Broadening Horizons:
Kansas City Public Library,
Adult Services Department
Strategic Plan 2013

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Photo by Travelin' Librarian

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Executive Summary

Downtown Kansas City is a bustling urban center that draws many people to come live, work, and play, and it continues to grow. Through revitalization efforts over the past ten years, the city has seen positive improvements in hospitality, security, maintenance, and overall safety and cleanliness. A survey by the Downtown Council of Kansas City revealed that this revival of the city core has proven successful, with residents ranking the downtown area above average for entertainment, character, art and culture, diversity, and cleanliness, among other features.

The Kansas City Public Library system has over ten locations in the Kansas City Metro Area and last year served nearly 2.5 million customers. Participating in the city's revival, the new Downtown Library location opened in 2004, and its parking garage's book façade has been celebrated nationally.   This branch is the largest and most centralized in the system, and has recently undergone some internal changes in order to keep up with the fast pace of the city's rebirth. Last year, the four major departments of the downtown branch – Reference Services, Circulation, Collection Development and Community Outreach – merged together to form the new Adult Services Department. In order to better serve the community and library patrons, as well as to compensate for staff reduction, the heads of each department combined forces to work toward several shared goals. Kansas City's changing economy, growing downtown, and evolving cultural landscape have inspired the library to take a fresh look at community needs; department leaders have developed a strategic plan to see to it that these needs are met.

The following goals and their corresponding objectives have been set into motion by the Adult Services staff, and are expected to be complete within one year:

Goal 1: Find and connect with the fastest growing populations in downtown and surrounding areas.

Objective 1.1: Support and encourage the creative output of Kansas City's thriving visual artist community.

Objective 1.2: Better address and adapt to the needs of underserved ethnic groups in the Kansas City service area.

Goal 2: Improve access to our department's information and resources.

Objective 2.1: Close the digital divide of the urban core of Kansas City by increasing our patron computer usage by 40%.

Objective 2.2: Increase opportunities for improvement of adult literacy in the Kansas City area.

Each objective has several explicit initiatives to aid in its completion. Both the Adult Services staff and the strategic planning committee are confident in the attainability of each goal and that the changes set into motion by the new department will ensure the betterment of the library's future service to the Kansas City community.

Organizational Profile

Adult Services Department

Overview

Since its inception, the Kansas City Public Library (KCPL) has been a valued asset to the citizens of the area. The organization goes back to 1873 when it was first established as part of the local school district, and even in its earlier days it served as both a center for education and a downtown cultural center. Over many decades the library has expanded its facilities and services to better meet the needs and interests of a thriving metropolitan community in the 21st century. At present the nearly 2.5 million customers utilize the ten locations and many online services and resources.

As the Kansas City Public Library has grown, a number of specialized departments have been created to maintain high-quality operations for the library system. Over time these departments have become fragmented, duplicating efforts in some areas while working toward disparate goals in others. In facing an economic recession and significant budget cuts, the library board urged administration to seek more creative ways to better draw and serve current and potential library users. This charge led administration to assess the fragmented organizational structure and unite multiple departments under a new Adult Services Department.

The unified department has allowed for an aligned mission and standardization and streamlining of many operations, but leaders recognize careful strategic planning is essential for the department to fully achieve its vision. As a result, the Strategic Planning Team formed to assess the current demands of the department and develop targeted goals to move the department forward. The following strategic plan covers a span of twelve months, providing adequate time to execute an action plan in a concise enough timeframe for the newly restructured department to quickly evaluate and respond to the results.

The Organization

The Adult Services Department of the Kansas City Public Library (KCPL) is an exciting new venture for the downtown location and will primarily focus on public service for library users aged 18 and older. As noted earlier, this newly formed public service department is a merger of four, formerly separate, departments: Circulation, Reference, Programming and Community Outreach, and Collection Development.

The previous managers of these departments, together with the Downtown Branch Manager and Director of KCPL, unanimously agreed that the preceding Head of Reference, Jessica McClanahan, should be appointed as the of Head of Adult Services.

The former departments were reorganized into three divisions of the Adult Services Department and each division was assigned a single coordinator who would report directly to the Head of Adult Services*. Hope Harms was appointed the Reference Coordinator. Kim Weir, the previous manager of the Circulation Department, accepted the new role of Circulation and Collection Development Coordinator. Matthew Fuegen accepted the role of Programming and Outreach Coordinator.

Each coordinator directly oversees the workload of their particular area, but since multiple divisions share some staff members, the Head of Adult Services supervises and evaluates all staff within the department.

* For organizational chart, see Appendix I

Guiding Values

The directors and personnel of the Kansas City Public Library brought forth a mandate to better serve our patrons, both locally and globally through the development of the Adult Services Department. Major stakeholders of the Kansas City Public Library benefiting from this change include:

-Residents of the City of Kansas City, Missouri and surrounding areas
- Personnel of the Kansas City Public Library
- Board of Directors
- Board of Trustees
- Friends of the Library
- Mayor, City Council, and other elected officials
-Schools, both public and private, as well as institutes of higher education
- Area businesses
- Cultural groups embodying Kansas City's rich diversity
- Library and information professionals and students

First and foremost, our collection and department operate on the basis that information should be open and accessible for all. The information needs of our community are our highest priority, and our ideas about what those needs actually are constantly evolve and adapt to meet the changing world around us. Circulation, Reference, Collection Development, and Outreach have all merged to form the Adult Services Department of the Kansas City Public Library. As separate entities, each department has its own guiding values, but commonalities can be found when the four are brought together. To provide information for our patrons in an open, friendly, convenient, and non-discriminating environment is the basic guiding value of this strategic plan.
We anticipate the new department to function on a higher level, with our team of library professionals able to work together to provide better access, outreach, and assistance to our patrons. We hope to reach out to the community to raise awareness of all the resources and programs our library and department have to offer. The new department is expected to streamline library operations in order to create a more efficient use of our space and facilities.

Mission:

Broadening the horizons of our community through technology and innovation while empowering individuals through access of information.

Preparation and Planning

Department Management Team

The Adult Services Management Team consists of the following members: Jessica McClanahan, Head of Adult Services; Hope Harms, Reference Coordinator; Kim Weir, Circulation and Collection Development Coordinator; and Matthew Fuegen, Programming and Outreach Coordinator. These members are considered the driving management force behind the new Adult Services Department and were the most logical appointees. This department management team will contribute their combined vision and experience toward the strategic planning process.

There may be areas or instances when the department management team allocates duties relevant to the success of the strategic plan to other members of the department. In those cases, a sub-committee will be formed and overseen by a member of the Adult Services management team.

Planning Factors

Our prior library structure is now being shifted to unify these, formerly separate, departments into the one large collaborative organization. Managers previously led their departments independently with minimal external supervision and now will have to learn to work together. While this will be challenging, all agree the change will better suit the needs of our community. Each member of the team will take care to learn what each division does in advance, and every attempt will be made to be sensitive to all the departmental needs.

The library has been proactive in assessing the needs of our patrons through ongoing surveys and open forums. This existing structure of information will help us better reformat the Adult Services Department and facilitate our growth. Another hurdle we will examine in creating a cohesive strategic plan is the handling of the budget. Library budget had previously been split between the four different departments with most of the budget going toward collection development. Merging the four departments will allow each division a better chance at the overall share, but will also create the need for a new system of funds allotment.

Though some difficulties can be expected, the guidance of the department head, as well as substantial contributions from the three coordinators will be positive factors for the strategic process.

Current Reality

Environmental Scan

Several outside factors have contributed to the changes occurring within the Downtown Library. Most of these key elements are due to a shift in the community and new city developments. Kansas City residents are beginning to move back into the downtown area, and the library is realizing that the community's information needs are evolving rapidly.

As the city's renaissance continues, the area has also welcomed an influx of creative talents. The Downtown Council recently found that Kansas City boasts the seventh highest concentration of visual artists and the fourth highest concentration of graphic designers in the country. Performing arts are also embraced, the past year marking the opening of the Todd Bolender Center, home to the Kansas City Ballet, as well as the new Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The wealth and appreciation of creativity brings a unique life to the city.

Kansas City is also home to a diverse array of races, ethnicities, and cultures. Recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey found that nearly 8% of the city is foreign born, and over 12% speak a language other than English at home, a significant increase over the last five years. In addition to both prominent African-American and Hispanic populations, the area has also seen a marked increase in those of Slavic heritage, which the city as yet has to fully accommodate.

Technology has also brought significant change to the area, and more development is to come. According to the Mid-American Regional Council, employee numbers from high-tech companies such as Sprint Nextel Corporation, AT&T, and Cerner Corporation, as well as various banking, engineering, and medical facilities, rank just behind government agencies. With numerous technologically inclined individuals, area libraries are seeing increased demand for digital content and compatibility, particularly related to e-books and mobile devices. Neighboring library systems are also utilizing technology to streamline processes. Technology will continue to be a major drawing factor in the years to come, especially with the advantage of an ultra high-speed broadband network that is being deployed across Kansas City through the Google Fiber project.

The state of education in the area ranges from top private schools to a public school district whose state accreditation has currently been revoked, and the American Community Survey shows 13% of the city's residents have not completed high school or equivalent schooling, and another 25% have only attained high school level preparation. Meanwhile, public agencies including libraries face significant budget cuts and staff shortages, often resulting in little to no targeted service to the under-educated.

