



CITY OF WICHITA  
**WICHITA  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY  
BRANCH  
REVIEW**

Spring 2017

*Prepared by*  
Wichita State University  
Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs  
Public Policy and Management Center

*Misty Bruckner, Director*  
*Lisa Dodson, Senior Project Manager*

Wichita State University  
1845 Fairmount  
Wichita, Kansas 67260-0155

# Disclaimer

The study was conducted by the Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) at the Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs (HWS) at Wichita State University (WSU). The PPMC is an independent research body unaffiliated with the City of Wichita. This report was prepared by the research team. It represents the findings, views, opinions and conclusions of the research team alone, and the report does not express the official or unofficial policy of the HWS or WSU. Information for this report was supplied by the City of Wichita and additional sources. The accuracy of findings for the report is dependent upon these sources.

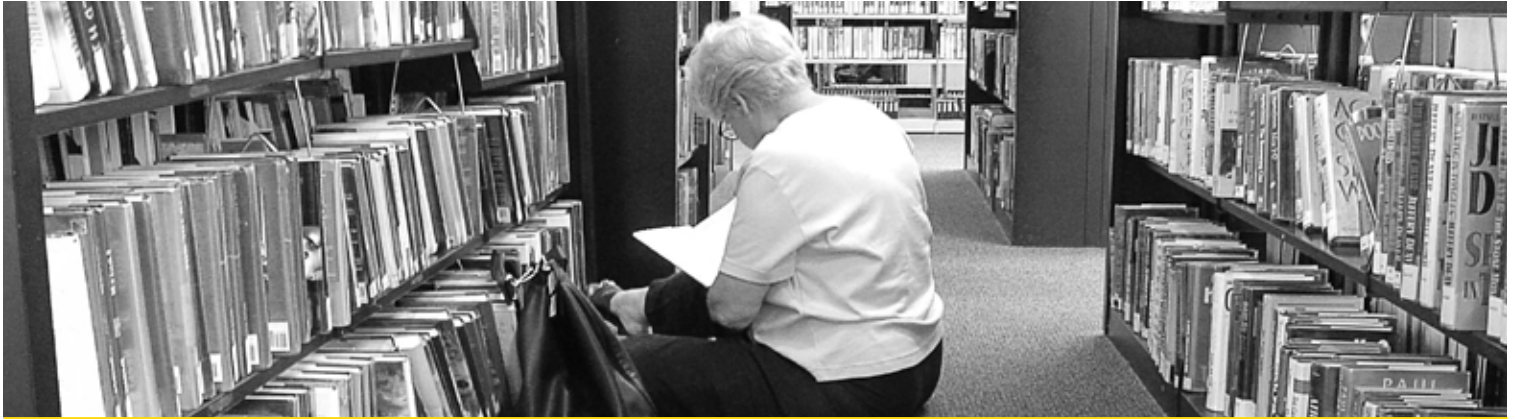
# Acknowledgments

The PPMC would like to thank the staff of the City of Wichita and community organizations interviewed. Specifically, the PPMC would like to acknowledge the following people for their contributions to the report: Cynthia Berner, James Covell, Paula Downs, Kristi McEachern and Kelsey Parker. In addition, the following Hugo Wall School graduate assistants provided research support: Kevin Ash, Craig Crossette, Sean Sandefur.

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	1
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE</b> .....	7
<b>3</b>	<b>PROCESS</b> .....	8
<b>4</b>	<b>LIBRARIES' CHANGING ROLES</b> .....	9
<b>5</b>	<b>NATIONAL TRENDS</b> .....	12
<b>6</b>	<b>WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY</b> .....	18
<b>7</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL BRANCHES</b> .....	25
<b>8</b>	<b>BRANCHES</b> .....	29
<b>9</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	48
<b>10</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	

# 1. Executive Summary



In a time when society is digitally connected and information is freely available, libraries are shifting from repositories of information that visitors consume to facilitators for community engagement including the interpretation and creation of new information. Libraries are critical community anchors that offer individuals opportunities for lifelong learning, literacy, personal and professional development, informed citizenship, recreation, research and empowerment in a complex world.

The traditional public library model was conceived in a time when information was scarce. But with the new networked world and the massive abundance of information the new public library model is one of access to community resources. Libraries are transforming to meet the needs of their communities through community building, fostering literacy, economic development and addressing social problems. With the construction of the new Advanced Learning Library, there is an opportunity to rethink how the branch libraries fit into the mission and purpose of the Wichita Public Library.

The City of Wichita requested the Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) at the Hugo Wall School at Wichita State University conduct an external and independent review of the branch library system including the following tasks:

1. Engage stakeholders to identify issues and challenges in delivering existing and new services at branch libraries
2. Review national standards and criteria in library services
3. Conduct interviews, observations and surveys with internal stakeholders
4. Assess site usage, evaluate user profiles, analyze initial market impact, facilitate community engagement and provide foundation for future planning

# COMPARISON INFORMATION & LIBRARY TRENDS

Research by the PPMC indicates there are several trends and changes in library services which the Wichita Public Library should use to strategically focus resources in the future. Some of the highlights from the research include the following information.

**Community Development** - Libraries serve an important role in community building through education, promoting democratic values, championing literacy and serving as a catalyst for addressing social problems.

**Economic Development** - Libraries support economic development by fostering employment and entrepreneurship. They serve as anchor institutions to help revitalize struggling neighborhoods and downtowns and provide a host of small business services and workforce development support for job searches, access to computers and workplace literacy assistance for English language learners.

**Mobile Library Services** - One of the most successful methods of outreach has been the development of the “pop-up” library locations around the community and bookmobiles, which are traveling libraries. Mobile library services have been successful in providing more literary opportunities in areas of town where people congregate.

**Expenditure Information** - The Wichita Public Library (WPL) is underfunded compared to peer libraries nationally and in Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska. Nationally, libraries spend \$36 per capita (ICMA, 2013). The WPL received \$21.97 per capita in income with \$20.82 provided by local government. This is 30% less than the Omaha Public Library and between 50-80% less than other area peers.

**Civic Discourse** - Libraries promote civil discourse through their ability to build small communities of difference, such as workshops and book clubs, that encourage people to engage in free inquiry and civic discussion.

**Society Resource Divide** - According to a study by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute of Literacy, 32 million adults (14% of the population) in the U.S. can't read and 29% of adults read at only a “basic” level. Economic security and the ability to actively participate in civic life all depend on an individual's ability to read and assess information. Libraries provide free and equitable access to information and play a key role in creating literate environments.

## MARKET IMPACT OF BRANCH LIBRARIES

The PPMC partnered with Civic Technologies to conduct a market segmentation analysis of the entire library system market and individual branch markets. The significant information gathered in this process provides a data mine that should continue to be explored in the future. There are 122,551 geocoded cardholders in Wichita who comprise 30% of the market and 285,867 non-cardholders, who comprise 70% of the market potential for expanding library services. In comparable studies conducted by Civic Technologies in other communities, Wichita is reaching less of their market share. Denver reaches 47% of the market; Las Vegas reaches 39% of the market. This report provides recommendations to expand Wichita markets.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL BRANCHES

The following are recommendations relevant for all branches and were universal in the feedback from surveys, focus groups and best practice information.

## **Leverage Customer Loyalty**

The City of Wichita and Library staff should be extremely proud of the loyalty developed with branch library users. Over 80% of all respondents for each branch were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their branch. The strong satisfaction ratings of services and staff indicates quality programming and strong relationships between users and providers. The loyalty from customers should not only be celebrated, but leveraged to reach additional markets.

## **Updates to the Buildings and Environment**

- Seating – Visitors indicated they wanted seating that accommodates families, specifically parent and child seating as well as comfortable seating for reading, studying and meeting in small discussion groups.
- Acoustics/Noise – Visitors want the libraries to provide designated spaces that accommodate various noise levels.
- Study Rooms – Visitors want meeting spaces that accommodate small study groups for school projects, tutoring services or neighborhood social groups.
- Meeting Rooms – Library users identified meeting rooms as an important neighborhood asset for community engagement. They identified the fees charged for meeting space as a barrier to library use.
- Arrangement of Shelves - Visitors wanted shelf arrangements by interest categories (e.g. mystery, wellness, sports).
- Colorful/Relaxing Décor – Focus groups indicated the library could do more to make their spaces colorful and appealing, including updating the children’s areas.

## **Develop Unique Branch Experience While Maintaining Connection to Central Services**

To ensure each branch can expand its market, all branch locations will need flexibility in programming and decision-making processes, in order to develop new programs, services, collections and partnerships that target their markets. Branches will need support to pilot different programming experiences and take some risks in customizing their branches to meet the unique needs of their audiences.

## **Expand Community Services and Programs**

Needs differ among branch service areas. Offering unique services and programs, such as culture-specific materials, citizenship information, job search assistance or bilingual services is important, in order to grow market reach.

## **Expand Partnerships**

Branches should identify and reach out to potential community partners including neighborhood leaders, businesses, community organizations and City services. Creating partnerships with schools will be critical in cultivating future library users and fostering community literacy.

## **Marketing**

Marketing efforts for branches need to consider the potential users identified in the research from Civic Technologies. Branches should develop strategies that reach these new audiences.

### **Revisit Policies of Data Privacy vs. Informational Marketing: Library “App”**

Users want a device application, or “app,” that pushes out information based on preferences, such as “you recently checked-out books about gardening, you might like to read this new library book.” The library must balance the philosophical policy issue of privacy of user data versus accessing user profiles to market or inform users about available library resources.

### **Collaborate with Regional Libraries**

The Wichita Public Library partners with area libraries on some programs. Individual branches can explore opportunities for partnerships with the communities closest to them.

### **Branch Engagement with the Public**

Branches need to re-think how they engage with the public. Expanding library services through the use of “pop-up” libraries and mobile libraries (bookmobiles) could increase reach to communities, such as southeast Wichita, that are underserved by library branches.

### **Strategic Planning to Identify Branch Goals**

It is important for each branch to define its unique community purpose and develop strategic priorities to meet community needs.

### **Alignment of Branches with Advanced Learning Library**

The construction of the new Advanced Learning Library requires the branches be integrated into the “make-over” through identification of new services that can be “pushed out” to branches.

### **Reduce Barriers**

More than 97% of the 1,840 respondents to the library online survey think libraries are important for our community. Interestingly, 71% of non-users also felt the library was important for the community. However, comments from non-users indicate a lack of understanding about the changing roles and services provided by libraries. The library needs to explore new ways of informing and educating the public about the social good and value-added libraries provide to the community.

### **Re-Evaluate Fee Policies**

Libraries serve an important function as gathering places for the community. Charging rental fees for the library meeting rooms is a barrier, limiting the potential use of library spaces. For some users, fines and fees are a reported barrier to library use. The current model of partial cost-recovery, through imposition of fines and fees, allows the library to offer free library cards. Analysis of the significance of revenues generated by fines and fees would provide a platform for discussion about alternative options and the trade-offs and implications for public policy.

### **Align Performance Expectations and Resources**

As noted previously, the WPL receives less funding per capita than other peer systems or smaller systems in Kansas. Budget and resource allocation will be an important policy conversation for staff and the City Council in the future. Resources, whether that is reallocation of existing resources or new resources, should be aligned with activities that reflect the policy priorities of the City. These activities may include increasing the number of users, impacting literacy, supporting workforce development, connecting branch users to the Advance Learning Library, improving quality of life or other priorities. The broader conversation encompasses the impact and expectations policy leaders have and how resources are allocated to support priorities.



# INDIVIDUAL LIBRARY RECOMMENDATIONS

While there are overall recommendations that are applicable to all branch libraries, the following provides a brief overview of services needed for individual branches.

## **Alford**

- Increase bi-lingual services
- Provide more self-checkout stations and other amenities to make it more convenient for patrons
- Focus on WiFi access and accessories, since Alford has the highest number of unique WiFi users after Central
- Develop partnerships specific for both children's programming and career services
- Improve seating as seating was marked as fair/poor more than any other branch
- Focus on services and marketing to families of limited financial means

## **Maya Angelou**

- Focus collections to provide more options on African-American culture
- Retool to become a resource for workforce development, from youth to adults.
- Concentrate on literacy needs of the area, which are significant, and emphasize children's literacy
- Provide additional printers and scanners to help job seekers and students
- Develop programming to focus on workforce needs
- Address implementing free class and meeting space as an important policy issue

## **Comotara**

- Create more of a "book store" look
- Provide "convenient" options for services
- Connect to other locations; the new Advanced Learning model will be of particular interest

## **Evergreen**

- Provide more materials in Spanish and also materials about American history, citizenship requirements, immigration information and other issues relevant to the Hispanic culture
- Emphasize the importance of focusing on literacy
- Provide resources for job and career development
- Connect technology services to literacy for children and job seekers
- Provide more technology access points, such as computers, tablets, software, and charging stations
- Develop programs that serve the full-family simultaneously

## **Linwood**

- Revamp the collection to focus on frequently requested items and to purge dated or unused materials
- Improve meeting space
- Partner with the recreation center for programming or shared space opportunity
- Re-evaluate hours of operation since this was defined as a user concern
- Improve external signage

## **Rockwell**

- Create the “bookstore” environment
- Explore opportunities to provide alternative library options (pop-up, mobile services, partnerships) due to the large geographic service area
- Operate Rockwell as a pilot test location for prototyping new programs and services planned for the Advanced Learning Library, since it mirrors the larger community demographics more than any other branch location

## **Westlink**

- Provide additional resources for customers who are more technology savvy and have a greater potential market for electronic books
- Create plans to address the space issue at Westlink: consider new location; establish new partnerships for shared space; and develop mobile or “pop-up” libraries to serve large geographic space
- Provide physical “make-over” at the existing facility to best utilize limited space resources

# 2. Background & Purpose



## BACKGROUND

In response to a request from the City of Wichita, the Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) at Wichita State University's Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs (HWS) assisted the Library department with research of their branch libraries to provide an overall assessment of usage, user profiles and market implications. The data collected develops an initial profile of each branch library, identifies information gaps for market analysis and starts a foundation for future planning for branch libraries as it relates to extending services of the proposed Advanced Learning Library throughout the branch system.

## PURPOSE

To provide external and independent review of the library branches, the City of Wichita contacted the PPMC to provide project management to include research, analysis, facilitation and assessment of the branch library system. The project assessed site usage, evaluated user profiles, analyzed initial market impact, facilitated community engagement and provided a foundation for future planning. In order to develop user demographic profiles, the PPMC partnered with Civic Technologies, a firm that specializes in library data and market segmentation analysis.

# 3. Process

All branches within the public library system were reviewed independently as part of the research process. The PPMC completed the following specific actions and tasks to complete the report:

## *Task #1: Best Practices and Industry Trends Research*

The PPMC in collaboration with staff from the library identified best practices in branch management systems and identified different approaches utilized by other successful communities. The intent of the research was to explore different management models and to provide alternatives for consideration for decision makers in the future.

## *Task #2: Assessment of Current Service Levels and Community Profiles*

The PPMC utilized Civic Technologies for analysis of data collected by the library system to identify user patterns and profiles for each branch location. Information included: demographics; material usage; facility check-out location; and usage trends. The PPMC worked with the library staff, the City Information Technology department staff and Civic Technologies to provide the analysis.

In addition, the PPMC team conducted observation assessments, library user surveys and online surveys to provide a snapshot of how patrons use the library, their impressions of the branches and their overall service perceptions.

## *Objective #3: Conduct Interviews with Internal Stakeholders*

Significant insight was gained by contacting the people most involved with activities at the branch sites. The PPMC conducted eight focus groups consisting of staff, user groups and branch library patrons at specific locations. This qualitative information provides additional perspectives to the quantitative information, best practices and industry standards research. In addition, a two-day workshop was conducted with library staff to review the data and discuss implications for each branch.

## *Objective #4: Develop a Final Report*

Information from all objectives is synthesized in this final written report, including next steps for consideration. Work products, including research, stakeholder engagement tools, data collection processes or other items used for work on the project are provided to the City of Wichita. Due to the volume of data, the survey and observation results and market analysis from Civic Technologies is provided electronically under separate cover to be used at the discretion of City staff.

# 4. Libraries' Changing Roles



In a time when society is digitally connected and information is freely available, libraries are shifting from repositories of information that visitors consume to facilitators for community engagement, including the interpretation and creation of new information. Libraries are a community multi-tool providing a conduit to free and equitable access of information. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization reports the role of libraries is to create and foster literate environments and embrace the responsibility to bridge social, political and economic barriers (Krolak, 2005).

