Designing the Future Public Library: Community Needs Analysis and Strategic Planning

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Overview

- The Project
- The Process
- Results
- Implications

The Project

- **State Library of North Carolina Pilot Project**
  - **Need for standardizing community needs analysis**
  - **Pilot Project**
    - **Three consultants following the same general process**
- **Robert Burgin**
- **Bill Millett**
- **Anthony Chow**

The Process

- **Phase 1: Community Needs Analysis**
- **Phase 2: Strategic Planning**

Phase 1 – Community Needs Analysis (CNA)

Goal 1: Analyze Current and Future Needs (See Handout 1)

Goal 2: Open dialogue about the value of libraries and alignment with community priorities.

The Process:

1. Steering committee of external stakeholders
2. Interviews – administration and community leaders
3. Gather Usage and Demographic Data (10 years if possible)
4. Focus Groups – targeted stakeholder groups (if applicable)
5. Community Forums – Open access and representation
6. Surveys

Why collect all of this data?

1. Data Triangulation – multiple data points on the same phenomenon
   - Increases validity and generalizability
2. Community needs identify strengths and gaps that speak directly to strategic goals and resources.

Community

Government   Need   Staff

Leaders
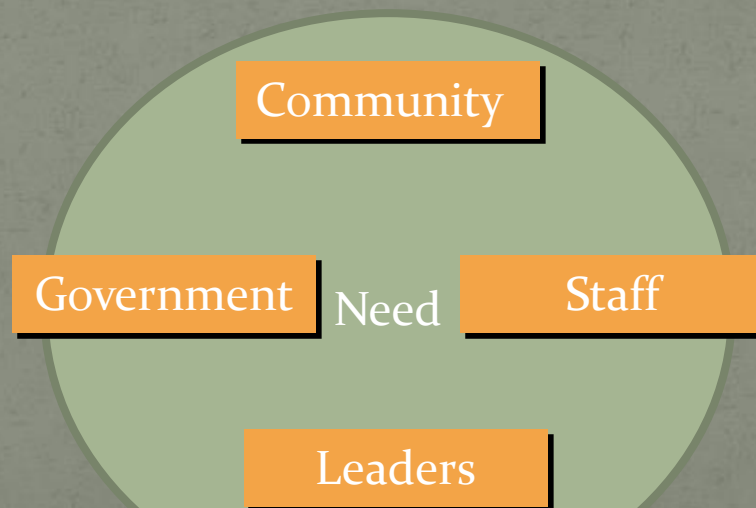
The Results

- Community Needs Analysis
  - Collaborating with local community stakeholders
  - Major community trends for:
    - Information needs
    - Primary usages of the library
    - Demographic trends

The Results (2)

- General Community Information Needs

Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1. Local news	5.70	945
2. Weather	5.59	936
3. National news	5.49	935
4. World News	5.33	936
5. Email	5.32	942
6. Community resources	5.15	932
7. Community events	4.98	922
8. General website surfing	4.92	932
9. Government resources	4.75	921

