

**West Side Branch
Facility Effectiveness Assessment
And Service Delivery Analysis**

Cedar Rapids Public Library

**As Revised
January, 2006**

**Prepared with the Assistance of
George Lawson, Library Planner
Ames, Iowa**

Executive Summary

This study begins with a facility effectiveness assessment that identifies customer service and operational issues at the West Side Branch Library. These descriptions and observations of existing conditions are based on notes prepared by the consultant and 22 library stakeholders, including the Library's Trustees, representatives of the Foundation and Friends, and members of the library staff.

The notes are organized by building and service systems. Because of the investigative nature of the effectiveness process the comments may at times appear to emphasize problems and focus on criticism. Working individually, the planning group found identified a number of common issues.

- The West Side Branch is inviting and well used.
- The branch is not visible to the community from outside of the Mall and has no independent identity.
- There is frequent public demand for additional public computing stations.
- Children's program space is inadequate to support the branch's more popular children's offerings. During regular programs customers are unable to access children's materials during the programs.
- Collections are limited due to the lack of space.
- Public seating and seating options are limited due to the lack of space.
- The Branch lacks common amenities such as a public restroom and public photocopier.
- There is a lack of separation between different functions within the Branch so that children's activities can bother adult customers.

The second portion of this study takes the form of a service delivery analysis. There is a body of findings that suggest the Library Board of Trustees and City consider creating a more robust library presence in the western sector of the City.

- The current 2,600 square foot West Side Branch is a limited service library and there are recurring instances of customer demand that exceed the Branch's capabilities.
- Public library service in the Cedar Rapids area has become a cooperative undertaking, with the major library providers working together to create an optimum environment for their customers.
- The majority of the primary library service outlets are, by historical fact, east of the Cedar River.
- Population forecasts for the west and southwest segments of the metropolitan area are significant, 90% by the year 2030.
- The space needs assessment prepared concurrently with this study supports the need for additional library service space through the year 2030.
- There is some concern regarding the vitality of the branch's current retail environment.
- Peer benchmark data suggest it is appropriate to consider branch development.