As such, the economic climate cannot be ignored. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a 7% to 9% unemployment rate for the metro area, and while not as significant as in other parts of the country, the impact is still noticeable. Libraries in the area continue to see high volumes of job seekers utilizing library resources, and the competitive job market is requiring a better educated workforce as society moves deeper into the information age.

Kansas City faces a unique challenge in nurturing its community's energetic development while also supporting a diverse and struggling population. Without strategic action, support for continued growth will collapse. The city's reputation as a cultural and intellectual hub will deteriorate, potentially driving out residents and businesses, leading to a drastic decline. Rather than become an outdated community resource, the Adult Services Department of the Downtown Library aims to be a key contributor in guiding the city forward and helping its residents flourish.

Photo of Downtown Kansas City by ThirdHandArt

SWOT Analysis

This exercise allowed our department to examine its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, (SWOT) from both internal and external sources.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Diverse collection, both print and e-content • Quality programs that guarantee our patrons' a unique library experience • Safe and welcoming spaces for all users • Dedicated and talented personnel	• Limited funds • Loss of experienced staff members to retirement • Reduced staff due to attrition • Departmental changes resulted in new and different roles for staff • Inadequate marketing of services
Opportunities	Threats
• Developing more of an online presence • Using more social media to market services and programs • Promoting the library as a showplace for new Google Fiber Internet connection • Adult Services staff are the first in the library that our users meet • Attracting new users to the library by catering to the needs of a more diverse population	• Publishers withholding or severely limiting e-content from libraries • Possibility of further budget reductions • Increasing subscription rates for database services • Overextended staff due to staff shortages

Gap Analysis

Prior to the merger, each department set modest goals, which they would strive to meet. Reference statistics were steady, and our collection of materials was well known and sought out by users around the city. While each department has more than met their established goals, we have fallen behind in the amount of services we were able to provide due to the separation of departments. Limited staff has reduced our ability to provide public programs and conduct outreach in the community. We have lost touch with our community and the ever-changing demographics our user base consists of. The allocation of funds to each separate department restricted the amount of databases and eBooks we could purchase, and our collection is slowly stagnating. Finally, loss of staff due to attrition, created staffing shortages in each of the departments.

In carrying out the first strategic plan for the new Adult Services Department, we hope to overcome this deficiency and achieve the new goals we have set. Each individual working in Adult Services will be cross-trained and familiarized with each of the divisions contained within the department. This will assist in overcoming our staffing shortage, which will help us attain our goals. Our department hopes to increase its programming and outreach numbers by 20% from the original goals set forth by the former Programming and Outreach Department. We would also like to see an overall increase in usage through increased circulation, computer usage and utilization of our databases. Realignment of funding will allow us to weed older materials from our collection and purchase new, up to date materials. We hope to focus these materials on the needs of our surrounding community. With a growing number of artists, ethnicities, and younger residents, we hope create a collection and environment, which will inspire their creative spirit and desire to learn.

Organizational Performance

In the beginning stages of the strategic planning process, we are focusing on small, manageable steps we can take to achieve our two main goals. A considerable amount of research has to be done to determine which direction we can go with our collection and programming. Our success can be measured through circulation records, monitoring of computer and software usage, and program attendance. At the end of every quarter, the data will be compared to the desired results.

Current Activities:

1. Circulation and Collection Development:

     a). A few staff members have begun the first stage of weeding to make room for new Adult Literacy, Fine Art and Design, and Continuing Education collections.

     b). Research is being conducted on e-books and e-readers to determine whether they are a good fit for our adult patrons.

     c). Databases are undergoing scrutiny in terms of use, access, and cost.

2. Reference:

     a). All department employees are currently being trained in reference interview and information needs assessment.

     b). We are standardizing our current reference procedures and determining the best ways to deal with both in-house and online inquiries.

3. Programs and Outreach:

     a). Marketing and Research – We are currently looking at two particular groups of people in the community to increase their presence in the library and to ensure their information needs are addressed:

          1. Underrepresented ethnic groups and non-English speaking groups

          2. Visual artists and designers

     b). Classes and programs to promote adult literacy are being developed.

4. Technological Services:

     a). Closing the Digital Divide – We are working to ensure that users are getting the most out of what the library has to offer by assessing our digital resources, creating classes for inexperienced users and/or digital immigrants, and training staff to be able to answer questions about the tools that are available.

     b). Space is being made (due to collection weeding, downsizing, and rearranging) to make room for more computer stations.

     c). Hard drives are being tidied up in order to create maximum storage space for new software programs, as well as to increase the speed of the machines themselves.

5. Administration:

     a). A 12-month strategic plan has been developed for the new Adult Services Department. Realistic and worthwhile goals are being set, and it is the first effort toward improving our services and resources. Steps are now being taken to put the plan into action.

     b). Staff reorganization – Heads of departments that were once separate now form a team of coordinators that all work together for the benefit of the new department. Cross training, team development, and continuing education are all measures being taken to strengthen the abilities of the staff.

Performance Targets:

1. Circulation and Collection Development:

a). The Adult Literacy and Continuing Education Collection will house resources needed to promote lifetime learning and increase literacy for our adult patrons.

b). We will develop an e-book collection that patrons can use on their own devices, or on devices that the library has available for checkout.

2. Reference:

a). Each employee will be on a reference rotation according to the new system: One librarian will be at the desk at all times, while another will rove throughout the department. Two roving librarians will be employed during peak service hours.

b). Items will be added to the daily reference statistics sheet to track inquiries on the new Adult Literacy and Foreign Language sections.

3. Programs and Outreach:

a). Foreign language communities – Holiday celebrations, cultural awareness programs, collection development, and art exhibitions will be organized to make these groups feel at home in our facility.

b). Visual artist communities – In addition to substantial additions to the collection, gallery exhibits and visiting artist lectures will also be held to ensure that these users are represented in our patron community.

4. Technological Services:

a). Computer systems will be added and updated, with a combination of Macs and PCs available to users.

b). A new collection of e-readers, tablets, and other electronics will be developed for our adult patrons to check out and use.

c). Creative software is to be added to create a space in which users can be active and creative with their library experience.

d). Classes will be available to users of all levels to ensure that everyone has a chance to utilize our resources to their fullest potential.

5. Administration

a). A committee will be developed to conduct quarterly reviews to assess the department's adherence to the strategic plan.

b). Data collected to measure attendance, programs, and circulation will be evaluated to make sure we are on the right path.

c). Marketing campaigns will be finalized to bring awareness to the new department and resources therein.

Future Vision:

The Downtown Library Adult Services Department will look to the community for guidance in improving our department's collections and services. The library is working hard to embrace our city's diversity, while providing a place where patrons can grow, explore, and create together. We will be working constantly to improve access, increase library awareness, and improve the quality and relevance of the information and services we provide. Through the changes laid out in this plan, we will meet and surpass our department's potential while helping our patrons realize their own.

Photo of Kansas City by timsamoff

New Priorities

Strategic Profile

Urban libraries are rich resources that must be as dynamic as their communities. In a time marked by economic strain, areas like Kansas City rely on the increasingly diverse talents, skills, and perspectives of their residents. Library services offer great opportunities to support these individuals and help them grow and achieve. The Adult Services staff is dedicated to maintaining the Downtown Library's position as a viable and useful information source for the community. A new priority, however, is to introduce the library as an invaluable community center - a place for resources, discovery, and learning in our urban core. The strategic plan of the new department is a first step in implementing the tools and resources we have compiled to reform the idea of what this library should be to the community.

Of course, the role of technology cannot be ignored as it reshapes our daily lives. Familiarity and ready access to the tools and information it provides is vital for success. The Adult Services Department understands that the library is seeing, serving, and instructing more digital immigrants. Access to public libraries' computers and the Internet is becoming increasingly attractive to patrons, and is drawing a different demographic that does not always share the same profile as the traditional literate library patron. Libraries understand that technology is increasingly interwoven into the everyday lives of people and organizations for convenience, connectedness, entertainment, etc. More things are moving online to save paper and reduce costs, including government forms, job applications, bills, and banking. The middle class has more personal access to information via the Internet, reducing attendance and awareness of library services. Libraries like ours are working hard to develop services for and find ways to market to this demographic with more business-like strategies.

Potential budget cuts may mean reduction in staffing and services, but successful libraries will be adept at finding ways to do more with less. Using open source software, recruiting volunteers and interns, and taking advantage of more fundraising opportunities are ways to combat a potential budget crisis. In addition to technology and budget issues, libraries are finding the need to provide more services to more diverse cultures and non-English speaking patrons. We not only want to accommodate these new groups, but invite them in, show them that we are aware of them, and we want to help them with their information needs. There are also a great number of people in the community with non-traditional careers and educations that we would like to make feel at home in our facility.

The research done during the strategic planning process has helped the Adult Services staff to better understand the needs of the community. We feel more in touch with our urban core, and the completion of the strategic goals and initiatives in this plan will hopefully bring us much closer to Kansas City's diverse populace. Our mission statement clearly defines "empowering individuals through access of information" as our department's top priority, and we fully intend to stay in line with that mission.

