, after further study, consider alternative library access solutions such as:

1. Library computer kiosks equipped with printers, located within existing service businesses or government service offices or even schools in those areas that provide electronic access to library services, materials, and the Internet combined with a books by mail service to get materials to and from residents of the remote areas and homebound persons
2. A "Books (Materials) by Mail" service throughout the County.
3. Bookmobile to provide materials for all ages with a regular schedule of stops in remote areas.
4. Technology Mobile to present, teach and make customers aware of the library's valuable information resources and access via the Internet, so that while a library branch is not located in their neighborhood, they do have a virtual branch of the library on their computer.

Before any of these additional service delivery methods are implemented, we recommend that the Library survey and interview residents in those areas as to their current library usage and as to whether these services are needed or would be a benefit in improving their access to the library. For this reason, we have not provided costs for these options nor others that may be considered.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This document is a significant milestone for the residents of St. Mary's County. It is the first time that a comprehensive and integrated analysis of the county library system has been conducted. This report provides thoughtful and realistic recommendations which will ensure that the St. Mary's County Library system will continue to provide excellent customer service to future generations of county residents.

A report of this complexity required the support and cooperation of many groups and individuals. On behalf of the county residents, present and future, I would like to especially thank the following individuals:

- The 2002-2006 Board of County Commissioners which approved the funding of this study in the FY 2006 Capital Improvement Projects: Commission President Thomas McKay, Commissioners Kenny Dement, Larry Jarboe, Thomas Mattingly, and Daniel Raley.
- The 2007 Board of Library Trustees: President Joseph Bush, Jackie Mervine, Alan Dillingham, Everlyn Holland, Jan Briscoe, Joan Marsh, Joan Springer.
- Carol Gallagher of the County's Finance Department who managed the procurement process.
- Jeff Jackman of the County's Land Use & Growth Management Department who provided the necessary demographic and planning information.
- Gary Whipple of the County's Department of Public Works who managed the contract and provided invaluable technical expertise and advice.
- The many library customers and community members who participated in the various focus groups and surveys to ensure that the report truly reflected the needs of our county residents.

This *Comprehensive and Integrated Library System Analysis for St. Mary's County* starts us on a very important journey. The Library Board and staff look forward to working with the community and Board of County Commissions as we discuss these recommendations and create a responsible building plan to accommodate the lifelong learning needs of our county residents.

Kathleen Reif, Director  
St. Mary's County Library  
March 2007

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St. Mary's County Library Comprehensive and Integrated System Analysis

Prepared by PROVIDENCE Associates Inc  
March 20, 2007

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The St. Mary's County Library (to be known hereon as SMCL) continues to experience significant growth in the community's use of all library services. Based on widely-accepted measures the Library outperforms its peers in almost all areas. To plan for the future delivery of library service in this growing jurisdiction the County, working together with the Library, issued a request for consultant services to create a 10- year Comprehensive and Integrated Library System Analysis for St. Mary's County. The goal of both the County and the Library was to be able to provide for library services and facilities that would not only be responsive to changing service needs, but would also anticipate the service needs and expectations of county residents. The County selected *PROVIDENCE Associates LLC* for the project and charged the firm with:

- Assessing current library services and identify future services
- Studying the physical condition of Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown library facilities and determine the adequacy of all of the existing facilities to serve the current county population and the projected population through the year 2016
- Making recommendations for all aspects of services and facilities for the next 10 years

*PROVIDENCE* began its work with the Library's Administration in February, 2006.

To date *PROVIDENCE Associates* has:

- Identified both current and projected library usage patterns
- Created a county demographic profile
- Conducted a peer comparison of library output measures that compare SMCL with its neighboring counties whose boundaries are contiguous to Saint Mary's County, and with the national average of public libraries serving communities of similar population
- Gathered stakeholder input to determine satisfaction levels with current services and to identify changes in the way library services need to be provided in the future
- Assessed the physical infrastructure of the Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown library facilities
- Established library facility service areas based on the County's Election Districts that will serve for at least the next twenty-five years,
- Developed recommendations that will provide for relevant quality services and facilities that are and will be responsive to customer needs and expectations for at least the next 10 years.

