

**MOUNTAIN BROOK CITY COUNCIL
PRE-MEETING AGENDA**

**PRE-COUNCIL ROOM (A106) CITY HALL
56 CHURCH STREET
MOUNTAIN BROOK, AL 35213
FEBRUARY 23, 2015
5:30 p.m.**

1. Additional design work for Cahaba River Walk project – Nimrod Long of Nimrod Long and Associates (See attached information. This item may be added to the formal agenda.)
2. Roundabout grant application for Mountain Brook Village – Alicia Bailey of Sain Associates (See attached information. This item may be added to the formal agenda.)
3. Library Study presentation - Steve Egan of The Mercer Group (See attached information.)
4. APPLE grant recommendations – Richard Caudle of Skipper Consultants (See attached information. This item may be added to the formal agenda.)
5. Parke Lane update – John Evans
6. Removal of some/all of the modular newspaper/magazine racks in the villages – Dana Hazen (See attached information. This item may be added to the formal agenda.)
7. Conditional Use for Family Share Massage in the Mountain Brook Mall in Mountain Brook Village – Dana Hazen (See attached information. This item may be added to the formal agenda.)
8. Change BZA meeting date to 3rd Monday – Dana Hazen
9. Executive Session

Sam Gaston

From: Bailey, Alicia
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 4:45 PM
To: Nimrod Long; Sam Gaston
Subject: RE: Cahaba Park - Overton Road Drainage - Vestavia 2015-01-RT1

Revised fees based on scaled back survey and analysis after our discussion with Jefferson County:

Field survey - \$1390.00
Establishing existing ROW - \$1610.00
Plan Design - \$1000.00
Drainage analysis - \$800.00
Jefferson Co coordination and revisions if they do a 2nd review - \$500.00
TOTAL - \$5,300.00

Let me know what you think. Thanks.

From: Bailey, Alicia
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 1:07 PM
To: 'Nimrod Long'
Subject: RE: Cahaba Park - Overton Road Drainage - Vestavia 2015-01-RT1

Our fee would consist of the following:

Field survey - \$2,000.00
Establishing existing ROW - \$2,500.00
Plan design - \$2,500.00
Drainage analysis showing the drainage areas, flows, velocities, etc. - \$1,000.00
Jefferson Co coordination and revisions from a 2nd review - \$1,500.00
TOTAL - \$9,500

Have you verified there are no utility conflicts or am I going to need to do that? I don't have cost included for this if I need to handle.

Also, I'm assuming no additional ROW would be needed so no tract sketches, legal description or coordination for ROW. All I have looked at is the GIS information and Overton Road appears to be tight on the west side ROW but there appears to be plenty of ROW on the corner.

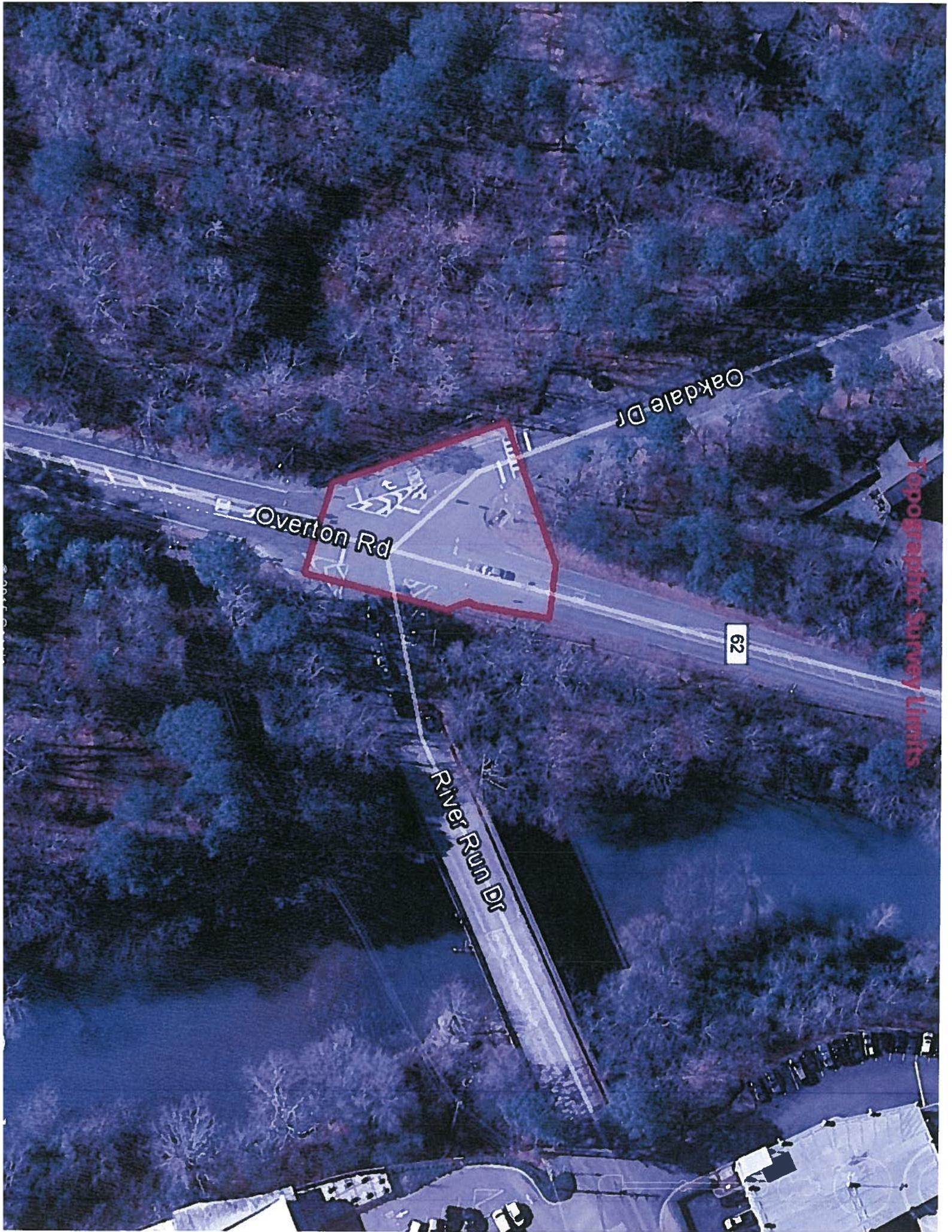
Let me know what you need from me on this and if Sam approves to move this forward.

From: Nimrod Long [<mailto:nimrod@nimrodlong.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 10:16 AM
To: Bailey, Alicia
Cc: Sam Gaston (gastons@mtnbrook.org)
Subject: RE: Cahaba Park - Overton Road Drainage - Vestavia 2015-01-RT1

FYI

Nimrod W.E. Long III
FASLA, LEED AP

2/19/2015



Oakdale Dr

Overton Rd

River Run Dr

62

Topographic Survey Limits



MEMORANDUM

TO: Sam Gaston
FROM: Alicia Bailey
DATE: 2/19/15
SUBJECT: Cahaba Road / US 280 / Culver Road / Lane Park Road Intersection Improvements

The City of Mountain Brook is considering submitting a request to receive federal funds to improve the intersection of Cahaba Road / US 280 / Culver Road / Lane Park Road. This intersection was studied in 2012-2013 and several different intersection options were presented in the Advanced Planning Report, dated April 2013. The City of Mountain Brook, the City of Birmingham, and ALDOT were heavily involved in the project and approved the report. The intersection option that operated with the highest traffic efficiency was the option of a large roundabout at the Cahaba Road / US 280 / Lane Park Road intersection and a mini-roundabout at Culver Road. However, an environmental phase must be conducted before this option can be selected to move forward to design.

The Advanced Planning Report was funded in thirds, with the City of Birmingham as the lead and being reimbursed by the City of Mountain Brook and ALDOT. The intersection improvement will have an impact in the Mountain Brook Village area and may require Right of Way from adjacent Mountain Brook properties. The City of Mountain Brook should consider the public's response to the community impact, i.e. will their response be more favorable knowing that Mountain Brook is the project sponsor instead of Birmingham?

With this request, the City of Mountain Brook would serve as the project's primary sponsor. This responsibility entails Mountain Brook to commit to matching 20% of the total project costs. In recent discussions, the City of Birmingham has indicated they are in support of the project and will consider joining with Mountain Brook to fund the 20% match. The City should also consider requesting ALDOT to participate in the funding.

If the City of Mountain Brook is awarded the federal money for the project and cannot finalize funding agreements with the City of Birmingham and ALDOT, the City of Mountain Brook can cancel the project. The cancellation can be made at any point, however if it is cancelled after federal money has been spent, the City would be at risk to pay back the federal money.

At this time, a resolution is not required for the federal funding request. A resolution will be required after the award of the funds and the City of Mountain Brook enters into a funding agreement that has a specific financial commitment assigned to it.

We look forward to seeing this project move forward.

"2013 Birmingham Business Alliance Small Business of the Year"

Two Perimeter Park South, Suite 500 East - Birmingham, Alabama 35243
p (205) 940-6420 - f (205) 940-6433
www.sain.com

February 24, 2015

Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
Attn: Michael Kaczorowski
2 North 20th Street, Suite 1200
Birmingham, AL 35203

SUBJECT: Funding Request for the Fiscal Year 2016-2019 TIP
Cahaba Road / US 280 / Culver Road / Lane Park Road Intersection Improvements

Dear Kaz:

The City of Mountain Brook requests funding for the Preliminary Engineering, Right of Way Acquisition, Utility relocations, and Construction for improvements at the intersection of Cahaba Road, US 280, Culver Road, and Lane Park Road. The City of Mountain Brook will serve as the primary project sponsor and is committed to the local funding match (20% of total project costs). We intend to negotiate joint funding participation from City of Birmingham and ALDOT. Attached is a resolution from our City Council committing to our portion of the funds.

This intersection was studied in 2012-2013 and several different intersection options were analyzed in the form of an Advanced Planning Report (APR). The report, dated April 2013, was prepared by Sain Associates and approved by the City of Mountain Brook, City of Birmingham, and ALDOT. We understand an environmental phase must be completed to select the preferred intersection alternative to move forward to final design and construction. The intersection options outlined in the APR project appear to satisfy requirements for both CMAQ and STPBH funding categories.

Attached is a document with further information for our request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sam Gaston
City Manager

Birmingham TIP Project Request
for
Intersection Improvements to Cahaba Road / US 280 / Culver Road / Lane Park Road
Sponsors: City of Mountain Brook with support from City of Birmingham

Proposed Project:

Preparation of an environmental document, survey, preliminary engineering, and construction plans for an improvement of traffic operations at the intersection. Acquire right-of-way, relocate utilities, and construct improvements.

Preliminary Purpose & Need for Improvements:

The existing intersection configuration at Cahaba Road / US 280 / Culver Road / Lane Park Road is unusual and brings together five street approaches into a large signalized junction. There are no pedestrian accommodations at the intersection and bicyclists have a difficult time mixing with traffic in the large intersection conflict area.

This intersection serves as a connecting link to the City of Birmingham's two largest tourist attractions, the Birmingham Zoo and Birmingham Botanical Gardens, and to Mountain Book Village, a commercial shopping district in the City of Mountain Brook. The geometry of the existing intersection is confusing and there is a need for clear directional way finding for travelers who infrequently use the intersection.

Routine traffic congestion occurs during morning and afternoon commuter peak hours and at mid-day hours. Seasonal congestion is experienced in concurrence with peak attendance at the Birmingham Zoo and Botanical Gardens, which occurs in the spring and fall of each year.

Traffic volumes and congestion at the intersection are expected to increase in the future as additional commercial development is constructed at Lane Parke Village, to be located adjacent to Culver Road and Lane Park Road. Other traffic increases are expected as the Birmingham Zoo and Birmingham Botanical Gardens expand their facilities in the next decade.

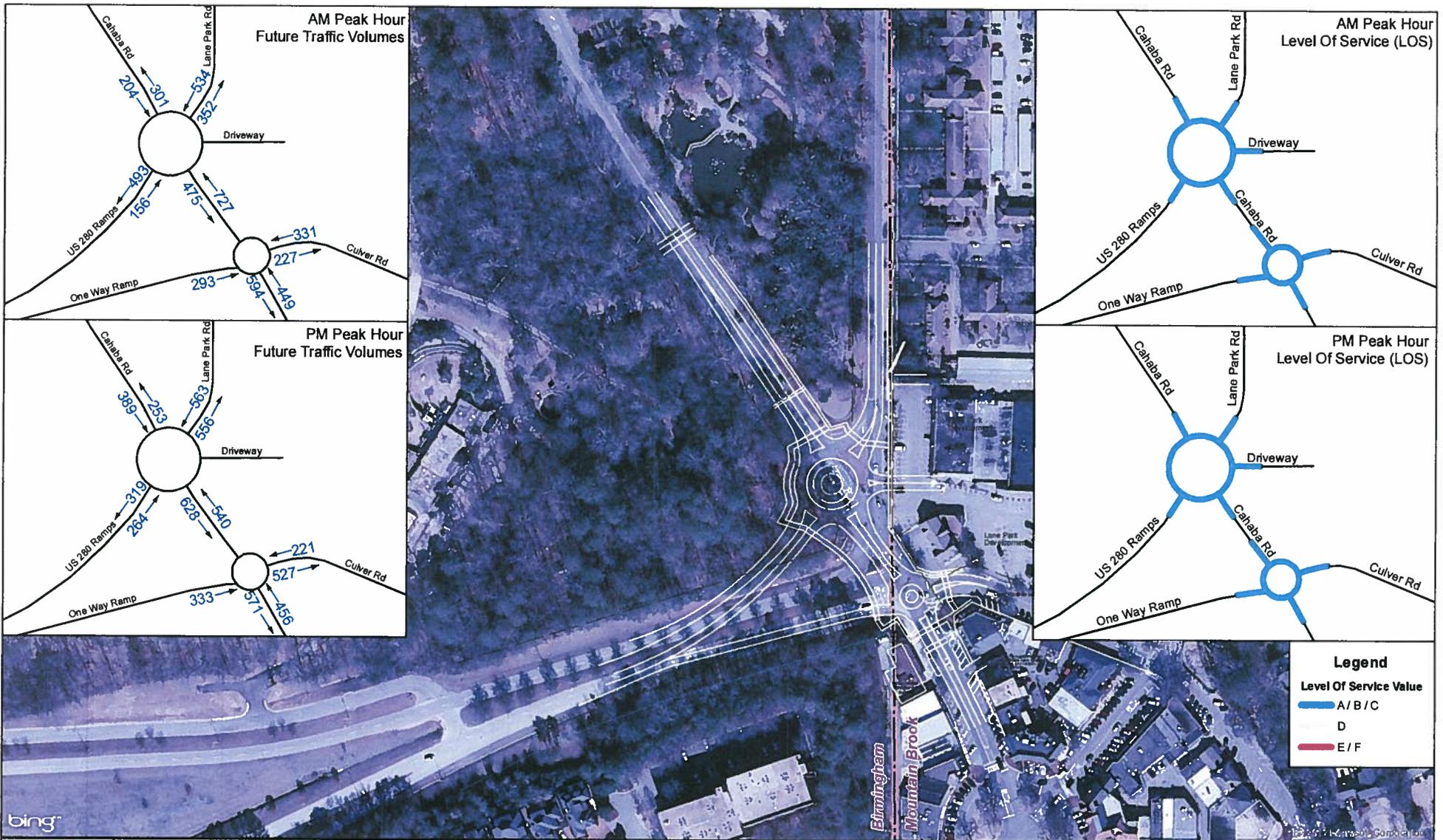
The purpose of the project is to define an improvement that will provide a gateway to the City of Birmingham and City of Mountain Brook, improve way finding for Zoo, Gardens, and Village visitors, provide accommodations for all modes of transportation, and improve traffic flow.

Opinion of Probable Costs:

Preliminary Engineering (includes environmental document)	\$515,000
ROW	\$360,000
Utilities	\$500,000
Construction	\$1,840,000
CE&I (15% of construction cost)	<u>\$276,000</u>
Total	\$3,491,000

Advance Planning Efforts:

An Intersection Advance Planning Report was prepared by Sain Associates, Inc. for the City of Birmingham, City of Mountain Brook, and ALDOT. The document, dated April 2013, summarizes traffic, environmental, conceptual design, and cost considerations for the project. The above referenced opinion of probable cost is based upon the findings of the Advance Planning Report.



Build Option 1 - Main and Mini Roundabout
Figure 6

EMMET O'NEAL LIBRARY

MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY

UPDATED DRAFT TECHNICAL REPORT

EMMET O'NEAL LIBRARY

MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY

UPDATED DRAFT TECHNICAL REPORT

THE MERCER GROUP, INC.

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February 16, 2015



The Mercer Group, Inc.

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February 16, 2015

Mr. Sam Gaston
City Manager
56 Church Street
Mountain Brook, Alabama 35213

Ms. Sue Debrecht
Library Director
50 Oak Street
Mountain Brook, Alabama 35213

Dear Mr. Gaston and Ms. Debrecht:

The Mercer Group, Inc. is pleased to present our second updated **Draft Technical Report** for the **Management and Organizational Study** (Management Study) of the **Emmet O'Neal Library** (Library or EOL). We updated earlier drafts based on our meetings with the Library Board, City officials, the Library Director, department heads, and staff.

The Mercer assessment and report is based on our revised **proposal to the City of Mountain Brook dated October 17, 2013, and approved by the City Council on October 28, 2013**. The proposal provides detailed descriptions of the scope of work, issues to be addressed in the study, and project work plan.

The Management Report is presented in two parts:

1. **Technical Report:** The Technical Report for the EOL Management and Organizational Study presents the complete results of our assessment of the library, including a series of exhibits to support information in the text of the report.

Findings and recommendations in the report result from interviews with EOL staff and stakeholders by our project manager and library consultant, research and data collection, and a review of employee surveys and questionnaires.

2. **Employee Surveys Report:** The results of the EOL Employee Surveys are presented in a separate report identified as Appendix 1 to the Mercer Report.

Mr. Sam Gaston, City Manager
Ms. Sue Debrecht, Library Director
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OVERVIEW OF THE TECHNICAL REPORT

The Technical Report is comprised of this Cover Letter, which serves as an Executive Summary, and the following seven chapters.