Strategic Initiatives

The Adult Services Department hopes to increase access to information, awareness, and attendance. For the next twelve months, the Adult Services staff will be working toward two main goals:

1. To better serve growing populations in the downtown area.
2. To improve access to our department's information and resources.

Our Strategic Planning Team has come up with several objectives and initiatives to assist our staff in making these goals a reality.

Goal 1
Find and connect with the fastest growing populations in downtown and surrounding areas.

Objective 1.1
Support and encourage the creative output of Kansas City's growing visual artist community.

Initiatives:
- Encourage creative activities within the library through added software programs and classes (computer and software instruction, arts and crafts, etc.).
- Create space where artists can share, exhibit, and network.
- Add to the collection books and resources that will cater to the artists' information needs (artists and art history, technique and craft, marketing, grants/financial assistance, art and design based periodicals, etc.)

Objective 1.2:
To better address and adapt to the needs of underserved ethnic groups in the Kansas City service area.

Initiatives:
- Increase the amount of language, life skills, fiction, and nonfiction material and expand the variety of languages they are available in for patron usage.
- Create programming, community events/partnerships and outreach which will directly serve this community.
- Develop tutorials in various languages, which will aid in library resource usage to new users unfamiliar with the English language and increase the amount of computer software available in different languages.

Goal 2
Improve access to our department's information and resources.

Objective 2.1
Closing the digital divide of the urban core of Kansas City by increasing our patron computer usage by 40%.

Initiatives:
- Promote more in-house computer usage with patrons by supplying more accessible machines.
- Offer more computer instruction, both through group learning via classes and one-on-one instruction with a librarian.
- Increase the Wi-Fi signal throughout the department so that connectable devices (laptops, tablets, smart phones) can be utilized and online inside the library.

Objective 2.2
Increase opportunities for improved adult literacy in the Kansas City area.

Initiatives:
- Develop a circulating collection of Adult New Reader materials, including books, books with audiovisual supplements, and periodicals, for Kansas City's low-literate adults.
- Provide self-paced reading instruction software on all computers and offer online literacy-building databases and programs.
- Host regular literacy-based programming that is relevant and enticing to adults.

Action Plan

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Goal 1
Find and connect with the fastest growing populations in downtown and surrounding areas.

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Objective 1.1: Support and encourage the creative output of Kansas City's growing visual artist community.

Initiative 1: Encourage creative activities within the library through added software programs and classes (computer and software instruction, arts and crafts, etc.).

Action Steps
- Adult Services will assign one staff member to team up with one IT staff member to assess software needs.
- Open Source software will be used as much as possible to save room for more expensive programs, such as Adobe Creative Suite.
- IT staff will work closely with Adult Services to train staff and patrons on the new software and computers.
- Through networking and staff relationships, we hope to find several volunteer artists to teach two arts and crafts class per month.

Timeline
Our addition of new software will depend on the completion of the computer update (see Goal 2, Objective 2.1), since there would be no point in putting new software on machines that are going to be replaced. During the first three months of computer updates, the software will be chosen and installed. The arts and crafts lessons will occur twice a month starting in February 2013.

Evaluation
Clicks will be measured on each program to see which ones are being used and how often. A section will be added to the daily reference statistics sheet for questions regarding the new programs. Attendance of computer instruction classes and art and crafts courses will be measured through sign up sheets. Exit surveys will be given to the patrons at the end of each class, asking about patron skill level before the class, usefulness of the information covered, and schedule offered.

Measurable Outcomes
The instruction courses, as well as the arts and crafts courses will be evaluated after each session. Each successive class will be molded and revised according to the information drawn from the exit surveys. Scheduling will be evaluated according to compared session times and attendance rates. The information pulled from the monitoring of software use will be examined to determine whether the programs are worth having or need to be replaced with something else.

Initiative 2: Create space where artists can share, exhibit, and network.

Action Steps

- One Adult Services staff member will be given the title of Exhibition Coordinator, and will oversee monthly artist exhibits and First Friday events.
- A newly available room in the library will be allotted for our library's new gallery space.
- Another Adult Services staff member will be put in charge of visiting artist talks.
- Once a month artist lectures will be held, encouraging art students, professional artists, faculty, etc. to attend, learn, and meet each other.

Timeline
The process for this will likely take some time. In the first quarter the Exhibition Coordinator will plan and curate the first event in our new exhibit space, getting everything ready for a spring opening and First Friday event. The visiting artists talks will be scheduled once a month starting in January 2013.

Evaluation
The exhibit space is in a room that already has a gate counter, so counts will be done for attendance in the gallery space both on First Fridays and throughout the week. Head counts will also be taken at the artist lectures.

Measurable Outcomes
Attendance is really the most important factor in determining whether or not these events are worthwhile. If attendance is low, measures will be taken to get the word out. If after increased marketing and networking is implemented attendance is still low, then the events will either be held less frequently or cancelled altogether. If attendance is high, and the projects are getting more people into the library, then we will try to develop more events like this in the future.

Initiative 3: Add to the collection books and resources that will cater to the information needs of designers and visual artists.

Action Steps

- Collection Development Coordinator Kim Weir and two staff members of her choice will work together on the Fine Art and Design collection in order to better suit the needs of our growing artistic community.
- Artist and art history books, books on technique and materials, as well as fine art and design periodicals, information on grants and residency/fellowship programs will be added to enhance our collection.
- The Collection Development team will collaborate with the libraries of Kansas City Art Institute, University of Missouri Kansas City, and other surrounding area colleges and universities to ensure that our aspiring artists and designers have all of their information needs met.

Timeline
The collection development team for this initiative can afford to take their time. Within the first quarter, the team should have a substantial amount of research done and have a very good idea of the types of material purchases they will want to make. Communication with the college and university libraries will also be done in the first quarter and the team will have a good idea of where Adult Services can pick up the slack. Within the second quarter, barring any budget complications, all periodicals will have been chosen and subscribed to and a substantial amount of the new books will have been purchased.

Evaluation
Circulation records will be closely monitored to see which materials are being checked out. Periodicals will be more difficult to measure, but hopefully the librarians will be able to tell which are being read based on which ones are left out on tables or moved around. We will also put out a survey in the periodicals section asking patrons to tell us which titles they like, and what they would like to see more or less of.

Measurable Outcomes
The circulation records will be able to tell us which of the new materials are being checked out and how often, and will inform future collection decisions for this section.

Objective 1.2: Better address and adapt to the needs of underserved ethnic groups in the Kansas City service area.

Initiative 1: Increase the amount of language, life skills, fiction, and nonfiction material, as well as expand the variety of languages they are available in for patron usage.

Action Steps:

- A committee of selected individuals from the Adult Services Department will be formed for this task.
- Inventory existing collection to access where gaps are, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the collection.
- The current collection will be weeded and then reorganized into subgroups for different languages. Additional shifting will also be done to make room for new materials.
- Emphasis will be placed on learning material, which will aid in learning language and life skills. Multiple copies will be ordered and lost copies will be replaced.
- A team will be selected and charged with the task of identifying popular reading materials from each language group.

Timeline
Inventory of the collections will begin in January 2013, and weeding/reorganizing will soon follow. Staff hopes to have the collection shifted and subdivided by July. The selection and ordering of the material will be an ongoing project, which will be conducted from the beginning to the end of the year.

Evaluation
Circulation stats will be monitored frequently throughout 2013. We will make notes of what materials are circulating at a higher rate then others, and try to increase the amount and availability of these materials. A survey will also be placed within the collection's stacks, which will ask for input and suggestions from users of these materials. Staff will consistently monitor popular titles for different cultures and continue to stay aware of patron trends and needs.

Measurable Outcomes
On a basic level, we will keep tabs on the amount of books we have available at any time in the stacks. Circulation statistics will also be monitored. We are hoping to increase the circulation rate and amount of usage of these materials.

Initiative 2: Create programming, community events/partnerships and outreach which will directly serve this community.

Action Steps:

- Individuals in the Adult Services department who are interested in volunteering and outreach will be encouraged to participate.
- Employees will compile a calendar of different holidays and days of significance for different community ethnic groups.
- Brainstorming for programming activities will be conducted with all ideas being recorded. List will be narrowed down based on feasibility and budget.
- Local organizations that serve diverse populations, i.e. The Don Bosco Center, will be contacted in hopes of conducting programming outside of the library.
- Material promoting these events will be distributed in areas surrounding the library.

Timeline
Staff will be encouraged to contact other local organizations and build relationships with the organizations early in the 2013, while various programs will be conducted continuously throughout the year.

Evaluation
Staff will be asked to compile reports documenting their activity. Matt Fuegen, Programming and Outreach Coordinator will evaluate the reports, and any issues or problems will be discussed in a one-on-one meeting with him. Program attendance will be taken and monitored. Lower performing programs will be retooled in hopes of increasing attendance.

Measurable Outcomes
We hope to establish lasting partnerships with other organizations serving our diverse population. By doing so, we can better meet the needs of our patron base and increase attendance or our programs.

Initiative 3: Develop tutorials in various languages, which will aid in library resource usage to new users unfamiliar with the English language, as well as increase the amount of computer software available in different languages.

