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**LIBRARY SERVICES ELEMENT**

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# LIBRARY SERVICES ELEMENT

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Purpose

The purpose of the Library Services Element of the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan is to ensure the provision of library services to residents. This Element is optional, not required by Chapter 163, F.S., but has been prepared as pursuant to Rule 9J-5, F.A.C. The standards set in this Element will guide the future development of the Library System. The County is responsible for the funding and operation of the Palm Beach County Library System through the Palm Beach County Library District. The Library is the community's primary agency for storage and retrieval of information. The Palm Beach County Library System is an institution available to all residents regardless of economic or educational level, physical handicap, race, creed or national origin. It provides access to information, ideas and cultural expression objectively and is dedicated to representing all viewpoints on issues. The Library System is instrumental in developing a sense of community and local pride in the County by providing a forum for discussion of issues important to the community as a whole.

### B. Assessment and Conclusions

To ensure the quality of service throughout the Library District, the Library System provides for three levels of service:

- a first tier, through the neighborhood branches;
- a second tier, through regional branches; and
- a third tier, through the Main Library, which also serves as the final resource for all of the smaller facilities in the District.

In 1989, the Library System was comprised of eleven locations totaling 112,290 square feet, which represented 0.22 square feet per capita. An additional 104,660 square feet was added as a result of the Library Expansion Program I, which was completed in 1997. This ambitious expansion program increased the number of facilities to fourteen and the square feet per capita to 0.36. The population adjustment brought by the 2000 Census, however, showed that recent renovations and expansions have failed to maintain the 1997 level of service. The level of service for facility space has been eroded by population growth to 0.32 square feet per capita.

In 2002, voters overwhelmingly approved the issuance of bonds to help fund the Library Expansion Program II. The \$72 million program will be funded with income from the sale of bonds and impact fee revenues. Scheduled for completion in 2010, the second phase will add four branches for a total of eighteen, 187,705 square feet, and raise the facilities level of service to 0.46 square feet per capita. Despite these efforts, the Library System remains far below the nationally accepted service level of 0.60 square feet per capita. Similarly, additional increases in the holdings, information technology access, and professional and other staff levels are necessary to achieve State-recognized standards and to keep pace with growth.

To ensure that needs are met, the Library System utilizes a planning methodology based on its mission statement, that helps align the Library's long range plan, performance measures, budget document, and the goal, objectives, and policies of this element. This methodology is applied on an ongoing basis and provides for public participation.

## **II. GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

### **GOAL 1 PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES**

It is the **GOAL** of Palm Beach County to provide a Library System throughout the Palm Beach County Library District that serves the informational, educational, and recreational reading needs of residents of all ages, interests, and circumstances, thereby promoting the broad dissemination of knowledge.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1.1 Implementation**

All public activities concerned with the provision of library service in the Palm Beach County Library District shall be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Library Services Element and with all other elements of the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy 1.1-a:** The Library System shall provide the following programs of service based upon its Mission Statement:

- Circulation
- Reference
- Children's Programs
- Community Enrichment

**Policy 1.1-b:** The Library System shall annually evaluate the services provided and determine if the balance of library programs is appropriate to the needs of the community.

**Policy 1.1-c:** The Library System shall pursue the means to allow for the provision of equitable access to all library facilities, resources and services within the County by all County residents and to ensure equalization of Library Service throughout Palm Beach County.

**Policy 1.1-d:** The Library System shall review its long-range plan annually to ensure that progress toward the adopted levels of service is reflected in the Long-Range Plan objectives.

**Policy 1.1-e:** The Library System shall encourage public participation and comment in the planning process, including local public forums, focus groups, and user surveys that help assess user needs.

## **OBJECTIVE 1.2 Adequate Library Collection**

The Palm Beach County Library System shall adopt Level of Service Standards in order to provide the residents of the Palm Beach County Library District with a collection of library materials that will serve their informational, educational, and recreational needs by the year 2010.

