

PLAN FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

FY05 – FY08 ORGANIZATIONAL
STRATEGY FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

December 3, 2004

PLAN FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Brooklyn Public Library's (BPL) Plan for Public Service. With this document, the Board of Trustees, together with the Executive Director and her staff, will outline a plan of service designed to improve and expand the ways in which BPL is used; increase the library's importance in the lives of children; and create an organization that is easier to do business with for staff, vendors and library users.

The Plan for Public Service describes changing and enhancing the role of staff, and implementing a new structure for the delivery of public service. The plan anticipates greater communication and teamwork between neighborhood library and Central Library public service staff, and the support personnel who underpin our service to the public. This plan of service also highlights the importance of creating an organization that will be more flexible and more responsible.

The library has weathered a number of challenges in recent years. The national and local recession, and the resulting City budget crisis, has placed a tremendous strain on Brooklyn Public Library's budget. Since fiscal year 2002, the City of New York has reduced its operating subsidy to the library by \$15 million, or 21%. Given that 70% of BPL's budget goes toward personnel, and that most library staff provides direct public service, less money leads to libraries being open fewer hours. In addition, we've spent less money on books and other library materials as well as technology.

Brooklyn Public Library is well loved by those who use it and by those who understand the good work done by library staff each and every day. This reservoir of good will is a tremendous asset as the library moves forward and changes the way it does business.

The City and national economies appear to be rebounding, which should result in an improved and more stable budget picture. Combined with the vision of the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees, Brooklyn Public Library is poised for greatness.

We are excited about the potential impact of this plan for library users and staff alike. By redirecting resources to more efficient business practices, we will be better able to weather economic downturns. And, most importantly, we will begin to provide a consistent quality level of service that our public needs and deserves.

Board of Trustees
December 21, 2004

BACKGROUND

History:

BPL founded in 1897, is now in its second century of service. The library continues to serve the diverse communities of Brooklyn by serving as a center for learning and equity. BPL promotes literacy, provides programs that attract young people and adults to the library, and helps people of all backgrounds achieve their goals. As the nation's fifth largest public library system, BPL serves the borough's 2.5 million residents through the Central Library, Business Library and 58 neighborhood libraries, a bookmobile and a Kidsmobile. BPL neighborhood libraries are located within a half-mile of every Brooklyn resident.

Who We Serve:

Brooklyn is one of the five boroughs (counties) that make up New York City. According to the 2000 census, the total population of Brooklyn is 2.5 million. Of that population 7.4% is under 5 years old and 11.5% is 65 years or older. Almost 1 million of the 2.5 million, or 38% are foreign born and of that number about 20% are not US citizens. The top five languages spoken in the borough after English are Spanish (18%), Russian (6%), Chinese (5%), Yiddish (3%) and French-Creole (3%). The median household income in Brooklyn is \$32,135. Fully one-quarter of the population or 170,000 families live in poverty. 1.6 million Brooklynites are older than 25. Of that population, 484,000 or 31% have less than a high school education, and 414,000 or 27% have a high school education or GED.

Governance:

BPL's governing Board of Trustees consists of 25 members, including the Mayor of the City of New York, the Comptroller of the City of New York, the President of the Borough of Brooklyn and 22 Trustees half appointed by the Mayor of the City of New York and half by the President of the Borough of Brooklyn. The regular term of office is five years. The Board of Trustees sets policy for Brooklyn Public Library and has overall fiscal responsibility for the Library.

Funding:

Most of BPL's annual revenue comes from the City of New York (81% in FY 2004) and the State of New York (10%). The remaining support (9%) comes from a variety of sources including individuals, corporate and foundation support, as well as competitive government grants, the Federal e-rate program, investments, fines and fees.