- I. Overview of the Project:** Reviews the project's goal, methodology, and activities.
- II. Current Situation:** Presents baseline information on the Library (services and resources), a SWOT Assessment, a Comparative Analysis, and the results of the employee surveys and questionnaires.
- III. Library Assessment:** Presents findings, analyses, and recommendation for library-wide issues, such as governance, strategic direction, service delivery structure, management organization and staffing, and resource management (EOL and City "support" departments and services).
- IV. Department Assessments:** Presents findings, analyses, and recommendations for the library's "line" departments (Adult, Children, Circulation, and Technical Services).
- V. Implementation:** Outlines the implementation process, defines implementation issues and challenges, and presents an Implementation Plan/Scorecard.
- VI. Exhibits:** Presents data, charts, reports, master surveys and questionnaires, and other supporting information.
- VII. Appendix I - Results of the Employee Surveys:** Provides a separate, detailed report on the results of the employee surveys (Values, Organizational Climate, GRIPES/Management Practices, Resources, and Personnel Practices), which includes exhibits presenting scores for all employees, supervisors, and non-supervisor at the library level and for all employees only at the level of the five library departments (Administration, Adult, Children's, Circulation, and Technical Services). Because of confidentiality concerns (most departments have only 1 supervisor) we do not break out department scores by supervisors and non-supervisors.

The results of the Management Philosophy Profile (completed as part of the employee surveys packet) and the Employee Questionnaire (issued separately from the employee surveys) are presented in this Technical Report.

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OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE LIBRARY

The Mercer Group, including our library consultant (an active library director), is very impressed with the services and staff at the Emmet O’Neal library. Clearly, the library provides a very high level of service to city residents and other library patrons as confirmed by the ETC Institute’s recent citizen survey. 98% of survey respondents said they are very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of library services, a rating much higher than libraries in 52 other ETC communities, as well as higher than any other city department. The library is not just effective in delivering services, but is loved as a library and as a community gathering place.

Mercer believes EOL is exemplary in terms of:

- Leadership from the Library Board and Library Director
- Financial support from the City
- Community support, including the Friends, Foundation, and Junior Women’s Committee
- Value to the community as a center of community life
- Management (the five department heads) and Staff (full-time and part-time)
- The collection and collection development funding
- Programs through the Adult and Children’s Departments
- Library facility

Leadership and community support from city residents, primarily the City Council and Library Board, but also the Friends, Foundation, and Junior Women’s Committee, reflects a strong commitment to the library and to the community of Mountain Brook. The Library Board is highly-qualified and experienced, and puts in the work to make the library great. Similarly, library support organizations are committed to creating a wonderful facility, raising revenues above and beyond the city contribution, and supporting programs, particularly for kids.

The EOL management team and employees, including part-time employees, are committed to meeting the expectations of city and library officials and of Mountain Brook residents and other library users...and do meet these expectations. Across-the-board, staff is knowledgeable, hard-working, and professional, with a very high commitment to customer service and satisfaction.

The collection is both diverse and extensive...and evolving in concert with patron interests and trends in library services for more electronic information and sharable media.

The library facility is high-quality with adequate space (mostly) for the collection and patron visits. The library space includes a large community gathering place and study rooms/areas for students, making EOL the place to be for both events and quiet times. The new Makerspace will enhance the library’s role as a student and business center.

Changes and improvements suggested in the Mercer report, therefore, represent a fine-

tuning of an organization that already is exemplary.

Mr. Sam Gaston, City Manager

Ms. Sue Debrecht, Library Director

City of Mountain Brook, Alabama

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SWOT ASSESSMENT

The **SWOT Assessment** indicates major positive strengths, but also a few current weaknesses and future opportunities and challenges. Threats are more external than internal, but real.

Major Current Strengths

- Valuable, high-quality, diverse library programs
- Community gathering place
- Committed and well-coordinated Library Board
- Support from Foundation, Friends, and Junior Women's Committee
- Skills, experience, and teamwork of library staff
- Breadth and depth of the collection

Major Current Weaknesses

- Need a long-term vision, broadened mission statement, updated values statement, and full-scope strategic plan for the library and its departments
- Vacancies in five part-time positions need to be filled
- Better internal and external communications (top-to-bottom, side-to-side, library-to-city)
- Better internal policies, procedures, systems, and controls
- Better use of an already cramped space (weeding, basement, parking, reference area, large print books)
- Increase the number of stations and use of self-checkout technology, but patrons enjoy personal interactions with the Circulation staff

Major Future Opportunities and Challenges

- Gather more feedback from the communities through surveys and focus groups, rather than word of mouth, to better define community interests and needs for library programs, elements of the collection, space use, and technology application
- Keep up with technology applications supporting library services (e-books, administrative, Makerspace, etc.)
- Succession planning (Director and two department heads can retire soon)
- Expand outreach and communications to better inform the community, businesses, and schools of library offerings

Major Threats

- National recession affecting the local economy and city revenues
- Loss of support and funding from the City
- Loss of support from patrons and the Library Board (unlikely)
- JCLC service issues due to funding loss (inter-library loan system and technology)

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MAJOR CHALLENGES

Although the library has many strengths and areas of excellence, Mercer identified five areas in which the Library needs to...

1. **Strategic Direction:** The current mission statement does not cover EOL's role as a community gathering place, an important element in the full scope of library services, particularly in a community that does not have true community center (although schools and churches play that role in some ways).
2. **Service Delivery Structure:** EOL is an important part of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC), which provides interlibrary loan and library technology services. Early in the study, Mercer learned that one major participant had reduced its funding to the cooperative, creating doubt about its future viability as a service provider. The Library Director assured us that the cooperative will endure and that key members, including EOL, have talked with technology vendors about continued operation.
3. **Management and Staffing:** With several key management team members close to retirement, EOL needs a more formal succession plan.

Although overall staffing is in line with hours of operation and patron service requirements, the mix of staff across departments and full-time/part-time must continue to be watched. As the library study progressed, the Library Director and management team continued to fine-tune Exhibit 3b's comparison of 1998 staffing (in the old building) and 2013 staff (in the new building). Personnel growth over the past 15 year is primarily explained by new functions (IT) or expanded programs, all of which have been approved by the Library Board and the City Council.

4. **Human Resource Management:** Unlike the City, EOL does not have a human resources agency like the Jefferson County Personnel Board to support the pay plan, hiring, and promotions or a dedicated human resources specialist (a part of the City Finance Director's job). We see the need for strengthening of the HR function at EOL, including updating policies and procedures, improving application of performance evaluations, and formalizing the pay plan.
5. **Information Technology:** EOL technology services are maturing with internal leadership and external provision of technical library systems by the JCLC. But, technology is a moving target, as exemplified by opening of the Makerspace. Our library consultant had one concern compared to library best practices – the low use of self-checkout technology by EOL patrons.

6.

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Ms. Sue Debrecht, Library Director
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KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Scores on Mercer's employee surveys were very high compared to our firm's standards; other library clients; and the Public Works and Park & Recreation Departments. See Chapter II, Section E, for an overview of the results of the employee surveys and Appendix I (presented as a separate document) for detailed results and copies of the surveys used.

Mercer's response to the City and Library issues identified as we prepared our proposal are described below:

1. **Organization:** Does the organizational plan include effective spans of control, organizational levels, grouping of functions, reporting relationships, and communications?

Mercer Response: Yes, with only a few exceptions having limited overall impact on organizational and operational performance:

- Sharing of positions across departments
- Communication of staff meeting results to part-timers

2. **Staffing:** Are staffing levels appropriate, particularly related to objective standards of workload and responsibilities assigned and the mix of full-time and part-time staff? Is the growth in staff since the opening of the new building appropriate?

Mercer Response: Yes, again with some limited exceptions:

- Possible opportunities to reallocate or collaborate on some duties department-to-department
- Library-to-library staffing data in the Comparative Analysis

3. **Operations:** Are effective operational policies, procedures, and practices in place? What are the impacts of the building's layout and service levels on staffing needs?

Mercer Response: For the most part policies and procedures are in place, but some (e.g., the Employee Handbook) need to be updated.

The building drives staffing primarily due to the need to staff three service desks (Adult, Children's, and Circulation).

A greater influence on staffing levels is the growth in collection, circulation, patron visits, number of public computers, and adult and children's programs since the late 1990s and replacement of the prior library building.

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As compiled from Chapter III, key findings and recommendations for library-wide functions are:

- **Governance:** Library Board members are well-qualified and committed to library services. The Board operates cohesively to guide the work of the Library Director and library staff, as well as to responsibly use funds allocated by the Mayor and City Council.

Recommendations: No changes in board structure and operations, but we suggest the Board push for an expanded strategic planning process, particularly related to a long-term vision; development of a formal succession plan for the Director and department heads; enhanced communication of the value of the library to the community; and new blood as needed to support groups, particularly the Friends.

- **Strategic Direction:** The library submits five-year strategic plans to the State of Alabama, with the current plan covering 2012 through 2017. The plan includes most, but not all, of the elements in Mercer's *Strategic Planning Model for the Public Sector*.

Recommendations: Create a Functional Business Plan for the library based on the Mercer Model (see Figure 1 in the text) to include a more clearly-defined 10- or 20-Year Vision; updated Values; addition of the role as the community gather place to the Mission; modification to some goals and objectives; and development of 2-3 performance measures for each department.

To support the plan, we concur with staff that EOL needs a library-focused community survey. The Library Director has initiated such a survey.

- **Service Delivery Structure:** In addition to in-house services by EOL staff, the library is supported by City departments (primarily Finance), the Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC), and facility maintenance contractors.

Recommendations: The most important need is to work to secure funding for JCLC services after a recent cut in the Jefferson County contribution and to initiate conversations with vendors and area libraries in case an alternative approach to collaborative technology services is required. Work on this issue is underway.

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- **Management Organization and Practices:** The library's current organization plan is shown on **Exhibit 2** and its staffing history on **Exhibits 3a and 3b**. We observed that:
- The Adult, Children's, Circulation, and Technical Service Departments are traditional units of public libraries.
 - Information Technology is an evolving department with library-wide impact.
 - Facilities, Finance, and Human Resources functions are less evolved with services by part-time staff or as secondary duties of members of the management team.

In response to the City Manager's question in preparing our proposal, we tracked the growth of library staff from 1998 (before the new facility) to today. We found that staff growth seems to mirror growth in the size of the facility and the collection; increases in circulation and patron visits; and expansion of core programs:

- Per an updated Exhibit 3a, staff has grown from 16 full-time, 17 part-time, and three work study positions in the old building to 20 full-time and 17 part-time/seasonal (+25% in full-time and no change in part-time positions). New full-time positions include the IT Manager and the Teen/Youth Librarian.
- The Facility has grown from 17,500 square feet to 39,500 square feet with three service desks (the same as at the old library).
- The Collection has grown from 109,778 to 131,976 (+20%) and Circulation from 260,000 to 477,568 (+75%).
- Patron visits have grown from 45,000 to 199,234 (+343%), with the number and use of public computers also greatly increasing.
- The number of public computers, use of these public computers by patrons, and website visits have grown significantly.

Recommendations: Maintain the current management organization structure. We believe the current management team (Director + five department heads) can handle their current duties, as well as all duties of the former Assistant Director.

Fine-tune staffing levels primarily through inter-department reallocations rather than increases in overall staffing, except as noted below.

Strengthen the facilities, finance, and human resource management functions to achieve a higher level of maturity, likely in association with the City. Lacking the role of the Jefferson County Personnel Board and the Finance Director's experience, EOL may not have enough technical human resource time and skills to manage its staff effectively. Filling the part-time Administrative Assistant position, now vacant, may provide more

time for the Executive Assistant to focus on the HR function.

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- **Resource Management:** These support functions include equipment, facilities, budgeting and finance, materials (purchasing), human resources, and information technology.

As noted earlier, **some functions (materials, information technology) are well staffed, while others (finance, facilities, human resources) have more limited staff resources** available to manage these functions.

Recommendations: Equipment and equipment management appear adequate to support library operations. Our recommendations focus on the other support functions:

- Library Facility: Review opportunities to make the library even more inviting as a community space to include opportunities both within and around the library building.
- Facility Management: Add external technical resources to assist the Library Director and Circulation department head perform this specialized functions, perhaps in association with the City.
- Budgeting: Move toward an ROI-type budget on the GFOA model rather than a purely financial one. The recommended functional business plan will assist in providing program and performance information to support this effort.
- Finances: Give EOL staff read-only access to their accounts on *emGovPower* and consider that system to manage Foundation books, as well as resolve some minor procedural issues.
- Materials: Shift collection accounting from Technical Services back to the Accountant (more time may be needed) or restructure to a collaborative process to allow the Technical Services department head to focus more time on the material acquisition process. Review purchasing authority levels.
- Human Resources: Develop a formal Pay Plan (perhaps an update to an older plan); update the 2005 Employee Handbook; expand position announcements and advertising to broaden the applicant pool; and improve the Performance Review process, including application to part-time positions. Develop a succession plan for senior management positions.
- Information Technology: Update the existing IT strategy as suggested in the text of the report and review IT workload requirements and staffing allocations if some duties are realigned between IT and the Adult Department.

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Key findings and recommendations for library departments are:

- **Adult and Children's Departments:** Both departments offer wonderful services and programs. Staffing is close to optimal at the present time.

Recommendations: Better communicate the EOL mission and values; create department mission statements, goals, objectives, and performance measures; fine-tune staffing; continue aggressive weeding; and deal with some space and computer use issues.

- **Circulation and Technical Services Departments:** Both departments do a great job of supporting the collection and patron services. Staffing is close to optimal at this time.

Recommendations: As above, better communicate the EOL mission and values; create department mission statements, goals, objectives, and performance measures; fine-tune staffing; enhance self-check at the front desk; reassess the value of RFID (commonly used in other libraries); and shift some or all collection acquisition accounting duties from Technical Services to Accounting.

NEXT STEPS

The next step in the study process is to review the updated Draft Report with the City Council on February 23, 2015, then create and present a Final Report. The Final Report will include an Implementation Plan (see Chapter V and a future **Exhibit 8**) to serve as a scorecard for implementation of the study's recommendations.

* * * * *

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding our proposal, please call Steve Egan, our project manager and lead consultant, at 770-425-1775.

Very truly yours,

The Mercer Group, Inc.

THE MERCER GROUP, INC.

James L. Mercer, President and CEO (Project Director)

Stephen D. Egan, Jr., Senior Vice-President (Project Manager and Lead Consultant)

Anne Haimes, Library Consultant

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I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

This chapter of the report describes the project's purpose, objectives, scope, issues, deliverables, and schedule.

A. SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

Similar to many well-run cities, Mountain Brook is concerned about the level of services provided to its citizens and the resources required to deliver these services.

The Mayor and City Council believes this is a good time for an **independent, objective review of the management, organization, and operations of the Emmet O'Neal Library (EOL or the Library), which was not included in the Mercer Group's 2003 citywide study.**

Issues to be studied are a combination of the issues that Mercer reviews in our comprehensive Management and Operations studies, as well as issues of primary concern to the City of Mountain Brook and the Library.

City and Library Issues

In our pre-proposal telephone conversation with the City Manager and during an initial meeting with the Project Steering Committee, Mercer identified the following **key City and Library issues** to be reviewed in the study:

- 4. Organization:** Does the organizational plan include effective spans of control, organizational levels, grouping of functions, reporting relationships, and communications?

(See: Management Organization section in Chapter III, Library Assessment, and Organization & Staffing sections in Chapter IV, Department Assessments)

- 5. Staffing:** Are staffing levels appropriate, particularly related to objective standards of workload and responsibilities assigned and the mix of full-time and part-time staff? Is the growth in staff since the opening of the new building appropriate?

(See: Management Organization section in Chapter III, Library Assessment, and Organization & Staffing sections in Chapter IV, Department Assessments)

- 6. Operations:** Are effective operational policies, procedures, and practices in place? What are the impacts of the building's layout and service levels on staffing needs?

(See: Resource Management section in Chapter III, Library Assessment, and Operations Management sections in Chapter IV, Departmental Assessments)

Mercer Issues

Mercer's *Fifty Management Issues for Organizational Improvement* also were reviewed and assessed in this study. These issues are the foundation for ALL of our management studies.

Governance

1. Legal structure/form of government
2. Role of governing and advisory boards and committees
3. Staff support to these boards and committees
4. Policy making and decision making processes
5. Identification of and compliance with legal, regulatory, and policy requirements

Service Delivery Structure

6. Organizational location of services and activities both in and outside the city
7. Interdepartmental cooperation among city government departments
8. Intergovernmental cooperation across the region
9. Use of alternative service delivery opportunities, such as inter-local agreements, contracts, and privatization
10. Comparison with industry best practices, benchmark communities, and Mercer's national experience

Planning

11. Strategic planning process compared to the Mercer Model
12. Alignment of vision, mission, strategies, long-term goals, and short-term objectives (as they impact services levels, organization, and staffing)
13. Capital projects planning process, documents, and oversight
14. Financial planning and budgeting processes, documents, and oversight
15. Operational planning processes, documents, and oversight

Management Organization and Practices

16. Senior management organization structure
17. Internal workings of the management team
18. Management reporting and communications
19. Documentation of policies and procedures
20. Customer and stakeholder relations and communications
21. Organizational culture and values (as they impact organization and staffing)
22. Management philosophy and labor-management relations (as they impact organization and staffing)

Operations Management

23. Work standards and specifications
24. Work planning and scheduling
25. Unit organization and staffing
26. Job classifications, roles, and duties
27. Adequacy of facilities, equipment, tools, technology, communications, and materials
28. Unit supervision
29. Unit operations, work flow, productivity, and cost-effectiveness
30. Technical and administrative support operations
31. Activity and performance reporting and analysis
32. Emergency management plans and processes

Resource Management

33. Human Resource management policies, practices, and processes
34. Training and career development program
35. Safety and risk management program
36. Employee and labor relations

37. Financial management and reporting
38. Financial transactions and processes
39. Project and activity cost accounting
40. Rates, fees, charges, and cost recovery practices
41. Internal service fund operations and charges

42. Information systems management and support services
43. Computer and technology applications (hardware and software)
44. Records management, including documents, mapping, and GIS

45. Purchasing and materials management
46. Warehouse and stores operations

47. Facilities management
48. Facility and grounds maintenance operations

49. Fleet and equipment management
50. Equipment specifications, procurement, and replacement

We also reviewed library-wide and department-level functions based on the *Mercer Model for Managing in Lean Times*. Key issues and challenges reviewed are:

1.) Strategic Direction: Although many public agencies have “strategies, goals, and objectives,” many lack a full-scope strategic plan based on the Mercer Model, and many more fail to carry down the government-wide plan to department/program-level “functional business plans.” Often, therefore, the work of departments and employees is not aligned with the agency’s overall vision, strategies, and goals, and the various planning processes lack cohesion.

2.) Service Delivery Structure: Service delivery alternatives range from full consolidations (City-County or City-City/Town) to functional consolidations (Fire or Utilities) to collaboration or contracting for specific services (regional 911 Center or solid waste) to cooperation in funding social services or the arts. Mercer’s *Decision Criteria for Contracting* assists in determining what options might work in specific alternative service delivery circumstances.

3.) Organization and Staffing Plans: Do decisions for the Strategic Direction and Service Delivery Structure result in a mission-driven organization and staffing plan? Are the right people and right number of people in place to manage the organization and to cost-effectively deliver services?