The Pew Research Center in the Libraries 2016 study notes that “most Americans view public libraries as important parts of their communities, with a majority reporting that libraries have the resources they need and play at least some role in helping them decide what information they can trust.”

With the increasing proliferation of information from a wide variety of sources, citizens are turning to libraries as a resource to develop information literacy. The Pew Research Center reported that 77% of Americans believe that libraries are essential to providing resources they can trust and 66% feel that closing a public library would have a negative effect on their community. Libraries, as trusted institutions, help visitors acquire skills to locate, assess and evaluate information. Librarians educate visitors by encouraging critical thinking about sources and source credibility (Alvarez, 2016).

Libraries are critical community anchors that offer individuals opportunities for lifelong learning, literacy, personal and professional development, informed citizenship, recreation, research and empowerment in a complex world. In addition, libraries are transforming to meet the needs of their communities through community building, fostering literacy, economic development and addressing social problems.

# COMMUNITY BUILDING

Libraries serve an important role in community building through education, promoting democratic values, championing literacy and serving as a catalyst for addressing social problems. Libraries provide information and educational opportunities for all people through access to collections and free library programs for children, youth and adults. Libraries are embracing their role to support immigrants through materials and classes promoting citizenship. For example, the Oklahoma City's Metropolitan Library System has created a citizenship corner where immigrants can find resources related to becoming U.S. citizens. Libraries promote civil discourse through their ability to build small communities of difference, such as workshops and book clubs, that encourage people to engage in free inquiry and civic discussion.

# LITERACY

According to a study by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute of Literacy, 32 million adults (14% of the population) in the U.S. can't read and 29% of adults read at only a "basic" level. Economic security and the ability to actively participate in civic life all depend on an individual's ability to read and assess information. Libraries provide free and equitable access to information and play a key role in creating literate environments and promoting literacy (Krolak, 2005).

The National Literacy Trust, in a study of youth in the United Kingdom, found young people reading above the expected level for their age are twice as likely to be public library users. However, nearly half (47.8%) of young people report they do not use the library and the most common reason given was because their families don't use the library. Of the 43.8% of young people who do use the library the most common reason given was that the library had interesting reading materials.

Information literacy is the ability to recognize when there is a need for information and users have the ability to identify, locate, evaluate and use that information. Individuals are faced with the diverse and abundant information choices through unfiltered formats, raising questions about authenticity, validity and reliability. Libraries play an important role in promoting informational literacy and lifelong learning through access to information materials and technical assistance on how to use and evaluate information.

Libraries also play an important role in fostering the community's digital literacy. Digital literacy includes development of skills using computers, software, databases and other technologies for work, academic and personal goals. Many citizens depend on the public library for guidance in locating reliable information resources, access to digital technologies and assistance in learning how to use new information technologies. The Pew Libraries 2016 study found that 80% of Americans think libraries should offer programs to teach people digital skills, and 50% think this should include programs that teach new creative technologies like 3-D printing.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Leading libraries across the country now play an important role in economic development by fostering employment and entrepreneurship. They serve as anchor institutions to help revitalize struggling neighborhoods and downtowns and provide a host of small business services, such as video-conferencing, copy and fax machines, internet access, information about business planning, patents and trademarks.

Libraries support continuing education and workforce development through providing resources for job searches, access to computers and workplace literacy assistance for English language learners. The Tulsa City-County library offers an adult literacy program that includes English (ESL) literacy and Plan4College Centers that serve as a one-stop-shop for all college preparatory needs. The Omaha Public Library provides technological services that help patrons access and understand new software and devices ranging from tablets for reading or paying bills to using voice-to-text software.

Libraries are providing innovation centers, called maker spaces, which provide access to cutting-edge technological resources. Libraries are also providing business office space and business incubators for communities. For example, the Tulsa City-County Library provides a digital literacy lab, two flight simulators, and a maker space with an audio lab, 3D printing, wood carving and laser printing.

# SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Libraries also are partners in helping communities solve social problems. Public library populations have shifted to include more marginalized and disadvantaged groups, including immigrants, homeless and people with disabilities. Libraries serve as gateways to the community. For immigrants and non-English speaking populations, libraries provide information resources and offer services including citizenship classes, books and media in other languages, ESL classes and appointments with immigration information officers.

Many libraries are embracing the challenge of helping the homeless. The homeless go to libraries because it is a place of shelter, both physically and emotionally. Some libraries are actively working to connect the homeless to community services and information to improve their lives. For example, the San Francisco Public Library has a social worker who connects homeless and indigent patrons to available community resources and the Pima County Library in Arizona has hired public health nurses in its branches.

Libraries are developing more inclusive customer services and strategies to meet the needs of the disabled. Examples of services libraries provide include therapy dogs, sensory activities and enhanced training of library staff to better serve people with disabilities (Blank, n.d.).

Libraries serve as a portal for a wide range of community services that aid families in developing self-sufficiency. Nationally, the public library has evolved to become a community multi-tool offering assistance in job searches, literacy support, health resources, educational opportunities and government and community services.

# 5. National Library Trends

The slowing growth of registered borrowers and the decline in visits and in-library use reflect changing patron demands. Growth in libraries spending for print materials has slowed and libraries are making changes in the types of print materials that are purchased. Libraries are spending more on purchases of eMaterials and expanding programs and services, to include online services and materials readily available for download and use anywhere anytime. Libraries are offering a growing variety of tech equipment including circulating tablets, e-book readers, laptops and MP3 players (The 2015 Public Library Data Service, 2016).

According to the 2015 Public Library Data Service, libraries are increasing spending to improve services and offer new services aligned with changing patron needs to help reverse the decline in library usage.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Income and expenditures per capita have increased. Budget allocations are shifting to eMaterials and expenditures on staff.
- The mean number of paid staff has declined.
- Circulation has fallen by -1.25% per year since 2010.
- Registered borrowers and visits per capita, circulation per capita and in-library use per capita has declined. The slowing growth of registered borrowers and the decline in visits and in-library use reflect the changing demand for mobile phones and mobile browsing. As newer devices, including tablets, eReaders and netbooks become increasingly affordable and easy to use, the library website and online information sources provide an alternative to visiting the library.
- Steady increases in the average number of programs (5.9%) and program attendance (4.4%) suggest libraries are responding to shifting patron demands.
- Expanding services, such as lending tablet devices, continue to increase and libraries have diversified services to include online services and materials readily available for download and use anywhere anytime.
- Libraries are offering a growing variety of tech equipment including circulating tablets, e-book readers, laptops and MP3 players. Libraries also circulate digital cameras, video recorders, projectors, wattage meters and leap pads. “Libraries need to be tuned into the technology habits of each slice of the demographics that use our services” (M. Breeding, Library Technology Forecast for 2014 and Beyond).
- Libraries have been slow to incorporate social networking and support for mobile devices. As smart phone use grows, mobile usage and mobile apps will enable libraries to engage visitors in real-time, anywhere access to information.



The traditional public library model was conceived in a time when information was scarce. But with the new networked world and the massive abundance of information the new public library model is one of access to community resources. While libraries have a role to be responsive to the unique needs of their community, the library sector could benefit from identifying ways they can reduce inefficiencies through modeling management similar to business service providers. Robert McEntyre, former executive director of the New South Wales Metropolitan Public Library Association, maintains there is an economic imperative to change the way libraries work. He proposes libraries standardize, centralize, partner and outsource to provide responsive delivery and technical services (Norman, 2012).

The successful library model will: (1) pro-actively engage stakeholders; (2) promote value to the community; (3) engage in programs that emphasize literacies, storytelling, culture and life-long learning; (4) engage in partnerships; and (5) abandon the sacred cows and nostalgic views of traditional libraries (Norman, 2012)

## **Shared Service Model**

Libraries depend on public funding to provide “free access to information” but this access is not “free” for taxpayers. In a report by the Local Government Association in the United Kingdom options proposed to ensure survival of public libraries included a social enterprise model or a shared services model. The social enterprise model allows communities to play a more active role in running their libraries. These libraries are more likely to be co-located with other services such as government services, shopping malls, day care centers and churches. Social enterprise libraries depend on community volunteers. The benefit of this model is that it supports local government’s efforts to provide library services, while reducing costs and achieving social and economic objectives through community engagement.

The shared services model is a consortium model where members share a library computer management system and a joint catalog. Visitors can use their library cards in multiple libraries. The Kansas City Library Service Program is a consortium with 20 members that includes school, public, academic and special libraries.

## **Third Place**

Regardless of the management model libraries use, research is pointing to reinventing libraries as the ‘third place.’ If home is the first place and work or school is the second place, the library is becoming a ‘third place,’ reflecting the values and culture of the community. Libraries are a neutral space where the community can gather, interact and create. Libraries, as a cultural space, must be more than a multipurpose meeting room. Cultural spaces bring together museums, theaters, libraries and galleries with a management team and a synergy between planning and programs (Norman, 2012).

# PARTNERSHIPS

Libraries are maximizing their potential through partnerships with local government and community-based organizations. A report by the International City/County Management Association (2013) found libraries and local government leaders need to connect on community priorities, build partnerships and enable leaders at all levels of the organization. Library priorities are driven by the needs and opportunities of each community. Learning and literacy, public safety, environmental sustainability, economic development and cultural diversity all require innovation and partnerships. Once priorities are identified, it is essential for libraries to communicate their strategies to the public and to manage expectations.

## RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION ALTERNATIVES

Historically, library services have remained consistent, including loaning books, providing access to online resources and providing a quiet location to study. These services are adequate for the traditional customer base, but only reach a small portion of the overall community. Libraries around the world have attempted various new ways of distributing resources in order to reach a much larger segment of the population. Libraries are rethinking the roles of branch libraries and establishing new systems and partners for delivering services.

### **Technology**

Integrating technology, in addition to providing public computers, is critical for branch libraries' technology and technical services. The Monroe County Public Library in Bloomington transformed its movie and music areas into state-of-the-art digital creation space, which includes a green-screen video production studio and two soundproof audio recording studios. Libraries also offer media lounges, digital labs, and centers for education and technology (Morehart, 2015). Wichita State University Ablah Library added a creation space which includes a CAD workstation, an Android/iOS app development workstation, and a 3D printing area for students and community members to use (Wichita State University Libraries). While these examples are services currently offered at a central library, these services are also needed at branches.

### **Theme or Interest Specific Libraries**

Library branches are exploring themes, which are relevant and serve the local neighborhood. The East Hampton, New York, library adopted a sea-faring theme, including a boat as a reference desk and seagulls hanging from the ceiling. The Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales branch of the Denver Public Library uses a multi-colored design and a "library as a greenhouse" concept (Morehart, 2015). Children's areas can also include themes, for example the Brentwood Public Library in Tennessee has a forest theme for its Children's area (2010 Library Design Showcase).

Library branches are also blending functional and aesthetic qualities based on their community needs and resources available. Construction and renovations are embracing environmentally friendly features. The Medina Library in Ohio used low VOC carpet and paint, recycled upholstery and paneling, low-e glass windows which reflect heat outside, while reducing necessary lighting. Medina also added fireplaces to their fiction reading area and created a window in the children's department that looks into a working beehive. The Ocean City Branch in Maryland installed a geothermal heat-pump system, planted native vegetation that requires little watering and installed pervious pavement (2009 Library Design Showcase).

## **“Pop-Up” Libraries**

One of the most successful methods of outreach has been the development of the “pop-up” library. The New York Public Library was one of the first locations to have “pop-up” library locations. The Department of Urban Betterment first came up with the idea, leaving books on shelves next to pay phones around the city for residents to read at their leisure. This was initially unsuccessful, as residents had taken all of the books set out within six hours and the shelves were missing within several days. This did not deter the organization, who provided new painted shelves along with labels and stickers on each book stating “please don’t steal me and resell me, we’re trying to do something cool here.” Theft decreased significantly in the second attempt, and the libraries began seeing a large amount of interest from citizens around the city (Allen, 2012).

“Pop-up” libraries have been successful in providing more literary opportunities in areas of town where people congregate. Volunteers collected brightly colored furniture, books, and coffee mugs to set up “pop-up” library locations around New York City, such as a dreary bus stop or retail store in a rough area of town (Mack, 2012).

The Suffolk Public Library in Virginia also includes programming. Examples include kids’ crafts, story readings, or bringing a Nintendo Wii for participants to play. These “pop-up” locations almost always include laptops, iPads, and WiFi hotspots for internet connection on make-shift shelves which are easy to transport. The branch has issued 800 new library cards due to this initiative. Part of the outreach goal is to engage the community and present the library as relevant and forward-thinking (Brackney, 2015).

## **Mobile Libraries**

Mobile libraries, or bookmobiles, are not a new idea. They debuted “on feet and hooves” in 1901 for the State of Nebraska. Bookmobiles offer a full range of library services and make regular stops at schools, childcare facilities, assisted living and nursing homes, museums, and neighborhoods which have limited access to libraries due to geographic, financial and transportation needs. For example, instead of branch libraries, the Topeka Public Library uses bookmobiles that visit 24 locations each week, as well as an adventure mobile for school-age children. The Kansas City, Kansas, library has three bookmobiles, which visit thirty locations each week.

## **Electronic Books**

Electronic materials offer enhanced search capabilities. Users of E-books have rated the top benefits of reading electronically as enhanced user access, enhanced book functionality, and access to more content (Renner, 2009). While there are benefits to using E-books, there are also some downsides to switching from printed material. E-books do require power and technology, which can allow their access to be limited to those who have these resources at their disposal. The poor and elderly are potential groups that are limited in technological resources. Having limited power can also cause users with tablets to run out of battery while reading (Pettigrew, 2015).

## **Programs**

Libraries are facing challenges in delivering meaningful programs, especially teen programming. According to the American Library Association, teen programs are having little impact because they focus primarily on giving teens something to do rather than on outcome-based results. The most successful teen programs take into account community needs, teen wants and the library’s strength to formulate the best possible programs. Libraries can improve the impact of programs through community assessment and outreach.

Creating a new program and maintaining existing programs requires staff be able to justify the impact these programs have on the community. Data is needed to fully understand the impact of programs. However, usage statistics are often the only data available. The American Library Association is researching models for libraries to better measure the impacts of community programs.

# PURPOSE & VALUE OF LIBRARIES

Ultimately, a library is a reflection of the community it serves and the programs and services should reflect community priorities. Libraries measure success and value to their communities through three categories of benchmarks including community value, community engagement and organizational management. These measures extend beyond counts of check-outs or audience size. They are designed to measure outcomes and impact (Detez, Irfan, & Savic, 2014).

Community value benchmarks include: (1) digital literacy, measured by the availability of digital literacy training and individual technology assistance; (2) digital tools and resources, measured by support for digital content creation, monitoring the delivery of content, and resource on the library website; and (3) meeting key community needs, measured by support for workforce development, support for eGovernment and legal purposes, support for education, and support for health and wellness (Detez, Irfan, & Savic, 2014).

Community engagement is measured by benchmark indicators including: (1) strategy and evaluation, measured by relationship with community leaders, gathering community feedback, surveying patrons, evaluation of programs and services, and information based strategic decisions; (2) strategic partnerships, measured by partnerships and outreach activities; and (3) sharing best practices, measured by participation in a community of practice and gathering feedback (Detez, Irfan, & Savic, 2014).

Organizational management is measured with five benchmark indicators including: (1) planning and policies, measured by technology management policies; (2) staff expertise, measured by staff training, staff performance evaluation, and staff technology expertise; (3) devices and bandwidth, measured by device hours per capita, bandwidth capacity, time limits, and peripheral equipment; (4) technology management, measured by managing connectivity, minimizing out-of-service devices, and tracking technology use; and (5) technology inclusiveness, measured by accommodations for users with disabilities (Detez, Irfan, & Savic, 2014).

Libraries are a primary agent for social and economic change in any given community by providing education, information, personal development and inspiration. As the new town square, libraries are a place for people of all ages and backgrounds to seek help, connect with others and get access to the information and services they need (ICMA, 2013).

# INNOVATIVE TRENDS IN PEER LIBRARIES

A phone survey of peer libraries in Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska yielded several innovative ideas for library services and programs.

- A Library at Work initiative directly links the library to employers and allows for them to receive deliveries of books and other materials
- Specialty branches include Latino services and an environmental branch with science and technology programming
- Free “pop-up” libraries at bus stops and nursing homes, where library books culled from the collection are given away
- Mobile technology labs on buses
- Community outreach bookmobiles
- Book bikes, parked in various locations, offer books to check-out and a WiFi hotspot for internet connections
- Seed libraries for gardens
- Text to check-out, where library bar codes can be texted to check-out materials

# 6. Wichita Public Library

The Wichita Public Library has seven branch locations throughout Wichita that provide books, e-books, CDs, audiobooks, films, research data bases, computers, internet access and technical assistance. Programs for adults, teens and children include children’s story times, book discussions and special interest programs. Limited business services, such as copies and fax machines, are provided. Meeting space is also available for rent in some branches.