Action Steps:

- Adult Services and Technical Services will work together to perform this initiative.
- A list of translation software will be compiled and each will be analyzed and reviewed for usability.
- Members of both Adult Services and Technical Services will decide whether Babylon 9 software should be purchased, or if open source would suffice.
- If paid software were selected, the vendor would be contacted to see if a lower rate is available.
- Staff will receive extensive training for the software in order to execute troubleshooting when needed.
- Staff will develop and implement classes to help users familiarize themselves with the software.
- Online tutorials will be created from these classes for future reference.

Timeline
Evaluation of new software will begin in January of 2013. A decision on which would better suit our department and users should hopefully be reached by June with installation of the software beginning soon after.

Evaluation
We hope to measure clicks within the software program to see how it is being used. We also hope to have staff unobtrusively observe users and place surveys around the computers to gain a better idea of the usage of these programs. Tutorials will have a view counter so we will be able to see how many times the program was accessed.

Measurable Outcomes
We would like to see a 25% increase in computer usage from individuals who use English as a second language. We also hope that the tutorials will lessen the confusion patrons have when using these resources.

Action Plan

Goal 2
Increase access to the department's information and resources.

Objective 2.1: Close the digital divide of the urban core of Kansas City by increasing our patron computer usage by 40%.

Initiative 1: Promote more in-house computer usage with patrons by supplying more accessible machines.

Action Steps

- The Adult Services staff will work closely with Technical Services to carry out this initiative and gather the necessary resources.
- 35 new desktop computers will be purchased, along with accompanying monitors, accessories, and furniture
- Existing furniture will be moved and spaces cleared for additional computer terminals.
- All public computers that are at least four years old will be replaced with five computers exclusively for online catalog and database access stations, and ten machines for general use (Internet access, word processing, etc.)
- The total number of Internet accessible computers will be increased from 30 to 50.
- Public demonstrations of the new Google Fiber connection will be held and patrons will be encouraged to try it out for themselves on the library's Internet terminals.

Timeline
Replacement of older, slower machines will take first priority the first three months of the year. 15 new computers will replace older machines. Beginning April 2013, ten new general public use computers will be added within a three-month timeframe. Then, starting in July, the remaining ten new general use machines will be installed, also within a three-month period.

Evaluation
Statistics for computer usage will be kept electronically through the patron's login. Frequency of computer usage and duration of each patron session will be recorded.

Measureable Outcomes
Statistics on computer use will be collected monthly and assessed quarterly to gauge change in usage.

Initiative 2: Offer more computer instruction, both through group classes and one-on-one instruction with a librarian.

Action Steps
- Adult Services will create a "Tech Ed" taskforce, consisting of three or four members, who will plan, promote, and implement computer instruction classes
- Resources for computer classes, such as PCs and supplemental instruction publications are currently available in the library.
- "Tech Ed" classes will range from very basic introductory classes to more intermediate instruction on Microsoft Office software, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher.
- Roaming librarians, consisting of all Adult Services staff on a rotating basis, will make frequent stops in the computer lab section and assist patrons with computer needs.

- Patrons who require more substantial one-on-one assistance on library computers may sign up to "Rent-a-Librarian," where a user will have exclusive support from a staff member for a set amount of time.

Timeline
The "Tech Ed" taskforce will be created in immediately after the January 1, 2013. "Tech Ed" classes will replace all existing computer instruction programs beginning in March. The "Rent-a-Librarian" concept will be given a trial run in the early spring, but is dependent on the scheduling and availability of Adult Services staff.

Evaluation
Attendance counts will be taken at every "Tech Ed" class. Also, reference statistics will be tallied daily to indicate how often during each shift a staff member assists a patron with computers or any other library technology.

Measurable Outcomes
Attendance counts and reference statistics will be collected monthly and assessed quarterly to view any change.

Initiative 3: Increase the Wi-Fi signal throughout the department so that connectable devices (laptops, tablets, smart phones) can have Internet access inside the library.

Action Steps

- Adult Services staff will work with Technical Services to complete this initiative.
- Necessary resources will include three to four additional wireless routers throughout the Adult Services Department's public areas to strengthen the library's wireless local area network (WLAN).
- Strategic placement of these additional routers will primarily depend on the recommendations of the library's IT department.
- Adult Services has established a need for at least one additional router to be shared by the meeting and study room areas.

 Timeline
The installation of these wireless routers should be complete around March 2013, in between new PC installations as described in Initiative 1.

Evaluation
Patron usage of the library's expanded WLAN will be measured through the same methods as the in house public access PC usage. Patrons will be required to submit either email address or library account information to successfully log onto the library's Wi-Fi.

Measureable Outcomes
The number of patron logins will be gathered monthly and assessed by the management team quarterly to gauge any change in usage.

Objective 2.2: Increase opportunities for improved adult literacy in the Kansas City area.

Initiative 1: Develop a circulating collection of Adult New Reader materials, including books, books with audiovisual supplements, and periodicals, for Kansas City's low-literate adults.

 Action Steps

- Kim Weir, Circulation and Collection Development Coordinator, will lead two Adult Services staff members of her choice to establish the new Adult New Reader collection. The team will work with Youth Services and the Audiovisual Departments. Hope Harms, Reference Coordinator, will conduct relevant staff trainings.

- With help from Youth Services staff, suitable Juvenile books will be selected to supplement the Adult New Reader Collection. Books on science, biographies, and poetry have proven popular choices in other libraries' adult literacy programs.
- The Adult Fiction and Nonfiction collections will be shifted to make space for the Adult New Reader collection.
- "Easy Reads" and "Quick Books for Busy People" displays will be created and located in easily accessible but low profile locations in the building. Working with the Audiovisual Department, books may also be paired with a corresponding audiobook or movie.
- All staff in the department will be trained to recognize signs of a low-literate adult and practice strategies for sensitive, friendly, and helpful service to help reduce anxieties in a potentially intimidating environment for this population.
- Postcard announcements about the library's new collection will be sent to area adult education centers and organizations like Literacy Kansas City to help direct the target audience to the library's resources.

Timeline

Appropriate titles will be researched, selected, and ordered during January 2013. Shelf space for the new collection will also be prepared at this time. A department-wide training on low-literate adults and the Adult New Reader collection will be help in February after the majority of the materials have been received and processed. Announcements will be sent at the beginning of March. Reference staff in the department will participate in a refresher training 6 months later in August. Displays will be ongoing.

Evaluation

Circulation numbers for the new collection will be tracked and reviewed quarterly. Questions related to this collection will also be tracked in the Reference Statistics under a specifically designated category.

Measureable Outcomes

The Adult Services Department hopes to see circulation of at least 20% of the new collection by the end of the first quarter with continued increases throughout the year leading up to circulation at least 50% by the end of 2013. While this may seem low, the Missouri State Library (2005) acknowledges, "The collection probably will not circulate like other collections do. A library that chooses to have adult new reader material does so out of a sense of service, not statistics." For this reason the department will also be interested in the anecdotal evidence from the regular Reference Statistics surveys. However, if circulation proves to be too low, the department may investigate housing materials for a deposit collection with the Literacy Kansas City organization and local adult education centers.

Initiative 2: Provide self-paced reading instruction software on all computers and offer online literacy-building databases and programs.

Action Steps

- Under the direction of Jessica McClanahan, Head of Adult Services, two staff members will lead the software selection and implementation. Efforts will need to be coordinated with Technical Services.
- The designated staff members will research and recommend for purchase a combination of self-paced reading instruction software and online databases. Where appropriate, free resources, such as those from the ProLiteracy Education Network and TV411 project, will be utilized.
- The library expects to receive a "Spotlight on Literacy" Grant through the State of Missouri's Library Services and Technology (LSTA) Grant Programs, and any computer programs to be purchased must be in compliance with the grant guidelines. With assistance from the IT department, free software and online literacy programs will be installed on all public access machines, including laptops. Proprietary literacy software will also be installed on 10 of these computers.
- Staff will participate in a series of afternoon training sessions to learn and familiarize themselves with the software and databases.

- Postcards will be sent to area adult education and literacy centers to announce the library's new computer and web-based literacy tools. Table tents, designed with low-literate adults in mind, will also be placed around the computers and near the "Easy Reads" and "Quick Books for Busy People" displays.
- Staff will assist patrons with the tools as needed.

Timeline

Research and recommendations will be completed by the end of January 2013, and licensed software will be purchased by the end of February. Installation will take place sometime in March, as permitted by the IT department's availability. As computers are added and replaced (see action plan for Goal 2, Objective 2.1) the software will automatically be installed on the new machines. Staff training for new computer programs and databases will also take place in March. Announcements and promotional materials will go out at the beginning of April. Staff assistance with the programs will be ongoing.

Evaluation

Use will be automatically logged by the number of times the software or databases are accessed. Any programs that have not been accessed by the end of the second quarter will be more heavily promoted to see if use increases, otherwise they may be eliminated. Patron feedback surveys, designed with low-literate adults in mind, will also be available near the computers. Staff and tutors will log anecdotal experiences with the programs, both positive and negative, which will be reviewed quarterly.

Measureable Outcomes

The department would like to see all computer-based literacy programs being actively used by the end of the second quarter, showing a steady rise of two to five percent each month for the first year. Feedback surveys should indicate an overall net positive response (at least 60% in favor) of the software.

Initiative 3: Host regular literacy-based programming that is relevant and enticing to adults.