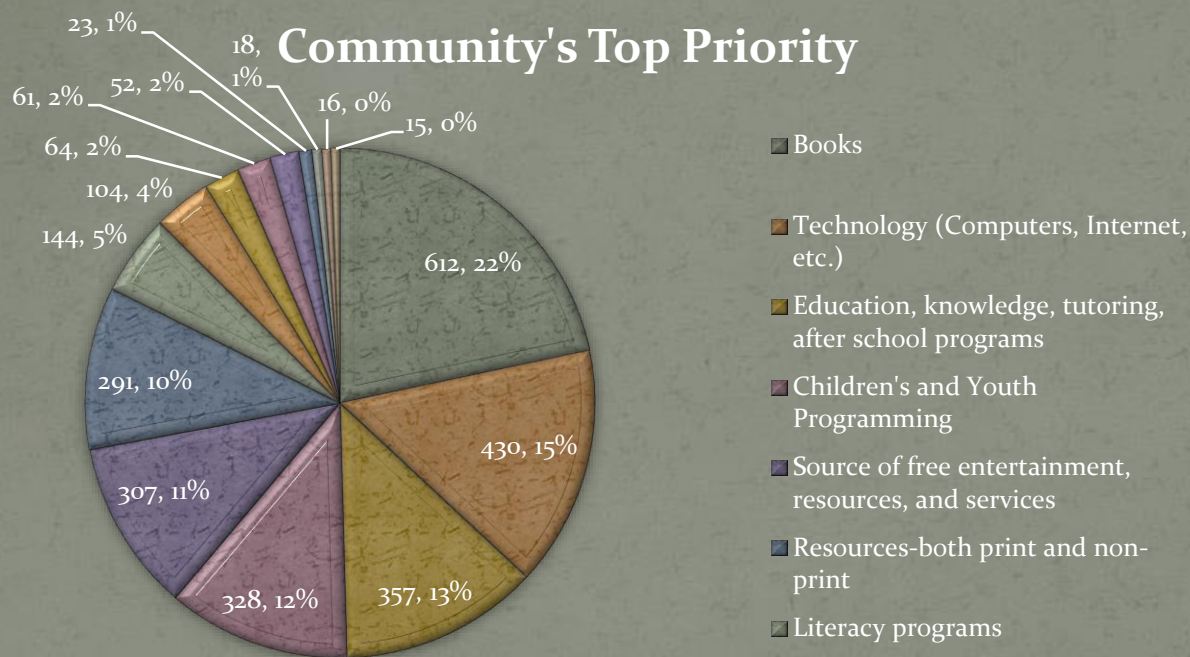| Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1. Local news	5.98	57
2. Email	5.79	53
3. National news	5.58	55
4. Community events	5.50	56
5. Weather	5.46	57
6. Community resources (e.g. bulletin boards, events, etc.)	5.31	55
7. World News	5.23	57
8. Government resources (e.g. County website, cable channel, etc.)	4.98	56
9. General website surfing	4.98	55

The Results (2)

- ## General Entertainment Needs

Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1. Leisure Reading	5.63	928
2. Local news	5.39	928
3. National news	5.22	917
4. Email	5.15	913
5. Watching movies via DVD	4.75	930
6. General website surfing	4.56	920
7. Attending community events (sports, theater, etc.)	4.47	928
8. Watching tv in general	4.32	927
9. Watching/Reading about Sports	4.01	874
10. Watching movies on TV	3.70	911

Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1. Leisure Reading	5.73	56
2. Local news	5.36	57
3. National news	5.24	56
4. Email	5.11	55
5. Attending community events (sports, theater, etc.)	4.95	57
6. General website surfing	4.89	54
7. Watching movies on TV	4.57	55
8. Watching TV in general	4.57	54
9. Facebook	4.20	55
10. Watching movies via DVD	4.17	56
11. Listening to music on the Internet	4.11	56

The Results (3)

- Community Top Priorities (open-ended)

Community's Top Priority

Pie chart labels:
- 23, 1%
- 18, 1%
- 52, 2%
- 16, 0%
- 15, 0%
- 61, 2%
- 64, 2%
- 104, 4%
- 144, 5%
- 612, 22%
- 291, 10%
- 430, 15%
- 307, 11%
- 328, 12%
- 357, 13%

Legend:
- Books
- Technology (Computers, Internet, etc.)
- Education, knowledge, tutoring, after school programs
- Children's and Youth Programming
- Source of free entertainment, resources, and services
- Resources-both print and non-print
- Literacy programs

The Results (3)

- Primary Library Usage

| Please tell us if you have used the Library during the past 12 months:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Checked out printed books	91.3%	2537
2. Used the Library Website to search for materials, place materials on hold, renew materials, use research resources, or manage your account online	64.8%	1800
3. Library staff helped you find books, resources, or information for any purpose	58.6%	1628
4. Used a Library as a place to read, work or study	47.8%	1327
5. Checked out audio books or music on CDs	46.4%	1290
6. Used reference materials, newspapers, magazines, or other periodicals	44.0%	1221
7. Checked out movies on DVDs	42.4%	1179
8. Used Library WiFi	37.4%	1040
9. Used a Library public meeting room for any purpose, including voting	37.2%	1033

The Results (3)

- Primary Library Usage

| Please rate the importance of the following Library services to you over the past 12 months:		
Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1. Checked out printed books	9.47	2721
2. Library Website to search for materials, place materials on hold, renew materials, use research resources, or manage your account online	8.86	2559
3. Library staff customer service and support	8.18	2583
4. Library as a place to read	6.99	2526
5. Library public meeting rooms for any purpose, including voting	6.93	2513
6. Library WiFi	6.90	2499
7. Checked out audio books or music on CDs	6.84	2565
8. Reference materials, newspapers, magazines, or other periodicals	6.80	2543
9. Library as a place to work or study	6.72	2494

Why Don't You Use the Library?