4.) Operations and Productivity Improvement: The performance measurement movement is one of many ways to ensure public sector operations are productive. But, in addition, governments need ways to assess and monitor the day-to-day and hour-to-hour operational efficiency of staff, units, and programs. We call this “*Managing the Numbers!*”

5.) Budget and Financial Management: Although it is hard to raise taxes, charges, and utility fees in economic hard time, public agencies can implement performance-based and other budgetary processes to ensure departments and programs are accomplishing organization-defined goals and objectives, operating efficiently and effectively, and giving a solid return on the organization’s investment in people, facilities, equipment, and other resources.

6.) People Management: Key needs for every public agency are to retain good employees and develop new hires and lower performers. The structure and application of pay plans (including performance-based rewards), benefits packages, organizational development and training programs, performance evaluations, and the like can bring employees to higher levels of performance and limit turnover and the attendant costs to hire, train, and retain good employees.

7.) Technology Investments: For years, central administrative departments have invested in resource management systems and line departments in technology to manage scheduling, operations, and facilities. Some agencies have not followed that trend by applying department-specific automation and technology opportunities (for example RFID in libraries). A strategic approach to technology is needed to optimize these investments and select reliable software and hardware vendors to support organizational and operational needs.

B. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The Project started in December 2013 and was conducted parallel to a study of the city's Parks & Recreation Department for which we issued a separate report. **Project activities** included:

- Interviews with members of the Library Board; the City Council Liaison; the City Manager, Finance Director, and IT Director; the Library Director, department heads, and full- and part-time staff; Friends of the Library Chair; Foundation Chair; Junior Women's Committee of 100 Chair; and several outside stakeholders (e.g., Western Supermarkets). These interviews supported the SWOT Assessment (see **Exhibit 1**)
- Review of City and Library-related data, documents, policies, procedures, and reports, as well as collection and analysis of comparative data for six other libraries;
- Observation of library operations in each department, including attendance at several library events; and
- Application of Mercer employee surveys and questionnaires, which were completed by thirty-five full-and part-time Library employees.

The detailed **project schedule** by task and subtasks, with time frames and milestones, is presented in Chapter III of our proposal. The schedule provided time for:

- A Kickoff meeting with the Project Steering Committee.
- Library staff to complete questionnaires and surveys.
- On-site interviews, site visits, and observation of work.
- Data collection, research, and benchmarking.
- Project and status reports.
- Analysis of information and data collected during the study, development of preliminary findings and alternatives, and preparation of a draft report.
- Review of the draft report with the City Manager, Library Director, City Council Liaison, and two Board members.
- Preparation of an updated draft report, which we then reviewed onsite with the EOL management team and department staff.
- Preparation of another updated draft with a presentation to the Mayor and City Council.
- Preparation of a final report on the project.

The consultant was responsible for the following **deliverables**:

- **Interim Status Reports:** These informal reports to the City Manager and Library Director, as well as periodic presentations to the Library Board, were delivered at key project milestones defined at the project kickoff meeting.
- **Draft and Final Reports:** We prepared Draft, Updated Draft, and Final Reports for the project, which detailed our findings, recommendations, and implementation plan.
- **Presentations:** Presentations to the Mayor and City Council, the Library Board, and EOL management and staff were made at the draft report stage of the project.

II. CURRENT SITUATION

This chapter of the report describes the City of Mountain Brook; documents the services and resources of the Emmet O’Neal Library (EOL); reviews the results of the Comparative Analysis; and presents the results of stakeholder and employee interviews and employee surveys and questionnaires applied in the Management Study of the library.

A. CITY OF MOUNTAIN BROOK

The **City of Mountain Brook** is primarily a residential community and a suburb of Birmingham. Mountain Brook has an estimate population of 20,359 (per U.S. Census data), with relatively slow, controlled growth. The City is noted for the quality of life and the excellence of its city services and infrastructure, school system, and library.

The city was incorporated in 1942 and is governed by a Mayor and five-member City Council, which appoints a City Manager to run daily operations.

The **City’s mission** is to be “a professional organization committed to teamwork and excellence which promotes full participation in enhancing the quality of life for residents.”

Key city values are Integrity, Safety, Education, Community, Stewardship, and Beauty.

For Fiscal Year 2014, the City employs about 225 people and has an annual all funds budget (including capital projects) of \$39,158,179. Budgets for major funds are:

- General Fund: \$32,065,367
- Capital Projects Fund: \$ 2,030,848
- Parks Board Fund: \$ 114,300 (net of the city’s General Fund contribution)

As a full service community, **city departments** include:

- Police,
- Fire,
- Parks & Recreation,
- Finance and Administrative Services,
- Public Works,
- Inspections, and
- Planning.

B. EMMET O'NEAL LIBRARY

The Library Board governs the **Emmet O'Neal Library** with day-to-day management by the Library Director who reports to the Board. The library is supported by three independent bodies – the Library Foundation, Friends of the Library, and Junior Women's Committee of 100.

Services

In-House Services

The library provides a wide range of traditional and emerging library and media services for city residents and non-resident patrons of the library, including, but not limited to:

- **Administrative Services:** Responsible for management, financial, facilities, human resources, and technology support to library departments. Technology includes public computers, wireless internet access, website, social media outlets, printing and copying services, and Makerspace.
- **Adult Services:** Responsible for managing books, DVDs, audio books, electronic books and readers, online resources, and educational programs for adults and young adults (18+); magazines and newspapers; general research materials; an investment center; and study desks and rooms (for all ages). Space assigned includes all of the second floor and the front of the first floor by the Circulation Desk. Shares use of the large conference room. Supported by the Teen Advisory Board.
- **Children Services:** Responsible for managing books, DVDs, audio books, online resources, e-books, readers, magazines, tutor rooms, and programs and services for children from birth through elementary school. Space assigned includes the back half of the first floor. Shares use of the large conference room.
- **Circulation:** Responsible for running the Circulation Desk; check-ins and check-outs; processing of all materials returned via the book drop; re-shelving materials once checked in; and managing holds by patrons so they are available for quick pick-up at the Circulation Desk.
- **Technical Services:** Responsible for ordering and processing in/out library materials; cataloging; accounting for material purchases, including books, DVDs, and audio-visual; and ordering general library supplies.

The library also serves as Mountain Brook's Community Center. The Large Meeting Room and smaller Board Room are used, sometimes rented, for board meetings, library programs and events, and community meetings and events. In addition, the grassy field across from the library is used for larger events with the approval of the private owners.

External Services

Several operating and support services are provided by the City of Mountain Brook, the Jefferson County Library Cooperative, and private contractors:

- **City of Mountain Brook:** Assists the library with processing financial transactions (accounts payable and receivable), financial reporting (except for special library funds), payroll, purchasing (limited), and information technology support (limited).
- **The Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC):** EOL is a member of the cooperative and the Library Director is a member of the board. JCLC supports interlibrary loans and provides a portal to the integrated library system (with card catalog) for member libraries.
- **Private Contractors:** Contracted maintenance services are used for major building repairs, custodial services, and the elevator.

Library Operating Statistics

In 2013, the library circulated almost 500,000 items in a collection of 132,000 items; welcomed almost 200,000 patrons and visitors; and answered 140,000 reference questions and 82,000 informal staff questions. Over 95,000 patrons used public computers and almost 30,000 people attended Children's, Teen, and Adult programs.

Since 1998, EOL's overall circulation has increased 75% and book circulation 92% with a significant jump in services starting in 2001 (when the current facility opened) that has continued through 2013.

Key statistics for 1998 or 2001, 2004-2005, and 2012-2013 are summarized on **Table 1** that follows.

Table 1
Selected Library Statistics (1998/2001, 2004-2005, 2012-2013)

Category	1998 Actual or 2001 Estimate	2004-2005 Actual	2012-2013 Actual	Change from 1998 or 2001 Estimate
Items in Collection	109,778	125,548	131,976	20%
Total Circulation	184,000	323,293	477,568	160%
Books Circulated	153,000	225,000	380,000	90%
Non-Books Circulated	31,000	100,000	95,000	36%
Hours of Operation		65 Winter 55 Summer		
In-Person Visits	45,000	228,000	199,234	343%
Reference Questions	60,000	90,000	140,000	133%
Information Inquiries to staff			82,465	
Computer Use			95,357	
Website Visits	5,000	52,000	105,864	2,017%
Children's Programs			518	
Children's Program Attendees			26,643	
Children Summer Reading Participants		962	2,154	
Teen Programs			48	
Teen Program Attendees			2,523	
Adult Programs			125	
Adult Summer Reading Participants			137	

Source: EOL Annual Reports to the State of Alabama and to the community

Notes: 1.) Some data (even numbers) are extrapolated from statistical graphs that lack specific data points.

Resources

Budget

The FY 2014 budget provides \$2,619,040 in operating funds for the library. In addition, the library manages a special fund for purchases of books and other materials. The FY 2014 budget for these funds is \$332,525, with the City funding of \$255,000 up from \$251,000 in prior years.

Annual revenues and the number of employees are shown on **Table 2** below and annual expenditures on **Table 3**.

Table 2
Revenue Budgets for FY 2012, 2013, 2014

<u>Revenue Categories</u> (Data from City Budget)	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Projected	FY 2014 Budget	Share of 14 Budget
Transfer from the City	\$2,259,370	\$2,394,870	\$2,552,290	97.5%
Meeting Room Revenue	5,814	7,230	7,500	.3%
Fine Receipts	52,551	48,000	48,000	1.8%
State Grants	12,062	11,250	11,250	.4%
Investment	39	0	0	
Miscellaneous	1,874	0	0	
TOTAL: Actual or Budget	\$2,331,710	\$2,456,772	\$2,619,040	100.0%
EMPLOYEES: Full-time and	21 FT	20 FT	20 FT	
Part-Time/Seasonal	14 PT	17 PT	17 PT	

Table 3
Expenditure Budgets for FY 2012, 2013, 2014

<u>Expenditure Categories</u> (Data from City Budget)	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Projected	FY 2014 Budget	Share of Budget
Salaries	\$1,355,786	\$1,438,900	\$1,530,730	58.4%
Benefits	290,387	297,593	315,835	12.1%
Other Expenditures	27,468	37,547	39,300	1.5%
Supplies and Expenses	146,168	149,501	147,150	5.6%
Contract Services	50,904	70,546	70,660	2.7%
Maintenance	129,946	136,267	126,000	4.8%
Utilities	145,474	158,953	166,950	6.4%
Transfers-Capital ERS	71,800	71,150	98,415	3.8%
Special Funded Projects	113,777	96,265	124,000	4.7%
TOTAL: Actual or Budget	\$2,331,710	\$2,456,722	\$2,619,040	100.0%
CHANGE: Year-to-Year		+5.4%	+6.6%	

Staffing

The **Library Director** is appointed by and reports to the Library Board, which is appointed by the City Council. The incumbent has served as Director for over 20 years.

Exhibit 2 in Chapter VI shows the most current **Organization and Staffing Chart** for the library. The current plan shows a total of 20 full-time, 15 part-time, and two temporary (summer) positions assigned to departments and functions as detailed below. The frozen Maintenance position is not included in the count of 20 full-time positions.

Budgeted positions by department/function are identified below. Full-time and part-time positions on Exhibit 1 may be allocated slightly differently than implied by the chart. Exceptions or recent changes are noted below in *italics*.

- **Administration (3.75 FT/2 PT):** Library Director, Executive Assistant, Information Technology Manager, Library Assistant II (.75 working in IT), Accountant (PT), and Administrative Assistant (*PT is vacant*).
- **Adult Department (4.25 FT/2 PT):** Department Head (1 FT), Librarian (2 FT), Library Assistant II (1.25 shared with IT), Adult Services Assistant (*2 PT with one vacant*)
- **Children's Department (5 FT/2 PT/2 Temporary):** Department Head (1 FT), Librarian (1 FT), Library Assistant II (1 FT, 1 PT, 2 Temporary), Children's Assistant (2 FT, 1 PT)
- **Circulation (6.25 FT/5 PT):** Department Head (1 FT), Library Assistant II (5.25 FT), Library Assistant I (*5 PT with one vacant*)
- **Technical Services (1.75 FT/4 PT):** Department Head (1 FT), Library Assistant II (1 FT, 2 PT), Technical Services Assistant (*2 PT with one vacant*)

Table 4 on the following page lists budgeted positions by for thirteen distinct position titles used by the library.

Table 5 on the following page compares staffing in 1998 (for the old building) and 2013 (for the new building). See **Exhibit 3a in Chapter VI** for details.

Table 4
Current EOL Position Count by Title

Position Title	Full-Time	Part-Time	Temporary
Library Director	1		
Department Heads	4		
Librarian	4		
Library Assistant II	7	1	2
Library Assistant I		5 (1 Vacant)	
Adult Services Assistant		2 (1 Vacant)	
Children's Assistant	2	1	
Tech Services Assistant		4 (1 Vacant)	
IT Manager	1		
Executive Assistant	1		
Administrative Assistant		1 (Vacant)	
Accountant		1	
Maintenance Worker	1 (Frozen, Not in Total)		
Total:	20	15 (4 Vacant)	2

Table 5
EOL Staffing in 1998 and 2013, by Department and Position Type

Library Department	1998 Old Building	2013 New Building	Change
Circulation	6 FT / 5 PT	6 FT / 6 PT	+1 PT
Information Technology	0	1.75 FT	+1.75 FT
Technical Services	1 FT / 2 PT	1.75 FT / 4 PT	+.75 FT / +2 PT
Children	2 FT / 5 PT / 1S	5 FT / 2 PT / 2 S	+3 FT / -3 PT / +1 S
Adults/Reference	2 FT / 0 PT	4.25 FT / 2 PT	+2.25 FT / +2 PT
Administration	2 FT	2 FT / 2 PT	+ 2 PT
Maintenance	1 FT	1 Frozen	-1 FT
Total	16 FT / 17 PT	20 FT / 15 PT / 2S	+6 PT / +0 PT / +2 S
Estimated FTE's	23.5 FTE	28 FTE	+6.5 FTE

- Notes:** (1) "S" = Seasonal (assumed to work 3 months at 19 hours per week per person)
 (2) FTE's assumes part-timers work 19 hours per week
 (3) 1998 does not include three work study students
 (4) Update check chart against new Exhibits 2 and 3a

Facilities

The Library operates out of the Emmet O’Neal Library building, a two-story (plus basement), 39,500 square foot facility located at 50 Oak Street in Crestline Village. This modern facility replaced an aging 17,500 square feet building in 2001. Table 6 on the following page compares features and resources in the Old and New Buildings. This table was prepared by EOL staff.

The library is open seven days a week for a total of 52 hours in the winter months and 65 hours in the summer months:

	<u>Winter Months</u>	<u>Summer Months Changes</u>
Monday/Tuesday/Thursday	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM	To 6 PM Monday/Thursday
Wednesday	9:00 AM to 6:00 PM	
Friday/Saturday	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	
Sunday	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Closed

The library building includes the following areas and features:

➤ **Basement:**

- Technical Services offices and work rooms
- Staff Lounge/Break Room
- Friends of the Library room
- Elevator serving all floors

➤ **First Floor:**

- Covered Visitor Drop Off and Entrance/Foyer
- Large Meeting Room (200 capacity) and Smaller Board Room (20 capacity)
- Kitchen
- Circulation Desk (near DVDs, Audio Books, and New/Recommended Books)
- Circulation offices and work rooms (with collection box)
- Children’s Department (desk, study room, and activity room)

➤ **Second Floor:**

- Adult Services Desk
- Research materials
- Young Adult Materials
- Special Collections (e.g., Coaches Corner)
- Magazines and Newspapers
- Study Desks and Rooms
- Adult Collection
- Investment Center
- Public Computers/Printers/Copier-Scanner
- Makerspace

Table 6
THE EMMET O'NEAL LIBRARY
COMPARISON OF OLD AND NEW BUILDING
Source: Library Staff (3/21/2014)

Feature	Old Building	New Building	Change
Square Footage	17,500	39,500	22,000
Staff Computers	9	43	34
Internet Computers	3	32	29
Games Computers		6	6
Laptops		10	10
iPads		10	10
E-Readers/Tablets		10	10
Telephone Lines	ISDN	Metro-E	
Public Meeting Room	One 1 Table/50 chairs	Two 45 Tables/195 Chairs	One 44 Tables/145 Chairs
Quiet Room	0	1	1
Tutoring Rooms	0	2	2
Group Study Rooms	0	3	3
Bathrooms	6	9	3
Bathroom Stalls	8	20	12
<u>Children's Department</u>			
General Area	4 Tables/16 Chairs	2 Tables/4 Benches 16 Study Carrels	3 Tables 4 Benches
Family Reading Area		3 Tables/12 Chairs	16 Study Carrels
Play Area		4 Bean Bag Chairs	
Tutoring Rooms		2 Tables/4 Chairs	
<u>Adult Department</u>			
Current Materials		2 Arm Chairs Bench	10 Tables 35 Chairs
Reference Area	6 Study Carrels 9 Tables/38 Chairs	1 Table/3 Chairs 20 Study Carrels 7 Tables/22 Chairs 3 Benches	18 Study Carrels 14 Stations/Chairs 20 Chairs
Investor's Area		4 Study Carrels 1-2 Person Couch 2 Tables/8 Chairs 4 Other Chairs	
Reading/Periodicals	4 Arm Chairs	8 Arm Chairs 4 Tables/16 Chairs	
Group Study Rooms		3 Tables/16 Chairs	
Quiet Room		2 Tables/8 Chairs	
Computer Lab		14 Stations/Chairs	

Equipment

Major items of equipment assigned to the library supports library operations, and include, but are not limited to:

- Public computers (43 vs. 9 in the prior building)
- Staff computers (32 vs. 3 in the prior building)
- Game computers (6)
- Laptops (10)
- iPads (10)
- e-Readers/Tablets (10)
- Makerspace computers (14 stations) and 3-D printer
- Game computers (3), early literacy stations (8), iPads (18), e-Readers (45)
- Library Management Information System (provided by the Jefferson County Library Cooperative)
- Furniture for offices, library common areas and study rooms, and meeting room

C. SWOT ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The SWOT Assessment is the result of information provided in employee questionnaires and from interviews involving over 50 people with a stake in the services of the library, including:

- City Council liaison,
- All Library Board Members,
- Foundation Chair,
- Friends of the Library Chair,
- Chair of the Committee of 100 Women,
- City Manager, Finance Director, IT Manager, and City Planner,
- Various external stakeholders (e.g., Western Supermarkets) and customers,
- Library Director, and
- All department supervisors and employees.

The Assessment is a compilation of the perspectives of these people on four topics:

- **Strengths:** What the library should be proud of, does well, and is noted for. Services, programs, attributes, and accomplishments that City officials, stakeholders, citizens, and employees appreciate.
- **Weaknesses:** Situations, services, methods, policies, and practices needing improvement, fine-tuning, or overhaul. Resource needs beyond the current budget. Needed resource reallocations.
- **Opportunities:** Service delivery ideas, new or expanded services, new ideas and approaches, possible collaborative opportunities, etc.
- **Threats:** Events or situations that would cause the “wheels to fall off.” Typically, many of these threats are the result of state and national factors and beyond local control.