We have worked with the County's Planning Department, specifically the Land Use and Growth Management (LUGM) division in determining the projected population growth through the year 2030. Each facility's service area has been correlated to the County's Election Districts. In addition, we have reviewed the County's Growth Plan and have focused on the targeted areas of development and redevelopment. These have

been combined with geographic mapping of current library customers to more accurately define the library service areas and project the need for additional library facilities.

Our team analyzed the comments made by 72 men, women, and young adults in 6 different focus group sessions. The focus groups represented a broad spectrum of library customers and representative groups of parents of young children, teens, senior citizens and community stakeholders. We facilitated one focus group comprised of the staff of the St. Mary's County Library. In addition to talking with library users and staff, we spoke with community leaders from both the public and private sector. The focus group comments enabled us to determine the level of customer and community satisfaction with current library services, identify areas for improvement and understand customer expectations for future services and facilities.

Taking into account the:

- volume of library usage by St. Mary's County residents
- county's projected population growth
- accepted national guidelines for sizing libraries
- service improvements and expectations identified by stakeholders in the community

the consultants reviewed each facility determining its ability to adequately provide the current complement of services as well as its capacity to accommodate future services in a growing community of library users.

What follows is PROVIDENCE Associates' key findings and recommendations that comprise the St. Mary's County Library Comprehensive Integrated System Plan.

### **St. Mary's County Out-performs Its Peers in Customer Contacts**

We have reviewed output measures for the SMCL for FY 2001 through FY 2006. There is consistent dramatic increase in library usage by SMCL customers. Customer contacts are up 100.5 percent. Customer contacts include circulation of library materials, reference questions asked, library visits and program attendance. The increases for each facility are equally impressive with Charlotte Hall up almost 26 percent, Leonardtown up 24 percent and Lexington Park up 36 percent.

The significance of these output measures becomes clear when compared to the performance of the peer libraries in each of the categories. With but a few exceptions, the St. Mary's County Library out-performs all of its peers:

- Circulation per capita = 11.1 compared with 10.9 for Calvert County, 6.0 for Charles County, and 9.3 nationally
- Visits = St. Mary's 570,000 per year, Calvert County 490,387, Charles County 354,367 and nationally 410,422

- Program Attendance = St. Mary's County 40,678\*; Calvert County 50,303; Charles County 30,718 and nationally 21,752

\*St. Mary's County Library made a management decision to reduce programming in order for staff to address the more pressing service needs of its customers e.g. circulation, assistance with technology, etc.)

### **St. Mary's County Falls Short of Operating Dollars and Hours of Operation When Compared with its Peers**

In several key areas the St. Mary's County Library falls below average when compared with its peers. This situation has a significant impact in preventing SMCL from being as responsive as it could be to the needs and expectations of its current customer base and the growing population predicted over the next ten to twenty years.

The most notable area that is lacking is that of available operating dollars. SMCL's expenditures per capita for both operations and materials are below average.

SMCL's FY 2005 Expenditures per Capita =	\$28.71
Calvert County's =	\$31.23
Charles County =	\$19.50
National Average =	\$32.84

SMCL's Materials Expenditure per Capita =	\$2.82
Calvert County's =	\$3.64
Charles County's =	\$2.25
National Average =	\$4.09

While the Saint Mary's County Library has the highest percentage of total registered borrowers among its peers for total population served, it is just barely represents 60 percent of the total population residing in St. Mary's County. There is room to capture and serve a greater percentage of the County's total population through increased operating funds, staffing and improved facilities with expanded hours of service and continuous promotion of what the library has to offer the community in both services and collections.

### **A Growing St. Mary's County Places a Greater Demand on Library Services**

St. Mary's County government has developed a laudable plan for controlled growth by identifying three types of areas – Development Districts where primary growth will take place through intense residential, commercial and industrial development; Town Centers where moderate to intense residential, commercial and some industrial development will occur; and Village Centers which will continue to be more rural in character. Development for future years is identified in the County's 2002 Comprehensive plan - *Quality of Life in St. Mary's County - A Strategy for the 21st Century*.

