

LIBRARY

Service Description

The Eugene Public Library provides a variety of informational, educational, and recreational material to library patrons. The Library champions intellectual freedom in the range of ideas and beliefs in the collections and services provided, including programs and displays.

Library services are provided through three facilities: the Downtown Library, at 100 West 10th Avenue, the Bethel Branch, located in west Eugene, and the Sheldon Branch, on Coburg Road in northeast Eugene.

In the 2005 Eugene Community Survey, 71% of Eugene households surveyed reported that a family member had used the Library in the past year up from 58% in 2003. Nearly 90,000 Eugeneans have library cards. In FY07, 2.58 million items were checked out from the Downtown Library and branches, more than doubled from 1.22 in FY01 (prior to the move to the new Downtown building).

The Library's collection of over 450,000 items varies in content and format. The Library subscribes to over 1,000 newspapers, magazines and electronic reference sources, including access to 9.6 million articles online, most in full text. Topics of specialized databases include health, medicine, and alternative medicine, genealogy, education and school financial aid, jobs and careers, grants, auto repair, and antiques. To ensure accessibility to all, the Library has specialized collections of large-print, foreign language, and non-print materials (e.g., audio books on tape and CD, videos, and DVDs).

Library staff serves community members of all ages by providing reference assistance and reader's advisory in person and by phone. Nearly 130,000 reference questions were answered in FY07.

In FY07, the Library sponsored over 1,000 free programs and events for all ages from infants to seniors. Included were storytimes, book groups, author talks, workshops, classes, performances, cultural entertainment in conjunction with the First Friday Art Walk, and informational and cultural displays. Total program attendance is about 40,000 annually.

Library services are also available 24/7 through the "virtual branch" of our web presence (www.eugene-or.gov/library). Services include full access to Library's catalog and patron account management, subscription database access, questions answered by reference librarians through L-Net, and the ability to download audio books (MP3 format), movies and educational TV programs. Other services include connection to after-school Live Homework

Help with online tutors and the ability to take onscreen practice tests, from the SAT to civil service exams.

In the City's largest volunteer program, more than 275 volunteers donated over 24,000 hours in FY07, for such projects as processing new materials, repairing books, maintaining the database, making displays, putting shelves in order, shelving materials, delivering books to the homebound, and assisting Internet users.

The FY08 authorized staffing level for the Library is 106.4 FTE, 39.5 FTE of which are funded by the Library local option levy.

Historic Perspective

- 1904 Eugene Public Library was established in a private residence.
- 1906 Eugene's Carnegie Library opened at 11th and Willamette to become the first such building in Oregon. Eugene's population is 6,000.
- 1959 Downtown Library (37,000 square feet) opened at 13th and Charnelton. Eugene's population is 58,500.
- 1962 Bookmobile service started.
- 1979 First library computerized catalog system was implemented.
- 1992 EPL was combined with the Hult Center and Recreation to form a single department: Library, Recreation and Cultural Services (LRCS).
- 1994 Council forwarded two bond measures containing a new Library to voters; both were narrowly defeated.
- 1995 First Public Internet access was provided through grant funding.
- 1998 Mayor's Library Improvement Committee appointed. Acting on recommendations from this committee, Council dedicated downtown Urban Renewal Funding to construct new main Library. Voters approved a four-year local option levy for Sunday hours, to establish and operate two branches, and to provide FF&E and operational funds for the new Downtown building.
- 2000 The first Eugene branch libraries opened: Bethel Branch and Sheldon Branch.
- 2001 Mayor's Library Improvement Committee reconvened to make recommendations for renewal of the levy through 2007.
- 2002 Voters renewed a four-year local option levy to continue branches, provide operations and staffing for larger new main library as well as enhancing services and extending hours. Library moves into 96,700 square feet of the new building on December 26. Bookmobile service ended. Eugene's population is 140,550.

- 2004 Initiation of expanded hours supported by local option levy begin. Downtown is open seven days (64 hours) per week; branches are open 6 days (56 hours) per week.
- 2005 The citizen Library Advisory Board was established under the City's departmental advisory committee structure. This eight member Board advises on Library policy direction.
- 2006 Voters renew a four-year local option levy at a rate of approximately \$37 annually for the owner of an average Eugene home (in 2006 the owner of an average Eugene home paid \$69). As part of the resolution referring the measure to the voters, the City Council expressed its intent to increase the dollars from the General Fund to make up the difference in order to maintain the current level of Library services. As part of that same resolution, the council also expressed its intent that Library services would be fully transferred to the General Fund over the four-year period of the levy. Library adopts new Strategic Plan, using the Public Library Association's "Planning for Results" process.