For each topic, major **themes** are identified when discussed in a significant number of the interviews. Each theme is presented based on a compilation of the insights of all parties interviewed.

Note that these findings are the perceptions of the parties interviewed and may not accurately reflect the current situation or represent a consensus of persons interviewed. In some cases information is out-of-date or incorrect and in others the comments accurately reflects the current situation. **So, care must be taken not to overreact to any perceived positives or negatives in the SWOT Assessment. It’s a starting point for deeper analysis by Mercer.**

Findings

Exhibit 1 in Chapter VI provides a detailed summary of comments by persons interviewed and completing questionnaires, which are broken down into two categories: Library and City officials and stakeholders, and Library managers and employees.

From this detailed assessment, **Mercer gleaned the following overall key findings for the library**. Unique, department-specific SWOT findings are provided in Chapter IV.

Major Current Strengths

- Valuable, high-quality, diverse library programs
- Community gathering place
- Committed and well-coordinated Library Board
- Support from Foundation, Friends, and Junior Women's Committee
- Skills, experience, and teamwork of library staff
- Breadth and depth of the collection

Major Current Weaknesses

- Need a long-term vision, broadened mission statement, updated values statement, and full-scope strategic plan for the library and its departments
- Better internal and external communications (top-to-bottom, side-to-side, library-to-city)
- Better definition and more equitable application of internal policies, procedures, systems, and controls
- Better use of an already cramped space (weeding, basement, parking, reference area, large print books)
- Increase the number of check-out stations and expand use of self-check technology

Major Future Opportunities and Challenges

- Gather more feedback from the communities through surveys and focus groups, rather than word of mouth, to better define community interests and needs for library programs, elements of the collection, space use, and technology application
- Keep up with technology applications supporting library services (e-books, administrative, Makerspace, etc.)
- Succession planning (Director and two department heads can retire soon)
- Expand outreach and communications to better inform the community and schools of library offerings

Major Threats

- National recession affecting the local economy and city revenues
- Loss of support and funding from the City
- Loss of support from patrons and the Library Board
- Collapse of the JCLC, including the inter-library loan system and technology support

D. 2014 CITIZEN SURVEY

In 2014 the City of Mountain Brook contracted with the ETC Institute to conduct a citizen survey to measure satisfaction and needs. Library findings are:

- **98% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of library services, higher than any other City department or program.** This rating compares to 82% very satisfied or satisfied in 52 other communities completing the survey, with a low-high range of 57% to 98% in all communities.
- **Only 6%, the lowest rating of any City service, indicated the library as their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd choice in requiring emphasis over the next two years, reinforcing satisfaction with current services.**
- **Satisfaction with the five departments and various programs of the library were very high (92% to 96% Very Satisfied or Satisfied).**
- **Similarly, satisfaction with nine library resources and services were very high (81% to 94% Very Satisfied or Satisfied), including the following rated above 90%:**
 - Staff Availability (94%)
 - Collection (92%)
 - Children's Programs (92%)
 - Hours of Operation (91%)
- **Services requiring the most emphasis over the next two years as rated 1st, 2nd, or 3rd priorities are listed below (but with relatively low ratings!):**
 - Collections/Materials (Books, DVDs, CDs, etc.) (27%)
 - Programs for children (19%)
 - Classes/Training (18%)
 - Online Resources (17%)
 - Staff Available to Assist Patrons (15%)
 - Programs for Teenagers (15%)
 - Hours of Operation (15%)
 - Programs for Adults (15%)
 - Using Library Computers (7%)
- **Effectiveness of Appointed Boards and Commissions is rated 87% Very Satisfied or Satisfied.** All boards and commissions are lumped together so the specific score for the Library Board is not identifiable, but is assumed to be very positive.

E. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

1.) Overview of the Analysis

In the comparative analysis we provide high-level data and associated analyses of **Mountain Brook and six other cities, three nearby and three nationally, as suggested by the City Manager and Library staff.**

- Birmingham, Michigan
- Hinsdale, Illinois
- Homewood, Alabama
- Hoover, Alabama
- Lake Forest, Illinois
- Vestavia Hills, Alabama

The sources of the data are original Internet research by the Mercer Group; U.S. Census data; and the results of the *2012 Survey of Public Libraries in America* by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Data elements collected and analyses conducted include:

- Baseline Data:
 - 2013 Estimated Population (includes population of contract communities)
 - Median Income
 - Education Level (% with BA or above)
 - Library Board (appointment authority and role)
 - Number of library facilities and size in square feet
- Library Data:
 - Service Area
 - Weekly Hours
 - Annual Patron Visits
 - Collection (total and per capita, as well as Books if available)
 - Circulation (total and per capita)
 - Technology (Makerspace or equivalent and public use computers)
 - Community & Meeting Rooms
- Budget Data:
 - Library Budget for FY 2014
 - Library Cost per resident (includes population of contract communities)
 - Total Full-time Equivalent Staff
 - FTE Staff per 1000 residents

Key findings and analyses are summarized from the data on Tables 7a, 7b, and 7c on the following pages, with detailed discussion of each comparable community following the tables. In summary, Mercer learned that:

- **Population/Demographics:** Mountain Brook and the six comparable communities generally have populations of 20,000 to 25,000 (excepting Hoover) and have higher levels of income and education.
- **Library Boards:** Governing Library Boards are common and can be appointed (generally) or elected (rare).
- **Regional Associations:** Regional partnerships with neighboring communities through contracts or inter-library associations are common. The JCLC, however, may be a larger collaborative than in the comparative analysis communities.
- **Facilities:** Most communities have a single library, although Birmingham has a two-building campus. Mountain Brook has the highest square footage of library space per resident in the survey.
- **Service Area:** Most (5 of 6) libraries serve a single community (city, village, or town), with Birmingham serving three other communities under contract.
- **Hours:** Weekly hours of operation are similar library-to-library. Annual visitors, however, are lower for EOL than other comparative libraries.
- **Collection:** The collection is primarily printed materials (per the IMLS), but EOL has a higher percentage of printed materials (93.5%) than other libraries nationally or in Alabama (80.4%).
- **Circulation:** Mountain Brook tends to mirror the three national libraries at 23.46 items circulated per resident, with the other Alabama libraries lower (17.29).
- **Technology:** Only the Darien library has a Makerspace (a Digital Media Lab for adults and the TEA Room Makerspace for children), although all libraries have computer labs or centers of some kind. EOL, however, has fewer public use computers than other area libraries, but about the same as the national comparatives.
- **Community Space:** All libraries have meeting rooms of various sizes and purposes, including large community rooms. Some libraries, however, have a theater, café, roof-top garden, and other amenities.
- **Budget:** Most funding comes from city tax-related sources. With one or two exceptions, Friends of the Library provide a nominal amount of revenue compared to the total annual budget. EOL is below national libraries in cost per resident, but above the area average.
- **Staffing:** **Determination of full-time, part-time staff, as well as full-time equivalent positions, needs to be confirmed.** The IMLS data for FTEs seems a bit odd. EOL staffing is a bit higher per 1000 residents than the overall sample, but lower than two libraries in the national sample.

Table 7a
Highlights of the Comparative Analysis (All Communities)

DATA AND ANALYSES	MOUNTAIN BROOK	6-COMMUNITY AVERAGE	NATIONAL AVERAGE	ALABAMA AVERAGE
Baseline Data: 2013 Estimated Population	20,359	37,671	25,377	47,965
Median Income	\$135,833	\$109,743	\$146,032	\$73,453
BA+	82.9%	68.9%	76.4%	61.3%
Library Board (Role)	Appointed (Govern)	5 of 6 Appointed (All Govern)	2 of 3 Appointed (All Govern)	3 of 3 Appointed (All Govern)
Facilities:				
- # of Libraries	1	1	1	1
- Square Feet	39,000	47,496	38,324 (now)	56,667
- SF/Resident	1.92	1.26	1.51	1.13
Library Data:				
Service Area	City	5 of 6 = City Only	1 or 4 cities	City
Weekly Hours	65 (61 Summer)	67-69	67-69	67.3
Annual Visits	218,776	450,436	420,061	480,811
Collection:				
- Total	131,976	157,087	158,604	155,570
- Per Capita	6.48	4.17	6.25	3.25
- Printed	123,453 (93.5%)	126,325 (80.4%)	127,533 (80.4%)	125,117 (80.4%)
Circulation:				
- Total	477,568	829,723	611,697	829,723
- Per Capita	23.46	17.29	24.10	17.29
Technology:				
- Maker Space	Yes	No-Tech Centers	No-Tech Centers	No-Tech Centers
- Public Use	72	95.4	71	119.7
Community/ Meeting Room	Yes (2)	Yes (1-6+)	Yes (1-3)	Yes (1-6+)
Budget Data:				
Library Budget (FY 2014)	\$2,619,040 City=97.5%	\$3,333,216 City=Most \$	\$3,475,445 City=Most \$	\$3,190,978 City=Most \$
Library Cost per Resident	\$128.64	\$101.74	\$136.95	\$66.53
Total FTE Staff	20+8=28	37.2	29.8	44.5
FTE Staff per 1000 residents	1.37	1.08	1.17	.98

Table 7b
Highlights of the Comparative Analysis (National Communities)

DATA AND ANALYSES	MOUNTAIN BROOK	3-CITY AVERAGE	BIRMINGHAM (MICHIGAN)	DARIEN	LAKE FOREST
Baseline Data:					
2013 Estimated Population	20,359	25,377 20,196	36,046 (4 cities) 20,504 (B-Ham)	20,732 (2010)	19,352
Median Income	\$135,833	\$146,032	\$100,789	\$200,724	\$136,583
BA+	82.9%	76.4%	74.9%	79.1%	75.1%
Library Board (Role)	Appointed (Govern)	Both (Govern)	Elected (Govern)	Appointed (Govern)	Appointed (Govern)
Facilities:					
- # of Libraries	1	1	1 (2 buildings)	1	1
- Square Feet	39,000	38,325	40,174	42,000+	32,800
- SF/Resident	1.92	1.51	1.11	2.03	1.69
Library Data:					
Service Area	City	1 or 4 cities	Four Cities	Town	City
Weekly Hours	65 (61 Summer)	67-69	67	72-67 (Kids)	68
Patron Visits	218,776	420,061	322,942	424,766	512,476
Collection:					
- Total	131,976	158,604	176,000+	152,482	147,330
- Per Capita	6.48	6.25	4.89	7.35	7.60
- Printed	123,453	127,533	140,291	118,247	124,063
Circulation:					
- Total	477,568	611,697	666,701	710,757	457,632
- Per Capita	23.46	24.10	18.86	34.28	23.62
Technology:					
- Maker Space	Yes	No	No	Yes	Media Lab
- Public Use	72	71	55	127	31
Community/ Meeting Room	Yes (2)	Yes (1-3)	Yes (1)	Yes (3)	Yes
Budget Data:					
Library Budget (FY 2014)	\$2,619,040 City=97.5%	\$3,475,445 City=Most	\$2,994,770 City=66.5% Contracts=27.2%	3,483,239 City=78% Friends=\$700k	\$3,948,325 City=All
Library Cost per Resident	\$128.64	\$136.95	\$83.08 (4 cities)	\$168.01	\$203.78
Total FTE Staff	20+8=28	29.77	28.9	30.4	30.0
FTE Staff per 1000 residents	1.37	1.17	.80 (4 cities)	1.47	1.55

Table 7c
Highlights of the Comparative Analysis (Area Communities)

DATA AND ANALYSES	MOUNTAIN BROOK	3-CITY AVERAGE	HOMEWOOD	HOOVER	VESTAVIA HILLS
Baseline Data:					
2013 Estimated Population	20,359	47,965	25,750	84,126	34,018
Median Income	\$135,833	\$73,453	\$58,927	\$76,016	\$85,417
BA+	82.9%	61.3%	59.0%	56.0%	68.9%
Library Board (Role)	Appointed (Govern)	Appointed (Govern)	Appointed (Govern)	Appointed (Govern)	Appointed (Govern)
Facilities:					
- # of Libraries	1	1	1	1	1
- Square Feet	39,000	56,667	50,000	85,000	35,000
- SF/Resident	1.92	1.18	1.94	1.01	1.03
Library Data:					
Service Area	City	City	City	City	City
Weekly Hours	65	67.3	67	69	66
Annual Visits	218,776	480,811	467,645	589,420	385,370
Collection:					
- Total	131,976	155,750	94,000	274,887	98,364
- Per Capita	6.48	3.25	3.65	3.27	2.83
- Printed	123,453	125,117	69,624	221,972	83,756
Circulation:					
- Total	477,568	829,723	500,000	1,575,465	413,704
- Per Capita	23.46	17.29	19.87	18.73	12.16
Technology:					
- Maker Space	Yes	No	No	No	No
- Public Use	72	119.7	127	168	64
Community/ Meeting Room	Yes (2)	Yes	Yes	Yes + Café/Theater	Yes (6) + Rooftop
Budget Data:					
Library Budget (FY 2014)	\$2,619,040 City=97.5%	\$3,190,978 City=Most \$	\$2,257,568 City=Most \$	\$5,575,550 City=99.6%	\$1,739,817 City=Most \$
Cost/Resident	\$128.64	\$66.53	\$89.70	\$66.28	\$51.14
Total FTE Staff	20+8=28	44.5	36.0	75.0	22.5
FTE Staff per 1000 residents	1.37	.98	1.40	.89	.66

2.) Overview of Comparable Communities

Birmingham, Michigan

Community: The Baldwin Public Library serves Birmingham and three other communities by contract (Beverly Hills, Bloomfield Hills, and Bingham Farms). The communities are located just northwest of the City of Detroit and have a four-city estimated 2013 population of 36,046. Birmingham's estimated 2013 population is 20,504.

Governance: The Library is governed by six-person Library Board that is elected. The board uses a 501©(3), the "Baldwin Public Library Trust," to encourage giving.

Strategic Direction: The Library developed a Strategic Plan for 2011-2014 with these key elements:

- **Mission:** "The library enriches Birmingham and participating communities by providing opportunities and resources for individuals of all ages and backgrounds to learn, connect, and discover."
- **Long-Term Vision:** "The library will be an essential resource for the community and its first choice for accessing the world's knowledge."
- **Three-Year Vision:** The library wants to accomplish four things over the next three years: Balance the budget, maintain and improve the user experience in difficult economic times, strengthen existing community partnerships and develop new ones, and utilize technology to meet user needs and aid in the delivery of library services.
- **Core Values:** The library has defined eight core values, which are Intellectual Freedom, Equitable and Inclusive Access, Education and Learning, Innovation, Welcoming Environment, Integrity, Partnerships, and Commitment to Excellence.
- **Strategic Goals:** The Library developed six goals relating to Services & Programs, Marketing & Public Relations, Financial Stability, Personnel & Organization, Community Relations & Partnerships, and Facilities & Technology.

Budget: The FY 2014 budget of \$2,958,518 is funded by a special Library millage currently set at 1.1 mills. Contract communities contribute about \$800,000 to the overall revenue stream.

Staffing: The Director oversees a staff of 14 full-time employees (down from 26 due to the recession), plus part-time positions. The 2012 IMLS Survey shows a total of 28.9 FTE positions.

Operations: The library operates 67 hours per week and is closed 11 days a year (plus two early closing days). The collection exceeds 176,000 items with total circulation of 666,701 (18.86 per capita). The library had 322,042 visits in 2012.

Facility: The Library and the City are working on a major building program to renovate the old library and add new space nearby. The result will be a 56,600 square foot modern library at a cost of about \$26,000,000. This building increases library space by 16,426 square feet.

Darien, Connecticut

Community: The Darien Library serves the Town of Darien, which is located just north of Stamford and Greenwich along I-95 and the Long Island Sound. The community is a commuter stop for New York City. The 2010 population was 20,732 and the community is 98% built-out.

Governance: The Library is governed by a 18-person, self-perpetuating Library Board. The Friends of the Library is a major fundraiser (\$705,000 in FY 2013), similar to a combination of the EOL's Foundation and Friends.

Strategic Direction: The Library developed a Long-Range Plan in 2001. Core Assumptions at the time are:

- Libraries will continue to exist and prosper in a rapidly changing IT environment.
- The Darien Library will be a public/private partnership (Town and Friends).
- Financial resources from the Town and Friends are limited and will be allocated on the value the Library delivers to the community.
- The Darien Library will continue to lead in the intellectual, cultural, and technological future of our community.

The Vision of the library is to “inform, educate, entertain, and enrich our community. The Mission includes ten statements of purpose.

Budget: The FY 2014-2015 budget of \$3,483,239 is funded by a general millage levied by the Town, as well as by a significant level of community donations from 1,300 donors. Per the library budget report by the Representative Town Meeting, technology investment (include the 3M/Lyngsoe sorting system for returned items) has contributed to staffing efficiencies.

Staffing: The Library Director oversees a staff of 30.4 full-time equivalent positions, supplemented by volunteers.

Operations: The library operates 72 hours per week (Children's is open 67 hours per week) and is closed 8 days a year. As of June 30, 2013, the library's collection has 118,814 books and 152,482 total items (including three quad-copter drones assembled in an “Attack of the Drones” program). These items were circulated 710,757 times (or 34.28 per capita). Library visitors totaled 328,620 and program attendance was 46,477. 90% of residents have active library cards. 30% of users are non-residents.

As of FY 2012, Darien was first in the State of Connecticut in per capita circulation, computer logins, and collection turnover, as well as second in visits and reference queries answered.

Facility: The Library has expanded over the years, most recently into a new building in 2009 (\$26,000,000) with over 42,000 square feet. Space includes one large (100+ participants); one mid-size (22+ participants) conference/meeting rooms; and a Makerspace for adults and children.

Homewood, Alabama

Community: The Homewood Public Library a city of 25,167 (2013 US Census estimate) and surrounding areas. The library is a member of the Jefferson County Library Consortium.

Governance: The Library is governed by a six-person Library Board that is appointed by the City Council. The board is supported by the Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library.

Strategic Direction: Representatives of the board, community, and staff developed the library's Long Range Plan for 2011-2016.

- **Mission:** "...to bring people, information, and ideas together to enrich lives, build community, and inspire lifelong learning."
- **Service Responses:** The library has defined five Service Responses, which are Connect to the Online World, Encourage Literacy, Make Informed Decisions, Enrich Lives, and Visit a Comfortable Place. These ideas form the basis for various goals and objectives.
- **Strategic Goals:** The Library developed six goals:
 - Keep current with changing technology.
 - Be on the cutting edge as new services, products, and technologies become available.
 - Increase awareness and train the public in the use of online resources.
 - Develop age-specific programs that encourage literacy and the love of reading.
 - Provide access to a variety of information and/or answers.
 - Provide materials and services to enrich the lives of patrons.
 - Provide well-maintained and welcoming spaces that serve as a community hub.
 - Be an example for the community and other libraries as good stewards of energy resources.