Foundation:

The Brooklyn Public Library Foundation was established in 1997 as a vehicle for special funding for BPL programs and projects. The Foundation is a nonprofit corporation established by the Brooklyn Public Library's Board of Trustees. Foundation Board members are appointed by the BPL Board of Trustees and serve renewable three-year terms. The Foundation's purpose is to raise significant private support for cultural and educational programs, books and other library materials, new technology and capital projects, and to build an endowment for the library's future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brooklyn Public Library's (BPL) FY05-FY08 Plan for Public Service is organized by three goals identified by the Executive Director. Each goal is accompanied by a list of projects that most directly relate to the objective. Projects will be completed; new projects will be added. Benchmarks and annual review will identify changes in the plan. Progress will be measured against benchmarks.

Goal 1. More People Will Make More Use of Brooklyn Public Library in More Ways Than Ever Before

- Renovate Central Library Plaza & Construct Auditorium beneath
- Expand Adult Basic Instructional Services
- Enhance Public Programming Initiative
- Enhance Adult Services
- Enhance Library Services Advocacy
- Redesign Collection Development Process
- Develop a Strategic Marketing Plan
- Plan for the Visual and Performing Arts Library
- Develop Effective Web Content

Goal 2. Brooklyn Public Library Will Make an Even Greater Difference in the Lives of Children in Brooklyn

- Redesign of Children's Services/Summer Reading Program
- Design & Implement the "*First Five Years*" Program
- Implement the "*Learning in Libraries*" Project
- Design & Implement Project "*Teen Edge*"
- Train staff in "*Everyone Serves Youth*" Initiative

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY *(cont.)*

Goal 3. Brooklyn Public Library Will Become Easier to do Business With

- Become a Process Organization
- Revamp Books in Motion/Materials Handling
- Upgrade BPL Learning Systems and Opportunities for Staff
- Build a Catalog We Can Trust
- Complete Neighborhood Services Cluster
- Design “The Other Cluster”
- Create a New Model for Public Service Delivery at Highlawn Library
- Streamline Branch Renovations/Library Capital Projects Processes
- Finalize Space Planning for Central Staff Relocations
- Initiate Plans for a Centralized Administration Center
- Improve Public Safety
- Advance Technology Initiatives
 - Reorganize IT
 - Rollout & Maintain a Technology Refresh Program
 - Complete Rollout and Establish Maintenance Processes of the PC Reservation and Print Management System
 - Complete construction of Networking.NYC

GOAL I.

More People Will Make More Use of Brooklyn Public Library in More Ways Than Ever Before

Definition: More people will have and use library cards. More books will be borrowed. More special programs for adults will be initiated, and achieve greater attendance. More people will visit their library – in person and via the web. We will redefine “Customer Public Service” to be sure we make all of our libraries welcoming, attractive and safe, and able to serve as the neighborhood community centers our public needs.

Action Steps:

- Renovate Central Library Plaza & Build Auditorium Beneath

Make the Central Library at Grand Army Plaza a primary destination for Brooklynites by recreating the Plaza into a grand and readily accessible civic space and by constructing a 200-seat state-of-the-art auditorium. This new facility will accommodate larger audiences for a wide array of diverse educational and recreational programs.

- Expand Adult Basic Instructional Services

Adult basic instructional services offered by BPL have doubled over the past year. The literacy and other basic instructional services offerings continue to grow as we document positive outcomes attract a wider variety of public; seek funds to attract more adults to our educational programs and work to serve the general public in new and different ways. We look to restructure the basic instructional services for adults, to expand the audience, to include branch staff, to actively evaluate the quality of programs and enlist user support.

- Enhance Public Programming Initiative

Coordinate and increase the offerings and venues for all of BPL's public programs. The Department for Programs and Exhibitions (formerly the Willendorf Division) will expand the scope of its programming effort on behalf of all BPL entities and expand the reach of our programming effort. By increasing the variety and number of public programs, BPL will reach a wider, and more diverse audience.

- Broaden Services for Adults

Improve services for our adult population by enhancing and increasing the visibility our Consumer Health programs through partnerships with local agencies; increase the number of book discussion groups throughout our neighborhood libraries and improve support for our Education and Job Information Center by seeking funding to add a second site at the Business Library.