The population projections for St. Mary's County have both significant service and facility implications for the Library. The population of St. Mary's County is projected to

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increase approximately 24.2 percent by the year 2015 to 119,000 and the number of households will increase 30 percent. By 2025, the County's population is expected to reach 141,500 persons, a 64 percent increase from the 2000 census number of 86,211. The estimated increase in population for the individual branch library service areas from 2005 through 2025 is:

Charlotte Hall	47.2% (from 25,188 to 37,089)
Leonardtwn	47.2% (from 25,707 to 37,852)
Lexington Park	47.2% (from 45,205 to 66,559)

(Source: SMC/LUGM/03-29-06:2006-Population 1990-2030.)

There are four nationally recognized demographic indicators that correlate with high library usage. They are level of education attained, household income, home ownership, and households with children under the age of 18. St. Mary's County's demographic profile for each of these indicators ranks considerably above the U.S. average resulting in the current pattern of high volume library usage throughout the County. The indicators are expected to be maintained as the County continues to grow.

Projected population increases over the next 20 years, consistently increasing usage by County residents, along with the comments and suggestions made by Focus Group participants, signify a need for one additional library facility, one replacement facility, an expansion of an existing facility and the continued improvement in reprogramming of existing space and drive-up service at the Lexington Park Library. This increase in the number of library users will continue to tax the current limitations of funding, existing facilities, services, and staffing.

### **What the Community Says**

The vast majority of all focus group participants have nothing but praise for the library and its staff! They do, however, consistently express the need for "more"-- best sellers, new books for adults and children, current non-fiction, and more current titles in areas of science and mathematics. They also desire more programming for adults and children, more seating, and more space for materials. All want more (expanded) hours of operation (earlier opening hours and Sunday hours year-round throughout the system), quiet study rooms for small groups, dedicated teen spaces in all libraries, additional meeting rooms for community use, and more parking.

The community leadership group represents a variety of important and influential individuals in the County from both the public and private sector. It is obvious from their discussions that they reflect some very distinct ideas about the SMCL and its future role in the community. A large majority believes that the SMCL is essential and views it as a formidable element for the "quality of life" that the County wishes to project. They identify the libraries as the core of the communities they serve.

The need for larger library facilities and facilities with amenities and spaces similar to the Lexington Park Library was a frequent and consistent comment by all focus group participants. The need for larger buildings was based on the need to accommodate:

- More books and materials in a variety of formats
- More information technologies
- More meeting rooms for use by community groups
- Quiet study areas
- Separate and well-defined children's areas and programming space
- Areas dedicated to serving teens
- Auditorium space for author lectures and major children's and family programming, etc.
- Staff who continue to "put the customer first" in providing personal assistance and making customer feel welcome and valued.

### **Library Technology for Today and Tomorrow**

Technology has resulted in the most dramatic change in public libraries in the last 15 years and it will continue to drive change. Therefore, as SMCL looks ahead it is important to maintain and continue their keen awareness of developing technologies that will impact how the library will continue to serve the information and life-long learning needs of its customers.

It is imperative that the Library take full advantage of self-service opportunities by first expanding its self-service technologies to all locations. It should stay on top of new releases and service and management enhancements that are made to the SMRLA Integrated Library System. The Library needs to continue to introduce new features to facilitate customer access and use, and free-up staff to assist with more complex customer interactions rather engage in functions that have been replaced with proven automated self-service technologies such as "self-check out" of library materials.

### **Service Areas**

The Library Administration's philosophy related to the number and size of libraries needed to serve St. Mary's County is a very practical one. As a primarily suburban/rural county they believe that the appropriate library service model is that of several large full service libraries which are easily accessible via major transportation routes rather than many small service-limited facilities located within neighborhoods. The consultants concur with that approach for library service for this jurisdiction.

In fact, as the consultants reviewed current usage statistics and the residential concentration of library users for each existing facility, our recommendations are based on expanding the size of libraries serving most of the current service areas and adding one additional new facility in an existing service area rather than creating new service areas. This rationale is based on the fact that there already are several "mixed" service areas where there is significant interaction and overlap of usage between Leonardtown and Lexington Park, and Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown.