Action Steps

- Matt Fuegen, Programming and Outreach Coordinator, will lead various Adult Services staff in preparing and running literacy-related programs throughout the year. Some collaboration with Youth Services will be required, as well as partnerships with outside organizations.
- A core set of staff will participate in training with the Missouri State Library and Literacy Kansas City so they will be prepared to conduct one-on-one reading mentoring and small group instruction sessions.
- Letters will be sent to area adult education centers inviting them to partner in the library's adult literacy efforts. When possible, Matt Fuegen will visit these locations in person to speak with directors, instructors, and tutors and invite them to extend their reading instruction into the library setting.
- The Adult Services Department together with Youth Services will host regular "Storytelling" and "Family Read Together" nights. This builds upon the success of the library's pilot "Family Read Aloud Month" program that took place in November 2011.
- Posters announcing the library's programs will be posted in the library and sent to area adult education centers, literacy organizations, area childcare centers, and Head Start facilities. They will also receive invitations for free tours of the library and a "coupon" for a library card, to be distributed to their adult students.

Timeline

Efforts to partner with area adult education and literacy centers will begin as soon as possible and continue throughout the year. Staff will attend literacy instruction training in March 2013, after which the library will offer ongoing small group instruction biweekly; individual mentoring will be available weekly by appointment. Weekly "Family Read Together" nights will commence in May in preparation for schools recessing for summer vacation, and "Storytelling" will take place bimonthly. Promotional materials will be distributed quarterly starting in the second quarter.

Evaluation
Head counts will be taken for each programming event. We anticipate that participation will initially be low. As the programs become more established, the library's reputation for being welcoming and helpful is expected to spread most effectively by word of mouth, and attendance will grow over time. Optional reading-level-appropriate surveys will be also available to participants following each event.

Measureable Outcomes
The Adult Services department aims to have five to ten individuals each month tour the library and redeem their "coupon" for a library card. At least two patrons should be regularly participating in one-on-one reading mentoring by the end of the second quarter, and at least five by the end of 2013. Attendance in the small-group sessions should be four to eight people. In these early stages of programming growth and development during 2013, the department will also have to rely on positive anecdotal evidence of success, since research shows that low-literate adults are generally reticent to acknowledge their literacy levels publicly.

Budget

So that the strategic planning team may have realistic expectations of the financial needs of the plan, a simple line item budget has been compiled. This budget is laid out with a separate section for each strategic objective of the Action Plan. A few anticipated funds from outside sources are also included. This proposed budget is not final, but subject to any unforeseen costs or reductions in available funding.

Item	Quantity	Total Cost
Objective 1.1 – Visual Artist Community		
Art and Design Materials Collection Development		$5,000.00
Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 Standard Ed. for 10 Computers	10 @ $229.00 (educational discount)	$2,290.00
Gallery and Exhibition Preparation Materials		$1,000.00
Promotional Materials		$1,000.00
Objective 1.2 – Underserved Ethnic Groups		
Foreign Language Materials Collection Development		$3,000.00
Programming		$1,500.00
Promotional Materials		$1,000.00
Babylon 9 Installed on 10 Computers	10 @ $70.85	$708.50
Objective 2.1 – Closing the Digital Divide		
Desktop Computers	35 @ $300.00	$10,500.00
LCD Computer Monitors	35 @ $150.00	$5,250.00
Computer Accessories		$2,000.00

Computer Furniture	20 @ $200.00	$4,000.00
Wireless Routers	4 @ $150.00	$600.00
Objective 2.2 – Adult Literacy		
Adult Literacy Materials Collection Development		$5,000.00
Adult Literacy Software on 10 Computers	10 @ $100	$1,000.00
Guest Speakers and Storytellers		$2,500.00
Trainings and Materials		$1,500.00
Promotional Materials		$600.00
Display Furniture		$200.00
Surveys and Evaluation Tools		$200.00

Anticipated Funding		
"Spotlight on Literacy" Grant ($2,500.00 - $10,000.00) through the State of Missouri's Library Services and Technology Grant Programs		$10,000.00
A visual arts grant from the Missouri Arts Council was awarded to the Kansas City Public Library in 2011 and the library is expected to qualify again in 2013.		$15,158.00

Photo by Hope Harms

Photo by David King

Performance Management

Synergies

Both of our goals for the Adult Services Department Strategic Plan 2013 have been created with the intent to better serve our patron base. Each initiative is reliant on the cooperation of the individuals involved and will require effective time management within the department, as well as cooperation from the community. The initiatives are stepping- stones, which will lead us to our end result: increased access for and to the community. Supplementing the software and technology available will be the impetus of many of our initiatives, the foundation upon which we will construct our new future. It will begin with something as simple as upgrading our existing computers. From there we will add new software to aid the art community (Initiative 1, Goal 1.1), and assist in patron assimilation to a new culture (Initiative 3, Goal 1.2). We will help individuals learn and familiarize themselves with this new software (Initiative 2, Goal 2.1) and utilize it in our fight to increase literacy (Initiative 2, Goal 2.2). Each initiative depends on the others to offer more capabilities and greater information access for our community.

Potential conflicts

As with any change, there are potential conflicts that can arise during this process. While the Adult Services Department makes a conscious effort to wisely allocate staff, the potential remains for staff members to feel overworked during a time when many changes are being implemented. This could result in an inability to follow through with commitments, hindering the progress of the initiatives. Coordinators will remain attentive to individuals' workload and stress levels to ensure appropriate assistance can be provided. The library may also face a shortage of space as galleries, programing, and collections expand, so well planned placement and scheduling of events is key. Finally, materials for these initiatives could potentially be fighting for the same financial resources, so the department will seek out external funding when possible, and reallocate and reduce expenditures as needed.

Monitoring and Reevaluation

The Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of the Adult Services Department Head and three coordinators, will serve as a taskforce to oversee the initiatives set forth in this document. Since we are undertaking many changes in a small amount of time, clear and direct communication within the department is essential. Taskforce meetings will be held monthly throughout the year, welcoming all Adult Services staff able to attend, in order to update each other on progress. Any coordinator unable to attend the meetings will be required to submit a report, which will be analyzed by those present at the meeting. The taskforce will monitor progress using the methods of evaluation and measurable outcomes described for each initiative in the Action Plan, including circulation and user statistics, website hits, gate counts, and feedback surveys. Minutes will be compiled and posted to the staff intranet.

Should actual results of any of the initiatives fall below the desired benchmarks, the Adult Services Department will remain committed to these goals. Based on the available data and staff impressions, the taskforce will revise the action plan to better address any point of weakness. Corrective measures will vary by situation, but may include increased promotion of events, scaling down on size and frequency, changing program schedules, or incorporating more off-site outreach. Alternatively, if response far exceeds our expectations, the department may need to draw on more help from outside organizations or implement a waiting list for programs. Regardless, the Adult Services staff members are enthusiastic and prepared to make these initiatives as successful as possible.

Contingencies

To keep our strategic plan realistic, we have thought of a few possible threats to the forward momentum of the plan. Some of the biggest foreseeable threats include:

Photo by 401K

Potential Budget Reduction

Due to the unstable economic future of our city, we understand that the threat of a reduction in our available budget is a possibility. An insufficiency in the budget would surely obstruct most, if not all, of our strategic initiatives. The Adult Services Department, however, is prepared to scale down on collection development and technological updates, or postpone altogether, should a budget reduction occur.

Photo by Homer Township Public Library

Loss of Staff

Should the Adult Services Department lose any staff during the next twelve months, the position would not be able to be refilled. In the event that the staff should shrink, we will reassess our action plan and stick to the strategic initiatives that we deem most important. When those actions are complete, more staff will be available to work on the remaining objectives and initiatives. Volunteers will be recruited if need be to make up for staffing shortages. Master of Library Science students from surrounding areas will be encouraged to intern at the Downtown library; these positions will be formatted to aid the Adult Services staff in completing strategic initiatives.

Photo by Feggy Art

Communication Fails with New Outreach Programs

Partnering with outside organizations might not work out. If an organization does not communicate or see eye to eye with the Adult Services Department and/or the Kansas City Public Library, or if there simply isn't the response we had hoped for, then another method will be used. Drawing from internal departmental relationships, as well as staff personal relationships, we believe we can build a network to help achieve our goals.

Concluding Remarks

This strategic plan is the first step of many future endeavors of the Adult Services Department of Kansas City's Downtown Library. We will hold true to our library's mission statement and look to enhance our newly formed department by pursuing our future vision. After assessing the functionality of our department and our library's environment, we gained a greater understanding of how the multiple divisions of Adult Services will come together to better serve our community. By looking to the urban core of Kansas City and the many diverse people that make up this dynamic community, we have set two major goals and laid out the initiatives to realistically achieve them. By executing this strategic plan, we hope to successfully improve and enhance the library experiences for the majority of the community as well as underrepresented groups whose voices often go unheard. As we push forward, the Adult Services staff is committed to achieving these goals, thereby improving the quality of life within our community.