Over the past three years, all of the branch libraries have experienced a reduction of service hours and declining gate counts ranging from a drop of 9% to 19%. To develop an understanding of user needs and to identify recommendations for strengthening the branch system, this study surveyed six peer libraries, conducted 460 intercept surveys, convened seven focus groups, observed 250 users and analyzed 1,840 online surveys of the general public.

## PEER COMMUNITY FUNDING COMPARISONS

The Wichita Public Library (WPL) is underfunded compared to peer libraries nationally and in Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska. Nationally, libraries spend \$36 per capita (ICMA, 2013). The WPL received \$22.38 per capita in income with \$20.90 provided by local government. This is 30% less than the Omaha Public Library and between 50-80% less than other area peers. Spending on total materials was \$2.31 per capita compared to peers which range from \$3.75 to \$9.37 per capita. Total operations costs (\$21.78 per capita) are 30%-80% lower than peer libraries.

Table 1: Library Peer Comparisons – Per capita Income and Expenditures

Peer library location	Population	Income (per capita)		Expenditures (per capita)					
		Total Income	Local Gov. Income	Print Materials	CD/DVD	eBooks	Down-loadable	Total Materials	Operations
Wichita, KS	388,413	\$22.38	\$20.90	\$1.54	\$0.34	\$0.14	n.a.	\$2.31	\$21.87
Johnson County, KS	433,657	\$56.98	\$53.73	\$3.53	\$1.02	\$0.78	n.a.	\$7.47	\$54.19
Topeka & Shawnee County, KS	174,480	\$101.82	\$84.75	\$3.62	\$2.09	\$1.25	\$0.87	\$9.37	\$97.18
Kansas City, KS	154,083	\$54.71	\$39.14	\$3.52	\$1.23	\$0.39	\$0.29	\$7.67	\$74.33
Omaha, NE	527,393	\$27.77	\$25.62	\$1.93	\$0.56	\$0.23	\$0.11	\$3.75	\$25.74
Tulsa City-County, OK	629,598	\$54.07	\$51.68	\$3.49	\$0.93	\$0.34	\$0.39	\$5.84	\$41.03
Oklahoma Metropolitan, OK	766,215	\$44.56	\$42.46	\$3.09	\$1.73	n.a.	\$0.74	\$6.59	\$44.45

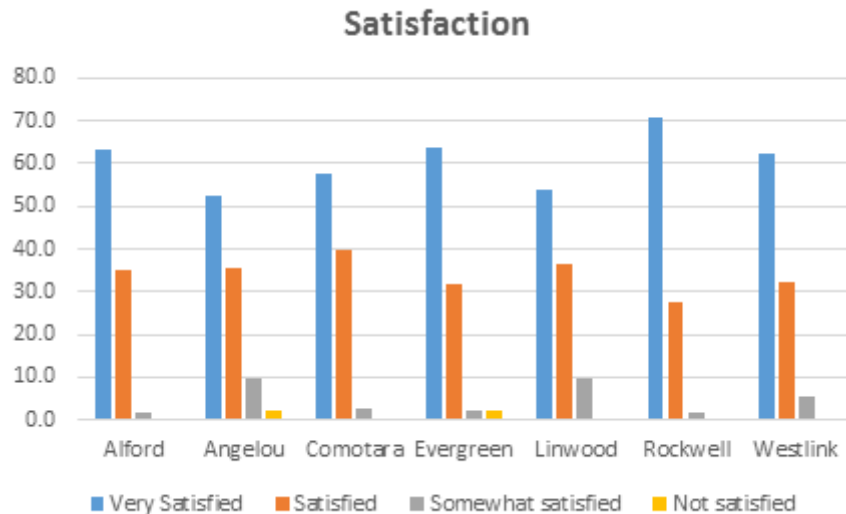
Source: The 2015 Public Library Data Service

# ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SERVICE LEVELS

The PPMC conducted a total of 460 customer surveys and 250 observations. Information from the survey and observation research was used to assess how patrons are using the library, user impressions of the branches and overall service perceptions.

Branch library patrons are loyal to their branches and surveys indicate they are very satisfied. Over 80% of all respondents for each branch were “very satisfied” or “satisfied.”

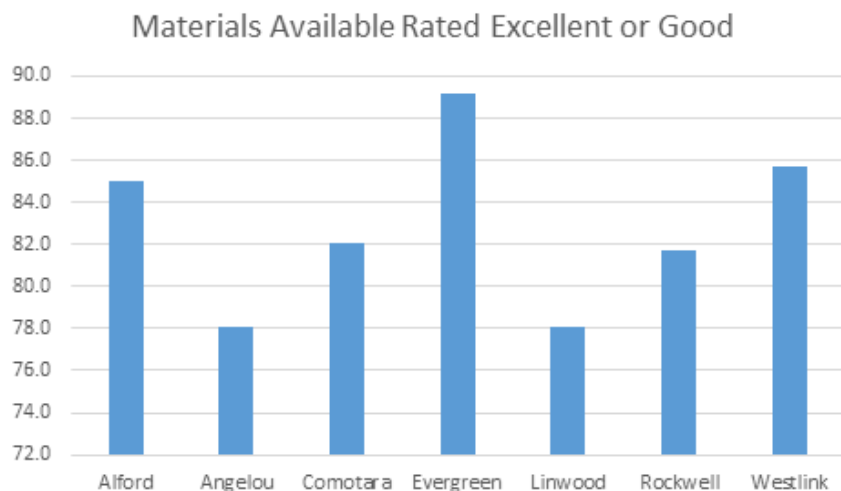
Chart 1: Customer Satisfaction



## Circulation and Collections

Between 70% and 90% of survey respondents at each branch stated their top reason for visiting the library was to borrow and return books. Approximately, 50% of all patrons identified borrow music, movies and spoken books as their second highest reason. Seventy-eight percent of respondents rated materials available as “excellent” or “good” at the branch libraries.

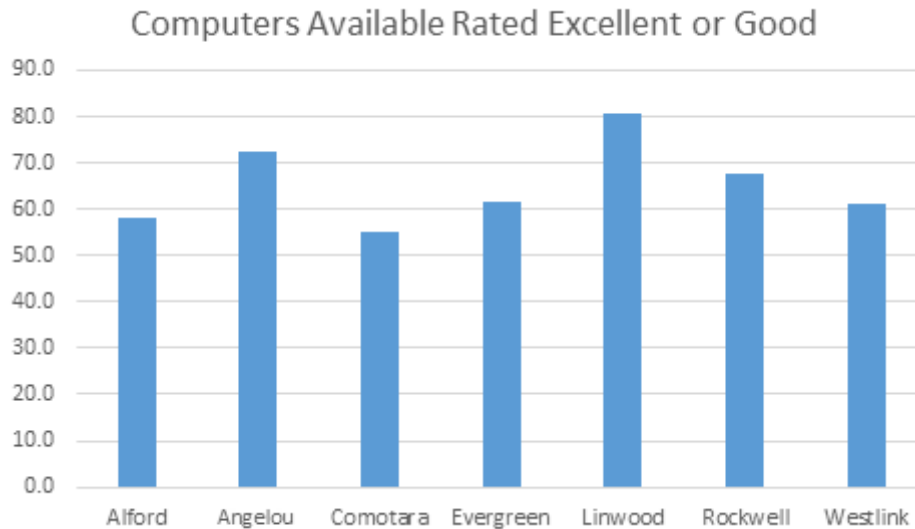
Chart 2: Materials Available



## Technology

Users identified technology as an important resource that needs to be continuously updated and expanded. Computer availability was rated “excellent” or “good” by 50% or more of respondents at each branch. However, users desire improved technologies including increased speed and reliability of public computers, more mobile devices such as tablets and plug-in charging stations for personal devices.

Chart 3: Computers Available



Focus group participants indicated a need for laptops and tablets, in addition to the desktop computers. Visitors want to take devices to quiet areas for study or provide a tablet to their child to use, while the parent is working. Users also indicated a need for charging stations for personal computers and devices.

There is also a strong need for library staff with expertise on the use of devices and software. Users want libraries to be the “go to” for help in finding and using information technologies.

## Programs and Services

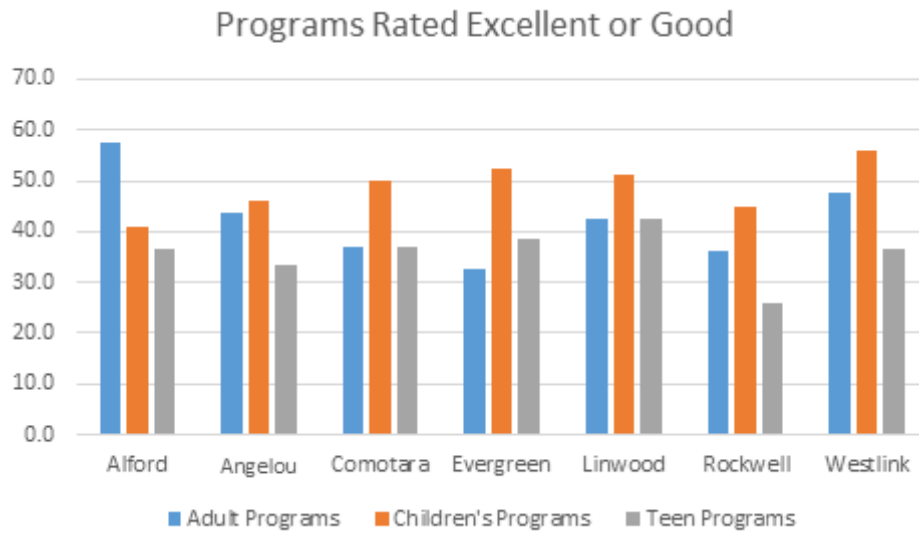
Respondents were asked to prioritize new and expanded services they would like to have at branch locations. The branch services identified as “essential” or “very important” include:

- Books and materials for check-out
- Parent/child seating areas
- Interactive child learning stations
- Self-check-out stations
- Job/Career resource services
- Bi-lingual services

Respondents were asked to evaluate programs for adults, teens and children. Approximately 50% of those surveyed attend adult or children’s programs and approximately 30%-50% attend teen programs. Of those respondents that do attend library programs, the children’s programs received the highest ratings at all branches except Alford, where adult programs received the highest ratings. When asked about the importance of expanding children’s programs over 65% of respondents at all branches answered “essential” or “very important.”



Chart 4: Programs

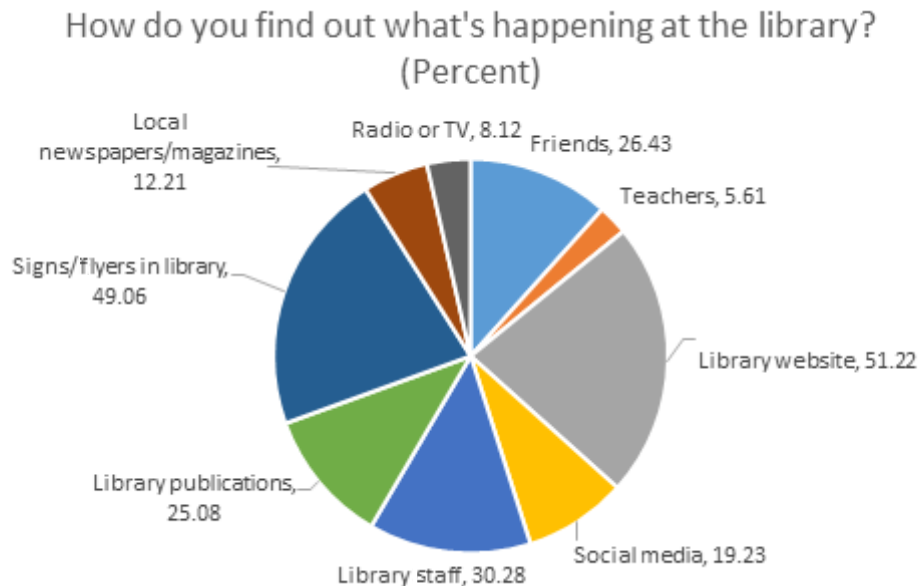


Additional research is needed to determine what types of adult, teen and children’s programs will best serve audiences for each branch. Programs that are poorly attended need to be analyzed to determine if content or marketing contributed to the lack of participation. Research shows programs need to be focused on outcome-based results. Teen programs especially, need to be more than just activities for teens.

**Marketing**

Most users get information about programs from the library website, social media, signs in the library or library staff. Expanding outreach efforts to market the library to both users and potential users will take specialized expertise and knowledge of library programs. In addition, partnerships with other organizations to expand outreach and marketing should be part of the overall marketing plan.

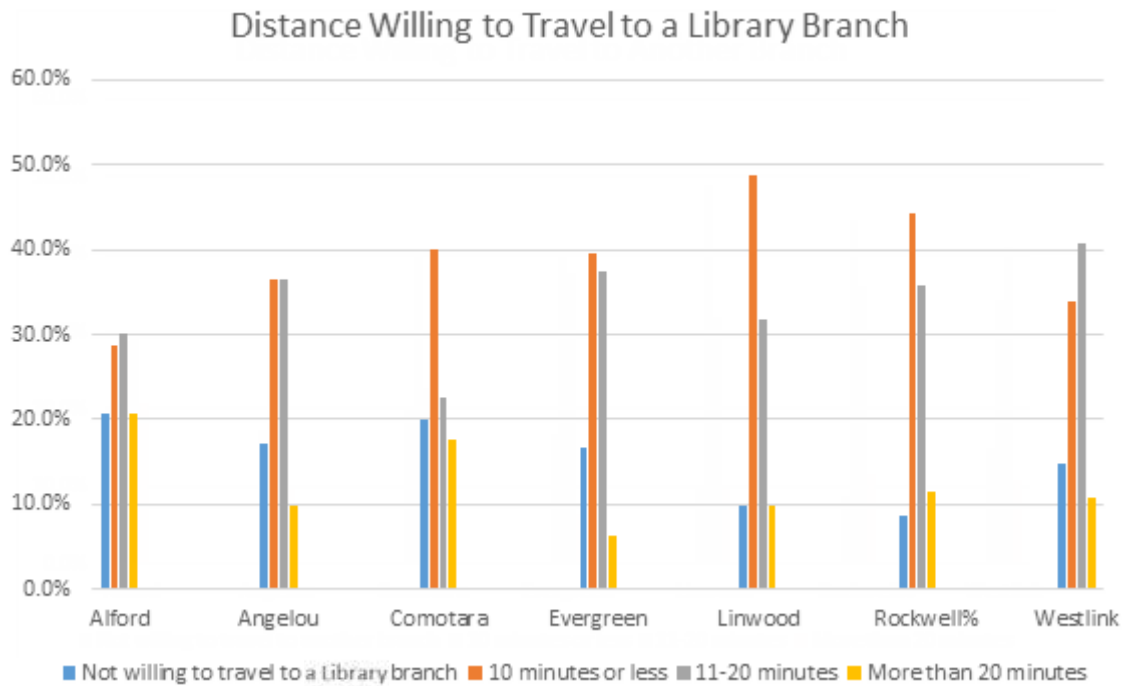
Chart 5: Marketing



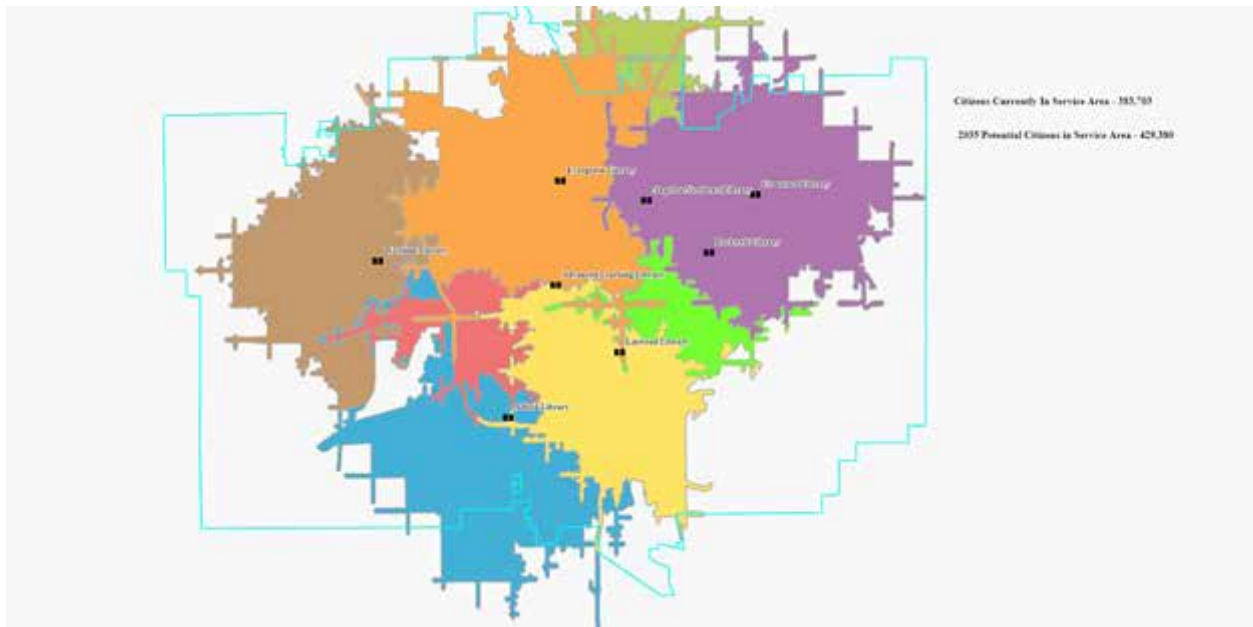
## Travel Distance

Most library patrons visit the branch library on a weekly basis and the central library monthly or 1-2 times a year. The majority of branch library patrons indicate they are willing to travel ten minutes or less to a library location. This information can inform discussions about which services and programming should be delivered at the branches as well as placement of libraries. The information also has implications for the importance of proximity related to library utilization. These findings indicate a need to provide unique services and programs at the new Advanced Learning Library in order to encourage branch users and new users to visit the library.