What is your ONE PRIMARY REASON for not using the Library?

0% 0%
3%
4%
4%
5%
5%
9%
9%
18%
21%
22%
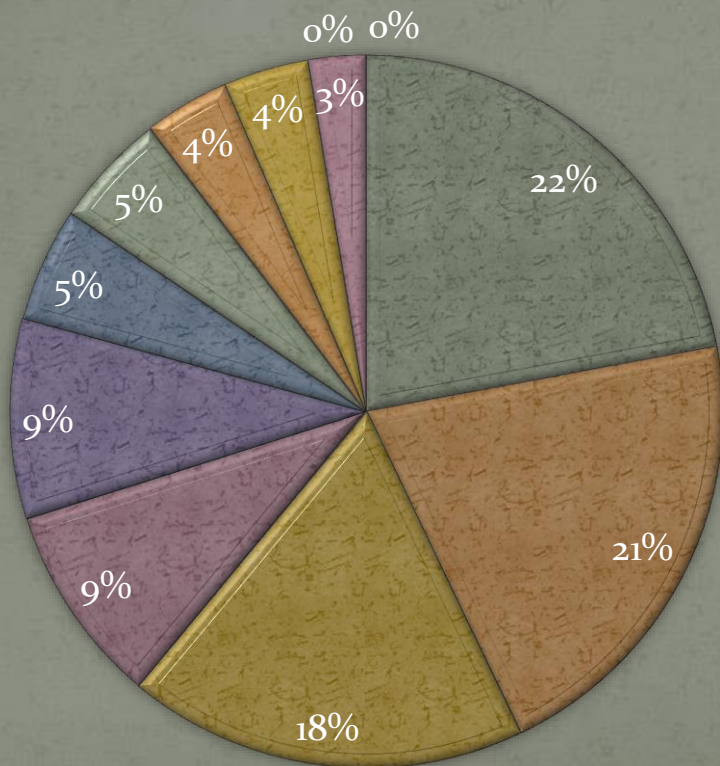
g. You get your information from the Internet

l. You purchase materials instead of borrowing them from the Library

c. You are too busy or don't have time to go

a.   You have no need or no interest

j. You are limited by age, health or mobility issues

Would You Use the Library If…

Would you use the Library if the hours and days were more convenient?

16%

51%

33%

Maybe/Don't Know

Yes

No
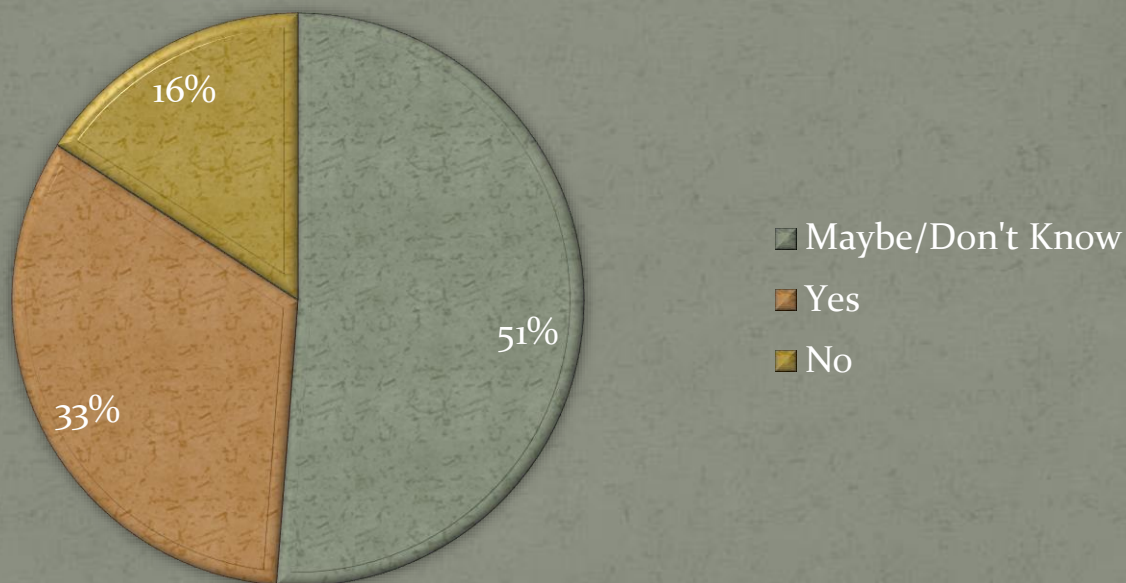
Distance from Library

Time to Library	f	Cumulative %
0 to 5 minutes	423	17%
5 to 10 minutes	947	54%
10 to 15 minutes	490	73%
15 to 20 minutes	191	80%
20 to 30 minutes	377	95%
30 to 45	31	
45 to 60	57	
60+	43	

15 min.