Citizen Involvement

EPL has a rich history of public involvement. The service was guided by the Library Board from 1904 to 1993. Special ad hoc committees have been formed on an as-needed basis, including the Library Revenue Advisory Committee (1993), Library Service Alternatives Committee (1995) and the Mayor's Library Improvement Committee (1998 and 2001). Beginning in 2005, a newly reformed eight-member Library Advisory Board (departmental advisory committee) has advised the Library, Recreation, & Cultural Services (LRCS) Department on library policy and services.

In addition to a core of dedicated EPL volunteers, significant citizen involvement occurs through two associated non-profit groups: The Friends of the Eugene Public Library and the Eugene Public Library Foundation. These two groups augment library funding and services, and champion library causes within the community. The annual donations from the Friends provide the majority of funding for library programs, such as weekly children's storytimes. The Foundation raised \$5 million for the Downtown Library capital building project and is now concentrating on building an endowment.

Customer Input

Library services are included in the Eugene Community Survey. In the 2005 Eugene Community Survey, the City is perceived by the majority of respondents as "doing an above average job at providing adequate library services." The Library has infrequently conducted an in-depth customer survey, the most recent survey of which occurred in 2001. General feedback is also collected continuously, though less formally, through patron comments, suggestions and through "Library Ask Us" on the website. The

Library staff regularly analyzes usage statistics and purchase requests to assess demand for collections and programs. In addition to these established customer feedback and assessment activities, the Library staff conducts targeted marketing surveys on special programs and services.

Mission

Eugene Public Library supports an informed community, lifelong learning, and the love of reading by providing access for all city residents to the universe of ideas and information.

Outcomes

- Promote life-long learning, literacy, and family and personal development, as well as the information to help individuals meet their basic needs with dignity.
- Encourage intellectual freedom through providing a diverse and intellectually stimulating collection of materials and through responsiveness to the community's needs and desires.
- Preserve and enhance livability and provide a variety of educational and recreational activities, accessible to all.
- Foster an experience of community for all patrons at the Library by providing a safe and welcoming environment.
- Strengthen and support the regional economy.

Operating Principles

- Intellectual Freedom. The Library supports and defends everyone's right to read, listen, view, and think as he or she chooses. The Library's records are confidential under Oregon law.
- Patron Service. The Library provides the highest quality of patron service possible by maintaining balance between individual patron needs, consistency and equity of services, and library efficiency.
- Diversity. The Library promotes diversity in staff, collections, and programs. The Library responds to diverse community needs with bi-lingual positions, collections, signage, handouts, web pages, adaptive technology, and multi-cultural programs. The Library is also designated as a discrimination-free work zone.
- Professional Standards. The Library maintains a high standard of long range planning and professional development. We use public money and resources wisely. Staff recently completed a gap analysis of EPL's services relative to the Oregon Library Association's Standards. EPL is currently "adequate" in all areas (governance, access, staff, materials and services, technology, community involvement, facilities).

Current Operating Environment

External Trends

Government Fiscal Measures

For the past several years, the Library's budget has remained flat while the public demand as well as the major costs to provide the service (personnel, facilities, technology support and contracts) continue to rise. In addition, schools and human service agencies are dropping services due to their own budget dilemmas. School districts 4J and 52 have radically decreased levels of in-school library services. This has shifted demand for library services to the public library, without any additional resources for support.

Growth

Demand for library services increases with the growth of Eugene's population. The Library not only serves more citizens, but must also find the right branch locations and service mix to respond to geographic and demographic changes, such as increased single parent families and ageing populations.

Regional Demand

Lane County has not provided library service to those outside Eugene City limits since 1988. The growing demand for regional library services may provide opportunities for partnership, but is not seen as a responsibility of the City of Eugene.

Economic Disparity

Job creation in Oregon is tending to be increasingly at high tech/high income and service/low income ends of the economic spectrum. Family wage jobs for those without higher education are disappearing. While those with a lot of disposable income may tend to use private sources (e.g., subscribe to magazines, buy their own books, have computers in their homes) rather than public library service, those with the lesser disposable income continue to rely on public library services for their complex informational needs.

Customer Feedback

In the December 2005 Community Survey, Eugene is perceived by the majority of respondents as doing an above average job at providing library services, and when asked if they or a family member had used various city services in the past year, respondents cited library services as the second highest used service (71%, up from 58% in 2003). A 2001 patron survey identified "feeling safe and welcome" as the most important aspect of library service, followed by books (non-fiction, then fiction), clean restrooms, and reference service.