Chart 6: Willingness to Travel



Map 1: Ten Minute Drive Time for Branches (based on expected 2035 population growth)



The map indicates the service area for branches with a 10-minute drive time. From the map, most areas of the community are serviced, but the southeast, southwest and west are the most underserved areas for access to libraries.

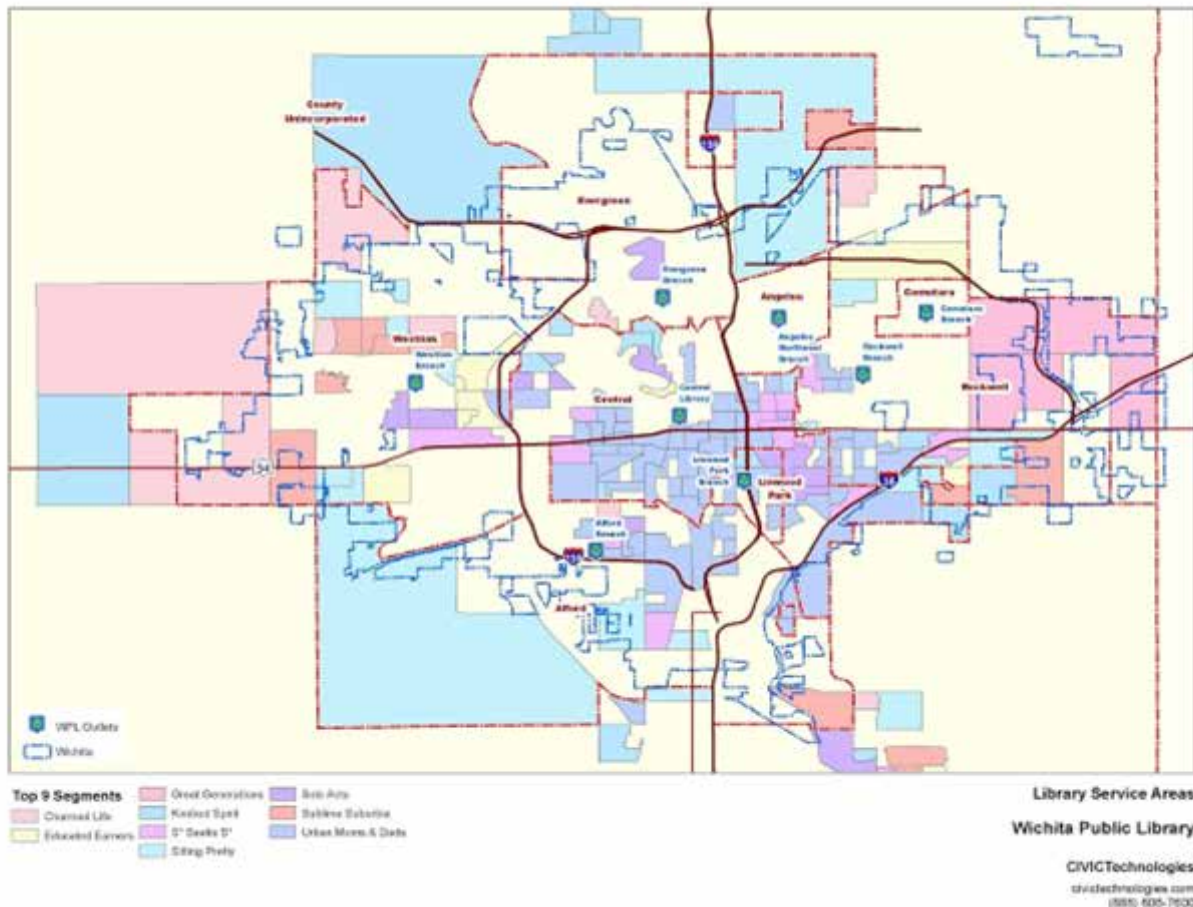
## Market Analysis

Library audiences were determined through a market segmentation analysis, conducted by Civic Technologies. Using a process of geocoding locations of library card holders, data was aggregated by block group and service area. Market segmentation was used to categorize existing or potential customers into groups based upon common characteristics such as age, gender, income, geography or other attributes relating to consumption behavior. Civic Technologies identified 47 segments in the City of Wichita, which is an unusually high number of segments for the City's population size. This indicates a significant level of diversity. These segments are given identifying names, for example "Urban Moms & Dads" based on descriptive profiles of users, created from their common characteristics.

There are 122,551 geocoded cardholders in Wichita who comprise 30% of the market and 285,867 non-cardholders who comprise 70% of the market potential for expanding library services. In comparable studies conducted by Civic Technologies in other communities, Wichita is reaching less of the market. Denver reached 47% of the market; Las Vegas reached 39% of the market.

The largest population segment is "Urban Moms & Dads," which comprises 19% of library customers (23,463) and makes up 16.2% (46,392) of the potential customers. This segment has a median age of 20s to low 30s, single-parent families, household income of \$30,000 or less, and persons living in urban areas with blue collar jobs. The second largest segment is "Sitting Pretty," which comprises 6.8% (8,391) of customers and makes up 7.4% (21,075) potential customers. The "Sitting Pretty" segment has a median age of 20s to low 30s, is married, has a household income of \$50,000-\$60,000 and works in white collar jobs. The top nine segments account for about half of the population of the City of Wichita. These segments are distributed throughout the city in specific patterns related to housing type, housing price and periods of urban development. Map 2 shows the distribution of the top nine segments.

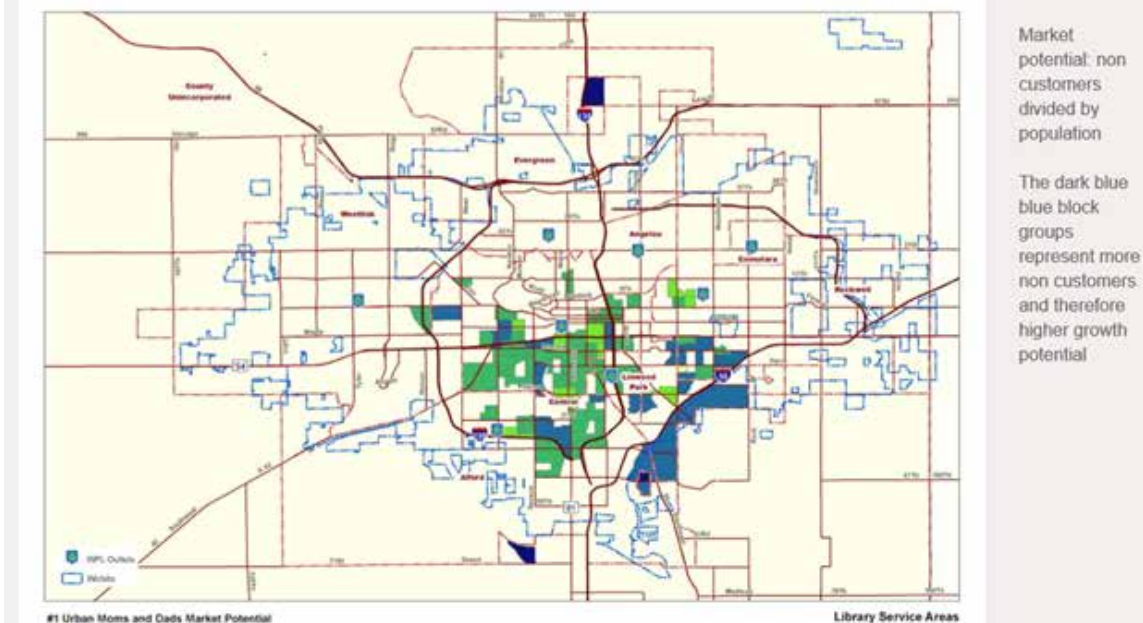
Map 2: Top Nine Population Segments



## Site Location

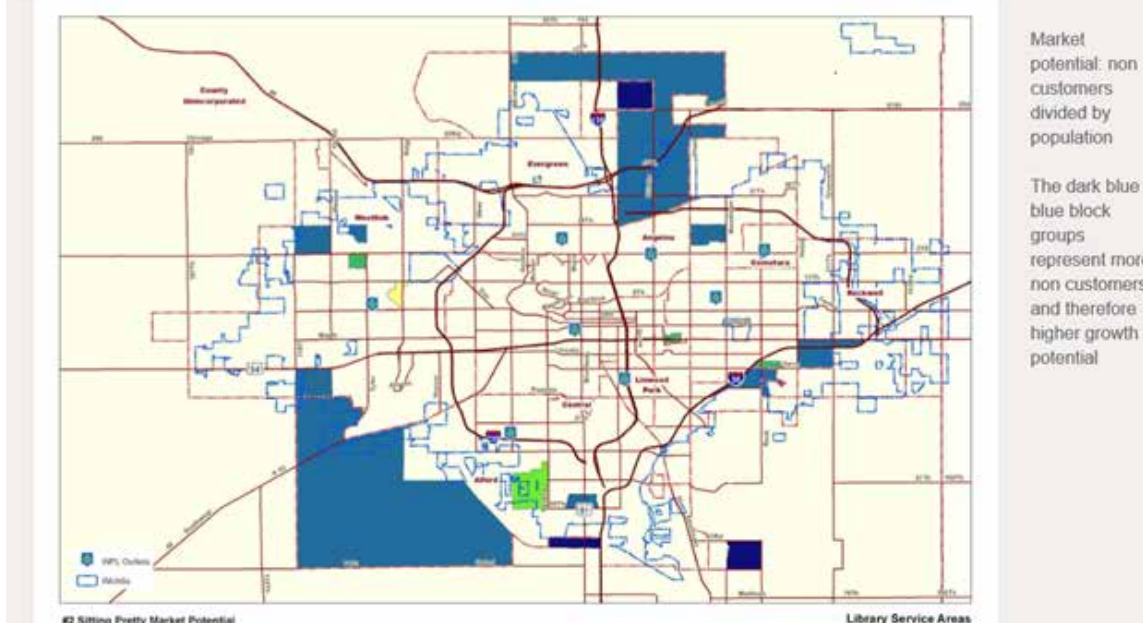
The Civic Technologies market segmentation report identified the largest potential growth in two audiences, “Urban Moms & Dads” and “Sitting Pretty.” The dark blue area indicates the growth potential for “Urban Moms & Dads” in southeast Wichita. Linwood Park and Rockwell are the closest branches serving this area.

### Segment Map #1: Urban Moms & Dads Market Potential



The “Sitting Pretty” segment is the second largest potential growth area shown by the dark blue block groups. Alford library is the closest branch to the southwest, with significant potential. This area could also be served by the Westlink branch. There is also growth potential in the northeast for Evergreen and Angelou. There is also some growth potential in the southeast part of Wichita.

### Segment Map #2: Sitting Pretty Market Potential



# 7. Recommendations for All Branches



The following are universal recommendations applicable to all branches. Information was derived from intercept surveys, an online survey, focus groups and staff feedback.

## 1. Updates to the Buildings and Environment

Library users had numerous suggestions for making branch libraries more welcoming to today's visitors.

**Seating** – The amount and quality of seating was limited at all branches. Visitors indicated they want seating that accommodates families, specifically parent and child seating as well as comfortable seating for reading, studying and meeting in small discussion groups.

**Acoustics/Noise** – Visitors wanted the libraries to provide designated spaces that accommodate various noise levels. They wanted traditional quiet areas for studying and also areas that accommodate children's play.

**Study Rooms** – Visitors wanted meeting spaces that accommodate small study groups for school projects, tutoring services or neighborhood social groups.

**Meeting Rooms** – Library users identified meeting rooms as an important neighborhood asset for community engagement. They identified the fees charged for meeting space as a barrier to library use.

**Arrangement of Shelves** - Visitors wanted shelf arrangements by interest categories (e.g. mystery, wellness, sports). They felt the organization is cumbersome and hard to find.

**Colorful/Relaxing Décor** – Focus groups indicated the library could do more to make their spaces colorful and appealing, including updating the children's areas.

## 2. Develop Unique Branch Experience While Maintaining Connection to Central Services

To ensure each branch can expand its market, all locations will need flexibility in programming and decision-making processes, in order to develop new programs, services, collections and partnerships that target their market. Branches will need support to pilot different programming experiences and take some risks in customizing their branches to meet the unique needs of their audiences.

While developing these unique branch experiences, staff will need to strengthen communications and connections between the central library and branch libraries with the opening of the Advanced Learning Library. Several comments were made from users about the branches being “left-out” of the innovation around the Advanced Learning Library. Survey results vary by location on whether branch library users visit the current downtown location, but there is no doubt a user loyalty to specific branches. Creating an inclusive system, strengthening communication and providing linkages between branches and the Advanced Learning Library will be important for the success of the entire system.

### **3. Expand Community Services and Programs**

There is substantial community loyalty and appreciation for the branch libraries. Branches are perceived as an important neighborhood resource and there is a desire for branches to be responsive to the needs of the communities they serve. Needs differ among branch service areas, and unique services and programs such as cultural specific materials, citizenship information, job search assistance or bilingual services are important opportunities.

### **4. Expand Partnerships**

Branches should identify and reach out to potential community partners including neighborhood leaders, businesses, community organizations and City services. Creating partnerships with schools will be critical in cultivating future library users and fostering community literacy. Some libraries issue area school children library cards to encourage and promote literacy. Partnerships with community-based organizations, for example the Boys and Girls Clubs, could benefit both organizations. Branches should also consider ways to support area businesses through providing employee resources and book deliveries to the workplace.

### **5. Marketing**

Marketing efforts for branches need to consider the potential users identified in the research from Civic Technologies and develop strategies that reach these new audiences.

### **6. Library “App”**

Users want a device application, or “app,” that pushes out information based on preferences, such as “you recently checked out books about gardening, you might like to read this new library book.” The library must balance the philosophical policy issue of privacy of user data verses accessing user profiles to market or inform users about available library resources.

### **7. Collaborate with Regional Libraries**

The WPL currently coordinates some programming with other suburban libraries from the Central Library. Partnerships with area libraries surrounding Wichita could benefit the library branch system and expand services to residents. Branch libraries that may be geographically closer to another community might create a partnership; examples might be Alford partnering with the Haysville Library or Westlink with Goddard. While there are examples of regional library systems that are governed and administered significantly different than the WPL system and surrounding areas, there could be some inspiration or ideas that could be modified to benefit our region. A regional example is the Oklahoma Metropolitan Library which has a total of nineteen branches due to a partnership with the Pioneer Library System, which serves communities to the south, east and southwest of the city. Members of either library can check-out books in the library system, using the same card. Book centers are also present across the county where books are delivered to locations such as nursing homes and there is a mail service in which individuals and homebound residents can receive book deliveries. A call center is being developed in which all library questions, regardless of topic, can be answered by a specific set of staff.