10 min.

5 min.
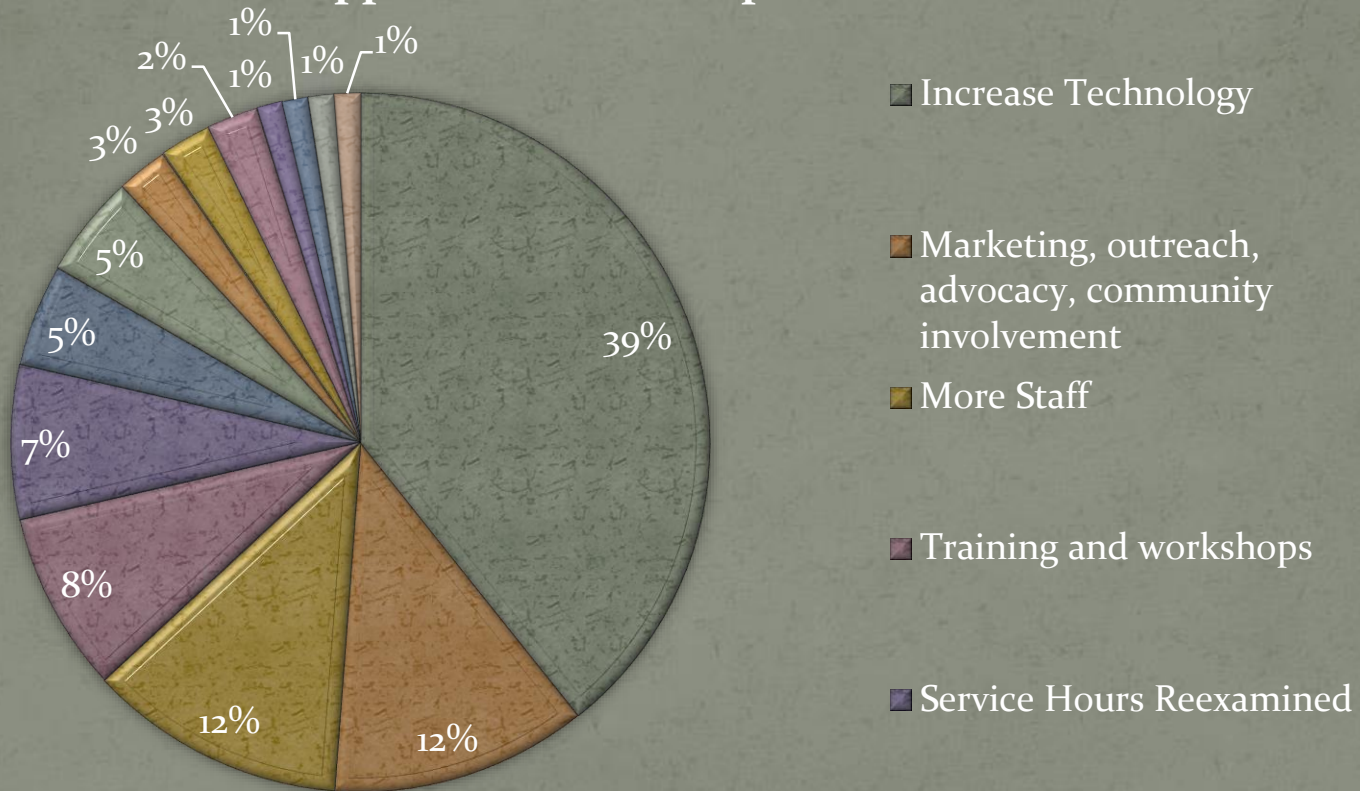
Demographics and Needs
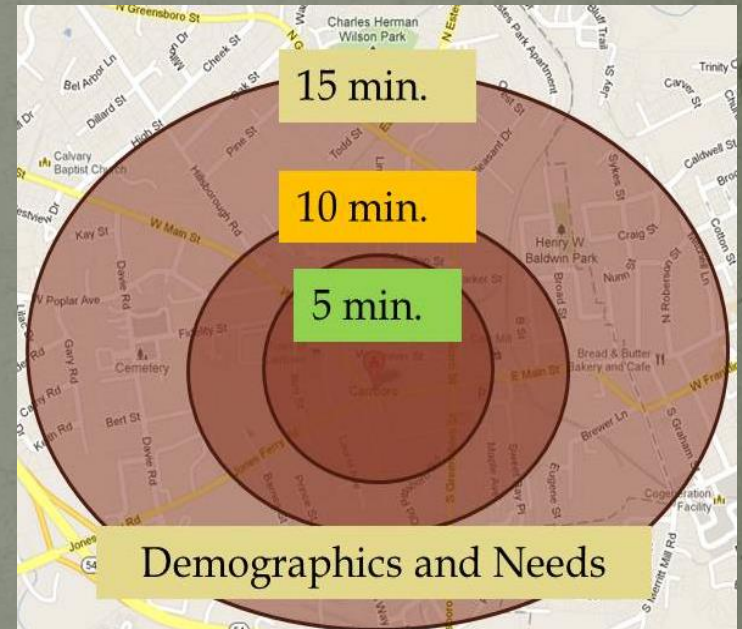
The Top Five Reasons for Using the Library