- Advance Library Services Advocacy

Create an effective advocacy network for better financial support to the BPL library staff, Friends and Volunteers, Community Planning Boards and community organizations to ensure adequate city, state operating and capital support. Develop effective mechanisms to ensure that staff and Friends are provided with regular updates on the status of our budget, and participate in budget advocacy planning sessions so that they can increase awareness of BPL's needs among elected officials and community based organizations.

- Redesign Collection Development Processes

The Collection Development department will be reorganized to assure more community-focused, accessible and readily available collections in multiple languages and formats. All the library's collection development processes will be reviewed. The library will assess and benchmark selection, acquisition, cataloging and materials processing activities for continuous improvement and effective resource management. Collection Development staffing will be assessed and reorganized in order to guarantee maximum synergies afforded by the library's new integrated library system and strategic agreements with the library's materials vendors.

- Develop a Strategic Marketing Plan

Brooklyn Public Library needs to assess how and why patrons choose to take (or not) advantage of the services we offer. Through a Strategic Marketing Plan BPL will conduct a thorough market assessment. This Plan will allow us to determine what marketing strategies and marketing materials are the most effective in reaching the widest audiences.

- Plan for the Visual & Performing Arts Library

Plan and design the Visual and Performing Arts Library (VPA). This project is multifaceted. Elements of the project include: community outreach to the arts community and BAM; identification of VPA advocates; completion successful of the City pass-through process; design development with TEN Arquitectos, and development of a fundraising campaign.

- Develop Effective Web Content/Process Redesign

It is essential that our website be content-rich, dynamic and relevant to provide accurate information to the public. Staff will be directly involved with and responsible for identifying and establishing a process for maintaining effective content on the BPL website. The defined process will recognize the significance of superb web content in the daily activities of all of our librarian staff. This is one of three processes identified under the umbrella of “Becoming a Process Organization.”

GOAL II.

Brooklyn Public Library Will Make an Even Greater Difference in the Lives of Children in Brooklyn

Definition: Through our work with children from birth to five years old, along with their parents and caregivers, elementary and middle school children, and young adults we will better serve, and make a real difference in, the lives of Brooklyn's children. Brooklyn Public Library will become a recognized national leader in services to youth due to an enhanced and proactive curriculum of public programs, quality training initiatives and enhanced collections.

Action Steps:

- Redesign Children's Services and Improve Summer Reading Program Participation

Redesign Children's Services to include all aspects of work with children from ages 0 through 12. The new department will focus on children's "*First Five Years*" using what has been learned about the importance of reading to very young children. Particular emphasis will also be placed on our work with school-age children and on our collaborative relationship with the Department of Education. The Summer Reading Program will reach more children. The services of the department will include an improved web presence, upgraded training for staff, and an enhanced level of public program offerings to children, parents and caregivers.

- Design & Implement of the "*First Five Years*" Program

The First Five Years program fosters early literacy in very young children and models reading and verbal interaction for parents and caregivers. Initially, the program will pilot in 15 branches in Brooklyn's most at-risk neighborhoods and have the highest concentrations of children under five, per the 2000 Census. In particular, we chose areas with high concentrations of low-income, low literacy, immigrant, or minority families because children in these families traditionally have less success in accessing literacy and education.

- Implement the “*Learning in Libraries*” Project

This is a youth services grant funded by the Wallace Foundation to improve BPL’s services to school age youth and to foster greater collaboration with the other NYC libraries. Specific initiatives include enhancement of the Book Buddies and Homework Helpers programs, and enhanced collection of books and other resources to support the public school curriculum. Partners in this project are the Wallace Foundation, the Urban Library Council, NYPL, and QBPL. The project is funded for three years at \$2 million.

- Design & Implement Project “*Teen Edge*”

Funded by the Department of Justice through an appropriation spearheaded by Congressman Ed Towns, this delinquency prevention program is designed to increase the productive involvement of adolescents in the library and community through a collaboration of BPL staff, Youth Counselors, and Teen Peer Mentors. Targeting three libraries, the project will involve community teens in programs and activities designed to reduce the number of security incidents involving teens and prepare them to be successful in school and the job market. Training will be developed to teach library staff to work more effectively with teenagers.