PROVIDENCE is recommending that all current service areas remain the same. A new library should be considered for the California/Hollywood/Lexington Park (northern portion) service area.

## **CONSULTANT'S SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on all of the data, documentation, and comments that have been gathered, reviewed, and assessed by PROVIDENCE we propose the following recommendations requiring the most immediate implementation to enable the St. Mary's County Library to maintain and expand its ability to provide relevant, high quality library services to St. Mary's County residents for years to come.

### **Hours of Service**

- a) *The SMCL should begin to explore ways to cost-effectively provide expand hours of service and make them consistent at all locations.*
- b) *While expanding hours of service (especially Sundays) will require some additional staffing, modifying work schedules along with investing in additional self-directed customer service (self-checkout, electronic library card registration, online payment of fines and fees by credit card) would allow for expanding service hours in a cost-effective manner without the need for significant additional staffing.*

### **Collections**

- a) *SMCL should continue to use all available resources to review its circulation data, selection policies, and budget allocations to accommodate adding more media titles and more copies of these titles to its collections in all locations. Media formats represent the largest growth in circulation for public libraries nationwide. St. Mary's County library users indicated that they want a wider variety and increased availability of media formats.*
- b) *SMCL should sample circulation records of fiction titles by popular genre for all ages (Christian, classics, etc.); monitor requests for new titles not owned; and examine ILL requests to identify areas of the fiction collection needing more representative titles or more copies of a title.*
- c) *SMCL staff should continue to review and adjust the Library's non-fiction print holdings to determine the most appropriate size of that collection given that many persons in the community indicated they prefer and choose to meet their information needs by accessing the Internet (e.g. Google and Yahoo ) rather than visiting or calling the library for that information..*
- d) *SMCL staff should continue to regularly review and adjust its reference print holdings based on the same rationale stated in the previous item, and the fact that*

- e) *electronic information resources are replacing print versions. The electronic versions are more up to date and easier to search and find information.*
- f) *SMCL staff should continue to review its Periodical Back File holdings and maintain them at no more than the current year plus one year for all publications that are available online in full text.*
- g) *SMCL should continue its regular and frequent schedule for weeding out-of-date print materials on health, the pure sciences, and technology as, in the rapidly changing world in which we live, the most up to date information will be found online.*
- h) *SMCL should continue to expand its offerings of downloadable books, movies, music and provide access to podcasts and other downloadable formats that are compatible with a increasing variety of personal portable devices e.g. PDAs, MP3 players, smart phones, home computers, etc. (This also falls into the next Technology category)*

### **Technology (IT)**

- a) *SMCL should determine the “level of computer access” they aspire to provide either as a system or in each library based upon the “basic, better, or best” scenario identified in the Technology Report section of this report. It is important to note that the community expressed a strong desire to have computer labs in all locations and many more computers on the floor located in one area rather than spread throughout the library. The exception is the desire to have dedicated computers in both Children’s and Teen areas.*
- b) *SMCL should review and thoroughly update its existing Technology Plan that looks ahead three to five years and defines technology enhancements the library will accomplish in response to the community’s needs and expectations. The plan will prioritize technology goals and identify capital and operational costs needed to implement the Plan.*
- c) *SMCL should continue to quickly move to more self-directed, less staff intensive services such as self-check, online library card registration, payment of fines and fees, program registration, etc. to free up staff time to the more human interactive service needs of customers.*
- d) *SMCL should strive for at least 90% circulation of library materials through self-check and provide the hardware to make this possible, and at least 60% of new card sign-ups and 70% of payment of fines and fees taking place online.*
- e) *SMCL should explore, in conjunction with SMRLA, the full functionality of the Sirsi/Dynix ILS to enhance self-service opportunities for library customers, including but not limited to library card registration, computer sign-up and print management, credit card payment of fines and fees, RFID compatibility, federated searching, etc.*