## **8. Branch Engagement with the Public**

Branches need to re-think how they engage with the public. Expanding library services through the use of “pop-up” libraries and mobile libraries (bookmobiles) could increase reach to communities, such as southeast Wichita, that are underserved by library branches. Consider having “pop-up” events at PTA meetings, community events, parks and other community gathering places. Take the library to the public instead of expecting all the public to visit the library.

## **9. Strategic Planning to Identify Branch Goals**

It is important for each branch to define its unique community purpose and to develop strategic priorities to meet community needs. Branches can serve as an information and resource center unique to the market segment the branch serves. Strategic planning to identify priorities for each branch would be beneficial.

## **10. Alignment of Branches with Advanced Learning Library**

The construction of the new Advanced Learning Library requires the branches be integrated into the “make-over” through identification of new services that can be “pushed out” to branches. An example might be a neighborhood business offering a “coffee cart” on certain days or displaying art at the branches which preview the full exhibition at the Advanced Learning Library. As the Wichita Public Library prepares for the opening of the Advanced Learning Library, there is an opportunity to pilot programs or resources at the branches. These pilot programs build inclusion of the branches, create enthusiasm and start users thinking of additional services available with the facility.

## **11. Reduce Barriers to Library Use**

More than 97% of the 1,840 respondents to the online survey think libraries are important for our community. Interestingly, 71% of non-users also felt the library was important for the community. However, comments from non-users indicate a lack of understanding about the changing roles and services provided by libraries. The library needs to explore new ways of informing and educating the public about the social good that libraries provide to the community. Emphasis should focus on how libraries differ from and enhance what is currently available on the Internet.

## **12. Re-Evaluate Fee Policies**

Libraries serve an important function as gathering places for the community. Charging rental fees for the library meeting rooms is a barrier, limiting the potential use of library spaces. By offering meeting spaces free-of-charge during regular library hours, libraries would expand their role as a center for community education and community engagement.

For some users, fines and fees are a reported barrier to library use. The current model of partial cost-recovery, through imposition of fines and fees, allows the library to offer free library cards. Analysis of the significance of revenues generated by fines and fees would provide a platform for discussion about alternative options and the trade-offs and implications for public policy.

## **13. Revisit Policies of Data Privacy vs. Informational Marketing**

The library must balance the philosophical policy issue of privacy of user data versus accessing user profiles to market to or inform users about available library resources. Library users expressed interest in the library providing an “app,” similar to the Amazon marketing service that informs users “you might also like this.” The “app” would push out information about books and materials based on user check-out profiles. Additional research is needed to determine if the “app” is feasible and is a service that is valued by the majority of library users.

#### **14. Leverage Customer Loyalty**

The City of Wichita and Library staff should be extremely proud of the loyalty developed with branch library users. The strong satisfaction ratings of services and staff indicates quality programming and a strong relationship between users and providers. The loyalty from customers should not only be celebrated, but leveraged to reach additional markets. These users can and should be the best marketing tool of the libraries. Engaging these users as an extension of the library staff can engage additional customers. Volunteer opportunities, marketing campaigns, and testimonials are opportunities to leverage this resource.

#### **15. Identify and Monitor Strategic Impact Measures**

The Library staff should continue to monitor traditional measures of library services (i.e. gate-counts, check-outs, audience size) but should also identify and monitor strategic measures related to the impact of library services. Impact measures focus on meeting key community needs such as support for workforce development, support for eGovernment and support for education.

#### **16. Align Performance Expectations and Resources**

The broader policy conversation for the City Council and staff needs to focus on the role of the branch libraries in the community. There has been significant preparation for the Advanced Learning Library and a similar process needs to happen for the branches regarding services, target markets and impact performance measurements. These are important conversations regarding what branches need to continue to do, what branches need to stop doing and what are the priorities for the future. As noted previously, the WPL receives less funding per capita than other peer systems or smaller systems. Budget and resource allocation will be an important policy conversation for staff and the City Council. Resources, whether that is reallocation of existing resources or new resources, should be aligned with activities that reflect the policy priorities of the City. These activities may include increasing the number of users, impacting literacy, supporting workforce development, connecting branch users to the Advance Learning Library, improving quality of life or other priorities. The broader conversation encompasses the impact and expectations policy leaders have and how resources are allocated to support priorities.



# 8. Branches



As mentioned previously, the PPMC team conducted observation assessments and user surveys at each branch to provide specific data on library users priorities, service interests, and overall satisfaction. The surveys found user satisfaction, reasons for visiting the library and overall priorities and new services requested were similar for all branches.

This section provides an overview and recommendations that are unique to each branch. The overall recommendations, previously discussed, provide the framework applicable to all branches, while the analysis and branch-specific recommendations provide nuances or deviations different from the overall system.

Information was collected from user surveys, observations, staff input and focus groups. In addition, Civic Technologies analyzed each branch service area to provide an overview of the proportion of the market served and a market segmentation analysis for each branch. Whereas the overall analysis of the Wichita market provides a general direction for the Wichita library system, the segmentation analysis by branch provides a specific examination of each branch library.

# CIVIC TECHNOLOGIES DEFINITIONS

The following provides a brief overview of definitions used by Civic Technologies to analyze the market for each branch:

- Market Share: Customers as a percentage of the population
- Market Potential: Non-customers as a percentage of the population
- Customer growth potential: Is an index that describes the opportunity for customer growth by comparing one segment to another segment. The higher the index number the higher the growth potential. The bigger the gap between the numbers, the bigger the opportunity to grow the segment with the higher index number.
- Low Market Potential is when the segment's market share is BELOW that branch library's average market share of customers
- High Market Potential is when the segment's market share is ABOVE that branch library's average market share of customers
- Low customer potential is when the segment's customer potential is BELOW that branch library's median customer potential.
- High customer potential is when the segment's customer potential is ABOVE that branch library's median customer potential.

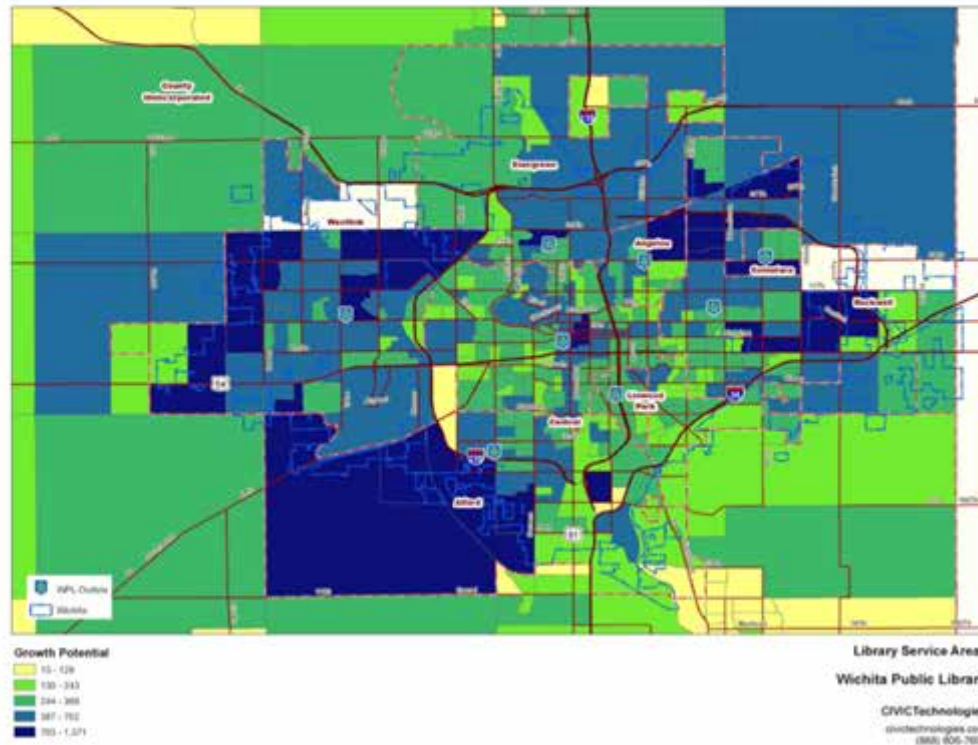
Customer growth potential is measured by an index that compares one segment to another segment, calculating an index number to measure growth potential for customer checkouts. As stated previously, the primary market segments for all branches were "Urban Moms & Dads" and "Sitting Pretty"; followed by "Educated Earners" and "Sublime Suburbia." The first two segments represent more than a quarter of all checkouts, while the top four segments represent a third of all checkouts. All other segments have an index score below 30, meaning they have a smaller chance to grow in the market. However, for some branches, those smaller index scores represent a significant part of the market for that branch. Consequently, each branch needs to focus on the overall primary markets, as well as the market segments most critical to the individual branch.

Table 2

	Checkouts
Urban Moms & Dads (113.6 index)	140,846
Sitting Pretty (51.6 index)	79,839
Educated Earners (33.5 index)	35,483
Sublime Suburbia (31.0 index)	44,042
Total	300,210 (out of the 947,936)

The map of Customer Growth Potential (on a color scale of yellow as lowest growth potential and blue as largest growth potential) shows Westlink and Alford branches have the largest growth potential on the west side of Wichita. Angelou, Comotara, Evergreen and Rockwell also have larger growth potential in the northeast part of the city. Linwood had the lowest growth potential.

## Map of Customer Growth Potential



### Definition

Customer Growth Potential is an index that describes the opportunity for customer growth by comparing one segment to another segment.

The higher the index number the higher the growth potential.

The bigger the gap between numbers, the bigger the opportunity between segments.

The following sections provide an overview of unique findings and recommendations for each branch. This information provides a foundation for each branch to address specific priorities, concerns and customer markets for the service area for each branch.

## ALFORD

The Lionel D. Alford Regional Branch opened in 2003 and is the newest and largest Wichita Public Library branch location. The library is located at 3447 S. Meridian and primarily serves southwest Wichita. In review of the checkout by block groups, Alford also has noticeable checkout from east and north Wichita area. Customers from areas outside of the defined Alford service area are coming from more suburban environments. Alford was the first to offer self-check, and is the only branch to feature drive-up pickup service. These convenient services are an important feature for users of Alford.

### Service Area Audience

According to Civic Technologies data collection of the Alford service area, the median age of the block groups is in the 20's to 30's. Most users have a high school education level and a median income typically in the \$30,000 or less category. But, there is a portion of block groups with income levels up to \$50-\$60,000 that the Alford Branch serves. The majority of residents have blue collar occupations with significant representation in construction, maintenance, manual labor, food services and transportation. Of those with white collar professions, most are found in office administration, health care support and personal care. There is a higher proportion of public assistance funding for this area compared to the general public.

### User Perception and Profile

More than two-thirds of the users surveyed at Alford were there to either borrow or return books and almost half were borrowing or returning music, movies or spoken books. Most users surveyed were satisfied, rating excellent or good, with hours of operations (88%) and with customer services (87%) and materials available (85%). Seating and power access were areas listed as concerns. Almost all those surveyed reported they were very satisfied (63%) or satisfied (35%) with Alford as a branch library.

Of those responding to the survey, 51% indicated they do NOT visit the central library. New services requested focused primarily on programming and 57% indicated a need for bi-lingual services. Almost 30% of the people responding to the survey indicated a household income below \$30,000.

### **Branch Environment**

#### A. Collections

According to data provided by the Wichita Public Library, there has been a declining gate count the last three years (2013 – 128,947; 2015 – 112,170). Increasing the number of books and materials available to checkout was listed as the number one service need for Alford (79%). Therefore, it is recommended that Alford, like many other branches, revamp collections to address the needs and market segmentation of customers. In addition, Alford should remove books that are low in circulation making it easier for users to identify and borrow books of potential interests.

#### B. Services

Bi-lingual services are a concern for patrons with 50% of respondents marking this service as important. While market segmentation did not indicate this as a focus, patrons using the facility and staff report this as important. Alford should explore providing bi-lingual staff and expanding collections, as well as other bi-lingual service options.

Convenience of services was highly valued at Alford specifically the drive-up window and self-checkout. Recommendations for providing additional convenience in services should be a priority for staff, including more self-checkout stations and ideas to address limited mobility of patrons. In addition, with users coming from all over the community, services should be convenient so patrons feel their library visit was worthwhile.

#### C. Technologies

Users and staff at Alford indicate a need for basic technology and assistance. Additional support through classes, individual information sessions and peer-support are ideas to address this need. Alford has the highest number of unique WiFi users after Central, and almost as many unique computer users as Westlink. Additional user space, technical support, and access to mobile devices (laptops, notepads, etc.) should be available at this location.

#### D. Programs

More programming for all audiences was indicated as very important or essential (64%), but more children's programming was the highest priority at 70%. Assistance with job and career resources was the next highest request with 66% rating this service as very important or essential. Alford should explore partnership opportunities for both children's programming and career services. The flight and aircraft industry motif initially designed for Alford maybe one area to explore.

#### E. Building and grounds

Seating was marked as "fair"/"poor" more than other facility needs. Identifying additional and unique seating is important to patrons. Alford should consider needs for families, study groups and more meeting space to address concerns and requests of users.

### **Development of New Audiences (Civic Technologies)**

For the Alford service area, the library is serving about 30.2% of the market area (16,737 out of 55,412). Data from market segmentation indicates the need to focus on services and marketing to families of limited financial

means. Opportunities in this audience include services, outreach and programming for school-readiness, early literacy and family entertainment options. Teens will need options for basic literacy, homework, and job preparedness. For adults, there are three primary audiences to expand. First, working families who may need assistance with job skills and employment, “do-it-yourself” education opportunities through materials and classes, and entertainment options with technology and checkouts. Second, there is a segment of older, middle-income workers that are looking for assistance with technology needs, traditional material checkouts and social opportunities at the library. Third, due to the number of customers coming from outside the service boundaries services should be explored to make convenience the priority for these customers. Alford’s location provides an advantageous option to expand partnership with the South YMCA to reach more customers and market new services, the fire station located adjacent is another public partner to attract new audiences through special events. Direct marketing to users outside of the service boundaries currently using Alford services, and marketing to senior groups in the area are additional options to consider.

#### Staff Workshop Focus: Tools to Power Your Day

In the workshop, staff analyzed the Civic Technologies data to determine strategies for expanding audiences. Alford identified a branch focus on helping working families with young children and modest financial means. The library can provide convenient and time-saving resources to help with education, job search and technical information needs. The library provides an oasis from life stresses through free entertainment, programs, crafts and fun to help families get through their day. When asked to develop a thematic statement to describe what focus Alford should adopt in marketing to new audiences, the theme was “Tools to Power your Day.” This theme captured the need to provide practical and convenient services for families of limited means.

## MAYA ANGELOU

The Maya Angelou Northeast Branch Library was built in 1996 and is located near the corner of 21st and Hillside with the goal of providing primary services in the area closely surrounding the facility. The area designated Angelou’s service area, consists of predominately African American neighborhoods and draws the majority of users to the facility from the nearby neighborhood.

### **Service Area Audience**

According to Civic Technologies data, the Angelou service area, is significantly different from other areas, with more than 62% of block groups represented by two market segments: “Metro Strivers” (41%) and “City Core” (21%). The median age of the block groups is in the 20’s to 30’s and is predominately African-American. A high school education is the most common achievement level; however, there is a significantly higher percentage of the population without a high school degree compared to the general public (50+%). The median household income is typically below \$30,000. The majority of residents have blue collar occupations with significant representation in construction, maintenance, and transportation. Of those with white collar professions, most are found in health care support, personal care and food services. There is a higher proportion of public assistance funding for this area compared to the general public. There is also a higher percentage of people who have never been married, compared to the general public (50%-75%).

### **Audience**

More than 76% of the users surveyed at Angelou were there to either borrow or return books and almost half were there to use the public computers. Almost a quarter of users surveyed were not satisfied with hours of operations and this sentiment was heard in the focus group at this branch. Respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with

customer service (99%) and materials (77%). In the focus group, participants indicated a need for more materials specific to the African and African-American culture. Seating and tables, meeting space and the children areas were areas indicated as the most significant facility needs. Almost all those surveyed reported they were very satisfied (52%) or satisfied (36%) with Angelou as a branch library.

Of those responding, 40% indicated they do NOT visit the central library. Of the 60% that do visit the Central library, 58% visit only 1-2 times a year. New services requested focused primarily on programming for children (85% requesting) and teens (80%). More than 78% indicated a need for job and career services. Almost 50% of people responding to the survey indicated a household income below \$30,000.