- Train Staff in “*Everyone Serves Youth*” Initiative/OST

Spearheaded by the City of New York – the Everyone Serves Youth – Out of School Time initiative offers safe and developmentally appropriate environments for children and youth when they are not in school. These programs support the academic, social, physical and emotional development of young people, and serve the needs of NYC’s families and their communities. Government service providers and funders are partners in supporting an accountable and sustainable ESY/OST system. As part of our goal of making a difference in the lives of Brooklyn’s children, BPL will train all staff in how to work with children better based upon Everyone Serves Youth principles.

GOAL III.

Brooklyn Public Library Will Become Easier to do Business With Both Internally and Externally

Definition: It will be easier for library users to do business with Brooklyn Public Library. In addition, it will be easier for external organizations and internal clients to do business with the library's administrative units. For example, it will be easier to get a library card, to borrow books, and to sign up to use a computer. It will be easier to find what you want by using the BPL website.

By becoming a process organization, staff will learn to identify problems and review and improve their workplace processes. There will be emphasis on learning project management as well as collaboration skills. We will learn to work smarter, not just ask staff to work harder. By becoming a process organization, we will allow staff to identify what they need, and the organization will support staff in acquiring the skills necessary to accomplish those tasks.

Action Steps:

- Become a Process Organization

BPL must review its current processes and “redesign” or replace those that are currently inefficient, poorly measured, and not focused on customer satisfaction. BPL has enlisted the help of Hammer and Company, which offers exceptional training in “business process redesign.” Nearly 25 staff members have completed portions of the Hammer program. Three staff members have been certified as Process Masters. BPL has identified the following initiatives – Books in Motion, Development of Web Content, and, Learning Systems and Staff Opportunities Deployment - as areas for redesign using the “Hammer” model.

- Revamp Books in Motion/Materials Handling Processes

This is one of the three, yet most “core” of the processes identified under the “Becoming a Process Organization” initiative. We need to

find space to process holds and store collections from neighborhood libraries that are closed for renovations. Space must accommodate the interlibrary delivery function. Project includes the redesign of processes for moving materials around the system, so we can get them where they are needed as quickly and easily as possible. We will identify financing to cover lease and ongoing operating expenses for new space, and costs associated anticipated delivery truck fleet expansion.

- Upgrade BPL Learning Systems and Opportunities for Staff /Process Redesign

One of the three processes identified under the “Becoming a Process Organization” initiative. Establish a collaborative, cohesive training program that transforms BPL into a learning organization. Through a well-structured learning systems program, BPL will build upon staff skill sets and desires for advancement in the organization and prepare staff for new technology and changes in how we do business.

- Build a Catalog We Can Trust

Develop a catalog that adequately reflects our holdings. There is a large amount of inaccurate information in the BPL catalog. These inaccuracies frustrate both the public and staff. The implementation of library user-based holds on the OPAC has highlighted this problem. We will develop a short-term solution that will address the most pressing issues. At the same time, we will develop a long-term strategy that will address the remaining problem and create in a catalog that is an accurate reflection of our collections.

- Complete Rollout of Neighborhood Libraries Clusters

Implement a user-centered public service organization. Built upon the Branch Leadership Initiative, Clusters are designed to develop teamwork and leadership skills among staff, so that they can engage community and help inform management’s decisions. Line-level staff that perform direct public service and interact with library users will inform the decisions of management. Ultimately 56 neighborhood libraries will be organized into 14 clusters.

- Design and Implement “The Other Cluster”

Establish organizational and administrative relationships for BPL units focusing on Reference, Instructional Services, programming and more. The “other” cluster will include the Central Library, the Kings Highway Library, the Adult Learning Department and the Business/Brooklyn Heights Library. This cluster may also include the Visual & Performing Arts Library.

- Create a New Model for Public Service Delivery at Highlawn Library

Create a new service model by renovating the Highlawn Library to make it more physically appealing and, at the same time, structure services to make it easier for users to do business with the library. Through the installation of express check out machines and return slots, users will be able to more easily borrow and return library materials. The children and teen areas will be made more attractive with the installation of additional computers. The staff room will be renovated to create a more efficient workspace. Additional popular library materials and better merchandising will increase circulation.