Budget: The FY 2014 budget of \$2,257,568 is funded primarily by the City's general millage.

Staffing: The Library Director oversees a staff of 22 full-time employees and 29 part-time positions (about 36 FTE's). The City funded a "Salary Audit" in 2007-2008 (cost = \$15,000). Due to the national recession, recommendations have not yet been implemented.

Operations: The library operates 67 hours per week and is closed 18 days a year. The library serves 48,000 patrons per month (576,000 per year) and has a collection of 94,000 books (plus electronic media). Circulation totals over 500,000 items per year (or 19.87 per resident). Over 95% of materials are checked out via self-check machines. A LSTA grant enabled the library to install Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology to streamline the checkout process, inventory control, and turnaround time.

Facility: The Library occupies a 50,000 square foot building. Space includes two auditoriums (60 and 200 people); three mid-sized meeting rooms (40-100); and three small conference rooms (4-12), as well as Computer and Family Labs.

Hoover, Alabama

Community: The Hoover Public Library serves a fast-growing city of 84,126-population (2013 US Census estimate) in an area of 47.16 square miles. The City has a high percentage of high school (94.5%) and college graduates (56.0%), with a median household income of \$76,061 and low poverty (6.4%) and unemployment rate (3.8% in 2013).

Governance: The Library is governed by a five-person Library Board that is appointed by the City Council. The board is supported by the Friends of the Library, which operates a year-round bookstore during library hours.

Strategic Direction: The library's mission: "...to serve all citizens of Hoover by offering the services, resources, and facilities to fulfill their information, educational, cultural, and recreational needs and interests. The term 'citizens' encompasses individuals and groups of every age, education, philosophy, occupation, economic level, ethnic origin, and human condition."

Budget: The FY 2014 budget of \$5,575,550 (\$66.28 per capita) is funded primarily by a general millage levied by the City.

Staffing: The Library Director oversees a staff of 43 full-time employees and 64 part-time positions.

Operations: The library was founded in 1983 and operates 69 hours per week (with 15 closed days in 2013). The library had over 79,000 members and 589,420 visits in 2012.

In 2012, the library had a total collection of 274,887 books and other materials. Circulation totaled over 1,575,000 items per year (or 18.73 per resident), which is the fourth highest circulation in Alabama (the highest circulation rate in the JCLC).

Facility: The Library occupies a 85,000 square foot building. Space includes a Café, 250-seat Theater, and meeting rooms

Lake Forest, Illinois

Community: The Lake Forest serves the City of Lake Forest, with a 2013 estimated population of 19,375, and surrounding communities. 81% of residents are registered borrowers.

Governance: The Library is governed by a nine-person Library Board that is selected by the Caucus and appointed by the Mayor with approval of the City Council. The Board appoints the Library Director. The board is supported by the Friends of Lake Forest Library, a 501(c)(3) organization.

Strategic Direction: The mission of the library is “to make accessible to all residents of the city, as economically and effectively as possible, books and other information resources and services for the community...To fulfill this purpose, every reasonable effort will be made to furnish materials and services on a wide range of subjects.”

Budget: The FY 2014 budget of \$3,948,325 is funded by a general millage that covers almost all library expenditures. Reserve funds of 15% of the budget are set aside based on City recommendation.

Staffing: The Library Director oversees a staff of 20 full-time employees and 30 part-time positions. The part-time positions amount to 10 FTEs.

Operations: The library operates 68 hours per week and is closed 8 days a year. Sunday hours are eliminated during the summer months. Patron visits totaled 512,476.

For FY 2013, the collection totals 147,330 items (7.60 per capita) with circulation (excluding videos) of 457,632 (23.62 per capita). About 3% of the collection was weeded out in the fiscal year.

Facility: The Library operates out of a 32,800 square foot building constructed in 1931 and enhanced in 1978, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, and 2009. The building includes conference/meeting rooms and a Media Lab.

Vestavia Hills, Alabama

Community: The Vestavia Hills Public Library (“The Library in the Forest”) was founded in 1969 and serves a city of 34,018-population (2013 US Census estimate) in an area of 19.41 square miles. The City has a high percentage of high school (97.7%) and college graduates (68.9%), with a median household income of \$85,417 and a low poverty rate (4.1%).

Governance: The Library is governed by a xxx-person Library Board that is appointed by the City Council. The board is supported by the Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library, who operate a bookstore three or six hours per day. PAL (People Affecting Library Success), a group similar to the Junior Women’s Committee of 100 in Mountain Book, supports the Children’s Department.

Strategic Direction: Elements of the Strategic Plan include:

- **Mission:** “...be a leader in the community’s cultural, intellectual, economic, and environmental stewardship by offering access for all ages to a diverse and relevant collection of materials, provided in an environmentally and architecturally sensitive ‘green’ space. The library will achieve its mission by being both a provider and a partner in the Vestavia Hills Community.”
- **Strategic Goals:** The Library’s website identified eleven guiding principles in being a provider and partner, as stated in the mission, as well as supplemental goals.

Budget: The FY 2014 budget of \$1,739,817 (\$51.14 per capita) is funded primarily by a general millage levied by the City.

Staffing: The Library Director oversees a staff of 16 full-time, 12 part-time, and two seasonal (summer) positions, which amount to 22.5 FTEs.

Operations: The library operates 66 hours per week (with ?? closed days in 2013). The library had 335,750 in-person visits.

Per the recent ETC Citizens Survey, the Library (after Public Safety and Schools) is the third highest rated public service with 91% most satisfied (scores of 4 and 5 on a 5-point scale).

In 2012-2013, the library had a total collection of 98,364 books and other materials. Circulation totaled 413,704 items per year (or 12.16 per resident).

Facility: The Library occupies a new 35,000 square foot building, which opened in 2010 as a result of a building campaign. The library is seen as a “community center” and space includes seven meeting rooms, including the rooftop garden, with space for 12-20, 40-50, and 100-150 people.

F. EMPLOYEE SURVEYS

Appendix 1 to the Library Report provides a complete analysis of employee survey results. This chapter of the report provides key findings and associated recommendations.

Overview of the Surveys

To gather employee data and understand employee perceptions, we applied five Mercer Group surveys, as well as the Management Philosophy Profile (MPP) (see later in the report); and an Organizational/Operational Questionnaire (see later in the report). The five employee surveys are:

- Values
- Organizational Climate
- GRIPES or Management Practices
- Resources
- Personnel Practices

The detailed results of the employee surveys issued to Library employees are provided in Exhibits 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, and 1E in Appendix 1 and the master survey documents are provided as Exhibits 2 (surveys), 3 (MPP), and 4 (questionnaire) in the Appendix.

In total, we processed thirty-five completed responses from Library employees, which is close to a 100% response rate (one department did not return a completed survey). The **data in the survey reports are reported by the following three Employee Types** (the first group below) and **five Organizational Categories** (the second group):

- All EOL Employees (35)
- 001 EOL Supervisors (5)
- 002 EOL Non-Supervisors (30)

- 100 Circulation (11)
- 200 Technical Services (5)
- 300 Children (10)
- 400 Adult (5)
- 500 Administration (4)

Mercer's Minimum and High Performance Standards, overall scores for the Library, and overall scores for recent Mercer clients, are shown on Table 8 that follows for GRIPES, Resources, Personnel Practices, and the OCS.

Although overall results are excellent, **lower scores for individual factors (like Career Opportunities, Compensation & Benefits, and Staffing) or organizational categories and employee types** may indicate issues and challenges to address as noted in the following pages, Appendix 1, and later chapters of the report.

Table 8
Employee Survey Scores for Mountain Brook & Recent Mercer Clients

CLIENT	GRIPES	RESOURCES	PERSONNEL PRACTICES	ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE SURVEY
<u>Mercer Standard</u> High Performance Minimum Problematic	4.0=Good 3.0=Adequate Under 2.5	4.0=Good 3.0=Adequate Under 2.5	4.0=Good 3.0=Adequate Under 2.5	60% Agree/<30% Disagree 50% Agree/<40% Disagree <50% Agree/40% Disagree
<u>Mtn. Brook EOL</u> 2013-2014 21,000-population Suburban Higher income	3.31 74.0%	4.23	3.95	73.14% Agree 13.43% Undecided 13.43% Disagree
<u>Mtn Brook CITY</u> 2003 Study	2.84 76%	3.36	2.98	58.55% Agree 15.66% Undecided 25.78% Disagree
<u>Mtn Brook DPW</u> 2011 Study	3.46 71.9%	4.05	3.36	66.29% Agree 10.91% Undecided 22.81% Disagree
<u>Mtn Brook P&R</u> 2013 Study	3.12 80%	3.75	3.42	67.76% Agree 18.67% Undecided 13.57% Disagree
<u>Colorado City</u> Library Staff 12,000-population Suburban Higher Income	3.46 83%	3.48	3.73	72.92% Agree 11.25% Undecided 15.83% Disagree
<u>Texas City</u> Library Staff 53,000-population Urban/Suburban Mixed income	Not Used	3.10	2.34	44.17% Agree 12.92% Undecided 42.92% Disagree

Results of the Surveys

Values Survey

This survey asked Library employees **five Yes-No questions about the status and application of organizational values:**

- **Values Statement:** 14 of 32 respondents indicated a formal values statement is in place.
- **Communication of the Statement:** 12 of 33 respondents indicated that values are communicated to employees or posted.
- **Employee Input:** 3 of 29 respondents indicated that values are developed with employee input. Values seem to have been created by the Library Director and the HR Consultant.
- **Relationship of Library and Department Values:** 10 of 26 respondents indicated that department values are related to Library values...or the City's values.
- **Values Lived Day-to-Day:** Despite earlier scores, 29 of 32 Library employees indicated a values system is lived out day-to-day.

Based on the use of the Values Survey in other clients, Mercer likes to see that Yes scores are twice the No scores. The Library only met this standard on the last Values question.

The survey also asked employees to list values in place in the department, with a list of sample values provided from other Mercer clients. **The values most frequently identified across the department** are listed below:

- Integrity (and Honesty)
- Respect (and Courtesy)
- Teamwork
- Pride
- Fun
- Positive Attitude
- Best Possible Service
- Service to Patrons
- Relationships with Patrons
- Encourage the Love of Reading and Learning
- Provide Up-to-Date Reference and Literary Materials
- Quick and Efficient, but Correct, Solutions to Situations
- Efficient Use of Staff and Resources

It is very interesting that although a high percentage of EOL staff seems to indicate they don't know of a formal Values Statement, most of the values listed above are very similar to the values in the EOL Employee Handbook. EOL, however, recently updated the values via an all-employee survey.

Organizational Climate Survey (OCS)

The OCS measures the state of the organization's culture, internal relationships, and employee attitudes toward work based on sixty indicators or statements grouped into twelve sub-scales. The twelve sub-scales are:

- Career Opportunities
- Compensation and Benefits
- Employee Involvement
- Information and Communications
- Management Competence
- Productivity and Service
- Quality Emphasis
- Receptivity to Change
- Understanding of Organizational Goals
- Work Group Problem Solving (among managers and supervisors)
- Work Group Coordination and Cooperation (among employees)
- Working Conditions

This survey is scored on a percentage for Strongly Agree + Agree, Undecided, and Strongly Disagree + Disagree choices. Based on the application of the OCS in over 100 other clients, we have developed the following **Mercer Standards (or Goals)**:

- **High Performance:** Agree score of at least 60% with a Disagree score under 30%
- **Minimum:** Agree score of at least 50% with a Disagree score under 40%
- **Problematic Scores:** Agree scores below 50% and Disagree scores at or above 40%

The department's overall average of 73.14% Agree, 13.43% Undecided, and 13.43% Disagree meets our High Performance Standard.

Only the Career Opportunities (52.57% Agree) and Compensation & Benefits (49.71% Agree) subscales have overall scores below 60% Agree, which are driven by lower Non-Supervisor scores (both under 50% Agree).

Overall Supervisor scores (74.67% Agree) are very similar to Non-Supervisor scores (72.89% Agree). Normally we see a spread between 10% and 20%, so Library non-supervisors are much more positive than non-supervising employees in other agencies.

GRIPES Survey

This survey measures the adequacy of sixteen management practices, grouped into six categories:

- **G**rowth (personal development and training,
- **R**espect and recognition,
- **I**nformation,
- **P**otential tapped,
- **E**mpowerment, and
- **S**upport...hence the acronym GRIPES.

Most factors are scored on a five-point scale with 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Average/Adequate, 4=Good, and 5=Excellent, with Potential scored as a percentage. Based on the survey's application in over 50 other clients, **Mercer's Standards (or Goals)** for this survey are:

- **High Performance:** 4.0=Good or 70% Potential
- **Minimum:** 3.0=Adequate or 60% Potential
- **Problematic:** Approaching (Under 2.5) or under 2.0=Fair and under 60% Potential

The department's overall GRIPES score is a solid 3.31, which exceeds our Minimum Standard. Potential is a robust 74%, which meets our High Performance Standard.

A few factors, however, had lower scores, either for the department as a whole or for a division or section:

- **Growth and Training Hours:** Non-Supervisors (2.93 and 2.86) rate these factors somewhat low. Low scores for employee development and the adequacy of training hours is a recurring issue in studies of public sector organizations. Training, particularly if travel is required, often is the first line item cut in hard times.
- **Respect by Appointed and Elected Officials:** Supervisors rate Respect from the City Council low (1.60) and Non-Supervisors rate both factors low (2.38 for the Library Board and 2.00 for the City Council). Mercer is surprised by the low score for the Library Board. The low score for the City Council is more understandable as employees have very limited interaction with City Hall officials (also see Support).
- **Support:** Both Supervisor (2.25) and Non-Supervisor (2.87) ratings for support from the City Council and City Manager are low.
- **Supervisors vs. Non-Supervisors:** Supervisors (4.39) have a much higher overall score than Non-Supervisors (3.23). Although some difference is typical, a 1.16 difference is unusual.

Resources Survey

This survey measures the adequacy of a variety of resources provided through the budget. The nine factors rated by employees are:

- Staffing
- Facility
- Vehicles
- Tools
- Gear
- Office Equipment
- Computers
- Materials
- Other Resources (such as training funds and contracts)

This survey is scored on a scale of 1 (Poor), 2 (Fair), 3 (Adequate), 4 (Good), and 5 (Excellent). Based on the application of the Resources Survey in over 50 other clients, we have developed the following **Mercer Standards (or Goals)**:

- **High Performance:** 4.0=Good
- **Minimum:** 3.0=Average/Adequate
- **Problematic:** Approaching (under 2.5) or below 2.0 (Fair)

The Department's overall score is 4.23, which exceeds our High Performance Standard. Significantly, the Collection (4.60 overall) had a very high score. Supervisors rated the collection as Excellent (5.0).

Only one score (Staffing by Supervisors at 2.80) was below 3.0, our minimum standard:

Supervisors (4.13) and Non-Supervisors (4.24) had very similar scores. It's unusual for Non-Supervisors to have the higher overall score.

Personnel Practices

This survey measures the effectiveness of personnel administration/human resource management functions and activities. The **nine factors** rated by employees are:

- Hiring Process
- Career Ladders
- Training
- Grievances (by employees)
- Discipline (by the city)
- Performance Evaluations
- Pay
- Benefits
- Morale

This survey also is scored on a scale of **1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Average/Adequate, 4=Good, and 5=Excellent**. Note that scores on this survey tend to be ½ to 1 point lower than scores on the Resources Survey. Based on the application of the Personnel Administration Survey in over 50 other clients, Mercer has developed the following **standards/goals**:

- **High Performance:** 4.0=Good
- **Minimum:** 3.0=Average/Adequate
- **Problematic:** Approaching (under 2.5) or below 2.0 (Fair)

The department's overall score (3.95) is just below our High Performance Standard. Unlike other clients, the Personnel Practices score is only .28 lower than the Resources score.

Again, **Supervisors rate one factor (Performance Evaluations at 2.50) lower than 3.0, our Minimum Standard.**

Again, **Non-Supervisors (3.96) have a slightly higher score than Supervisors (3.93) because of the Supervisors' low score on Performance Evaluations.**

Recommendations

1. Survey Issues and Opportunities to Resolve: The following key issues need to be reviewed and resolved by the Library management team then reported to the Library Board. A starting point is to review survey these issues in department staff meetings then in a management team meeting.

- **Organizational Values:** The values in the Employee Handbook, plus others listed in Mercer's Values Survey, need to be reviewed and updated with staff support then posted in staff offices and updated in the handbook. We understand the Director has started to take action on this recommendation.
- **Organizational Climate:** Lower scores on Career Opportunities in smaller agencies are common, particularly where there are different technical skill requirements within units of the agency (e.g., Circulation and Children's).

The lower OCS score for Compensation & Benefits is interesting as these factors individually received high scores on the Personnel Practices survey (4.07 for Pay and 4.49 for Benefits). Supervisors and Non-Supervisors had similar scores on both surveys with the OCS scores somewhat low and Personnel Practices pretty high. These mixed messages need to be sorted out!

In our interviews, we learned that EOL does not have a formal Classification and Compensation Plan or an up-to-date Pay/Salary Plan. Maybe the lack of these common HR policies explains the lower OCS scores?

- **GRIPES/Management Practices:** The Library Director and Library Board should review the reasons for lower scores on Respect by and Support from the Library Board and City Council, particularly for Non-Supervisors. Lack of contact often explains these low scores, which are common across our clients.

In addition, they should review why Non-Supervisors give somewhat low scores for Respect by Other Departments and by the Library Director. Perhaps related to front-line and back-room roles and/or not enough contact?

The Library Director and management team also should review the reasons for lower scores for Growth and Training Hours, particularly for Non-Supervisors.

- **Resources:** Although most Resources scores are excellent, Supervisors give a lower score for Staffing. In many interviews, management and full-time staff advocated for additional staff. See our discussion of Staffing levels in Chapters III (library-level) and IV (department-level) of the report.
- **Personnel Practices:** The Library Director and the management team should review lower scores for Performance Evaluation. See our discussion of Human Resource Management issues in Chapter III of the report.

2. **Future Surveys:** We recommend that our clients repeat the Employee Surveys about 24 months after our report is delivered to measure progress in making improvements and implementing changes identified in the surveys.

G. MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY PROFILE

Overview

The **Management Philosophy Profile (MPP)** was completed by six supervisory personnel, including the Director, the Information Technology Manager, and four department heads. Because the management team is relatively small, we grouped all managers, including the director, into a single reporting group. A **master copy of the MPP is provided as Exhibit 6 in Chapter VI** of the report.