1. **Books and other print and non-print resources**

2. **Children's programming and resources**

3. **Technology (computers, internet access, online resources, e-books, training, etc.)**

4. **Library as place (community center, quiet place to study, read, etc.)**

5. **Education and self-enlightenment (knowledge access, tutoring, after school programs, training workshops, etc.)**
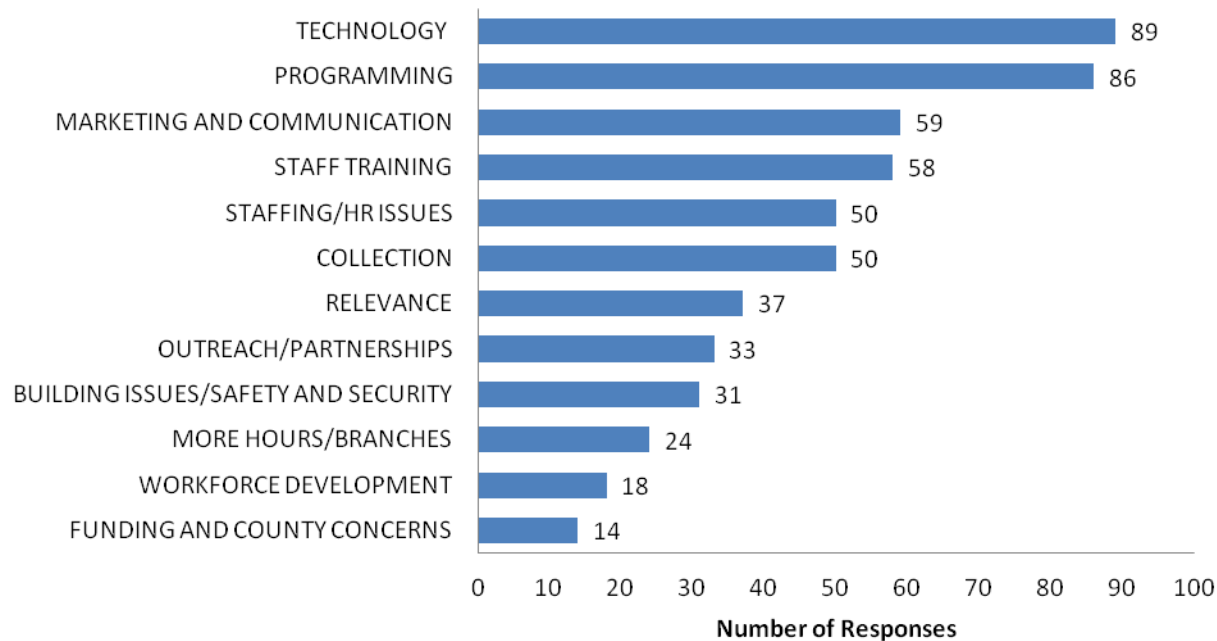
Staff Perceptions

Opportunities for Improvement

Pie chart segments: 39%, 12%, 12%, 8%, 7%, 5%, 5%, 3%, 3%, 2%, 1%, 1%, 1%, 1%

Legend:
- Increase Technology
- Marketing, outreach, advocacy, community involvement
- More Staff
- Training and workshops
- Service Hours Reexamined

Staff Perceptions - Priorities

Strategic plans can only have 5-7 high priority goals to focus on. Please give us your top five highest priority goals you feel CML needs to concentrate on in the next few years.