- Streamline Library Renovations/Capital Projects Processes

Develop a coordinated Capital rebuilding program that will inform the renovation process from start to finish. By working collaboratively with both internal and external customers, BPL will improve the development of the building program, solicit more support from public officials, and provide better information regarding a project’s timeline(s) and impact(s) on the community. In addition, we will develop a coordinated, streamlined closing and reopening process that will improve communication and reduce unnecessary steps.

- Finalize Space Planning for Staff Relocations

Relieve space constraints at the Central Library by locating office space for non-public service units. With so many upcoming construction projects at Central, there is simply not enough space to accommodate Central Library staff. It makes sense to relocate non-public service staff unit’s offsite – (see Initiate Plan and Identify Space for Centralized Administrative Center).

- Initiate Plans and Identify Space for a Centralized Administration Center

Identify new space to accommodate centralized administration office operations for the BPL system, including all non-public service administration units such as Information Technology, Finance, Human Resources, Marketing and Communications, Friends and Volunteer Services, as well as Public Service units currently housed in alternative spaces around the borough. This would release much-needed space for Central Library operations.

- Improve Public Safety

Improve and upgrade safety and security at BPL by adapting the current Emergency Preparedness Plan to conform to NYPD's Incident Command System management format, evaluating the fire safety mechanical system of all 60 units of BPL and establish an OSHA compliant preparedness program for BPL.

- Advance Technology Initiatives

BPL has established a series of initiatives to streamline technology-based activities and focus on Information Technology as an essential component of public service work. The staff of the library will focus on the following four areas of IT work:

- *Reorganize IT*

Reorganize the Information Technology function into four streamlined consolidated areas: IT Operations, Access Services, Online Library Services and Applications Support. This will more appropriately position IT's role as an enterprise-wide public service organization.

- *Rollout and Maintain a Technology Refresh Program*

The library's public PCs and network infrastructure are more than four years old. Since the implementation of the Technology Initiative in the late 1990's, there have been no major technology upgrades. The Technology Refresh program includes system-wide replacement of all public-use PCs, system-wide upgrade of desktop application software, system-wide network equipment

replacement and formulation of an ongoing cyclical technology maintenance plan.

- *Complete Rollout and Establish Maintenance Processes for the PC Reservation and Print Management Project*

Transition from the large-scale project planning and implementation phases to the ongoing service delivery phase, by reorganizing the main project team into a smaller operations group that will daily manage the service provider relationship, oversee ongoing contractual deliverables, and monitor customer satisfaction.

- *Complete Construction of Networking.NYC*

In partnership with the Consortium for Worker Education, Brooklyn Healthnet/BICNET, Queens Technology Consortium and Washington Heights-Inwood Advanced Telecommunications Coalition, BPL will begin the implementation of its portion of the first phase of a technology network serving low-income communities in Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan and the Bronx. Once the project—to be carried out over two phases—is complete, the five partners will support a videoconferencing network for nearly 240 schools, libraries, and assorted community-based organizations.

Since 1999, this network has been funded with \$11 million in allocations from the federal E-rate program and a \$9 million grant from the NY State Diffusion Fund.

Since 2000, Verizon has installed the infrastructure for about 60% of BPL's Phase One sites. BPL will begin working with these sites to install and test equipment, train site staff, and provide general tech support while Verizon continues to connect with remaining sites.

FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

Challenges and Assurances:

Definition: In order for library staff to properly assess the implementation potential of each initiative, potential challenges to a successful implementation were identified, as were the assurances that the outcomes of the initiatives outweighed the challenges. Identifying challenges should help prepare for a positive outcome.