- f) *SMCL should employ a full-time web designer/web master (or contract out the work) to design and maintain an intuitive, transparent, interactive web site that serves as the “virtual” branch of the SMCL, as a portal linking to organizations in the community, e.g. school systems, higher education institutions, local government, community services, and as a social networking vehicle for all members of the community. Notable (as cited in national professional library publications) public library web sites to view as models are the Ann Arbor Public Library (MI) and the St. Joseph Public Library (IN).*

### **Service to Adults**

- a) *SMCL should increase its use of Friends’ members and volunteers in planning and presenting programs and in facilitating book discussion groups. There are many adults in the community who have varied talents, who have traveled internationally, or have other experiences to share that are of interest to many adults. This will reduce the amount of staff time needed to plan and present programs.*
- b) *SMCL should create a Young Professionals or Millennial division of the Friends of the Library that would plan programs and events to attract this age group to the library by offering book discussion groups, “wine and cheese evenings in the stacks”, cooking for one or two demonstrations, open-mike nights, etc.*
- c) *SMCL should partner with the County’s Information Office for the Library to provide “podcasts” of County Council meetings and other important government meetings so community members who are unable to attend can have access to the actual session.*
- d) *SMCL should increase its use of volunteers to assist with programming for all ages, assisting customers using self-check machines, etc.*
- e) *SMCL should partner with other education-based organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit, and identify community volunteers to be able to increase and enhance the teaching of computer literacy for adults.*
- f) *SMCL should continue to use its computer classrooms as a venue for frequent sessions of computer classes for adults at no or low cost.*
- g) *SMCL should continue to foster and expand partnerships with the local business community in having them sponsor and/or underwrite library program offerings that appeal to children, families and adults.*

### **Children’s Services**

- a) *SMCL should offer more toddler story hour sessions per week for ages 1 to 2 ½ with smaller numbers of children (no more than a total of 20-25 children accompanied by a parent or caregiver) attending so that each session is*

*maximizes the child's developmental learning through books and activities and caregiver-child interaction rather than numbers served at any one time.*

- b) SMCL should continue its focus on collections, activities and dedicated library spaces within its children's areas for children ages birth to 5 and their parents.*

### **Teen Services**

- a) SMCL should hire, identify from among existing staff, or seek volunteers from the community individuals who relate well to teens and would like to focus on working with teens in the library.*
- b) SMCL should create teen advisory councils at the Lexington Park, Charlotte Hall and Leonardtown and use these councils to actively assist in the planning and redesign of teens spaces (colors, furnishings and technology) and the planning of teen programs/activities in the library.*
- c) SMCL should provide games on those computers designated for teen use in the library.*

### **Marketing and Outreach**

- a) SMCL should develop a marketing and publicity plan that addresses and actualizes the ideas listed above.*
- b) SMCL should identify, prioritize and increase its outreach activities along with what is needed (staff, volunteers, technology, library web site, etc.) to provide those activities.*
- c) SMCL should continue its Children's Outreach Van services focused on serving young children, their parents and caregivers.*
- d) SMCL should provide a "Books/Media by Mail" service to homebound customers and remote customers.*
- e) SMCL should investigate a partnership with Meals on Wheels, and other home delivery services in the county, to deliver library books and media to their clientele.*

### **Public Library/Community Collaboration and Partnerships**

- a) SMCL should partner with local agencies addressing the needs of "new Americans" in St. Mary's County to bring the Library to their clients, and their clients to the Library.*
- b) SMCL should provide collections and resources that support learning of English (spoken and written) and provide materials in the native languages of the county's New Americans.*