Category	Number of Responses
TECHNOLOGY	89
PROGRAMMING	86
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION	59
STAFF TRAINING	58
STAFFING/HR ISSUES	50
COLLECTION	50
RELEVANCE	37
OUTREACH/PARTNERSHIPS	33
BUILDING ISSUES/SAFETY AND SECURITY	31
MORE HOURS/BRANCHES	24
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	18
FUNDING AND COUNTY CONCERNS	14

Staff Perceptions - Priorities

Please react to the following statements on a scale from 1-7 (1=Strongly Disagree, 7=Strongly Agree):

AnswerOptions	Rating Average	ResponseCount
My work is important to the organization.	6.22	
My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.	6.14	
In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.	5.98	
My fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.	5.76	
I see myself working here five years from now.	5.70	
My input seems to count.	5.65	
I have the necessary resources to do my work.	5.53	
I receive praise frequently for doing good work.	5.44	
Our organization and my peers are all on the same page when it comes to our goals.	5.12	

End of CNA Phase 1

- Identify Priority Areas
  - Community Needs
  - Community Leadership
  - Staff Needs
- These serve as the needs to be addressed and articulated as strategic goals in Phase 2

Phase 2: Strategic Planning (See Handout 2)

- Vision Statement – An ideal future to strive for
- Mission Statement – What the organization strives to be on a daily basis
- Values – How the organization carries itself
- Core Competencies – What are the core suite of services that defines the organization and must be maintained at all cost.
- Goals, Objectives, and Activities
  - High priority goals that address priority areas
    - Objectives – sub goals and stepping stones to achieving goal
      - Activities – The specific, measurable means in which you need to accomplish your objectives and, ultimately, your goals.
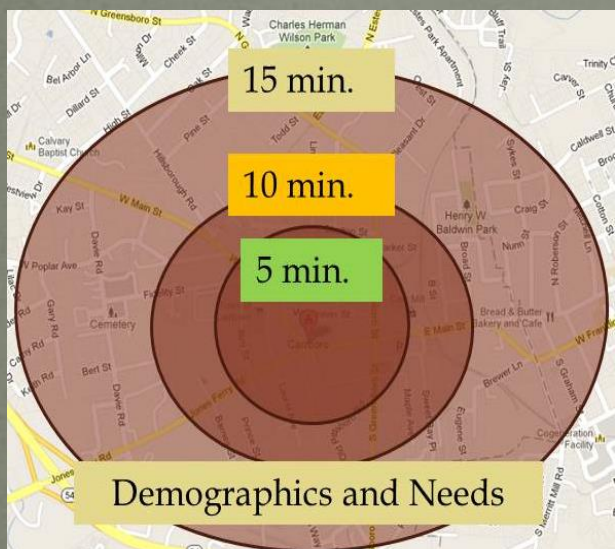
Strategic Planning Process

- Establish internal/external steering committee
  - Must have staff to vet goals and their viability
- Develop or revisit strategic plan
- Sticky Wall process
- Repeat on a smaller scale CNA process to get community input:
  - Focus Groups
  - Community Forums
  - Online Survey

Data Dashboards

- Goals need metrics, data, and formative and summative evaluation
- Input-Output framework – not going to happen unless you invest resources and time to getting it done
- Data dashboards reflect at-a-glance summations of current (and future) status

Libraries of the Future?

- More real-time analysis and responses to community
- Needs may stay more static, means in which they are met will change.

Demographics and Needs

15 min.

10 min.

5 min.

1. Books and other print and non-print resources

2. Children's programming and resources

3. Technology (computers, internet access, online resources, e-books, training, etc.)

4. Library as place (community center, quiet place to study, read, etc.)

5. Education and self-enlightenment (knowledge access, tutoring, after school programs, training workshops, etc.)

Q & A