## **Branch environment**

### **A. Collections**

Collections should provide more focus on African-American culture and connect to the history and future of the area. In addition, programming should connect to available materials at the branch. Adult and children's literacy was a concern for the community at the focus group. Programming and collections to serve those needs is important.

### **B. Services**

Angelou should retool as a resource for workforce development from youth to adults. Literacy needs of the area are significant and more focus in the children's literacy area is critical. Angelou is not open on Sundays or Mondays and closes at 6 p.m. on Wednesday through Saturday. Extended operation hours are a concern for patrons. While there is no easy answer, pilot projects should be initiated and evaluated, especially later evening hours that better meet the needs of working parents. Partnership opportunities were a significant emphasis in the focus groups. There are several schools and nonprofit organizations, the Boys and Girls Clubs for example, that should be connected to Angelou to expand service delivery opportunities.

### **C. Technologies**

For this service area there is a need for more access to technology, such as computers and laptops. In the focus groups, participants indicated a need for printers and scanners especially to help students with homework and job seekers. Assistance with technology and staff to meet the many needs of customers is another concern for users.

### **D. Programs**

Partnerships are critical for the community to fully utilize the services available at Angelou and expand beyond the walls of the facility. Children and adult literacy is a primary focus. In addition, programming should focus on workforce needs including information literacy and skill development. Cultural interests, related to African and African American history, were a significant conversation issue at the focus groups. Using the facility to host seminars and trainings for workforce development, history or current events is important to the community.

### **E. Building and grounds**

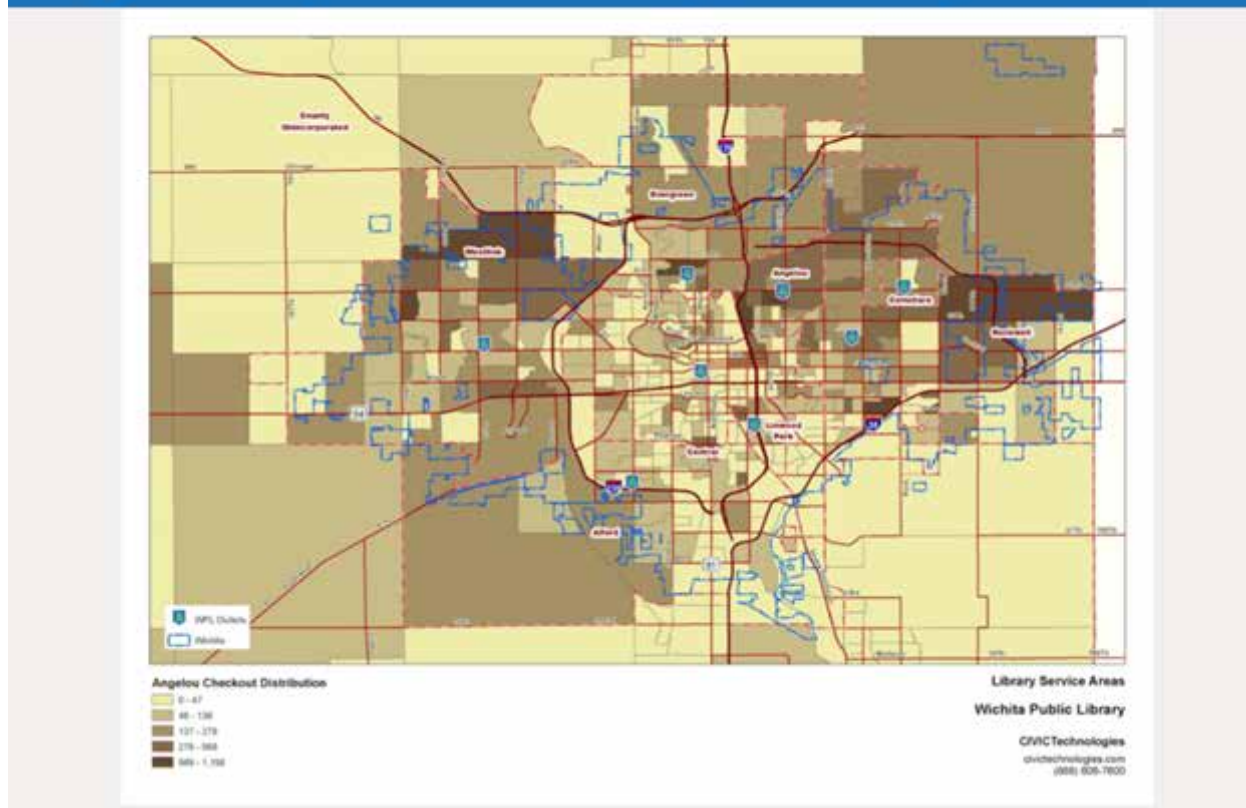
Free class and meeting space is an important policy issue for Angelou. Focus group participants indicated a need for larger and more meeting space. Utilizing external space for programming, seating and a positive gathering space was another suggestion from the focus groups. Last, 21st Street and Hillside were considered a significant barrier to access for youth walking to the facility. Staff should work with the community and the City of Wichita to identify safe walking routes for youth and families.

## **Development of New Audiences (Civic Technologies)**

For the Angelou service area, the library is serving about 36% of market area (6,043 out of 16,604.) Data from Civic Technologies indicates the primary audience for expansion in the services area should focus on the needs and interest of African Americans with specific focus on basic literacy skills, employment, cultural awareness and

entertainment options. Partnerships are critical to increase usage for the facility and there are several partners close to the library. The Atwater Community Center, Boys and Girls Club, Wichita State University, Wichita Police Department, Wichita Fire Department, schools and the CORE Health Clinic should be contacted to partner and expand services.

## Angelou Map of Checkouts by Block Group



### Staff Workshop Focus: Step Up With Angelou

In the workshop, staff analyzed the Civic Technologies data to determine strategies for expanding audiences. The library can support the neighborhood by offering resources that help patrons with job searches, public assistance, self-improvement, homework, computers and tutoring. The library can offer resources that help patrons improve their lives and provide a hand-up. "Step up with Angelou" is the focus theme that staff identified to reach out to new audiences.

## COMOTARA

The Comotara Branch Library opened in the Dillons grocery store at 21st and Rock in 1986, and was the first library branch in the United States to be placed in a grocery store. Although it is the smallest of Wichita's public library branches, with only four block groups considered part of the target service area, Comotara meets the need of this service area.

### **Service Area Audience**

According to Civic Technologies data collection for the Comotara service area, this branch is significantly different than other branches, with almost 60% of block groups represented by two market segments: "Apprentices"

(36%) and the “Regents” (24%). The market segment “Sweet Life” represents an additional 23% and the “Empire Builders” represent 17%. Of these four categories the vast majority represent urban neighbors far above average in education and income. The median age in these block groups is in the 30’s to 40’s. College education is the most common achievement level with median income typically in the \$70-90,000’s. There are a portion of block groups with income levels in the \$50,000’s, but most likely single-person households. The vast majority of residents have white collar occupations with significant representation in management, professional occupations, self-employed business owners; there is another portion consisting of high-income retirees. With the exception of the “Apprentices,” the other segments are typically married, and if there are children, they have fewer than the general public.

## **Audience**

### *Perceptions of patrons*

Approximately 88% of the users surveyed at Comotara were there to either borrow or return books and almost half were borrowing or returning music, movies or spoken books. Most users surveyed were satisfied, rating excellent or good, the hours of operations (83%) and materials available (82%). Seating, computers and power access are limited at Comotara, but customer expectations are also different. Almost all those surveyed reported they were very satisfied (57%) or satisfied (40%) with Comotara as a branch library.

Of those responding 64% indicated they do visit the Central library; the second highest of all branches. New services requested focused primarily on children’s programming (81%) and more books and materials to check-out (74%). People responding to the survey indicated a higher household income of above \$50,000.

## **Branch Environment**

### **A. Collections**

Comotara serves a different socio-economic group with different expectations for collections, compared to other branches. Recent efforts to change the collection to meet the needs of the market have proven successful. The branch should continue to move in that direction with the idea of creating more of a “book store” look to the collections.

### **B. Services**

The book store model also implies “convenient” options for services, such as book recommendations unique to customers and quick check-out options. Comfortable seating and options for parent-children seating areas were also requested. Comotara should work to build customer base through marketing and experimenting with ways to help consumers connect to other locations; the new Advanced Learning model will be of particular interest.

### **C. Technologies**

Technology focus is more on WiFi availability since most users have their own devices. Charging stations are also an important need for this branch.

### **D. Programs**

While programming and children’s programming were indicated as important, virtual programming or programming hosted by Comotara at another site may be more realistic options due to space limitations at the branch. Another consideration is to encourage program attendance at other sites.

### **E. Building and grounds**

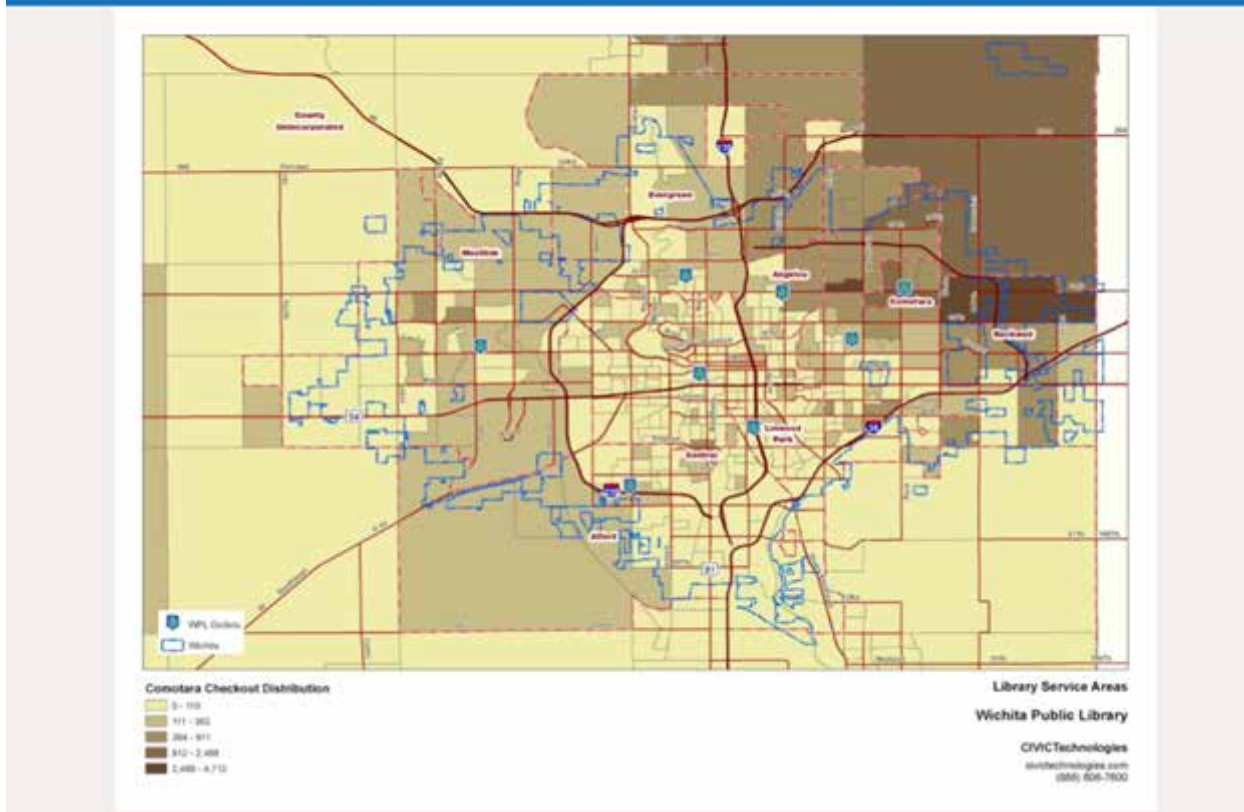
While space is an issue, customers seem to accept the limitations at the branch. Seating and parent-children space could be considerations. Any options to create a “book store” environment would be encouraged.



### Development of New Audiences (Civic Technologies)

For the Comotara service area, the library is serving about 31.2% of the market area (2,056 out of 6,600.) The higher-educated and more affluent client base, combined with limited space of this location provide a different challenge for reaching new clients. Targeted outreach to shoppers at the Dillons store may be one option. More likely, direct outreach to the neighborhoods, outreach from current customers and unique library experiences that create enthusiasm have the potential to expand the market. Specific conversations with current users on increasing the market may also increase users. In addition, working with other branches for programming or other community partners serving similar markets may be an option to expand services.

## Comotara Map of Checkouts by Block Group



### Staff Workshop Focus: We are the Gold Standard of Service - On Your Terms

Comotara staff noted their service area includes affluent, older well-educated adults. Their focus to expand audiences includes maintaining collections that provide newer, quality and popular books and materials displayed in a convenient, organized and attractive setting. Materials that support hobbies like cooking, designing and decorating are important. Users at this branch are seeking popular and new release materials. Staff rated customer focus and check-outs as their high priorities, with staff alignment and programs, medium priority and facilities and partnerships as low priorities. The Comotara branch thematic focus is “We are the Gold Standard of Service – On Your Terms.”

The Evergreen Branch Library opened in the former Wichita Arts Center in 2002. It is the second newest Wichita Public Library and is the second largest branch library in Wichita. It is the only branch with multiple rental spaces. Evergreen, located on the park campus with the recreation center by the same name, creating a true community service center. The block groups designated as Evergreen service area are primarily the north central part of the city, an area with a significant Latino population. However, there are other parts of this service area with very little Evergreen branch utilization. In contrast, there are groups of users from the northeast part of Wichita that use Evergreen. There is significant opportunity to expand the customer base in the area surrounding Evergreen.

## **Audience**

The area for Evergreen is proportioned with numerous market segmentations and each segment has less dominance. There are five segments represented in the first 50% of the population of the service area. The market segmentation of “Young Families” make up almost 18% of the market. “Young Families” typically are Hispanic, in their late 20’s to early 30’s; they rank high in number of children, especially with children under six, at nearly 75% above national average. Family status is typically married with income levels extremely varied resulting in an unclear market picture. High school education is the most common achievement level. The majority of residents have blue collar occupations with significant representation in construction, maintenance, and outdoor work.

“Gray Eminence” is another market segmentation representing 14% of the population, with a significantly higher number of retirees compared to the general population. “Gray Eminence” is very different from the “Young Families,” with the median age in the 40s. Most households have incomes in the \$50-70,000 range with white collar occupations. This segment has more leisure time with fewer children at home and more established lifestyles.

## **Branch Environment**

### **A. Collections**

Collections need to connect with the Hispanic culture. Materials in Spanish are important, but also materials about American history, citizenship requirements, immigration information and other issues relevant to the Hispanic culture. Other cultural influences indicate an importance for collections that support family entertainment and self-sufficiencies.

In contrast, meeting the needs of the “Gray Eminence” requires different expectations and interests in collections. Diversity of materials and clear and easy access to them will be important. In general, there is a need for more relevant collections with almost 85% indicating a need for more books and materials. Creating a more inviting access to these collections is something that was indicated in focus groups.

### **B. Services**

Approximately 70% of respondents indicated the need for bi-lingual staffing. Staff reflecting a significant part of the surrounding community is important. Interactive children’s learning centers are the most common request for new services. Again, understanding the needs of the large number of children in the area emphasizes the importance of focusing on literacy. Family-centered and convenient services are important to serve the family focus of the Hispanic culture.

Last, the Evergreen user surveys indicated a high need for job and career resource services (77%). Connecting community resources to address this service need is important for the future development of the community and relevance of the library.

### C. Technologies

Technology needs of customers are basic, such as individual training, classes and assistance while using technology. Connecting technology services to literacy for children and job seekers is another important focus. There is also a need for more technology access points, such as computers, tablets, software, and charging stations.

### D. Programs

Programming should focus on workforce development as previously mentioned in services. English language classes, citizenship classes, immigration law and other unique needs for the Hispanic families is important. Patrons recommended programs that serve the full-family simultaneously. There also is a need for programming to meet the needs of seniors in the area. Expanding partnerships to meet the programming needs is important.