We asked these managers to **rate themselves** on twelve indicators of management philosophy, which are clustered into three major categories and at two points in time (**Today** and a future **Target**). Each indicator allows the manager to select from a **five-step range of scoring choices between two extremes** (one side of the range identified as 1 and the other as 5, with grades 2, 3, and 4 in between):

➤ **Personality:**

- Type 1=Introvert to 5=Extrovert
- Risk-Taking 1=None to 5=Lots
- Initiative 1=Very Reactive to 5=Very Proactive
- Solutions 1=Mostly Feelings to 5=Mostly Analysis

➤ **Work Focus:**

- People 1=Very Internal to 5=Very External
- Work 1=Mostly Details to 5=Mostly Macro
- Resources 1=Mostly Things to 5=Mostly People
- Time 1=All in the Past to 5=The Past to a Year+

➤ **Relationships:**

- Status 1=Mostly a Boss to 5=Mostly Empowering
- Delegation 1=Very Central to 5=Mostly Broadly Delegated
- Decision 1=Mostly Closed to 5=Mostly Open
- Communications 1=Very Formal to 5=Very Informal

Basically, the lower the score the closer one is to the first of the two Management Philosophy extremes and the higher the score the closer one is to the second extreme. So, someone scoring 1 or 2 on Personality-Type would be very or somewhat Introverted and someone scoring 4 or 5 would be somewhat or very Extroverted.

Mercer reviewed each supervisor's responses and proposed an optimal score for each of the twelve criteria. These scores will be shared privately with each supervisor and are aggregated for the six-person management team as a whole in the report. For EOL, the Mercer

recommendation for the group is our estimate of the optimal score for a group with one Level 1 director and five Level 2 managers. Obviously, an art, not a science!

Findings

The results of the MPP are compiled on Table 9 that follows. At the bottom of Table 9, we provide three indexes that are explained below:

- **Mercer Standards Compliance Index:** Measures the degree to which the Today and Target scores of managers comply with Mercer's Standard Score for their level of position.
 - **High Compliance:** Managers are within .5 of the Mercer Standard on 10 to 12 of the twelve factors. Above Expectation.
 - **Moderate Compliance:** Managers are within .5 of the Mercer Standard on 7 to 9 of the twelve factors. At Expectation.
 - **Low Compliance:** Managers are within .5 of the Mercer Standard on fewer than 7 of the twelve factors. Below Expectation.

- **Group Transition Index:** Measures the amount of change that managers say they need to make in order to transition from their Today to their Target scores. Criteria measured in this index include the number of managers with changes, numbers of factors with changes, the total value of changes (ignoring +/-), and the net overall change (+/-).
 - **Low Transition:** A small number of Managers in the group indicate only a small number (1-2) of factors to be changed and/or a high numerical (2 or more points) change for only a few factors. Above Expectation.
 - **Moderate Transition:** More Managers in the group indicate a moderate number (3-4) of factors to be changed and/or high numerical (2 or more points) change for more factors. At Expectation.
 - **High Transition:** A large number of Managers in the group indicate a high number (>5) of factors to be changed and/or a high numerical change (2 or more points) for several factors. Below Expectation.

- **Group Cohesiveness Index:** Measures the cohesiveness of the group's Management Philosophy by the number and percentage of indicators having more than a 1-point (e.g., a score of 2 vs. 4 or 5) difference among the scores of the group of managers.
 - **High Cohesiveness:** Most managers are close to each other in their ratings of individual factors with only a few (1-2) scores varying more than 1-point up or down. Above Expectation.
 - **Moderate Cohesiveness:** Many managers are close to each other in their ratings of individual factors with some (3-4) scores varying more than 1-point up or down. At Expectation.
 - **Low Cohesiveness:** Only some managers are close to each other in their rating of individual factors with several (>5) scores varying more than 1-point up or down. Below Expectation.

Table 9
Results of the Management Philosophy Profile for EOL

Category and Indicator	Scoring is a five-step scale with low to high choices	TODAY (Ave for 6)	TARGET (Ave for 6)	MERCER (L1+L2 Mix)
<u>Personality</u>				
Type	1=introvert to 5=extrovert	4.0	4.3	3.75
Risk-taking	1=low to 5=high	3.5	4.0	3.75
Initiative	1=reactive to 5=proactive	4.0	4.3	4.00
Solutions	1=feelings to 5=analysis	3.8	3.8	3.75
<u>Work Focus</u>				
People	1=internal to 5=external	3.3	3.8	3.50
Work	1=details to 5=macro	3.3	3.3	3.25
Resources	1=things to 5=people	3.3	3.8	3.25
Time	1=past to 5=future	3.3	4.8	4.50
<u>Relationships</u>				
Status	1=boss to 5=empowering	4.2	4.2	4.00
Delegation	1=central to 5=decentralized	3.2	4.0	3.75
Decisions	1=closed to 5=open process	4.5	4.2	3.75
Communications	1=formal to 5=informal	3.0	3.3	3.75
MERCER STANDARDS COMPLIANCE INDEX	Measures the number of factors on which the group's Target score is within .5 points of the Mercer Standard	<u>Above Expectation</u> 10-12 meet Mercer Goal	<u>At or Near Expectation</u> 7 to 9 meet Mercer Goal	<u>Below Expectation</u> Under 7 meet Mercer Goal
EOL Assessment-Compliance:	Positive moves from Today to Target	Today = 8 At/Near	Target = 11 Above	Type at 4.3 is OK
GROUP TRANSITION INDEX	Measures the amount of change needed to move from the Today to the Target by the number of managers with changes, number of factors changing, range of change, and average change (+/-)	<u>Above Expectation</u> 25% managers 1-2 factors -5 to +5 +/-3.5 average	<u>At or Near Expectation</u> 50% managers 3-4 factors -10 or +10 +/-6.5 average	<u>Below Expectation</u> 75% managers 5+ factors -15 or +15 +/-9.5 average
EOL Assessment-Transition:	All MGRs changed scores Ave # scores changed = 6.6 Ave Gross Change = 7.6 Ave Net Change = +2.4	Below Expectation	Surprising # of changes for experienced managers	
GROUP COHESIVENESS INDEX	Measures the cohesiveness of the group's Management Philosophy by the number and percentage of indicators having more than a 1-point difference among the Target scores of the managers	<u>Above Expectation</u> 1-3 factors vary by >1 point	<u>At or Near Expectation</u> 4-6 factors vary by >1 point	<u>Below Expectation</u> 7-12 factors vary by >1 point
EOL Assessment-Cohesiveness:	Improving from Today to Target	Today = 10/12 Below	Target = 6/12 At Or Near	

Recommendations

3. Management Philosophy: Although, the average Target scores are in high compliance with Mercer Goals, the **need for some re-examination in the library's overall management philosophy** are evident from two indexes:

- **Transition:** The MPP caused these six senior, experienced managers to do a lot of rethinking as reflected in the number of changes from Today to Target scores (an average of 6.6 changes per manager out of 12 factors scored). Mercer expected this group of managers would already have settled into a fairly workable approach to managing their subordinates as all are in mid-career...at least.

Nevertheless, the Target scores are very solid compared to Mercer's standards. 11 of 12 Target scores are within .5 points of the Mercer standard and the other score for Personality-Type is fine. The MPP exercise, therefore, appears to have produced some fruit in terms of managers thinking about how they manage.

- **Cohesiveness:** Ideally, the scores would show that managers not only have Target scores close to the Mercer standard, but also close (no more than one point difference) to each other.

For EOL, the scores showed at least one instance, and often two, of group members having MPP scores two points apart (e.g., 3 and 5, 2 and 4) for ten Today scores and six Target scores.

Some of these instances are explained by the obvious two sub-groupings of EOL managers:

- ✓ Patron-centered (Director, Adult, and Children)
- ✓ Technical Support (IT, Technical Services, Circulation)

In addition, there are subtle signs in employee interviews (words like "inconsistent" and "favorite") that some managers need to rethink how they work with their employees individually and as a group. This issue does not appear to relate to any differences in managing full-time and part-time employees.

Mercer will review these issues with the Library Director and the five other managers during our review of the Updated Draft Report and lead them through an exercise to enhance cohesion.

4. Future Survey: We recommend that our clients repeat the Management Philosophy Profile about 24 months after our report is delivered to measure progress in implementing improvements and changes identified in the surveys.

III. LIBRARY ASSESSMENT

This chapter of the report presents Mercer’s Overall Assessment of the Emmet O’Neal Library, as well as library-wide findings, analyses, and recommendations related to the issues within the six categories of our *50 Management Issues for Organizational Improvement*:

- **Governance:** Legal structure, board operations, staff support
- **Strategic Direction:** Mission, vision, values, strategies, goals & objectives, performance indicators
- **Service Delivery Structure:** In-house, collaborative, and contract operations
- **Management:** Organization plan, management roles, and management practices
- **Operations Management:** Planning, scheduling, organizing, and supervising work
- **Resource Management:** Budget and Finance, Facilities, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Materials Management

Chapter IV, Department Assessments, provides findings, analyses, and recommendations for department-level strategic direction, organization and staffing, and operations management topics and issues.

A. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Mercer Group, including our library consultant (an active library director), is very impressed with the services and staff at the Emmet O’Neal library. We believe EOL is meeting its mission “to provide the highest quality of library and information services for all the people of our community.”

Clearly, the library provides a very high level of service to city residents and other library patrons as confirmed by the ETC Institute’s recent citizen survey. 98% of survey respondents said they are very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of library services, a rating much higher than libraries in 52 other ETC communities, as well as higher than any other city department.

The library is not only effective in delivering services and meeting community needs, but also is loved as a library and as a community gathering place.

Mercer believes EOL is exemplary in terms of:

- Leadership from the Library Board and Library Director
- Community support, including the Friends, Foundation, and Junior Women's Committee
- Value to the community as a center of community life
- Management (the five department heads)
- Staff (full-time and part-time)
- The collection and collection development funding
- Programs through the Adult and Children's Departments
- Library facility

Leadership and community support from city residents, primarily the Library Board, but also the Friends, Foundation, and Junior Women's Committee, reflects a strong commitment to the library and to the community of Mountain Brook.

The Library Board is highly-qualified and experienced, and puts in the work to make the library great. In addition, board members have a very constructive relationship with the library's director, management team, and staff.

Similarly, library support organizations are committed to creating a wonderful facility, raising revenues above and beyond the city contribution, and supporting programs, particularly for kids. EOL is fortunate to have three major support organizations, where many libraries only have one or two:

- The Foundation: Supports major fund-raising efforts, such as the library building.
- The Friends: Through its book sale and other activities provide supplemental income to enhance the collection.
- Junior Women's Committee: Provides hands-on support to children's programs and activities.

The EOL management team and employees, including part-time employees, are committed to meeting the expectations of city and library officials and of Mountain Brook residents and other library users...and do meet these expectations. Across-the-board, staff is knowledgeable, hard-working, and professional, with a very high commitment to customer service and satisfaction.

The collection is both diverse and extensive...and evolving in concert with patron interests and trends in library services for more electronic information and sharable media.

The library facility is high-quality with adequate space (mostly) for the collection and patron visits. The library space includes a large community gathering place, the board meeting room, and study rooms/areas for students, making EOL the place to be for both events and quiet times. The new Makers Space will enhance the library's role as a student and business center.

Changes and improvements suggested in the Mercer report, therefore, represent a fine-tuning of an organization that already is exemplary.

B. GOVERNANCE

1.) Legal Structure

Findings

The **Emmet O’Neal Library is governed by the Library Board**, which is authorized and empowered under Chapter 90, Free Public Libraries, of the Alabama Code and under Sections 2-270 thru 272 of the City Code of Ordinances. Language used in the state and city codes is very similar, with the city code for the most part confirming and referencing key elements of the state law (e.g., number of members and terms of office).

In summary, these State and City code sections indicate:

- Municipalities may establish and maintain or aid in establishing and maintaining free public libraries either separately or in connection with public schools.
- The government and supervision of such libraries shall be vested in a Library Board consisting of five members who shall be appointed by the governing board of the municipality. The terms of all appointments shall be four years.
- The Library Board in a municipality under 65,000 shall have full power and authority to:
 - 1) Control the expenditure of all funds received or appropriated
 - 2) Erect or rent buildings
 - 3) Purchase books and equipment
 - 4) Provide a system of libraries services...
 - 5) Elect a librarian and other employees
 - 6) Manage and control the library to carry out the intent and purpose of Chapter 90
 - 7) (Keep) a careful and complete record and set of books...
- The Library Board may contract with another library board to create a joint library service

Recommendations

- 5. Legal Structure:** No changes recommended as the EOL Board is well structured.

2.) Library Board Operations

Findings

The Emmet O’Neal Library Board developed Bylaws as of August 24, 2010, to codify its duties and responsibilities, membership, officers, the Library Director’s role, meetings, committees, and other matters. Board officers per the bylaws include the President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. A Budget and Finance Committee is referenced in the bylaws.

Mercer attended several board meetings and interviewed all board members, as well as the City Council liaison, City Manager, the Library Director, Library department directors, and several key library stakeholders (Foundation Chair, Friends Chair, Women’s Committee of 100). Relating to governance, we learned:

- The board, whose members are appointed by the City Council, is seen and acts as the governing body for the library. The Board President and other members have worked on improving communications with the City Council, with significant success. In addition, some board members feel that the community, and perhaps City Council members, may not have a full appreciation for the value of the library. So, communications remain a future challenge for the board, Library Director, and library staff.
- The President presides at meetings and the Treasurer countersigns all check requests submitted to the City. Certain expenditures (e.g., long-term contractual agreements) are approved by the City Council.
- The board is composed of high-level, experienced people with a strong commitment to library services. Members include people who grew up in Mountain Brook and have backgrounds in the law, banking, and other fields of value to board membership.
- The board members say they work well together to develop policies, rules, and regulations and to identify future needs for the community. A City Council member is assigned as a liaison to the board.
- The Board, with the assistance of the Director and senior staff, has created a mission statement and goals, which match the goals in the 2012-2017 Plan of Service for the library. The library, however, lacks a long-term Vision for library services.
- The Library Director and department heads do a good job of briefing the board on plans, activities, and needs. A written Monthly Report is presented and reviewed at each board meeting.
- Board Members are actively involved in the work of the library and are regular users of library services. In addition to attending regular board meeting and making decisions on various action items, some Board members play active role in library management functions (see above for the Treasurer’s role).

Recommendations

6. Library Board Operations:

- a) **Visioning:** We encourage the Board to work with the Director and senior staff to develop a long-term vision for library services in the City. In the Strategic Direction section of Chapter III, we will identify and process for identifying long-term needs and opportunities.
- b) **Communications:** We also encourage the Board to work with the Director and senior staff to develop a communication plan focused on the value of the library to the community, which is more than communicating programs and services. The plan could include periodic presentations to the City Council, who funds the library; community stakeholders; and the community through local media. The newspaper article on the library's roles as a safe haven in last winter's storm is an excellent example of this type of communication.
- c) **Succession Planning:** The Library Director's time with the library will end at some not-so-far-away time. The Board needs to develop a succession plan that considers:
- ✓ What is the current director's potential retirement timeline?
 - ✓ How might a future director be different than the current, long-serving director as the needs and challenges facing the library change?
 - ✓ Will the library seek internal candidates only or external candidates as well?
 - ✓ How can the current director develop potential internal candidates to foster their competitive position?

3. Library Support Groups

Findings

The Emmet O’Neal Library is supported by three organizations:

- **Friends of the Library:** This group of over 700 individuals and families that support the enrichment of the library through programs making the library more exciting and a fun place to visit. Anyone donating \$25 or more is a Friend. The Friends are self-governing and control independently-maintained financial resources for the good of the Library.

The Friends major activities are the annual book sale and preview party in February of each year. A Volunteers Committee meets quarterly to organize the book sale and organize other volunteer opportunities, like shelving books. Volunteers collect, organize, shelve, and price books year-round. The book sale produces \$25,000 to \$30,000 annually for the library’s Children’s, Youth, and Adult programs.

A Young Friends group was formed in September 2013 with over 25 members, many of whom are young professionals. A Teen Board supports programs and activities for that age group.

- **Library Foundation:** The Mountain Brook Library Foundation was formed in 1993 to provide a future source of income for the Library. The Foundation is separate from the Friends and also is self-governing via a Board of Trustees.

The Foundation was formed for major fundraising efforts to benefit the Library, including over \$8 million in public and private support for the new library building opened in 2001 and expansion of the parking lot more recently.

- **Junior Women’s Committee of 100:** This volunteer organization focuses on support to the Children’s Department. The committee is a major source of volunteers for programs, craft supplies, and the annual Spring Carnival, which raised almost \$50,000 in 2013.

Recommendations

- 7. Library Support Groups:** EOL is blessed to have three active groups supporting library programs. In turn, leaders of these groups praise library management and staff for support provided to these groups.

Key future needs for each group are recruitment of new members (who will be future leaders) and the development of additional fund raising activities to support ongoing operations.

In addition, space issues to be discussed later in this chapter (Section F2, Facilities) may impact the Friends of the Library, which uses significant space in the basement.

C. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1.) Mercer Model for Strategic Planning

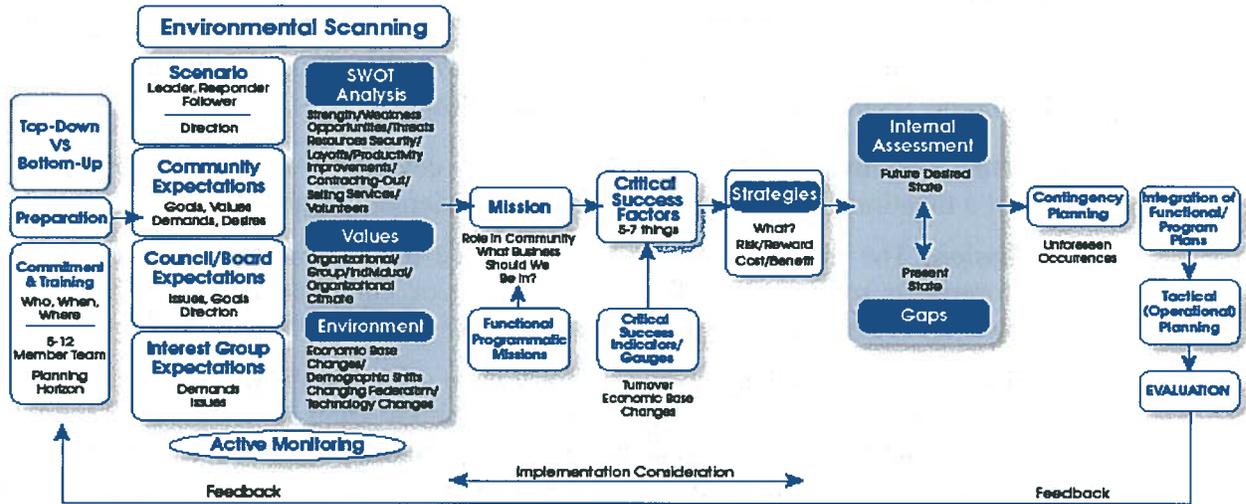
Figure 1 on the following page outlines the **Mercer Model for Strategic Planning in the Public Sector** based on our experience and on Jim Mercer's 1991 book, Strategic Planning for Public Managers.