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- c) *SMCL should continue to network and partner with the county school system, the local home-school associations, parochial and private schools, and higher education institutions to promote resource sharing, avoid unnecessary duplication of resources, and to promote those public library resources and technologies which support formal education throughout the county.*
- d) *SMCL should continue to network and partner with the County's economic development office, the Chamber of Commerce, business associations, and local Small Business Development Centers to make those small business owners and local entrepreneurs aware of library resources, both print and electronic, that provide demographic, marketing and other information that contributes to their success.*
- e) *SMCL should seek partnerships with local radio stations, game stores, comic book outlets, etc. frequented by teens to provide programs, events, workshops, contests, and give-aways at the library.*
- f) *SMCL should engage the faculty and staff at local colleges and universities in offering workshops for teens in creative writing, web design, gaming, creating media presentations, etc.*
- g) *SMCL should consider coordinating use of teen volunteers, through the schools, to assist with children's activities, teaching technology to adults, organizing teen advisory councils, etc. as a means for teens to meet their state required "community service hours."*
- h) *SMCL should use its partnerships with the local school system, private schools and local corporations to under-write, furnish, equip and promote dedicated "Homework Center" areas that offer both electronic (via dedicated PCs and a targeted subset of the Library's web site) and print content supporting curricula and "live online homework help" services for children in grades 4 through at least grade 9. This center should be located adjacent to Children's department in all branch libraries.*
- i) *SMCL should continue to expand its partnerships with local social service and health agencies to introduce the library and its parenting and early childhood resources to young mothers helping them to be effective first teachers in preparing their children for learning.*
- j) *SMCL should seek partnerships with local sign companies to provide uniform flexible interior and exterior signage, at reduced rates if appropriate, for all libraries.*
- k) *SMCL should partner with local museums and other cultural organizations to provide displays of documents, artifacts, costumes, etc. in the libraries*

- l) *SMCL should expand the use of naming opportunities for spaces and stacks as a means of fundraising when libraries are renovated or constructed, and to support enhancement of furnishings, fixtures, collections and technology.*
- m) *SMCL should replicate its current arrangement of leasing “café” space to local vendors in each of its expanded or newly constructed branch libraries.*
- n) *SMCL should seek a pro-bono or reduced fee arrangement with a local public relations firm to assist in the development of a “library brand” and logo that conveys the essence of the library in the lives of the community and is easily recognized by the community.*
- o) *SCML should expand its partnerships with local media (radio, newspaper, cable TV, community websites) add Library links to local online information sites e.g. Craig’s List, Judy’s Page, etc. and increase the Library’s visibility through print, PSAs (public service announcements), televised and podcast story times, book review programs, monthly newspaper columns, etc.*

**Staff Prepared and Trained to Respond to the Changing Needs of the Community.**

Residents of St. Mary’s County commented most favorably about the friendliness and helpfulness of library staff. The Library must make every effort to maintain that customer service emphasis for all staff and ensure staffs’ knowledge of information technology and computers to be able to help library users be successful in their search for information.

- a) *SMCL should maintain its current emphasis on customer service for all age groups and ensure that all new hires are trained in and accountable for using preferred customer service techniques.*
- b) *SMCL should maintain its philosophy of training all staff to be service providers for a variety of areas and age groups, so that all staff are able to use available information technologies in assisting customers with finding what they want or need.*
- c) *SMCL should train as many staff as possible in the use of customer centric technologies, in effective online searching, and in downloading electronic content to flash drives, MP3 players, and PDAs. “Reference, as we have known it, is dead”<sup>1</sup>*
- d) *SMCL should provide regular training to keep staff current in latest upgrades and modules of the Sirsi/Dynix system for maximum efficiency, productivity and analysis of collection usage data.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Planning and Design of Public Libraries, Harvard University School of Design, Sacramento, CA, November 6 - 9, 2006. Quote from Joan Frye Williams, Library Consultant and Futurist.  
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- e) SMCL should assign staff to be on the floor rather than stationed at a desk to provide point of service assistance to customers in the stacks and at computer stations.
- f) SMCL staff should continue to regularly use and introduce electronic resources when assisting customers in locating information.
- g) SMCL should maximize its use its circulation staff and enrich and add variety to current job tasks, by preparing and training them to assist customers out on the floor, to participate in community outreach activities, and to engage in program planning and delivery. The opportunity is a direct result of the transition to self-checkout and increased self-directed services.
- h) SMCL should hire a professional volunteer coordinator who will coordinate use of library volunteers, revise the Library's Volunteer Plan ensuring that specific job tasks, that assist with and expand public service, are identified and defined, along with the talents, skills and experiences required to perform them. The use of quality volunteers frees up paid staff to focus on more complex services and on outreach.
- i) SMCL should review its organizational structure to ensure that Marketing/PR, Virtual Library services, and Volunteers are a management focus along with the traditional collection development, children's and teen, and programming services.