Left: Photos by Hope Harms
Above: Photo of Downtown Kansas City by Pam's Pics-

Broadening Horizons:
Kansas City Public Library,
Adult Services Department
Strategic Plan 2013

Matthew Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, Kim Weir
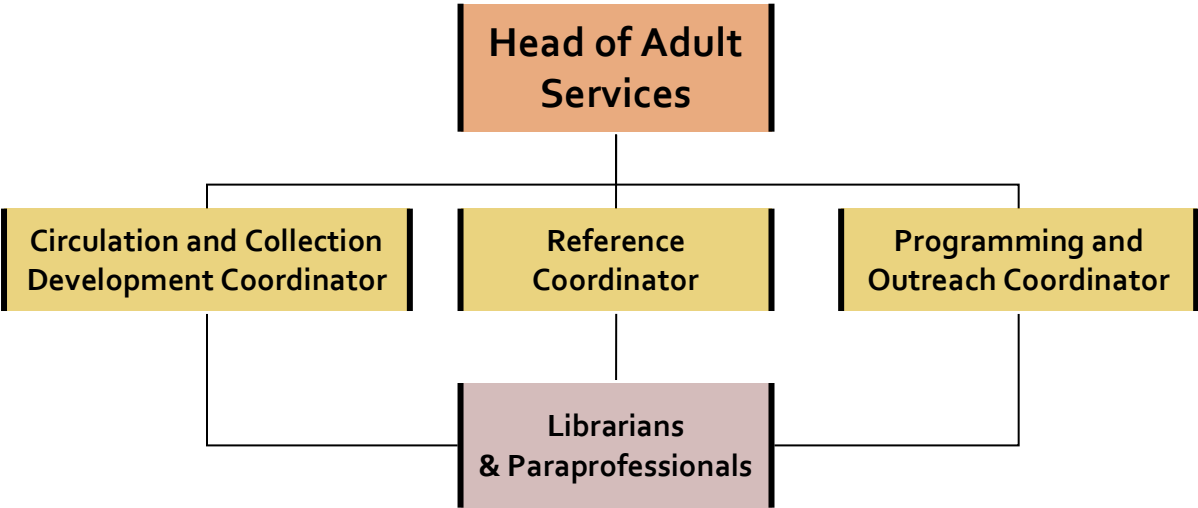LI805XR, April 2012

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APPENDIX I

Adult Services
Department
Organization Chart

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                    │   Head of Adult      │
                    │     Services         │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                               │
        ┌──────────────────────┼──────────────────────┐
┌───────────────────┐ ┌───────────────────┐ ┌───────────────────┐
│ Circulation and   │ │    Reference      │ │  Programming and  │
│   Collection      │ │   Coordinator     │ │ Outreach Coordinator │
│ Development       │ │                   │ │                   │
│  Coordinator      │ │                   │ │                   │
└───────────────────┘ └───────────────────┘ └───────────────────┘
        │                      │                      │
        └──────────────┬───────┴───────┬──────────────┘
               ┌───────────────────────────┐
               │       Librarians          │
               │   & Paraprofessionals     │
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APPENDIX II

Summary Report of Team Project Activities

LI 805 Leadership & Administration of Information Organizations
Emporia State University
April 11, 2012
Matt Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, and Kim Weir

Urban 4-sight Team Development Narrative

Prompted by their LI 805 Leadership and Administration of Information Organizations class, students Matt Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, and Kim Weir came together to construct and present a strategic plan for a hypothetical "Adult Services Department" of the Kansas City Public Library. Adopting the team name "Urban 4-Sight," this group came together as a cohesive unit and progressed through Tuckman's stages of team development: forming, storming, norming, and performing. At every stage, all team members demonstrated commitment to a high quality strategic plan and supported each other in accomplishing our tasks. This positive and productive environment made it easy for team members to invest themselves in the project to see it succeed.

Forming
The formation of Urban 4-Sight began when the class was instructed to assemble into teams. Matt Fuegen and Kim Weir agreed to be partners, and through e-mail they reached out to Hope Harms and Jessica McClanahan, who accepted. Each team member had worked with at least one other person on the team for previous class projects, and this laid a positive foundation for the team's development and allowed the team to comfortably and quickly move into subsequent stages. At the first face-to-face meeting the team members shared their leadership strengths and quickly established their roles for the project. Jessica accepted the role of Team Leader, and Hope volunteered to be Team Secretary. Matt and Kim also demonstrated leadership qualities throughout the project.

Storming
The team's storming phase was short lived. During the first two face-to-face meetings, communication and delegation of responsibility gradually moved from cautious proposals to free-flowing brainstorming and contributions. While some ideas were ultimately rejected, each person's input was given careful consideration as the team honed in on a specific focus and team identity for the project. Members settled on a long-term strategy with internal deadlines for completing the project, which helped facilitate the transition to subsequent stages of team development.

Norming
As early as the second face-to-face meeting, Urban 4-Sight began settling into the norming stage, and the team continued to shift between the norming and performing stages for the remainder of the project. Team members embraced an open and professional approach to their work. They held a shared understanding and interest in the project, so the exchange of ideas flowed comfortably and freely at each subsequent meeting and online. Jessica's leadership ensured that meetings were scheduled with an agenda to keep the project moving forward, but the team largely operated as a cohesive unit for brainstorming discussions and project management. The team fell into a regular pattern of meeting to review prior contributions, brainstorm for upcoming sections, and delegate responsibilities; then each person posted his or her sections to the team wiki by the predetermined deadline. Communication through e-mail and Blackboard took place between face-to-face meetings as needed.

Performing
Team members of Urban 4-Sight began demonstrating advancement into the performing stage by the third face-to-face meeting. Based on discussion and task delegation from the meetings, each person produced meaningful content on the team's wiki according to the team's schedule. Both meetings and online communication resulted in constructive feedback that enhanced the strategic planning process. Content for the document was added to the wiki with ample time for revisions, and this allowed for adequate time to prepare the class presentation. Each person felt knowledgeable about the strategic plan as a whole, which made it easy to delegate sections for the presentation. As sections of the project incrementally fell into place, team members commented favorably on the forward progress of the project and the reliability of the team. Everyone acknowledged how daunting the project would be without the combined efforts of everyone in the group. Having the opportunity to regularly meet in person was especially appreciated, and because Urban 4-Sight had such a positive group experience leading up to the project's completion, the decision to adjourn our final face-to-face meeting was met with bittersweet feelings.

MEETING MINUTES

- Meeting 1: Saturday, February 4, 2012 – MLC
- Meeting 2: Friday, February 17, 2012 – Panera
- Meeting 3: Friday, March 02, 2012 – Scooter's /Panera
- Meeting 4: Friday, March 09, 2012 – Panera
- Meeting 5: Friday, March 23, 2012 – Panera

Saturday, February 4, 2012

Location: ESU Metro Learning Center
Members Present: Matt Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, Kim Weir
First Meeting
Having already agreed to be in a team, the four members completed the "forming" stage by sharing leadership strengths and each member accepting a leadership role. Moving into the "storming" stage, the team discussed key elements that will be the foundation for our strategic plan project. A fictitious Adult Services Department of the real Kansas City (MO) Public Library was selected as the target for the strategic plan. Team name, meeting times, and methods for posting and sharing information were discussed.
Goals

- Share team member strengths
- Designate team member roles
- Determine library type
- Discuss team name
- Decide future meeting times and methods of communication

Business & Progress

- **Leadership Strengths:** Team members shared their top five leadership themes from the StrengthsFinder 2.0 Assessment. It was noted that the team has strengths in three of the four domains; while some probably have some "Influencing" strengths, they were not represented among the top. This is not considered detrimental to the outcome of the project.

    Matt Fuegen

    - Executing: Consistency, Responsibility
    - Relationship Building: Adaptability, Empathy, Harmony

    Hope Harms

    - Relationship Building: Harmony, Individualization, Relator
    - Strategic Thinking: Analytical, Input

    Jessica McClanahan

    - Relationship Building: Individualization
    - Strategic Thinking: Deliberative, Input, Intellection, Learner

    Kim Weir

    - Executing: Belief, Deliberative, Responsibility, Restorative
    - Strategic Thinking: Context
- **Team Roles:** Team members discussed required and optional roles within the team. Jessica expressed interest in the opportunity to take on the responsibility of compiling our project and presenting a unified voice for our team, and thus accepted the role of Team Leader. Hope volunteered to be Secretary. Based on their identified strengths, Matt took on the role of "Inspirational Fact-Finder," and Kim will be the team's "Executor" to ensure our project continues to move forward.

- **Choosing a Library:** Collectively the team had the most experience with public libraries and preferred to develop a strategic plan based on a real library. Being most familiar with Midwest libraries and communities, the team chose the Kansas City (MO) Public Library since it is geographically close, is not currently employing any of the team members, and some team members know KC Library staff who could supply additional information. The strategic plan will be prepared specifically for a fictitious Adult Services Department encompassing reference and circulation services.

- **Team Name:** The team tentatively agreed on the name "Urban Four," representing the location of our library and number of group members. The name will be finalized by the next meeting.

- **Meeting Times:** The team agreed to regularly meet face-to-face throughout the semester since all members live within a reasonable commuting distance from one another. Friday evenings were determined to be the best time based on each person's availability. Communication between meetings will generally take place through e-mail; e-mailing directly through one's preferred e-mail client will better facilitate group communication than using Blackboard's e-mail feature. Hope collected contact information for each member and sent it to the team.

- **Agenda and Minutes:** Hope will set up a wiki where items can be added to each meeting agenda and meeting minutes will be posted. Everyone can contribute to the agenda on wiki and Jessica will finalize it before each meeting.