Our model includes these key steps and processes:

- **Preparation:** Define an Approach to planning (Top-Down or Bottom-Up?), develop Commitment, provide Training, create a Steering Committee, and define the Planning Horizon.
- **Environmental Scanning:** Compile Community, City Council, City/Agency staff, stakeholder, and interest group expectations (goals, demands, desires); prepare a SWOT Analysis; identify Shared Values and Guiding Principles, analyze the Organizational Climate; and define Environmental Factors affecting operations.
- **Missions:** Define missions at the Governmental/Agency, Function (of multiple departments), Department, and Programmatic levels. Answer the questions, "What businesses we should be in?"
- **Critical Success Factors:** Identify 5 to 7 things that define success. These factors could include high-level goals to be accomplished.
- **Critical Success Indicators/Gauges:** Measure such things as positive changes, improved efficiency, reduced turnover, and enhanced citizen satisfaction. Also called Key Performance Indicators.
- **Strategies:** Decide where to go (Vision), what to do (Activities and Programs), risks and rewards, costs and benefits, and goals and objectives.
- **Internal and Gap Assessments:** Define a future desired state and compare it to the present.
- **Contingency Planning:** Provide options and plans to respond to unforeseen occurrences (Risk Assessment and Plan).
- **Integration of Functional and Tactical Plans:** Align departments, divisions, programs, grants, and the like to the overall community expectations, vision, values, mission, and strategies.
- **Evaluation and Feedback:** Close the loop so the strategic plan can be updated and improved periodically based on the experience of all parties involved.

**Figure
1**

THE MERCER GROUP
Local Government Strategic Planning Model



A key challenge in creating or updating Strategic and Functional Business Plans is the extent to which several planning initiatives are in place and are aligned:

- Vision Statements looking out 10 to 20 years.
- Statement of Core Values (or Guiding Principles).
- Organization-wide strategies based on Environmental Scanning and the SWOT Assessment.
- Mission statements (organization-wide and for departments)
- Operational and Tactical plans (for departments, divisions/sections, units/crews, and employees), which includes goals, objectives, and contingency plans.
- Financial plans (including annual budgets, long-term capital improvement plans, and enterprise plans).
- Functional, program, and/or process plans (may be cross-departmental).

2.) Library's Strategic Direction

Findings

- **Strategic Planning Process:** The Library has a strategic planning process centered on the *Five-Year Plan of Service* required by the State (see **Exhibit 4**). The latest plan is prepared for 2012 through 2017 and includes goals and objectives as explained below. The Library also has developed a *2014-2017 Technology Plan* (see **Exhibit 5** and Section G6, Information Technology, of this chapter that follows).
- **Functional Business Plan:** The Library has developed most, but not all, key elements of a functional business plan as defined by Mercer in Table 1.

- **Mission:** The library's mission is "to provide the highest quality of library and information services for all the people of our community." What's lacking, however, is a reference to its role as a gathering place for the community.
- **Vision:** Neither the City nor the Library have a formal Vision Statement looking out ten to twenty years. Notwithstanding, both seem to fully understand the strategic library services and outcomes expected by citizens, elected officials, schools, and other stakeholders at the present time. Key elements of that vision are operation of a first class library, as well as outstanding programs for adults and children. Longer term needs of the community are not as well defined, as noted by staff in their call for a citizen needs assessment.

In addition, the Library is envisioned as the gathering place for the community, both inside the library building and around the library property, including the adjoining privately-owned green space across from the main entrance. That open space is used for several community events each year, but is disconnected from the library itself by a two-lane road and parking spaces.

- **Values:** The City has defined six shared values (a/k/a guiding principles): Integrity, Safety, Education, Community, Stewardship, and Beauty. The Library's *Five-Year Plan of Service* does not include a set of organizational values, but the *EOL Personnel Policy* does, which are:
 - 1.) Honesty and integrity
 - 2.) Respect, compassion, and courtesy for all persons, including fellow employees
 - 3.) Highest level of service and accountability
 - 4.) Pursuit of excellence
 - 5.) Helpful and caring attitude
 - 6.) Demonstrate pride in the job
 - 7.) A positive and cooperative attitude and the fostering of positive team spirit
 - 8.) Sensitivity to creating and maintaining positive public perception
 - 9.) Keeping abreast of library trends and continuously seeking performance improvement

Values identified in the employee surveys for the library study show other possible values that might be good additions to the current values in the *EOL Personnel Policy*:

- ✓ Fun
- ✓ Best possible community service
- ✓ Encourage the love of reading and learning
- ✓ Provide up-to-date reference and literary materials
- ✓ Serving and building relationships with the public (or patrons)
- ✓ Quick & efficient, but correct, solutions to situations
- ✓ Efficient use of staff and resources

However, as shown in the Mercer Values survey (see Appendix 1), fewer than half of EOL employees have a good handle on the existing values. In addition, only 10% of employees say the values were created with employee input. Nevertheless, 90% of employees say the values identified in the survey, which include most of the values in the *EOL Personnel Policy*, are lived on a daily basis. The Director recently led staff through a values development exercise.

- **Strategies, Goals, and Objectives:** The library, through the Five Year Plan of Service for 2012-2017, has formally-defined goals and objectives for accomplishing the mission. The Library's five key goals are:
 - 1.) Provide the most up-to-date reference and library materials available
 - 2.) Encourage the love of reading and learning in our young people
 - 3.) Serve as a cultural and learning center for our community
 - 4.) Provide a convenient, attractive, and contemplative environment
 - 5.) Utilize the most effective technology
 - 6.) Maintain a well-trained, service-oriented, friendly staff

Each Goal is supported by two to five subordinate Objectives and associated Tasks for each objective. See the plan in Exhibit 4 for these details.

- **Performance Measurement and Reporting:** The library does a good job of collecting basic data on visitors and the use of the collection. Data provided by Library staff to Mercer includes current and historical information for:
 - ✓ Circulation Statistics (total circulation up 75% since 1998)
 - ✓ Foot Traffic (up 21% since 2002)
 - ✓ Reserved Materials/Holds (up 114% since 1998)
 - ✓ Reference Questions (up 96% since 1998)
 - ✓ Public Computer Use (up 215% since 2002)
 - ✓ Website Hits (up 2388% since 2002)
 - ✓ Social Media activity (blogs, Facebook, Twitter, 4Square)

Much of the increased use of the library and the collection represent opportunities and resources with the "new" library building. (See Table 6 in Chapter II)

The Library Director and staff do a good job of presenting performance statistics and operational information to the Library Board at its monthly meetings, as well as to the community in the annual report.

Recommendations

8. Strategic Planning Process: In anticipation of an update in 2016 to the state-required Five-Year Plan of Service, we suggest the Library Board, the Library Director, and management team review the elements of the Mercer strategic planning process and incorporate them in a Functional Business Plan for the Library. Specific ideas for that plan are listed below.

9. Functional Business Plan: While not getting too complex or bureaucratic, the Library should expand key elements of a functional business plan as noted below.

a) **Vision:** As noted above, the Library should develop at least a ten-year Vision Statement that addresses where the library expects to be or to be like in 2025. The vision could include a discussion of the following topics...and more:

- ✓ Opportunities available and Challenges to be faced (see the Mercer SWOT Assessment for possibilities)
- ✓ Changes in services to be provided to meet opportunities and challenges (e.g., growth of digital books, use of the Makerspace, transition from paper to electronic research materials)
- ✓ Enhancement to the library's role as the community's Gathering Place, including use of and connection to the open space across the street
- ✓ Management, organization, and staffing needs to meet future challenges
- ✓ Facility and equipment needs to meet future challenges
- ✓ Other resource needs to meet future challenges

As suggested by library staff, a Community Needs Assessment focused specifically on the library could provide valuable evidence of what the community wants and needs from EOL. This study is similar to the Parks Master Plan recommended in the Parks and Recreation Department study. With so much community involvement through the Board, Foundation, Friends, and Junior Women's Committee, the library assessment could be conducted through focus groups, making it a relatively straightforward and simple process. Perhaps also include Mountain Brook Schools and the business community in the assessment process. The City's Planning Director or an outside facilitator could facilitate these focus groups to provide a degree of independence and objectivity.

b) **Values:** From the Employee Surveys we learned that employees in each Library department have great ideas for an update to the organizational values. The Director and management team should review these suggested values and develop a formal Values Statement for the Library with employee input. Then update the values section of the Employee Handbook and post these values in employee work places. Again, we understand the Library Director has initiated this process.

- c) **Mission:** The current mission statement seems to suit the Library’s traditional role, but does not include language on the library’s role as a community gathering place. Mercer suggests adding a clause in the Mission Statement to include that role. For example, “...and to serve as a community gathering place for indoor and outdoor programs, events, meetings, and group studying.” Or, perhaps something simpler like “...and to serve as a community gathering place.”
- d) **Strategies, Goals, and Objectives:** The goals, objectives, and tasks in the *Five-Year Plan of Service* are a good start. Mercer suggests these improvements:
- ✓ Add a goal or amend Goal 3 to reflect the library’s role as a community gathering place.
 - ✓ Make each objective more measurable and time-specific. Objective 1.2, for example, might be stated as follows: “By the end of FY 2015 develop and implement a comprehensive program for technology training for the public, especially senior citizens, and hold five public training programs for at least 40 participants.”
 - ✓ Assign responsibility to a department and/or library employee(s) for accomplishment of the tasks that support the various objectives.
 - ✓ Prepare a scorecard for the various goal, objectives, and tasks that can be presented to the Library Board either monthly or quarterly.
- e) **Performance Measures:** Each department should develop 2 or 3 Key Performance Measures for ongoing and project work that includes a mix of these three elements:
- ✓ Output (e.g., how many units of service did we deliver?)
 - ✓ Outcome (e.g., how did our work improve library services and help to accomplish our mission?)
 - ✓ Cost (e.g., what did a unit of service or new initiative cost?)

Common library performance measures include:

- ✓ Citizen satisfaction levels from the City survey (+90%)
- ✓ Collection size vs. circulation (e.g., turnover)
- ✓ Circulation goals for books and non-books
- ✓ Monthly walk-in visitors
- ✓ Number of programs and attendance for children, teens, young adults, and adults (and for EOL broader community activities)
- ✓ Use of the two rental spaces and income generated
- ✓ % of public computers in service and used daily

Chapter IV includes specific performance measures for each library department (Adult, Children’s, Circulation, and Technical Services).

D. SERVICE DELIVERY STRUCTURE

1.) Library Services in Mountain Brook

Findings

As with most libraries, EOL services primarily are provided in-house with support from city departments, private contractors, and collaborative partners.

- **In-House Services:** Services provided in-house by Library employees are the result of years of experience, management decisions, and growth in the physical capabilities of the library building. Major areas of service include, but are not limited to:
 - Traditional and emerging library services to children, teens young adults, and adults
 - Administrative, Circulation, and Technical Services support
 - Children, teen, young adult, adult, and community programs and events
 - Makerspace and public use computers
 - Library administration and management
 - Library Board, Friends, Foundation, and Junior Women’s Committee support

- **City Support Services:** The Library is supported by several City departments in providing services, mostly administrative or financial in nature. From interviews with City department heads and Library employees and managers, City service support for the most part is excellent and includes these services:
 - Budgeting
 - Accounting (except Library special funds)
 - Accounts payable and receivable
 - Payroll
 - Purchasing (limited)
 - Phone system (limited)

Library staff indicates the City is not as effective in at least two service areas:

- Timeliness in paying bills
- Availability of budget and financial information and reports outside of scheduled monthly reports.

Generally, we suggest that bills be paid within 30 days of receipt and operating departments (or in this case an independent agency) have online inquiry-only access to their budget records at all times.

- **Contracted Services:** A significant number of services are contracted out to the private sector. It appears from interviews that most of these service providers are doing a good job for the library. Major contract services are:
- Major electrical, plumbing, and HVAC work
 - Elevator maintenance
 - Building maintenance projects

These contracted and collaborative services seem reasonable based on the Mercer model for contracting and collaboration and on the capabilities of Library and City staff. In our decision-making model, contracts and collaborations should be used for seldom performed services, when special equipment and training are required, when staff lacks the time or training to perform a task, in unique circumstances, and where there is a good supply of private sector contractors or public sector partners. The Library has carefully selected services outside of their capabilities to contract.

- **Regional Collaboration and Coordination:** The Emmet O’Neal Library is a member of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC) and the Library Director is a JCLC board member. The cooperative is composed of 40 area public libraries in which each member library maintains its autonomy, while banding together for selected library and support services. Each local library has its own board, hires its own director, and has its own budget, a part of which is a contribution to the JCLC.

The libraries in Jefferson County work together through JCLC to provide services that benefit all libraries and citizens in the county, including library technology (catalog, circulation system, some databases, and email) and inter-library loans. The core library software for the Emmet O’Neal Library’s automated library system is provided through the cooperative.

Interviews raised **two major collaborative questions:**

- **On-hold Books:** Should EOL offer new materials (e.g., best sellers, DVDs) to collaborative members during the first six months on EOL shelves or should these items be reserved for walk-in Mountain Brook residents when new? At present, EOL seems to stand out as one or one of a very few collaborative libraries that reserve new materials for city residents. We understand the Library Director and the management team gets push-back on this issue at JCLC meetings.
- **JCLC Funding:** We understand the City of Birmingham has either “zeroed out” or significantly reduced funding for JCLC. The Homewood Library budget says the City has reduced funding from \$1,000,000 to \$500,000 and “member fees are expected to go up.” What does this mean in the future for JCLC services and technology updates for core library systems? Many persons interviewed listed the future of JCLC as a Threat in the SWOT Assessment.

Recommendations

10. Service Delivery Structure:

- a) **Library and Contract Services:** The structure of in-house and contract services is appropriate. No recommendations for change.
- b) **City Services:** The Library Director should work with the City Manager and City Finance Director to fine-tune minor operational limitations in current processes and reports.
- c) **Collaboration:** The library, likely in association with other area libraries, need to develop a Risk Assessment and Contingency Plan for the future of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative that would include the following issues and questions:
 - ✓ What is the likelihood that any member will drop out of the cooperative due to its internal financial issues?
 - ✓ What might be the financial impact on other member libraries if any member maintains its current lowered level of funding or further reduces its contribution to the collaborative?
 - ✓ How would the other communities in the cooperative fill the gap, particularly to provide foundational library information systems?
 - ✓ Is there another area library that could serve as a lead administrative library in the absence of Birmingham?
 - ✓ What assistance would software vendors provide, if any, to maintain current systems if the cooperative fails?
 - ✓ What would these systems cost if membership was reduced significantly?

E. MANAGEMENT

This section covers the structure of organizational control from the Library Director into departments; library-level staffing issues, like the growth of staff since the new building was opened; and the inter-workings of the EOL management team (i.e., management practices). A detailed staffing analysis is presented in Chapter IV for each Library department.

1.) Management Organization Plan

Findings

Exhibit 2 shows the latest version of the **Organization and Staffing Plan for the Library**. The Library Director reports to the Library Board and oversees all library operations and staff, assisted by a five-person management team consisting of department heads/managers of the following departments:

- **Adult Services Department:** The department head directs three full-time Librarians; a .25 Library Assistant II position (shared with IT); and two part-time Adult Services Assistants (19 hours per week), one of which is vacant. The six people supervised amount to about 4.15 FTEs.
- **Children's Department:** The department head directs a full-time Librarian; two full-time and one part-time Children's Assistants; and one full-time, one part-time, and two temporary Library Assistant II positions (summers). The eight people supervised amount to about 5.5 FTEs. One part-time position is vacant.
- **Circulation Department:** The department head directs 5.25 full-time Library Assistant II positions (one shared with Technical Services) and 5.0 part-time Library Assistant I positions (a/k/a Pages), one of which is vacant. The eleven people supervised amount to about 7.75 FTEs. One part-time position is vacant.

In addition to managing the department, this department head acts as the library's building manager (in association with the Library Director in some situations, such as a major repair project for the elevator).

- **IT Department:** The IT Manager directs and delivers IT services and supervises a .75 Library Assistant II (shared with Adult).
- **Technical Services Department:** The department head directs a .75 full-time Library Assistant II (shared with Circulation); two part-time Library Assistant II; and four part-time Technical Services Assistants, one of which is vacant. The six people supervised amount to about 3.75 FTEs.

In addition, an **Administrative Department** supervised by the Library Director consists of the following functions and positions supporting the operations of the entire library:

- Accounting,
- Budgeting,
- Fundraising,
- Human Resources,
- Information Technology (considered a department itself as noted above), and
- Administrative support to the Library Director, Library Foundation, Friends, and Library Board.

Excluding IT, staffing for these administrative functions include:

- Full-time Executive Assistant (who serves as human resources administrator),
- Part-time Accountant, and
- Part-time Administrative Assistant (currently vacant).

The organization and operation of the administrative/resource management functions in Administration and IT will be covered later in this chapter of the report under Resource Management.

The Library Director states the immediate staffing need to fill all vacant part-time positions in line departments (on hold during the Mercer study) and projects strategic expansion of staffing to 21 full-time and 20 part-time positions as follows:

- Administration (fill Admin Clerk position)
- Adult (add one LA II and reclassify one other position)
- Circulation (+1-2 part-time to cover service hours)
- Executive Assistant (reclassify)
- IT (.75 FTE shared position to full-time with backfill above in Adult)
- Technical Services (.75 LA II position to full-time with upgrade)

Recommendations

11. Management:

- a) **Director's Span of Control:** With five department heads and two administrative support positions (Executive Assistant and Accountant), the Library Directors supervises seven positions, five management and two administrative. This span of control is reasonable. No changes suggested to this traditional structure of library departments.

Similarly, the spans of control of the heads of the Adult, Children's, Circulation, and Technical Services Departments (six to eleven positions, many part-time) and the IT Manager (one position) are manageable.

- b) **Assistant Director:** With the foreseeable retirement of the current Library Director, we do not recommend the library recreate an Assistant Director position or informally assign #2 duties to a single manager in the near future. Instead:
- ✓ Spread out #2-type duties either among the five department heads or among department heads/managers who appear to be strong candidates to replace the current director when she retires
 - ✓ Rotate these #2 duties among all member of the management team or these strong internal candidates so they gain exposure to a variety of director-level responsibilities, including dealing with officials like the Library Board and City Council and external stakeholders
- c) **Administrative Functions:** As we will discuss in more detail later in this chapter of the report (see Resource Management), financial and human resource management services, along with facilities management, are less developed areas of EOL's management function. Options include:
- Fill the part-time Administrative Assistant to deal with all routine clerical work
 - Expand the Executive Assistant's time on human resource management as routine clerical work is shifted to the Administrative Assistant
 - Increase the Accountant's time to take on or share collection acquisition accounting work with Tech Services

2.) Growth in Staff Since the New Building

The City Manager posed a staffing question early in the study process: **Why is the library staff larger at the new building compared to the old building?** He said he expected staffing in the new building to be the same as in the old building. The 2014 City Council liaison had a similar expectation.