Therefore, there will be increased operating costs related to the need for additional staffing to manage and provide new services and enhancements to existing services described above. By 2016, it estimated that the Library's staffing will increase by 24.18 FTE as follows.

	2006(current)	2016
Administration	6.00 FTE	<b>8.00 FTE</b>
Charlotte Hall	9.63 FTE	<b>12.59 FTE</b>
Leonardtwn	13.26 FTE	<b>16.89 FTE</b>
Lexington Park (existing)	14.45 FTE	<b>12.91 FTE</b>
Branch Library #4	NA	<b>17.23 FTE</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>43.44 FTE</b>	<b>67.62 FTE</b>

## LIBRARY FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

The appropriate sizing of public library facilities is determined by the complement of services to be offered in response to community need and expectation, the number of staff required to provide the services, and the population of the service area.

### Size of Library Facilities

All St. Mary's County libraries at this time are too small for providing the current array of service offerings and collections to the number of residents being served. With the

County's population expected to increase by approximately 47 percent between 2006 and 2025 and with new services and additional technology resources that will need to be provided, the existing library facilities are also too small to provide future service to the growing customer base throughout the County.

Nationally established best practices for adequately sizing library facilities recommend one square foot (1 SF) of library space per capita. Currently St. Mary's County is providing 0.54 SF of library space per capita or 51,855 for a population of approximately 97,000. Hence, the library system is under-sized for serving its current population base. It requires at least 27 percent more space than it currently has to achieve the 1 SF of space per capita guideline.

The need to increase the library space for St. Mary's County is significant given the growing proportion of residents who use their libraries regularly and the level of staff interaction needed.

As libraries add space through both the expansion of existing facilities (where possible) and the construction of new facilities, it is imperative that the design of these spaces include maximum flexibility to accommodate not only what we know is needed today, but also to accommodate the unknowns of the next ten, fifteen and twenty years. As the core of the communities they serve, all libraries should include spaces that welcome users and that provide for a variety of community activities and gatherings.

Any new and replacement facilities need to be located in highly visible, frequently traveled, accessible areas of the communities they serve. Ample parking is an essential requirement.

## **CONSULTANT'S FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS AND COST ESTIMATES**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, libraries remain facility centric. As described in the introduction to this report, public libraries are "third places" in the lives of residents of all communities. It is the place for:

- meeting friends and neighbors
- attending community meetings
- engaging in quiet study and group study
- having cup of coffee and reading a newspaper or magazine
- taking young children to the library to read to them and borrow books
- improving parents' roles as the first teachers of their children
- attending informative and entertaining programs aimed at a variety of age groups
- using high speed access to the Internet and specially selected online resources
- hands-on learning to effectively search electronic resources, create content and expand perspectives
- accessing computers for preparing homework assignments, job resumes, email, etc.
- linking to distance learning courses
- volunteering services and talents of the community
- doing homework and getting homework help

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- researching family history, local history
- finding community information related to services and activities
- teens to gather, chat, play computer games, engage in creative writing, listen to music, and volunteer
- finding good books to read or listen to in your vehicle.

Based on the array of services, the projected population growth of service areas and the current physical condition of the buildings, PROVIDENCE *Associates* recommends adding approximately 73,019 of library space to the SMCL over the next 10 years. The consultants have also identified immediate facility infrastructure issues that need to be addressed in the existing facilities.

### **General Infrastructure Maintenance**

In order to address the immediate problems (structural, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, site, life safety, and architectural) identified in the physical assessment of existing facilities, an estimated \$689,750 (\$405,250 for Leonardtown and \$284,500 for Charlotte Hall) will be need to be expended over the next two years.

Over the long-term (3–10 years) the estimated costs for maintenance and on-going repairs/replacements for current infrastructure is estimated to be \$520,500 (\$215,000 for Leonardtown and \$305,500 for Charlotte Hall). This number is in terms of 2006 dollars.

### **Increasing Library Space**

The following plan achieves the additional 73,019 SF of public library space over the next 10 years and maximizes efficiency of operations. All costs are estimated costs. All estimated costs exclude site acquisition that may be needed.