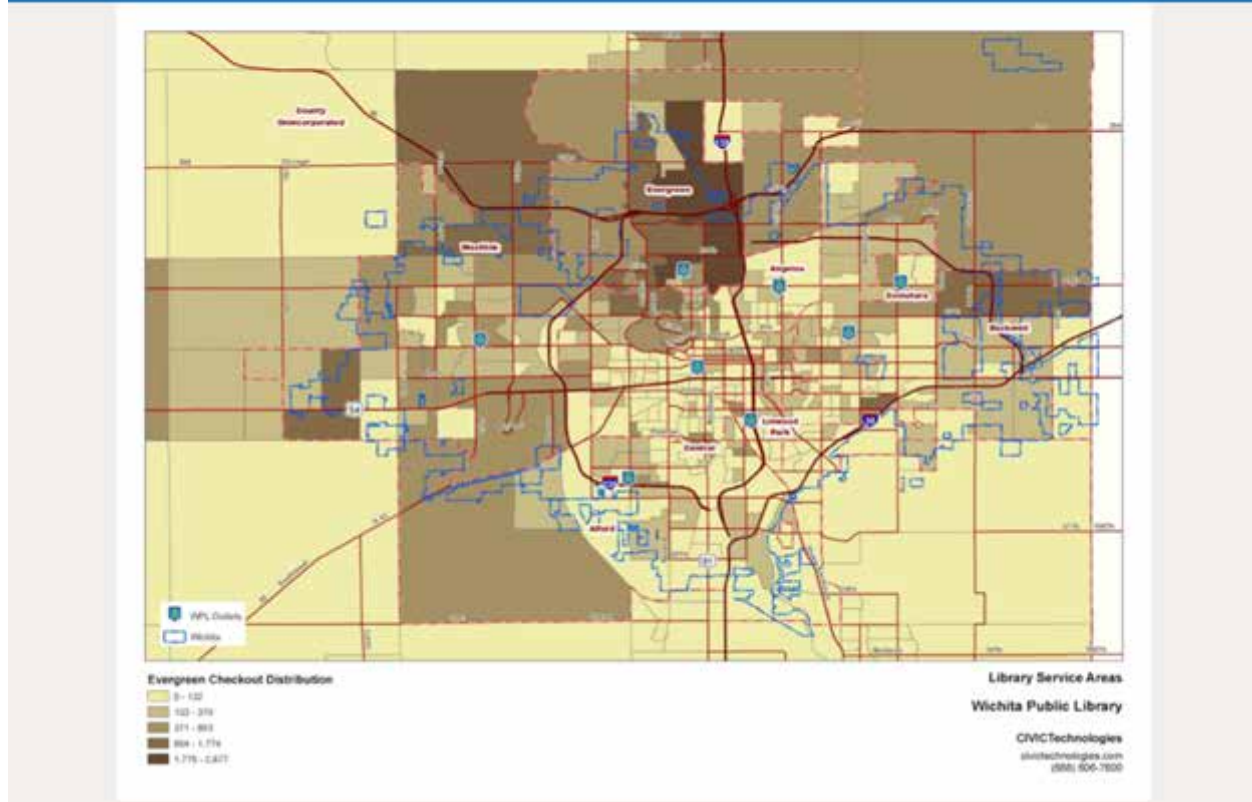
### E. Building and grounds

Community gathering space is needed for this branch and the policy on rental costs presents an issue. More space available for family activities is also important to consider. At the focus group, safety concerns for seniors were mentioned, so additional lighting or volunteer peer-security might be an option for the seniors.

### **Development of new audiences (Civic Technologies)**

The Evergreen service area is serving about 30.7% of the market area (8,515 out of 27,716.) There are two primary new audiences for Evergreen. First, is the Latino households in the community. Language skills, literacy support for all ages, classes on citizenship, cultural opportunities, and family oriented are events are an important focus for the marketing plan. The branch needs to establish partnerships with other City of Wichita departments, and, more importantly, community resources such as schools at all levels, the Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas, the faith community, cultural organizations and local social organizations are critical to expand services and serve purpose. Literacy, citizenship support and job skill development should be the primary focus to expand partnerships.

## Evergreen Map of Checkouts by Block Group



### Staff Workshop Focus: Every Community - Every Family - Everybody - Evergreen (Siempre comunidad - Siempre familia - Siempre tú - Evergreen)

Staff at the workshop identified focus ideas important for growth should include reaching out to the Boys and Girls Club. This branch serves busy families, many who are Hispanic. It is important to establish trust, safety and a community environment that meets the patron where they are, by speaking their language and providing a welcoming environment. Evergreen is a place of discovery which also includes providing technology. The high service priorities for Evergreen were identified as customer development and partnerships to connect more deeply with local organizations. Staff alignment to build relationships and expanded programs, including offering more programs in Spanish, were also important priorities. The focus of Evergreen is to be a community living room that is for “Every Community - Every Family - Everybody - Evergreen.”

## LINWOOD

In 1981, the Linwood Park Branch Library opened in the Linwood Park Recreation Center. Linwood is currently the only library branch co-located within a City of Wichita recreation center. The area designated as the service area for Linwood is confined to the surrounding areas. Due to access challenges to the library, users are primarily from this service area. However, there is a significant portion of users from the farther eastern part of Wichita.

## **Service Area Audience**

According to Civic Technologies data, more than 40% of the area is represented by “Urban Moms & Dads”; “Blue Collar Starts” represents an additional 25%. The median age of the block groups is in the 20’s to 30’s. High school education is the most common achievement level with median income typically in the \$30,000 or less category. The majority of residents have blue collar occupations with significant representation in construction, maintenance, manual labor, food services, and transportation. There is a higher proportion of public assistance funding for this area as compared to the general public.

### *User Perception and Profile*

Of the users surveyed at Linwood, 88% were there to either borrow or return books and almost half were borrowing or returning music, movies or spoken books. Most users surveyed were satisfied, rating excellent or good, hours of operations (83%) and customer services (87%) and materials available (79%). Children’s programming and larger children’s spaces, are considered to be a priority, even though half those surveyed do not use these services. Almost all those surveyed reported they were very satisfied (53%) or satisfied (37%) with Linwood as a branch library.

Of those responding, a high 70% indicated they do visit the Central library. New services requested focused primarily on more materials needed (85%) and career and job services (76%). Almost 55% of the people responding to the survey indicated a household income below \$30,000.

## **Branch environment**

### **A. Collections**

Staff and focus group participants indicated a need to revamp the collection to focus on frequently requested items and to purge dated or rarely used materials. Increased visibility of materials, that satisfy market needs, is another important aspect to enhance the usage of the collections. While there is interest in expanding the children’s area, ensuring implementation of some unique features and programming to draw in patrons will be important.

### **B. Services**

Almost 30% of users indicated a need for improved meeting space and again this was echoed in focus groups. Partnering with the Linwood recreation center for programming or designating other areas for programming might be an opportunity. Linwood user surveys indicated a high need for job and career resource services and connecting community resources to address this service need is important for the future development of the community and relevance of the library. Hours of operation may be another concern with 28% indicating hours were poor or fair. This issue should be reviewed for alternatives since customers indicated the hours are inconvenient or inadequate. Last, developing comprehensive marketing strategies are important to market this unique location.

### **C. Technologies**

Technology needs of customers are basic, such as individual training, classes and assistance while using technology. Connecting technology services to literacy for children and job seekers is another important connection. There is a need for more technology access points, such as computers, tablets, software, and charging stations.

### **D. Programs**

There is an opportunity to enhance the relationship and partnership with the recreation center co-located in the facility. Workforce development is an important need and again presents a partnership opportunity. Due to the low income area, free entertainment options should be expanded and marketed to meet the needs of families.

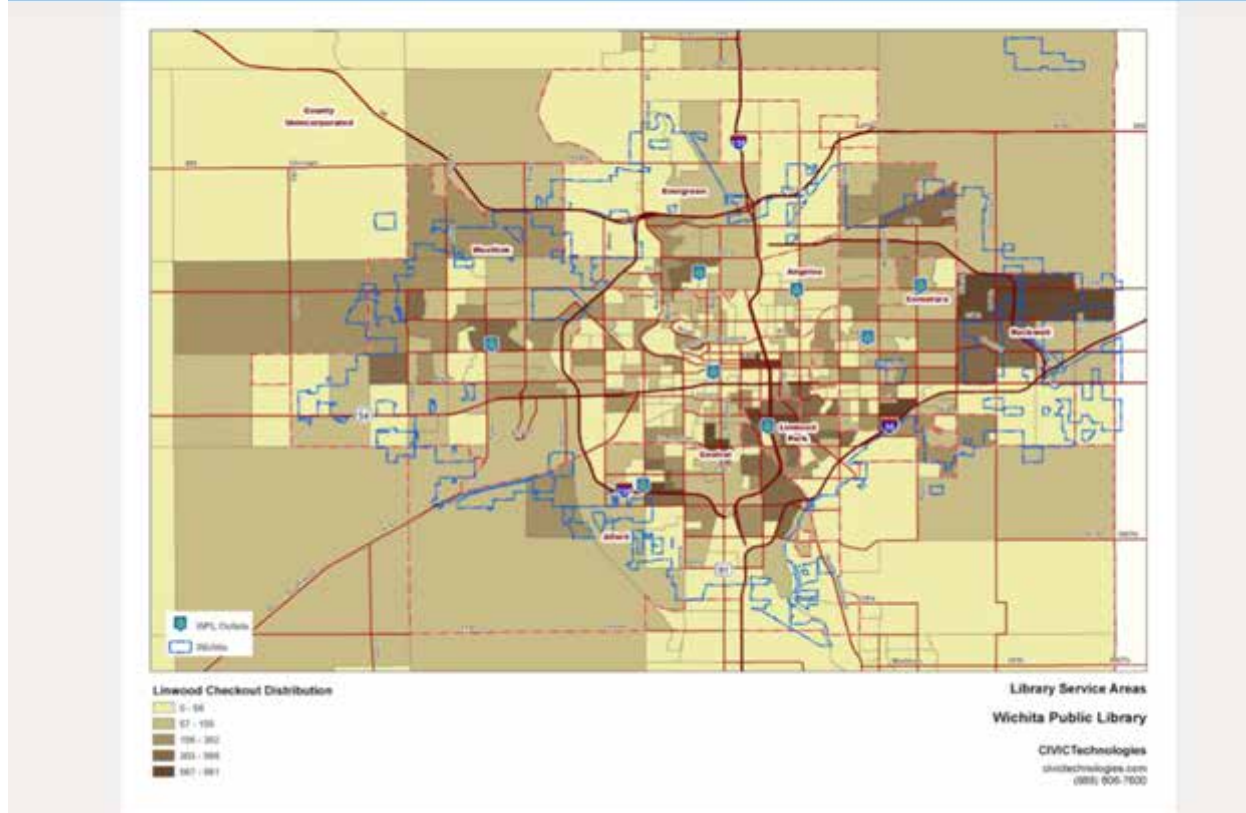
## E. Building and grounds

Signage is an important issue for this area and should be addressed to increase participation; however, current users did not see this as a concern. Tables and seating options was indicated as a need from staff, as well as opportunities for counter-height bars around the exterior. More meeting space coincides with the need for programming and service expansion.

### Development of new audiences (Civic Technologies)

For the Linwood service area, the library is serving about 33.4% of market area (3,602 out of 10,776.) Data from market segmentation indicates Linwood has some similarities with the Alford branch patrons that represent lower-income young families. Opportunities in this audience also include new services, outreach and programming for literacy, social opportunities and affordable family entertainment options. Working families who may need assistance with job skills and employment, enrichment opportunities through materials and classes, and entertainment options with technology and checkouts. The co-location with the recreation center should create more partnership opportunities to serve clients and create Linwood as a destination place for the beautiful park, recreation and library services. Families served by the nearby elementary school should also be a new audience for expansion.

## Linwood Park Map of Checkouts by Block Group



### Staff Workshop Focus: Linwood: The Rec Room

Linwood staff identified their branch focus on providing convenience and entertainment that patrons can take home. This branch can grow by creating a one-stop shop where dropping by the library feels like going to see family. With the neighborhood park outside, Linwood can be the living room offering comfort, convenience, entertainment, stress relief and fun. The library can provide video games and home entertainment as well as technology and technical support. The high service priorities identified include customer development to reach non-users in all the service areas identified and expansion of collections and checkouts like magazines and movies. The thematic focus for Linwood is “Linwood: The Rec Room.”

The Rockwell Branch opened in 1976 as part of Edgemoor Park. Rockwell and Westlink have the largest designated service areas. Due to the expansive geographical space, both locations are under-performing below the average 30% of the market share. Proximity to the library services appears to be a concern, with few users coming from the further southeast area of the community to use Rockwell.

### **Service Area Audience**

According to Civic Technologies, there are more than 24 different market segments represented in the Rockwell Service area. The large diversity of market segments creates significant demands on the variety of collections, programming and service needs for Rockwell. Unlike other branches, due to the geographic size and population diversity, there are not generalizations about the service area that can be made.

### *User Perception and Profile*

More than 80% of the users surveyed at Rockwell were there to either borrow or return books and almost 47% were borrowing or returning music, movies or spoken books. Most users surveyed were satisfied (rating excellent or good) with hours of operations (86%), customer services (88%) and materials available (81%). The facility for ease of access, parking, and cleanliness received some of the highest branch ratings with all over 90% satisfaction. Seating and power access were areas listed as concerns. Almost all those surveyed reported they were very satisfied (71%) or satisfied (27%) with Rockwell as a branch library.

Of those responding 44% indicated they do NOT visit the Central library. New services requested focused primarily on children's programming (76%) and others indicated a need for more materials (85%). People responding to the survey indicated a diversity of household incomes as anticipated with the diverse service area.

### **Branch environment**

#### A. Collections

There is a need for a more targeted collections to meet the diversity in users. Creating the "bookstore" environment with genres and specific collections is important. Rockwell should showcase some collections to target specific populations and there is a need to purge some of the non-fiction collection according to staff.

#### B. Services

Rockwell has the most diverse types of users next to Central. High market potential indicates a need to design a marketing plan specific to the area. In addition, exploring opportunities to provide alternative library options ("pop-up," mobile services, partnerships) is critical due to the large geographic area. Southeast Wichita would be a likely consideration to test the market and expand services with more agile service delivery options. More self-check options, such as text check-out and check-out stations, along with expanded customer support is also recommended.

#### C. Technologies

A portion of customers do not have technology alternatives and Rockwell is the first option. More than other branches, there is a diversity of technology users, but access, speed and support are still critical. From the data collected, technology is a focus for users at Rockwell with an increase needed for computer stations, mobile options (laptops/tablets) and charging stations.

#### D. Programming

An increase in children programming (76%) was the service most frequently requested. The diversity of users again makes programming challenging. However, due to the diversity of audiences and their similarity to the Central

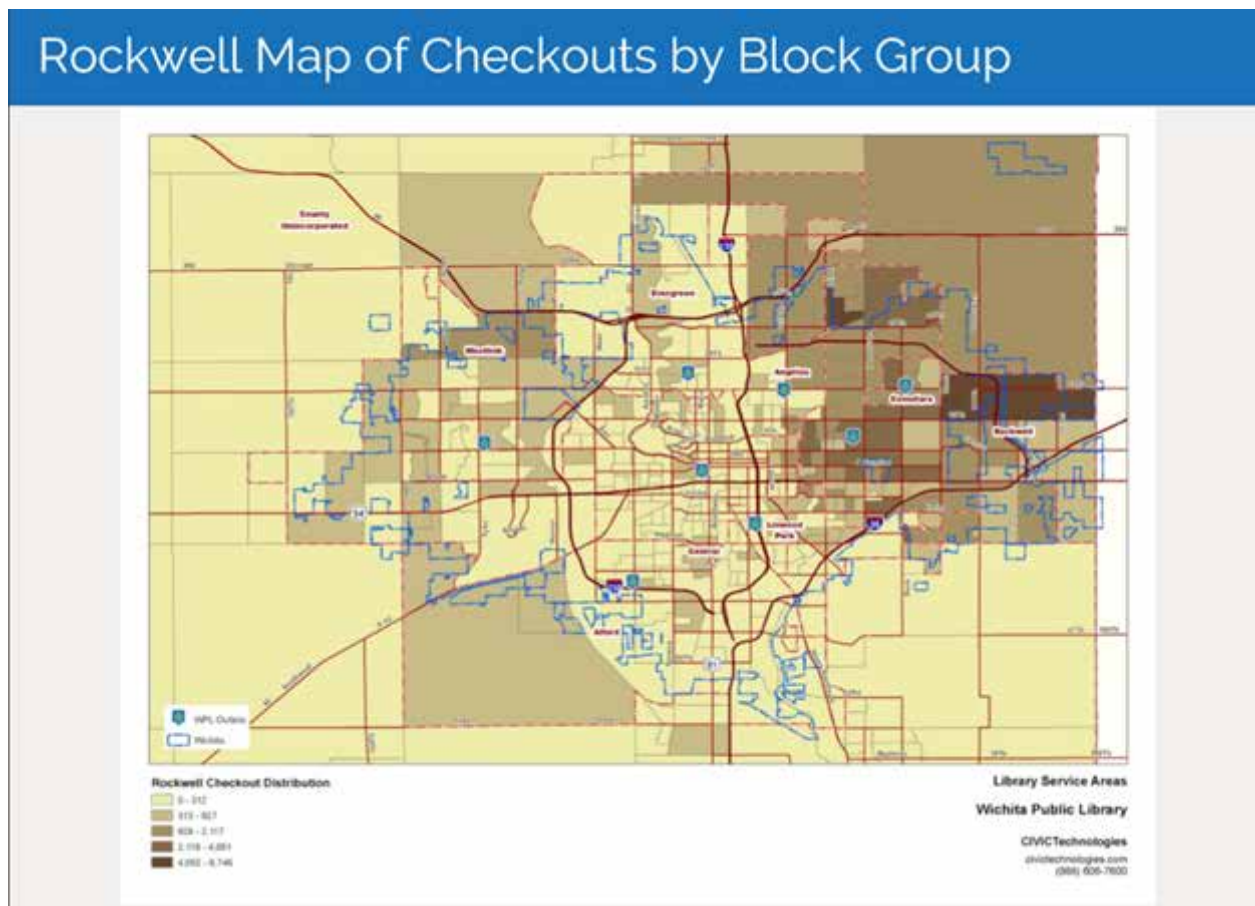
Library, Rockwell would be a good pilot test location for prototyping new programs and services planned for the Advanced Learning Library.