Internal Conditions

Facility

Eugene's Downtown Library, located on the first three floors of the new building which opened in December 2002, provides an excellent facility with

ample space for another five years of growth. The two library branches, located in rented facilities, extend service to outlying quadrants of the city.

Dependence on Time-Limited Funds

Public demand and support for extended hours and branch services put the City for twelve years in a position of depending on time-limited local option levy funding to support a large portion of the Library's operating budget. As part of the resolution referring the last levy measure to the voters in May 2006, the City council expressed its intent to increase the dollars from the General Fund to make up the difference in order to keep the current level of Library services. As part of that same resolution, the council also expressed its intent that Library services would be fully transferred to the General Fund over the four-year period of the levy.

Technology

Technology in public libraries is no longer just about maintaining operational efficiency and providing on site Internet access and non-print information sources for the public. The Library provides delivery of core services through the "virtual branch" of our website. Downloadable audio and video, electronic subscription resources including full text magazines, newspapers, health databases, business, do-it-yourself, genealogy, interaction with a reference librarian, and access to patron accounts and the Library's catalog are all available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, significantly expanding the Library's ability to meet the needs of the citizens we serve.

Professional Ethos

The principle of access for all is fundamental to the role of a public library, and continues to be valued by the citizens of Eugene. In Library policies and practices we exhibit the time-honored values of our profession as embodied in the Freedom to Read Statement, the Library Bill of Rights and the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association.

Performance Measures

Core Processes

Make a variety of materials available and accessible

- Maintain hours open to the public.
- Holdings per capita.

Provide Information

- Number of reference transactions.
- Number of website hits.
- Number of uses of specialized databases.

Provide programs

- Number of programs sponsored annually.
- Annual program attendance.

Total System

Effectiveness

- Library uses per capita.
- Circulation per capita.

Efficiency

- Expenditures per capita.
- Materials expenditures per capita.

Financial

- Percent of operating budget from:
 - General Fund
 - Trusts and Grants
 - Library Local Option Levy

Customer Satisfaction

- Percent of patrons that indicate they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with Library services on City and Library surveys.

Strategy 1: Secure stable funding to sustain Eugene Public Library services at current or enhanced levels, following the expiration of the current local option levy at the end of FY11.

Objective: By the end of FY11 the Library's operating budget will be absorbed into the City's general fund.

Work Activities:

- Work together with City Council, City Administration, City Finance and Budget, and the public to identify library funding for FY12 and beyond.

- Maintain strong ties with the two non-profit support groups: Friends of Eugene Public Library and the Eugene Public Library Foundation.
- Maintain an active and engaged citizen Library Advisory Board.

Strategy 2: Maintain public library services that are known for quality, sustainability and patron satisfaction.

Objectives: Maintain number of open hours per week at 176 systemwide.

Increase library materials budget to 10% of total Library operating budget or to \$7 per capita, whichever is greater.

Maintain the number of books in Library's collection to meet the Oregon Public Library standard of 2.5 books per capita.

Work Activities:

- Annually, complete a gap analysis of library service needs using the Oregon Public Library Standards.
- Assess and redesign systems as necessary to be responsive to patrons' informational needs.
- Provide excellent customer service: timely, accurate, knowledgeable, responsive and welcoming.
- Design EPL programs and services to reach community groups with diverse needs.

System Map

CORE PROCESSES

SUPPLIERS:

Vendors
Publishers
Grant agencies (e.g., State
Library)
Friends
Foundation
Performers

INPUTS:

Staff knowledge,
skills, abilities
Materials
Technology
Library facilities

Develop and provide public access to a diverse and stimulating collection of materials & information

Provide a high level of customer service, emphasizing the self-empowerment of users

Provide a variety of free public programming for all ages

FEEDBACK:

Surveys
Comments slips
Purchase requests
Usage statistics
Elections

OUTPUTS:

- Access to information
- Access to materials
- Information literacy (patrons learn to use the library)
- A literate community with access to culture
- A public building where people feel safe, valued, and welcome
- Investment in social equity for sustainable development
- Access to recreational reading, listening, viewing

DIRECT CUSTOMERS:

Students, home
schoolers
Readers
Independent learners
Researchers
City staff
Teachers
Non-native English
speakers
Homebound
Internet users
Families
Children
Teens
Parents
Daycare/preschoolers
Homeless
Disabled

STAKEHOLDERS:

City Council
City residents
Friends of the Library
EPL Foundation
Library Advisory Board