- **Next meeting:** The team will finalize the team name, work on the department mission and vision statements, begin delegating parts of the project, and address any other items added to the agenda. If anyone feels like bringing snacks, peanuts should be avoided, as Matt is allergic.

   The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 17th at 7:00 p.m.; location to be decided through online communication.

Friday, February 17, 2012

Location: Panera Bread on Shawnee Mission Pkwy
Members Present: Matt Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, Kim Weir
Second Meeting
In the second meeting the team moved from the "storming" to the "norming" stage. A strategy for completing the project was discussed, agreed upon, and implemented. The team established the basic premise of KCMO Public Library's fictitious "Adult Services Department" and brainstormed key components for the first portion of the strategic plan. Team members will begin working on their designated sections and continue to communicate online between now and the next meeting.

Goals
- Review minutes from the previous meeting
- Review assignment and assign tasks to each group member
- Decide on presentation method and theme
- Review basic facts about our library department and brainstorm mission, goals, etc.
- Finalize team name
- Set calendar of internal team deadlines
- Discuss items and location for next meeting

Business & Progress
- **Review minutes:** Jessica highlighted some key points from the last meeting to help us move forward on the project this week.

- **Review assignments/Assign tasks/Deadlines:** Matt had prepared a detailed outline of the strategic plan document. Hope shared some effective approaches she'd noted from the student samples provided. Based on that information, the group decided to focus on certain sections each week, and each team member would work on their chosen subsection(s) during that week. At the end of each week (sometime during the weekend), team members will post their content to the team wiki. Each week's focus will be as follows:

1. **Feb. 19 - 25:** Organizational Profile & Preparation/Planning (2, 3)
2. **Feb. 26 - Mar. 3:** Current Reality (4)
3. **Mar. 4 - 10:** New Priorities (5)
4. **Mar. 11 - 17:** Action Plan & Contingencies (6, 7)
5. **Mar. 18 - 24:** Concluding Remarks, Appendix, Executive Summary (8, 9, 1)
6. **Mar. 25 - 31:** Revisions & Presentation
7. **Apr. 1 - 7:** Revisions & Presentation
8. **Apr. 8 - 14**
   - April 11: Strategic Plan Document due
   - April 14: Strategic Plan Presentation
   - April 16: Team participation

For week 1, each team member will work on the following:
   - Overview - Hope
   - Organization/Org Chart - Matt
   - Guiding Values - Jessica
   - Library Team Management - Matt & Kim
   - Planning Factors - Kim

- **Presentation and compilation of the document:** Kim had posted a selection of strategic plans of libraries similar to ours, and Jessica shared her notes on aspects that she liked. The team liked the idea of including photos and discussed how to make a professional looking document. When all content has been added to the wiki, Jessica will compile it into a single document. Options for Word processing and publishing programs for this were discussed. Presentation will be discussed again as we get closer.

- **Department basics:**
   o **Organization:** Comprised of Circulation, Reference, Programming/Outreach, and Collection Development. These formerly stand-alone departments have been consolidated under one roof to streamline services and facilitate improved cross-communication, with the aim to better serve our adult community.

   o **Mission:** The team decided on the following working mission statement for the department: "Broadening the horizons of our community through technology, access, and innovation, and empowering individuals through access of information."

   o **Guiding values:** Should be a guide for our plan, not necessarily for the department, and not overly detailed.

   o **Department management/Strategic plan committee:**
      - Jessica McClanahan, Adult Services Department Head
      - Matt Fuegen, Programming and Outreach Coordinator
      - Hope Harms, Reference Coordinator
      - Kim Weir, Circulation and Collection Development Coordinator

   o **Time frame for the plan:** 12 months, 2013

   o **Planning factors:** Managers previously led their departments independently with minimal external collaboration and now will have to learn to work together. While this will be challenging, all approve of this change and are motivated to see it succeed.

- **Team name:** Team members decided to modify the name and work under the banner "Urban 4-sight" to highlight the urban nature of our community, our forward-looking strategic planning, and reflect that we are both "Team 4" and a 4-person team.

- **Next meeting:** The group discussed preferences for weekly versus biweekly meetings as well as potentially using Adobe Connect. Since one person will be out of town next weekend and not everyone was comfortable with Adobe Connect, the team decided the next face-to-face meeting would be in two weeks. Between now and then team members will work on

- their designated subsections and post to the wiki. Week 2's subsections will be divvied up through the Blackboard discussion board.

  The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 2nd at 7:00; location to be decided through online communication. Possibly Panera again or Scooter's nearby.

Friday, March 2, 2012

Location: Scooter's Coffeehouse; moved to Panera for wireless Internet access.
Members Present: Matt Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, Kim Weir

Third Meeting

By the third meeting, Urban 4-sight was moving between the "norming" and "performing" stages. The components of the document began falling into place as team members researched and added content to the wiki between meetings. The content was reviewed with team members seeking feedback and the team reaching a consensus on multiple points. The team brainstormed for the upcoming week's New Priorities, and following the meeting team members noted having cleared some confusion and feeling positive about the direction of the project.

Goals

- Review minutes from the previous meeting
- Review and comment on Organizational Profile and Preparation/Planning sections
- Review and further brainstorm Current Reality sections
- Discuss New Priorities and assign sections
- Discuss presentation (method, theme, tasks)
- Discuss items and location for next meeting

Business & Progress

- **Review minutes:** Various points from the team's previous meeting were referenced throughout the present meeting.

- **Organizational Profile and Preparation/Planning sections:** Prior to the meeting each member posted his or her respective sections to the wiki. Matt also posted an organizational chart for review, and everyone agreed that a simple representation of the structure was appropriate. The team agreed that further tweaks and revisions could be made to the early sections as the plan develops, noting that the schedule allowed ample time for revisions.

- **Current Reality sections:** Each section was briefly reviewed and discussed. Discussed revisions should be posted to the wiki by the end of the weekend.

  o **Organizational Performance:** Jessica talked about section and asked if mobile services should be considered. The team agreed it would be an appropriate responsibility for Outreach. She shared many other current services, and she also inquired about incorporating a strategic plan review committee to periodically assess progress, and the team thought this could be added to the Action Plan's Performance Management section.

  o **Gap Analysis:** Kim reviewed and requested feedback. The team discussed the concept of a gap analysis, deciding it should address the gap between current activities and what the community still needs.

  o **SWOT:** Matt reviewed the chart and wanted group feedback on the threat related to vendor database availability. The team decided to keep the database concern but shift focus to their expense. The team liked chart and found it to be a quality assessment.

  o **Environmental Scan:** Hope shared key points from the Environmental Scan, drawing attention statistics relating to KC's large "creative community."   She noted that area libraries are seeing trends related to technology, economy, and budget. She will look for more hard data on non-native English speakers and post to the wiki.

- **New Priorities sections:**
  - **Vision:** The team brainstormed important elements of the department's new vision statement, which ideally will be a short paragraph. It should include concepts that can be measurable and achievable. The following words and phrases were suggested for use in forming the vision statement and will guide the development of strategic goals:
    - Looking to our community for guidance to improve library collections and services
    - Evolving with our ever-changing community
    - Inspired by our community
    - Explore
    - Creating
    - Outreach
    - Diversity/ethnicity
    - Helping individuals connect with and thrive in the community
    - Reaching our/their potential

  - **Strategic Initiatives:** The team discussed in length the distinction between goals, objectives, and initiatives until every member had a relatively clear understanding. Based on the Current Reality analysis, the team brainstormed and assigned the following:

    1. **Goal:** Serving growing populations in the downtown area (Jessica & Kim)

       1. **Objective:** Increase creative output in the community

          Initiatives: More software, programs, increasing collection, staff training, cross-training, online databases, computer classes, marketing, alliances with other schools, etc. These can be measured through reference question statistics, attendance and door counts, surveys, etc.

       2. **Objective:** Better address underserved ethnic groups in KC

          Initiatives: Increase collection development, programming for holidays, computers can display appropriate language alphabets/characters, cross-train staff, and marketing. Jessica also suggested somehow including Don Bosco Community Centers (http://www.donbosco.org/). Measurements might include reference question statistics, attendance and door counts, surveys, etc.

    2. **Goal**: Increase access to our department's information (Hope & Matt)

       1. **Objective:** Closing the digital divide

          Initiatives: More computer access, taking advantage of the new Google Fiber, classes, staff training, etc. These can be measured through program attendance, computer use statistics, etc.

       2. **Objective:** Increasing adult literacy

          Initiatives: Offering classes, create an "adult literacy and continuing education" collection, more one-on-one help/tutoring, etc. These can be measured through circulation statistics, program attendance, etc.

    Team members will work on the objectives over the course of the week.
- **Presentation (method, theme, tasks):** This topic was tabled to a later meeting.

- **Next meeting:** Over the course of the week the team will work on the Strategic Initiatives section and discuss online any thoughts about the final draft of the vision statement. The strategic profile can also be discussed. These items will be reviewed and finalized at the next meeting in one week, and the team will begin brainstorming the Action Plan section.

  The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 9 at 7 p.m. at Panera.