**Policy 1.2-a:** The Library System shall provide two holdings per capita by the year 2010 to reach the basic service standard as stated in the revised Standards for Florida Public Libraries.

**Policy 1.2-b:** The periodical collection shall equal five periodical and newspaper subscriptions per 1,000 population to reach the basic service standard as stated in the Standards for Florida Public Libraries.

**Policy 1.2-c:** The Library System shall conform to the Standards for Florida Public Libraries by providing information technology to expand access to information. The Library System will subscribe to or contract for services equal to a minimum of \$1.00 per capita and include in its annual budget requests automation equipment and related items necessary for public access to these services.

**Policy 1.2-d:** The Library System shall participate in regional, statewide and national consortia or networks to enhance access to information and achieve economies by sharing resources.

## **OBJECTIVE 1.3 Levels of Service: Staff**

The Palm Beach County Library System shall adopt Level of Service Standards to provide a library staff that is sufficient in number and in range of expertise to provide access to the library collection and to other information resources throughout the region, the State and the nation.

**Policy 1.3-a:** The library shall maintain the professional librarian staff at one full time equivalent (FTE) per 7,500 people by 2010.

**Policy 1.3-b:** The library shall maintain all other staff at 3.35 FTE per professional librarian FTE by 2010.

**Policy 1.3-c:** *(deleted in Amendment Round 06-1)*

## **OBJECTIVE 1.4 Level of Service: Facilities**

Level of service standards shall be set in order to provide for the effective housing of the library collection and for access to that collection and to other information available in the region, State, and nation.

**Policy 1.4-a:** At the completion of the second phase of capital expansion in 2010, the Library System shall provide 0.46 square feet of library facility space per capita.

**Policy 1.4-b:** The Library System shall monitor automation applications in the library community and make adequate provision in its annual budget to support changes in technology.

**Policy 1.4-c:** The Library shall prepare a needs assessment study in connection with Phase III of the Library Expansion Program (LEP 3).

## **OBJECTIVE 1.5      Funding**

Palm Beach County shall utilize (within the Library District) alternative methods for funding facilities, equipment, staff and collection acquisition.

**Policy 1.5-a:** The Library System shall consider and evaluate all revenue sources available to provide funding for operating expenses and capital improvements.

**Policy 1.5-b:** The Palm Beach County Library System shall continue its efforts to obtain state and federal grants to help fund the facilities, equipment, staff and collection of the Library System.

**Policy 1.5-c:** The Library System shall provide assistance and guidance to the Friends of the Library in their ongoing efforts to stimulate public support for the Library through private funding.

**Policy 1.5-d:** *(deleted in Amendment Round 06-1)*

**Policy 1.5-e:** The Library System shall continue the use of volunteers to enhance library service.

**ABBREVIATED AMENDMENT HISTORY**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Ord. No.</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
<i>Adopted</i>	<i>08/31/89</i>	<i>89-17</i>	<i>09/11/89</i>
<i>Revised</i>	<i>09/18/90</i>	<i>90-32</i>	<i>10/04/90</i>
<i>97-2 EAR Re-write Adopted, and 97-2 EAR Map Revisions Adopted</i>	<i>11/17/97</i>	<i>97-48</i>	<i>01/14/98</i>
<i>98-1 Corrective Ordinance (Policy 1.4-a)</i>	<i>9/16/98</i>	<i>98-46</i>	<i>11/12/98</i>
<i>99-1 Revisions - Revise Policy 1.4-c for consistency with the Managed Growth Tier System</i>	<i>8/17/99</i>	<i>99-29</i>	<i>10/14/99</i>
<i>01-1 Deletions – Existing and Future Conditions Sections deleted</i>	<i>8/27/01</i>	<i>2001-045</i>	<i>10/22/01</i>
<i>06-1 Revisions – Library Services Updates</i>	<i>8/21/06</i>	<i>2006-19</i>	<i>10/20/06</i>

**Note:** For a complete history of the specific changes to this element, please contact the Planning Division at (561) 233-5300.

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