Challenges:

- Size and complexity of the VPA project
- Space constraints, particularly at the Central Library and in a number of the smaller, multi-floor neighborhood libraries
- Significant internal competition for limited resources
- City of New York unsystematic challenges to construction programs delay many projects; shifts in project timelines are constant

Challenges Due to Lack of the Following:

- Consistent annual funding from the City and State of New York
- The ability to retain key staff
- Staff acceptance of new/additional responsibilities
- Sufficient number of children and young adult librarians to successfully implement the youth-based initiatives
- A catalog that accurately reflects BPL's holdings
- Need for training for staff in good advocacy practices, especially to help public service staff understand the importance of advocacy. Adequate training facilities for staff and public
- Capacity to deliver on a full-scale "holds" process

Prospective Assurances:

- BPL has the potential to be an institution whose cutting-edge approach to library services is singularly responsible for transforming the stereotypical thinking about libraries.
- BPL will have an improved process for managing the movement of items including holds through an upgrade to the inter-branch delivery system.
- BPL will have a catalog that accurately reflects its holdings.
- We anticipate a dramatic improvement in core business processes because BPL staff is being trained to understand their work as an efficient end-to-end process.
- Branches and Central areas under renovation will be closed to the public a minimum amount of time by reducing the time for the internal closing and reopening processes.
- The newly constructed plaza and auditorium at the Central Library will provide BPL with the quality space necessary for improved programming and make the Central Library a destination for Brooklyn residents.
- Staff has a safe, clean and well-equipped work environment.
- Internet services offered by BPL will be improved by participation of staff in developing improved content, and by staff's increased skills in using the Web.
- BPL programs will regularly reach people of all ages and cultures throughout the borough.
- BPL will make a significant contribution to improved reading scores and educational attainment of Brooklyn's children.
- BPL will be understood as a partner with parents and caregivers to provide their children with enriching programs to support a child's development.
- Teens will see the library as a positive and constructive environment where they can find information they need for school and for life. Teens will also see the library as a wonderful first job.
- Teens and adults seeking health-related information will be well served by a library staff trained as "certified" consumer health librarians.
- Brooklyn's senior population will become enfranchised through the technological enhancements and instruction BPL has put into place.

- By expanding instructional services for adults, BPL will be identified as a certified, quality adult education provider on par with the DOE and CUNY.
- Important partnerships with many city and private agencies; BPL can use these partnerships as a resource for long-term success for many of the initiatives in this Plan.
- Improved Tri-Li relationship based on collaboration and mutual successes.
- Great advocacy leads to increased library funding.

Resource Requirements:

- **Personnel:** These initiatives cannot succeed without work by library staff. Some initiatives call for additional limited staffing. Nearly all initiatives call for additional redirection of staff efforts.
- **Technology:** Initiative requirements include a variety of equipment, computers, RFID (Radio Frequency Identification tags), and providing all library locations for wireless access.
- **Financial – Operating:** Many initiatives will need additional operating support in order to accomplish stated objectives. The additional operating support will fund staff training and development needs, consultants for assessment purposes, and costs for enhanced programming initiatives.
- **Financial – Capital:** Capital work at neighborhood libraries and construction of the VPA will need significant capital funds. BPL will seek capital funding from the City of New York for these as we acquire a new warehouse, relocate administrative office space and install self-service technologies and equipment.

ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS

As a part of the Board of Trustees' annual budget process, the board will evaluate the Plan for Public Service as follows:

- Per fiscal year during the budget process:
 - Establish goals/objectives to accomplish during the coming fiscal year
 - Assess progress in accomplishing goals established during the prior fiscal year
 - Maintain a dynamic planning process by adjusting the plan to reflect objectives/projects that were accomplished; add new projects as necessary
- Conduct a midterm review of accomplishments toward established goals and make adjustments accordingly

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

- **Ginnie Cooper** Executive Director
- **Siobhan A. Reardon** Deputy Executive Director
- **Janet Kinney** Deputy Director for Public Service
- **John Vitali** Deputy Director for Business Administration
- **Mary Graham** Director, Neighborhood Services
- **Dionne Mack-Harvin** Director, Central Library Services
- **Lawrence Jennings** Director, Human Resources
- **Barbara Genco** Director, Collection Development
- **Steven Schechter** Director, Government & Community Affairs
- **Carol Linn** Coordinator, Special Projects & Policy Analysis