### **Consultant Recommendation:**

Although this study is a 10-year plan, the consultants have projected needs for 20 years because it may take more than 10 years to accomplish all that needs to be accomplished. Moreover, any public capital investment for library buildings should, at minimum, have a life cycle of at least 25 to 30 years. Typically library buildings last for much longer. That said the 20-year; projected 2025 population for St. Mary's County is 141,500.

PROVIDENCE *Associates* recommends four full-service libraries for St. Mary's County by the year 2017. These recommendations, as implemented, will meet the County's library service needs through the year 2025. No ranking or priority is implicit in the list below.

- Charlotte Hall\* – retain the existing building, and begin discussions with the BOCC, DLDS and SMRLA for the Library to utilize all of the 24,400 SF of space for providing library services needed and expected by the residents of this service area.

If expansion into all of the SMRLA space is not possible, then the Library system will likely need to consider constructing a new 35,000-40,000 SF library facility located somewhat south of the current Charlotte Hall service area if it is to best meet the current and future needs of the service area residents who live in Charlotte Hall, Mechanicsville,

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Chaptico, Helen, Morganza, Loveville, etc. This option will significantly increase the total cost of the project. We have not provided cost estimates for this eventuality in this report.

It is the opinion of this consultant that regional operations, such as SMRLA, which provide support services to the three southern Maryland counties, are typically best housed in leased space centrally located to serve each of the three systems.

- Leonardtown\*\* – construct an all-new building totaling approximately 44,465 SF (includes 5,293 SF of space for Library Administration offices).
- Lexington Park – retain the existing building of 25,000 SF and continue to improve use of existing space for greater responsiveness to community needs and revamp the drive-up service area to truly function as such.
- Branch 4 – construct an all-new building of 30,174 SF in the California/Hollywood/Lexington Park service area to accommodate the significant growth resulting from the County's Master Plan.

An option to get closer to the industry best practice 1SF per capita would be to eventually have the new Branch 4 expand to become a 40,000 SF facility. The first step would be to construct the 30,174 SF building and site and design that facility on a piece of property that will accommodate a 10,000 SF expansion, if needed in the outer years 2024-2025.

These recommendations, if implemented, will result in a total of 124,039 SF of public library space for St. Mary's County equal to 0.87 square feet per capita by 2025. The consultants believe this to be a reasonable and achievable goal.

*\*According to the LUGM staff, growth in the 4<sup>th</sup> Election District may be less than what is shown by the projections as subdivisions such as Country Lakes and Wicomico Shores are building out and few or no major subdivisions are being created in District 4.*

*\*\*Growth in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Election District may accelerate beyond projections as development proposals within the town come to fruition as capacity is added to the town's sewer treatment plant in the next 5 yrs.*

Given that it is impossible to expand the current Charlotte Hall and Lexington Park libraries on their present sites, the ability to achieve 1.0 SF per capita of library space in the County cannot be done under this plan. However, the eventual expansion of Branch 4 by 10,000 SF in 2030 will provide 0.88 SF per capita. If the current Charlotte Hall Library is relocated and designed as a 35,000 – 40,000 SF building, the library space per capita will increase to 0.95 – 0.99 SF per capita.



The recommended timeline for completion of construction is:

By 2010 an expanded Charlotte Hall Library

By 2010 a new Leonardtown Library

By 2012 complete reprogramming of space at the existing Lexington Park Library

By 2016 a Branch 4 to be constructed in the California/Hollywood/Lexington Park Service Area

The total collection size, all formats exclusive of electronically accessible databases, by 2025 should total a projected 374,793, or 2.46 items per capita for the service area population.

The estimated capital costs, based upon the recommended occupancy dates for each project, totals \$37,268,897. This project cost represents all site development, construction, furniture, equipment, fees, owner costs, and contingencies for each project. It *does not* include site acquisition. The cost per capita for the existing 2006 population would be \$385.00; for the projected 2025 population figure the cost would drop to \$263. If bonded over 20 years, the cost per capita would be in a range of \$19.00 - \$21.00 per person per year.