#### E. Building and grounds

Patrons request a better use of space to accommodate requests, including: study rooms; family friendly areas; more tables; comfortable chairs and small group space.

#### Development of new audiences (Civic Technologies)

The library is serving about 27.1% of the market area (26,326 out of 97,161.) Rockwell has a loyal audience that represents various segments in the community. Development of new audiences should focus on the top few segments and include outreach services to meet demands of these segments, emphasizing Urban Mom and Dads and “Sitting Pretty” groups. Rockwell provides a case study environment for the larger Wichita market and therefore some pilot projects should be implemented to try to reach more of these segments. Focus on family activities and connections to the adjacent Edgemoor Park Recreation Center are important. Convenience of services and unique experiences to draw more people to the library are necessary to expand the audience. Rockwell’s significant geographic area also make it a prime location to drive mobile or “pop-up” libraries in the southeast area of Wichita to attract new audiences.



#### Staff Workshop Focus: All Your Tastes in One Place

The Rockwell branch serves a wide diversity of population segments. To grow audiences, staff identified the focus should feature the library operating like a retail bookstore for both convenience and quick service, as well as accommodating browsers. Children’s services should also be a focus. The library can play a role in growing digital literacy, where technology savvy users can find the creative space they need to thrive. High priorities for Rockwell include customer development, growing collections and checkouts. To serve the many market segments Rockwell staff identified their theme as “All Your Tastes in One Place!”



Westlink opened in 1981, and like Rockwell, represents a significant geographical service area of west Wichita. Due to the large size, Westlink also penetrates less than the district-wide 30% market share. Westlink is second in gate count, only behind the Central Library. In 2015, Linwood, Comotara, Angelou, and Evergreen combined did not equal the gate count of Westlink. The demand and volume of services for Westlink is significant and planning to meet this demand is a need to be addressed in the future.

### **Service Area Audience**

According to Civic Technologies data collection of the Westlink service area, there are more than 18 different market segments in the Westlink service area. “Sitting Pretty,” “Sublime Suburbia,” “Charmed Life” and “Educated Earners” consist of almost 50% of the market. For general purpose, these are working, middle income families in urban or suburban environments. More than other branches, besides Comotara, the Westlink service area primary market segments have higher education attainment, higher income levels, and are more technologically advanced. While not quite the same diversity as Rockwell, Westlink still has a significant number of markets to address, due to the large geographical area. It is important to be cautious and not paint with too broad of a brush when discussing Westlink.

### *User Perception and Profile*

More than 86% of the users surveyed at Westlink were there to either borrow or return books and almost 47% were borrowing or returning music, movies or spoken books. Most users surveyed were satisfied, rating excellent or good, hours of operations (88%), customer services (86%) and materials available (85%). Compared to other branches, seating availability was ranked fair or poor (28%); parking convenience again ranked lower than other branches (38%). Power access and meeting space were areas listed as concerns. Again, the patrons served and the service demand at Westlink is a challenge with space availability at this site.

Almost all those surveyed reported they were very satisfied (62%) or satisfied (32%) with Westlink as a branch library. Of those responding 47% indicated they do NOT visit the Central library. New services requested focused primarily on programming for all age groups and 80% indicated a need for more materials.

### **Branch environment**

#### A. Collections

Collections should reflect market segmentation and be current, popular and accessible. The “book store” environment again will be important. Customers are more tech savvy at Westlink and there is a potential market for more electronic books to be available.

#### B. Services

Convenience and access is important. Customers for the most-part have limited time and the library experience should meet the demands of their schedules. Kid and family friendly services should be convenient and was a focus of respondents. Given the location of Westlink, near large high schools, there is an opportunity to provide “one-stop-shop” new services, designed to help students with homework and college or career planning.

#### C. Technologies

Westlink users are more tech competent than other areas; still citing a request for services, but with more advanced needs. Laptops, tablets and social media are requested by users. There is an opportunity to evaluate new digital collection options with users from this site and could serve as a pilot program.

## D. Programs

Due to the space issue at Westlink, establishing new partnerships for space locations may be an opportunity. In addition, family friendly programming that addresses the needs of all participants should be considered.

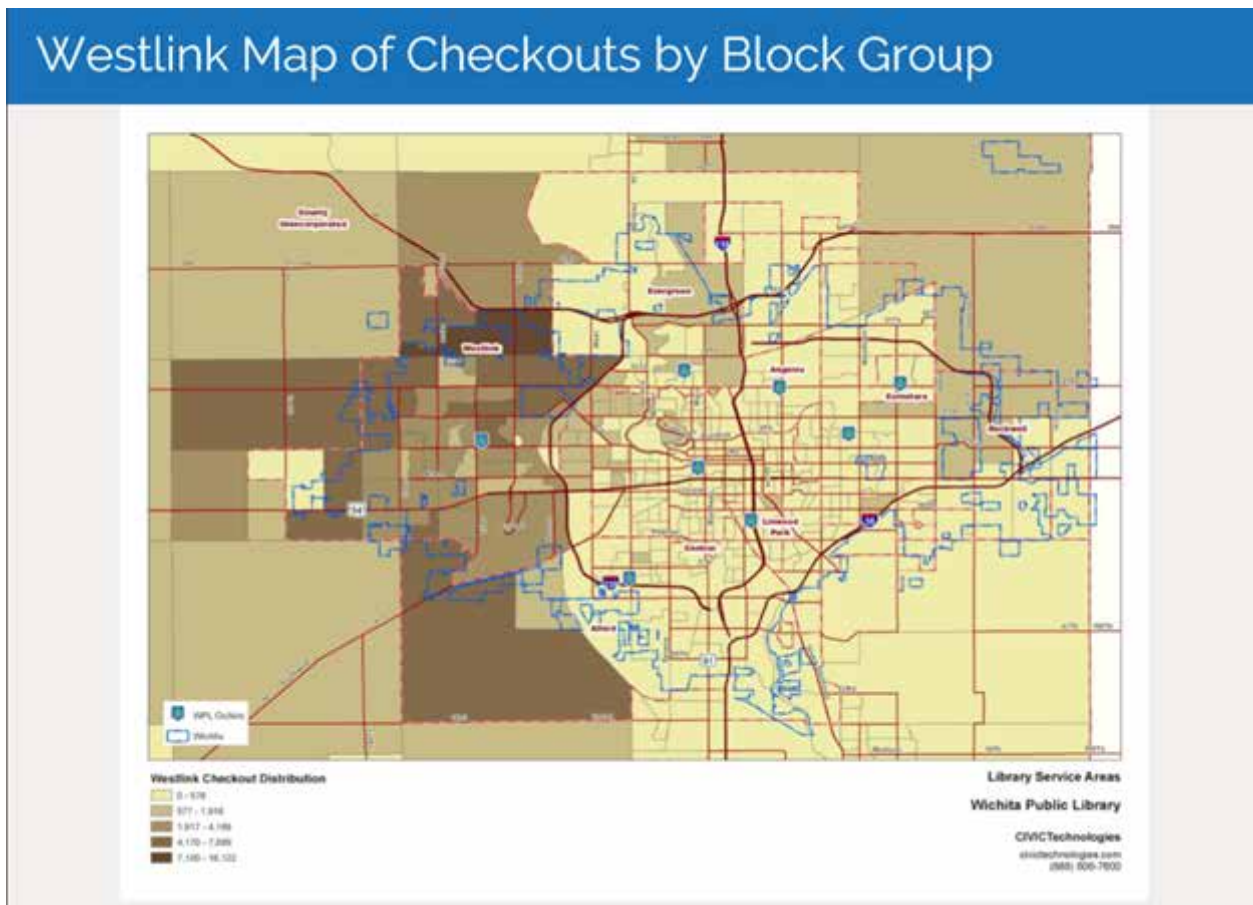
## E. Building and grounds

Space and location are a major concern at the present location. A new larger facility would be optimal. The user experience is a critical component to growth and a facility that is more modern and accessible would enhance public perception of value. Parking, seating, technology space and charging stations, meeting and programming space are all concerns. If a new, larger facility is not possible, alternative programming and service options should be considered to relieve usage at this site.

In the event a new facility is possible, the current facility could be used to provide enhanced services and administrative support. For example, the facility could offer a hub for students and families needing homework support, tutoring or a “one-stop-shop” for college preparation and planning. The facility could also provide space to logistically supply bookmobiles or “pop-up” libraries.

### Development of new audiences (Civic Technologies)

For the Westlink service area, the library is serving about 28.7% of market area (24,311 out of 84,837.) Westlink is unique in that it has NO segments that had a high market potential when reviewing the segmentation information. While Westlink is doing a good job of serving these markets, due to the size of the service area, Westlink should focus on convenience and temporary or mobile options to reach more customers. Unique programming to accommodate working families is important, including an environment that appeals to people with more leisure time. Key partnerships and strategic pilot projects to increase service delivery are important to expand the market. Westlink’s location, parking and space provide challenges for market expansion. Staff should focus on convenience of services and mitigating, as much as possible, any barriers for customers to use services.



Staff Workshop Focus: Westlink is Your Link; Start a Journey - Experience Westlink

The focus for Westlink centered on convenience, community value and the economic appeal of the library as a resource for self-improvement. Providing life-long learning experiences is important to reaching non-users. Services should appeal to youthful families, foodies, people who want to travel and do-it-yourselfers. Convenient services delivered via technology are important for busy families. High priorities include customer development to reach non-users and marketing to communicate the message about the great resources offered by Westlink. Improved facilities including a space to have learning experiences, improved parking and specialty equipment were identified as important. Westlink identified its thematic focus as “Westlink is Your Link” or “Start a Journey - Experience Westlink.”

# 9. Conclusion

The Wichita Public Library can be proud of the strong loyalty of branch library users. The robust satisfaction ratings of services and staff indicates quality programming and a strong relationship between users and providers. This loyalty from customers should not only be celebrated, but leveraged to reach new audiences, as determined by the research provided by Civic Technologies.

The data identified by Civic Technologies indicates that branches have over a 70% potential for growth in new audiences. In addition, 97% of the 1,840 respondents to the library online survey think libraries are important for our community. Interestingly, 71% of non-users also felt the library was important for the community. However, comments from non-users indicate a lack of understanding about the changing roles and services provided by libraries.

This study found a number of important recommendations that will strengthen the branch library system and engage new audiences. Universal recommendations for branches include updates to buildings and décor, developing unique branch experiences related to the neighborhoods served, expanding community services, growing partnerships, considering developing a library “app” and exploring the opportunities to leverage resources through regional collaboration with area libraries. In addition, branches need to re-think how they engage with the public, including defining their unique community purpose and developing strategic priorities to meet community needs.

Barriers to library use could be reduced by revisiting some library policies, such as reducing fees and fines and providing free meeting space for neighborhood groups. Patrons are requesting informational marketing notifications such as “you might like this book.” This marketing strategy requires the library to re-examine their policy of protecting data privacy versus using this information for informational marketing.

The Wichita Public Library is underfunded compared to peer libraries, which impacts its ability to reach the new audiences identified by the Civic Technologies research. Checking out books and materials is the number one reason Wichita branch patrons visit the library, yet spending per capita on books and materials is quite low (30 – 80% less) compared to peers. This impacts the library’s ability to provide the resources required to attract new audiences.

The construction of the new Advanced Learning Library requires the branches be integrated into the “make-over” through identification of new services that can be “pushed out” to branches. Several comments were made from users about the branches being “left-out” of the innovation around the Advanced Learning Library.

The Wichita Public Library is poised to expand its community role by shifting from being a repository of information that users consume to being a facilitator for community building through championing literacy, information literacy and digital literacy. The library has the opportunity to become the “third place” where citizen engagement, inquiry and civic discussion take place. Together with new partners, the library can foster both economic and workforce development.

This study highlights the significant role libraries play in developing their neighborhood communities. The Wichita Public Library branches are essential for effective delivery of library services. The branch system merits continued and expanded investment to grow and improve this significant community resource.

# 10. References

- Allen, J. T. (2012). The pop-up libraries of Manhattan. *World Literature Today*, 86(4),80-80. doi:10.7588/worllitetoda.86.4.0080.
- Alvarez, B. (2016). Public libraries in the age of fake news. *Public Libraries*, 55, 24-27.
- Brackney, S. (2015). Popularizing pop-up libraries. *Evanced Solutions, LLC*. Retrieved from <http://www.evancedsolutions.com/popularizing-pop-up-libraries/>
- Blank, B.T. (n.a.). Public libraries add social workers and social programs. *The New Social Worker*. Retrieved from <http://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/practice/public-libraries-add-social-workers-and-social-programs/>
- Carlee, R., Strigaro, K., Miller, E. & Donelan, M. (2011). Maximize the potential of your public library. International City/County Management Association. Retrieved from [http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge\\_network/documents/kn/Document/302161/Maximize\\_the\\_Potential\\_of\\_Your\\_Public\\_Library](http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/302161/Maximize_the_Potential_of_Your_Public_Library)
- Detez, J., Harvey, S., Irfan, E., Murphy, A., & Savic, M. (2014). *Performance metrics towards 2030: Investigating news to measure and report on our activities*. Victoria, AUS: State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria Network.
- Fels Institute of Local and State Government. (2010). *The economic value of the Free Library in Philadelphia*. Philadelphia, Pa.: Fels Institute of Government.
- Krolak, L. (2005). The role of libraries in the creation of literate environments. *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006: Literacy for Life*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001460/146057e.pdf>
- Library Design Showcase. (2009). *American Libraries*, 40(4), 30-42. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25650269>
- Local Government Association. (2012). *Local solutions for future local library services*. Retrieved from [http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=e6ec1bb0-8ca8-44ae-b811-40b5734f3a8a&groupId=10180](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=e6ec1bb0-8ca8-44ae-b811-40b5734f3a8a&groupId=10180)
- Mack, R. (2012). The pop-up library: A mini-movement of knowledge. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-mack/the-pop-up-library-a-mini-\\_b\\_1470544.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-mack/the-pop-up-library-a-mini-_b_1470544.html)
- Morehart, P. (2015). Library design showcase. *American Libraries*. American Library Association. Retrieved from <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2015/09/01/2015-library-design-showcase/>
- Norman, M. (2012). Frail, fatal, fundamental: the future of public libraries. *Australasian Public Libraries and Information*. 25, 94-100.
- Pettigrew, S. E. (2015). The future of the book and the slow book movement. In *History of the book: disrupting society from tablet to tablet*. (153-160). Monmouth: Wester Oregon University.
- Public Library Data Service (2014). *The 2014 Public Library Data Service: Characteristics and Trends*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/pla/publications/plds>
- Renner, R.A. (2009). Ebooks—costs and benefits to academic and research libraries. Retrieved from [http://static.springer.com/sgw/documents/1343302/application/pdf/eBook\\_Costs+and+benefits+to+ARL](http://static.springer.com/sgw/documents/1343302/application/pdf/eBook_Costs+and+benefits+to+ARL)



WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

HUGO WALL SCHOOL  
OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

*Public Policy and  
Management Center*