Friday, March 9, 2012

Location: Panera Bread on Shawnee Mission Pkwy
Members Present: Matt Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, Kim Weir

Fourth Meeting

The fourth meeting marked more successful progress in Urban 4-sight's "norming" and "performing" stages. The team has come to a unified understanding of goals and vision for the project, and between each face-to-face meeting successful progress has been made. Discussion flowed freely at this meeting, and each member agreed that the team experience has been very positive and one of the best each has participated in so far. In this meeting the team reviewed the previous week's work on the Strategic Initiatives section, and in preparation for the upcoming two weeks before the next face-to-face meeting, sections were assigned for the remainder of the Strategic Plan Document. The team also began discussing preferences for the class presentation.

Goals

- Review minutes from the previous meeting
- Solidify our Goal, Objectives, and Initiatives, and also write out our Future Vision and our Strategic Profile.
- Discuss and assign areas for next week's sections, Action Plan and Contingencies, with special attention to the Timeline, Budget, and Plan B.
- Discuss and assign the following week's sections, Concluding Remarks, Executive Summary, and Appendix
- Discuss document and presentation aesthetics
- Other topics for discussion
- Discuss items and location for next meeting

Business & Progress

- **Review minutes:** The information from the previous meeting's minutes was referenced at various points throughout the meeting. Matt mentioned that he had posted a chart for the Current Performance section that was discussed at the last meeting. On the file exchange, he also added some statistics from KCKPL for the team to reference.

- **Goals, Objective, and Initiatives:** Prior to the meeting, each team member had posted a variety of initiatives for the designated objectives. Together the team reviewed and pared down the initiatives to a manageable number for the Action Plan.

- **Strategic Profile and Future Vision:** During this discussion Matt noted that it should be stated early in the document that the Adult Services department does not include Special Collections, Audiovisual, or Archives responsibilities except for occasional cases of overlap. He will update this in the Organizational Profile.

  o **Vision:** All agreed on the concepts trying to be conveyed but were having a difficult time formulating ideas into well-written phrases. A list of words and phrases will be added to the wiki, where the vision statement can be finalized.

  o **Strategic Profile:** In a similar manner, words and phrases will be added to the wiki and discussed in Blackboard over the following week.

- **Action Plan and Contingencies:** All agreed that this would likely be the most substantial and time consuming portion of the document that the team as worked on.
    - o **Formatting:** The team decided how the Action Plan should be structured, which should look like the following:

        Goal 1: [Use whole numbers.]

        Objective 1.1: [Use decimal numbers.]

        Initiative 1: [Use whole numbers.]

        Action Steps [Use bullet points.]

        - [Step 1 – Assign **responsibility**. For example, "Two staff from the Adult Services department will head a task force…" or where appropriate, "XYZ Coordinator will lead a team/committee to…"]

        - [**Resources** needed should be included as part of the action steps.]

        Timeline [For 2013; can use "ongoing" where appropriate.]

        Evaluation [How do we gather data; how are things going]

        Measureable Outcomes [Targets and expectations]

        Initiative 2: [And so forth…]
    - o **Performance Management:** Hope and Kim will work on this section. We will include items such as Department Head/Coordinators checking the status monthly/quarterly, initiatives being overseen by a taskforce, and ensuring that staff are allocated wisely so as not to be spread too thin.

    - o **Contingencies:** Jessica and Matt will work on this. Factors to consider include budget reduction (we will have to things smaller; won't act on such a large scale, but we will see it through); staff shortages (smaller scale; maybe postpone for one year, but be sure it will still be executed); lack of turnout or community reception (work more closely with local organizations to brainstorm); communication and buy-in fails with outreach (reassess methods of communication/marketing; utilize internal departments and look at a smaller scale initiative).

- **Concluding Remarks, Executive Summary, Appendix:** The team assigned these sections for the week following the upcoming week since there will not be a face-to-face meeting the next weekend.
    - o **Concluding Remarks:** Matt and Kim
    - o **Executive Summary:** Jessica, possibly with Matt's assistance
    - o **Appendix:** Hope; she noted that the team could add any of their references to the "Resources" page on the wiki.

- **Document and Presentation Aesthetics:** Matt and Kim will put the PowerPoint presentation together, keeping a clean professional look and avoiding any goofy themes. Jessica will compile the document in something like Word and would like the team to be thinking about the overall scheme and look they would prefer. All agreed photos would be a welcome addition, and they may include generic photos, some of the "community bookshelf" parking garage; and possibly some posed photos. Everyone can add photos to Blackboard.

Other: At the conclusion of the meeting, all members commented on how well the team experience had been going. Each person has been consistently contributing, and while the project has seemed daunting, it's progressing relatively smoothly. Each team member appreciated the opportunity to conduct face-to-face meetings.

Next meeting: Each person will work on his or her assigned sections for the next two weeks, by the end of which rough draft of the strategic planning document should be complete. After this point the team will be ready to begin revising and polishing the document and preparing for the presentation

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 23 at 7 p.m. at Panera. Through online communication the team will decide if it will be beneficial to schedule an Adobe Connect meeting during the weekend preceding the next meeting.

Friday, March 23, 2012

Location: Panera Bread on Shawnee Mission Pkwy
Members Present: Matt Fuegen, Hope Harms, Jessica McClanahan, Kim Weir

Fifth Meeting
Heading into the fifth meeting, Urban 4-sight continued to operate in the "performing" stage. Team members had contributed enough content to the wiki that it could start being reviewed as a whole. The team addressed loose ends to be wrapped up for the strategic planning document, and plans and deadlines were set for the final document editing and presentation. While the team had not concluded its work on the project, the team took its first steps toward the "adjourning" stage, deciding that this would be the final face-to-face meeting, which was both exciting and bittersweet.

Goals
- Review minutes from the previous meeting
- Future Vision
- Executive Summary
- Conclusion
- Revisions and Compilation
- Presentation
- Other topics for discussion
- Discuss items and location for next meeting

Business & Progress
- **Review minutes:** Various points from the team's previous meeting were referenced throughout the present meeting. The team elected not to conduct an Adobe Connect meeting prior to this face-to-face meeting.

- **Strategic Profile:** Team members will finalize it this week during final revisions.

- **Future Vision:** Kim drafted a nice vision statement in the discussion board that can be included in the document.

- **Executive Summary:** Jessica asked for feedback on how to structure the Executive Summary. The team liked the idea of starting broadly, describing the city and library setting, then the department, then the goals and objectives. Since the initiatives are lengthy, those will not be included, only referenced.

- **Conclusion:** There was not much to discuss. Matt wrote a very nice concluding paragraph.

- **Revisions and Compilation:** The last day to edit content on the wiki is **April 4th**. Team members will primarily edit only the sections they worked on, with the exception of correcting basic spelling, grammar, and mechanics errors. The file exchange also has some supporting content (specifically the statistics chart for the Current Performance and an organization chart for the Appendix) that should be included. Jessica will then compile the content into a single document with a table of contents, thoroughly edit all of it, then make it available for the group to review and approve before it is due. The document is due **Wednesday, April 11th**.
- **Presentation:**
  - **Templates:** Matt shared two possible templates for the slideshow, and the team elected to use the more geometric design to emphasize KCPL's urban identity. The template is saved to the Box folder Matt created; all team members have been sent an e-mail invitation to access it.
  - **Sections:** The team discussed and decided how to divide the presentation, then drew numbers to see who would prepare and present each section. After numbers were drawn, Jessica made sure everyone felt comfortable with the assignments.

    1. **(Kim) Introduction:** Environmental scan, introduction to the library and department (including merger), preparation and planning
    2. **(Matt) Current Reality & New Priorities:** Current performance, SWOT analysis, and gap analysis, goals/objectives.

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3. **(Hope) Action Plan:** Initiatives for each goal/objective, briefly touching on action steps, evaluation, and performance management
4. **(Jessica) Contingencies & Conclusion:** Contingencies, summary/conclusion

- **Deadlines:** Slides and content should be sent to Matt **by April 4th**. The template is in the Box folder.

- **Other:**
  - **Measureable objectives:** Hope noted that Matt included a measureable target in the outcome he prepared and asked if other outcomes should match. The team decided that since individual initiatives listed measureable outcomes, it was not essential to include a target in the outcome.

  - **Pictures:** Matt searched Flickr for some usable pictures for the document and presentation, and saved promising candidates to a Box folder and sent an e-mail invitation to each team member. Hope also took some photos at KCPL and posted the Flickr link to the discussion board; she will add those to Matt's Box folder. Jessica might try to stage some photos with friends. More photos related to computer use and technology would be good. Citations for photos will be done as captions under the image.

  - **Appendix:** Hope will include the Organizational Chart that Matt saved to the file exchange. She will also prepare a References page, and reminded team members to add references to the Resources wiki page if they had any to include.

  - **Budget:** Hope reminded the team to include budget estimates for the initiatives, which Matt had already done. The team discussed what might be appropriate, and Matt provided helpful suggestions based on his budgeting experience in his job. For collection development he suggested at least $5000 for adult literacy, $3000-5000 for art. He will talk to his coworker Rita to ask about KCKPL's collection development budget. For software, the team will need to research general costs for licenses or subscriptions. Operate under the assumption that 15 or so computers will have "creative lab" software.

- **Next meeting:** The team decided that no additional face-to-face meetings were necessary. The remainder of the project can be completed through online channels of communication. Team members were open to the idea of meeting via Adobe Connect to run through the presentation before the class weekend. This will be determined through e-mail.

  A possible Adobe Connect meeting would occur during the week of April 8th.