Library staff provided the following reasons for staff growth since the late 1990s:

- The new building is more than twice the size of the old library and has two floors rather than a single floor.
- A larger, more diverse collection to manage, including digital materials.
- Increasing circulation and more walk-in visitors.
- Many more computers for public and staff use.
- More programs and participants with a community meeting room and board room.
- Community service preferences (e.g., check-out by staff rather than self-check).

In **Exhibit 3a**, Library staff provides a list of personnel in 1998 and 2013, showing growth from 14 to 20 full-time positions and from 15 to 17 part-time/season/temporary positions. A summary of changes in the number/composition of staff from Exhibit 3a are shown on **Table 10** below:

Table 10
Changes in Full and Part-time Positions, 1998 and 2013

DEPARTMENT	1998 FT	2013 FT	1998 PT	2013 PT
Adult/Reference	2	3.25	0	2 (1 vacant)
Children's	2	5	6	2 (+2 Temp)
Circulation	6	6.25	5	5 (1 vacant)
Technical Services	1	1.75	4	6 (1 vacant)
Administration	2	2	0	2 (1 vacant)
Information Technology	0	1.75	0	See Note
Maintenance	1	0 (Frozen)	0	Contracts
TOTAL:	14	20	15	17

Note: As of 2014, a second IT position is shared with Adult (75% IT and 25% Adult)

Key staffing changes from 1998 to 2013 include:

- Addition of 1.25 full-time and two part-time positions in Adult/Reference.
- Consolidation of five part-time positions to create three more full-time positions in Children's, as well as the addition of one part-time position and elimination of one summer position (now two summer).
- Addition of .75 full-time and two part-time positions in Technical Services.
- Addition of two part-time positions in Administration (Accounting and Administrative Assistant).
- Creation of an IT Manager position by eliminating the Assistant Library Director.
- Elimination of a Maintenance position, which is frozen and replaced with a contract.

A consultant study by Dick Waters in 1996 reviewed staffing needs in the library based on desks/counters to be staffed, time needed for non-desk duties, leave time, and the like. The projections in five-year increments are shown on **Exhibit 3b**, which include extensive notes that need to be read to fully understand underlying assumptions used in the staffing analysis.

Table 11 below summarizes the Waters' analysis from Exhibits 3b, with supplemental data from Mercer in *italics* (2013 Population, Collection, and In-Person Visits; 2002 and beyond Square Footage data; and Actual FT/PT Staff).

Table 11
Waters Study Projected Growth in Staff FTEs with New Building

DESCRIPTOR	1997 Estimate	2002 Estimate	2007 Estimate	2012 Estimate	2013 Actual	2017 Estimate
Population	20,000	21,000	22,000	23,000	20,359	24,000
Circulation	240,000	315,000	330,000	345,000	477,000	360,000
Items in Collection					131,976	
In-Person Visits					199,234	
Square Footage	17,500	39,500	39,500	39,500	39,500	39,500
Job Titles:						
Director	1	1	1	1	1	1
Admin Asst	1	1	1	1	1.5	1
Asst Dir/Research	1	1	1	1	1 (IT Mgr)	1
Dept Head	3	3	3	3	4	3
Librarian	2	3	3	3.5	4	3.6
Library Clerk	8.5	7.7	7.7	8.0	10 (LA II)	8.5
Library Page	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.7	6.5	3.9
Accountant					.5	
Building Services	1	2	2.0	2.0	Contract	2.0
Total Staff FTEs	21.0	21.0	22.1	23.3	29.0 (est.)	24.0
Volunteers	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0		4.0
Actual FT/PT)	16/17				20/17	

Actual staffing in 2013 (with 17 part-time and two temporary/summer converted to 9.0 FTEs), therefore, **exceeds the 2017 projection by 5.0 full-time equivalent positions**, mostly accounted for by front-line Clerks and Pages. However, as seen above and from earlier data:

- 2013 circulation is well above the 2017 estimate that was prepared in 1996.
- Walk-in customers have increased substantially, particularly to use public computers and the new study/quiet rooms.
- Reference questions, including face-to-face inquiries of desk staff, are up significantly.
- The new building continues to have three service desks (Adult, Children's, and Circulation).
- The IT function and staff has grown significantly.
- A new Youth/Teen Librarian was created in the Adult Department.

Recommendations

12. Staff Growth: Mercer believes the current library staffing level is close to optimal with an opportunity only for minor adjustments as noted earlier for Administrative positions, which need to be analyzed with the management team during review of the draft report:

- Fill the part-time Administrative Assistant position to deal with all routine clerical work, thereby freeing the Executive Assistant for other duties (see below).
- Expand the Executive Assistant's time on human resource management by shifting purely clerical work to the Administrative Assistant. In effect, make this position the HR Manager or Specialist (for the most part).
- Increase the Accountant's time to take on or share accounting work now performed in Technical Services, which negates the need for increasing the full-time LA II position in Technical Services from .75 to 1.0 unless an associated adjustment is made in part-time staffing.
- Continue to assess the mix of full-time and part-time positions across the library.

3.) Management Practices

Findings

The EOL director and management team seems well organized, as a whole and within departments. The senior management team meets bi-weekly and department staff meets at least once a month. The entire Library staff meets monthly, but some part-time employees miss that meeting due to scheduling conflicts. Minutes are available, however, for each of these staff meetings.

The management team does a good job of keeping the Library Board informed on library matters, programs, and activities. The EOL web site, paper flyers and handouts, periodic mailings, the City newsletter, local newspapers, and the EOL annual report do a good job of keeping patrons informed.

Management Practices issues and challenges from interviews, surveys, and questionnaires include:

- **Management Philosophy:** The MPP results in Chapter II, however, indicate a need to review how the management team manages to ensure they are on, or close enough to, the same page to present a consistent management philosophy across the library.
- **Inter-Department Collaboration:** EOL departments, particularly Adult and Children's, are relatively independent of each other. A few interviews called them "silos." To a degree this independence is understandable as the Adult-Children's patron base is very different with a pretty clear dividing line between the upper limits of a child and the lower limits of an adult.
- **Surveys:** Lower scores for Respect by Other Departments and the Library Director. (GRIPES survey) and perceived limits on time available for training and in training hours (Personnel Practices survey).
- **Interviews:** Limited indication of the need for greater consistency and fairness in applying some library policies and procedures and in balancing workloads in some departments.

Recommendations

13. Management Practices: As the management team reviews the results of the MPP, look for anything in department independence that may impede accomplishment of the EOL's overall Mission, Vision, and Values and may lessen cohesiveness.

Even though minutes are helpful, ensure part-time employee get a full report on the monthly staff meeting from department managers.

Review and resolve, as needed other Management Practices issues and questions listed in the Findings above.

F. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Resource Management section presents findings, issues, and recommendations for six Resource Management functions:

1. Equipment Management
2. Facilities Management
3. Financial and Budgetary Management
4. Materials Management and Purchasing
5. Human Resource Management
6. Information Technology

1.) Equipment Management

Findings

Almost all equipment is office furniture (e.g., desks, chair, study tables) or library-related (e.g., shelving, counters), which are used and managed by Library staff. The Library bought high-quality furnishings for the new library buildings, which appears to have held up well.

The major category of equipment that needs regular care and replacement is public use computers, which are covered in Section F6, Information Technology, that follows.

Recommendations

14.Equipment Management: None.

2.) Facilities Management

Findings

Library Facility

The “new” Library is a significant upgrade from the old library facility (we are told), both in terms of space and features. The library’s size and features compare well to libraries in the six-community comparative analysis in Chapter II. However, some features in other libraries are intriguing for a library also serving as a community gathering place:

- Café
- Coffee house
- Rooftop garden
- Theater

When considering management and functionality of the current building, however, a few issues are evident:

- The meaning and needs/wants/opportunities of the library as a community gathering space currently are off-mission, as stated earlier in the chapter. Meaning, the library and the city may not have fully thought through what is needed in and about the library to fully serve as Mountain Brook’s “community center,” particularly as an initiative to raise funds for a more traditional community/recreation center failed to materialize.
- Lacking another option, the Library Director and the Circulation Department Head act as the facility manager, including figuring out what to do about major repairs (like the recent elevator upgrade).
- Storage space is somewhat limited per staff.
- The Friends of the Library uses significant space in the basement for storage of books for the annual book sale in the spring.
- The library is jammed with high school students during final exams, which is a great “problem.”
- Parking is an often-stated issue, particularly when there is a major event at the library. Improvements in recent years (the lower lot and the staff parking area) have helped.

Meeting Spaces

The 200-capacity conference/meeting room and 20-capacity board room are used for library programs and meetings, and can be rented by outside groups. Facility rental can be requested online through the EOL web site.

Rental fees are \$25 to \$50 for up to four hour in the Board Room and \$50 to \$250 for up to four hours in the Meeting Room. Annual revenues are in the range of \$6,000 to \$7,500.

The Library uses an event scheduling system to manage use of the meeting rooms. The current schedule is posted on the EOL web site to allow patrons to check availability. The library's primary meeting coordinator says the scheduling system is cumbersome to use, time-consuming when entering reservations, and unreliable.

Recommendations

15. Facilities Management:

- a) **Library:** As the library redefines its mission to include a phrase relating to its role as a community gather place, EOL and the City should think broadly about the needs of and opportunities for the library in that regard and the resources, internal and external, available or needed to accomplish that segment of the mission. In particular, EOL and the City should think expansively as to how external spaces (e.g., the "Green") can be linked to the library for community events and festivals.

The "weeding" process should be expanded to include materials in storage to free up space. Seldom used or seasonal stuff might better be stored offsite (location uncertain!).

Review library staff's ideas for alternative use of the Friends space. Based on the comparative analysis, consider a more permanent, onsite "bookstore" for used books that is open throughout the year.

Library managers could use some expert advice on managing the building, perhaps in association with the City and particularly for larger projects (like the elevator upgrade).

- b) **Meeting Spaces:** Review the functionality of the event scheduling system and upgrade or replace it to make the system easier to operate and more reliable.

3.) Financial and Budgetary Management

Findings

The City provides well for the Library's operating and capital needs, with an allocation of \$2,619,040,290 in FY 2014 that represents 97.5% of Library revenues. In addition, the annual collection acquisition budget is \$332,525, with the City funding \$255,000 of that amount.

The City provides financial management services to the Library, including accounting, accounts payables and receivables; purchasing via *emGovPower*; and limited IT help.

A part-time Accountant, who is a CPA, processes financial transactions and reports for the Library. Her role includes accounts payable and receivables, accounting for the Library Foundation, the monthly financial report to the Library Board, budget tracking, and Friends and Junior Women's Committee savings accounts and City reimbursement.

A few issues and challenges, however, are evident to Mercer:

- **Budgeting:** The Library's budgeting process and the budget itself are primarily financial with limited formal documentation and consideration of strategies for structuring services and serving customer, long-term goals, short-term objectives related to these goals, planned activities and projects, and performance measures (in effect making the budget an exercise focusing on return on investment). Many public agencies, including libraries, merge elements of the Strategic Plan into the budget process and document.

The Library Director prepares a draft budget with the assistance of department heads, which then is reviewed and approved by the Library Board. The approved Library budget is submitted to the City Finance Director for review and approval like a city department. The City Council ultimately approves the budget for the library.

- **Financial Management:** The City's Finance Department drives the Library's financial management activities (accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, and the like), with the exception of accounting for special donations and funds.

Financial staff in the Library is limited to a part-time Accountant who understands her role in processing accounting transactions in *emGovPower*, as well as the City Finance Department's policies and procedures.

The Library lacks a financial procedures manual, although many policies and practices are based on City practices and seem to be understood by key management and financial staff (e.g., processing invoices).

The City selects the independent auditor for the Library and the EOL Foundation Board selects the auditor for the books of the Library Foundation.

- **Financial System:** The City uses the *emGovPower* suite of software to manage finances, fixed assets, payroll, purchasing, and the like. From interviews with the Accountant and other Library staff, the system seems to suit their needs, although a few activities are a bit cumbersome:
- Payment of Library invoices via City Finance are said to be slow at times resulting in finance charges.
 - Need to hand-carrying the signed payroll print-out down to City Hall instead of using electronic signatures and submittal.
 - Some transactions require entry by the Library and a second entry by Finance.
 - Budget reports are produced weekly by the Finance Department for books and operations, but inquiry-only access to the *emGovPower* system is not possible by the Library at this time.
 - The Foundation books are kept on Quickbooks rather than *emGovPower* with the Accountant focusing on expenses and the Executive Assistant on revenues as a separation of duties.

Recommendations

16. Financial and Budgetary Management:

- Budgeting:** The Library Director should look at the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) budgeting model as a way to expand ROI information in the annual budget request. Courses and books are available through GFOA that explain their model. The key benefit of the GFOA approach is that it couples strategies (missions, goals, objectives, key performance indicators) with budgetary decisions.
- Financial Management:** Mercer suggests the City permit EOL greater read-only access to financial records on the City's financial system so they can more-easily track the status of accounts on a day-by-day basis. Where needed, EOL should develop financial policies and procedures for internal operations that are not already documented in City procedures.
- Financial System:** Mercer understand the EOL-City relationship is a good one, so our recommendations are in the spirit of fine-tuning, particularly the items listed above for the financial system, which should be the foundation for discussions among the Library Director, Library Accountant, City Manager, and City Finance Director.

Although Quickbooks is a reasonable way to account for the Foundations books, we wonder if using the City's financial system (with EOL having full access for entries and reports) would be a better way to account for these assets?

4.) Materials Management and Purchasing

Findings

- **Collection Management:** The Library's collection of books, CD/DVDs, newspapers and magazines, e-readers, and reference materials is managed primarily by the Adult and Children's Departments with the support of the Technical Services Department. The Library is reasonably aggressive in culling out little used materials to provide space for new purchases.

Technical Services processes invoices for books, then forwards them to the Accountant for entry in the City's financial system. Staff indicates the process would work better if orders and purchases were spread out across the year instead of made in peaks and valleys.

The Technical Service department head tracks materials purchases on spreadsheets by categories (e.g., Adults, Children, Young Adults, and Specialty Items) and subcategories (e.g., non-fiction, fiction, and audio-visual). We understand this task used to be performed by the Accountant.

- **Materials Management:** The head of the Circulation Department, with the assistance of the Executive Assistant to the Library Director, acts as a purchasing agent for general materials and supplies. Inventories of library support materials and supplies primarily are managed by the various departments.

We did not identify a formal purchasing policy for the Library, although we understand the City has such a policy and it could be applied at the Library. We understand EOL departments can spend up to \$1000 before needing to generate a purchase order.

Recommendations

17. Materials Management:

- a) **Collection Management:** EOL needs to revisit the assignment of detailed accounting duties from the Accountant to Technical Services, as well as staffing impacts in each department. Mercer would like to shift accounting back to the Accountant, with an appropriate adjustment in work hours, or a collaborative approach.

Where possible, spread out book and materials purchases to balance Technical Services workload.

- b) **Materials Management:** Review purchasing authority level with a possible increase to \$1,000 to \$2,000 at the Library Director level.

Document EOL policies and procedures where not documented in City regulations.

5.) Human Resource Management

Findings

- **Human Resource Management:** The Executive Assistant acts as EOL’s human resource specialist, in addition to other duties (e.g., use of meeting rooms; Board, Foundation, Friends, Junior Women’s Committee support; annual fundraising; and donations). The Library Director also is actively involved in the HR function, activities, and decisions.

Mercer identified several HR management issues and challenges:

- Like several other resource management functions, HR at the library is relatively immature and focuses more on processes, like payroll, than broader HR issues and challenges. A recent issue involving pension eligibility and contributions due to excess work hours for a part-timer shows the need for more professionalism and, perhaps, more time devoted to human resource management.
 - The City Finance Director serves as the HR Director for City positions due to the extensive role of the Jefferson County Personnel Board. He is very experienced in human resource management, but not a fully-trained HR professional. As a City employee, he is only a limited resource to the Library.
 - The HR consultant used to compile the Employee Handbook in 2005 is not regularly involved in HR matters at the Library.
- **Classification and Compensation:** Unlike the City, the Library Board, not the Jefferson County Personnel Board, controls position classification and compensation for EOL employees.

Per the list of job descriptions, the compensation plan covers twenty-two positions, some of which are department- or role-specific (e.g., Library Assistant II is tailored to three departments – Adult, Children, and Circulation – and defined for full-time and part-time).

Positions are re-rated periodically by the Library Director and managers, with changes in salaries recommended to the Board by the Library Director.

The Library does not appear to have a formal compensation plan or salary schedule, and compensation seems to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

- **Job Descriptions:** Mercer received “EOL Job Descriptions and Specific Team Duties, 2013,” indicating job descriptions are up-to-date. For each position classification, the job description defines Essential Job Functions, Necessary Knowledge/Skills/Abilities (or Qualifications in some cases), Education/Experience, and Salary/Hours/Benefits.

Most job descriptions, but not all, also list Specific Team Duties (by name if more than one person works in the position).

Job descriptions updates are the responsibility of department managers.

- **Policies and Procedures:** The Library developed personnel policies and procedures (“EOL Personnel Policy”) with the assistance of an outside consultant. The procedures provided to Mercer are dated May 24, 2005, and are written in the format of an Employee Handbook that starts with the EOL mission and goals. Employees sign an Acknowledgement page to show they received the manual.

Library policies are supplemented by some City policies (e.g., “Drug-Free Workplace”) that the Library has adopted.

We do not believe the document has been updated since 2005 and is showing its age. For example:

- Part-time Employees: Hours are said to be set by department heads and may vary week-to-week. In practice it appears that most part-time employees work 19 hours per week or 38 hours per pay period, with slight variations each week due to scheduling needs.
 - Seasonal Employees: Are not mentioned in the handbook.
 - Family Leave: May need to be updated due to changes in law since 2005.
 - Employee Behavior: Understanding of the values in this section appears to need reinforcement per Mercer’s employee surveys.
 - Sick Leave: Many agencies use a 3-day standard, not 5-day, for requiring a doctor’s note to document sick leave.
 - Comp Time: Accrual and use policies may need to be updated per comments in Mercer’s employee surveys.
- **Hiring:** All hiring is directed by the Library Director and Department Heads (management) and the Executive Assistant (facilitation). Openings are posted on the Library website and emailed to other area libraries by the Executive Assistant, who then collects resumes and answers applicant questions. Department heads then interview prospective candidates and recommend people to be hired to the Library Director.

Issues and challenges include:

- Job openings are advertised in a very limited way.
- Applicants and hires tend to be similar in background and experience to current Library employees.
- Background checks were only recently implemented (a policy is forthcoming) and are directed by the Director (national) and the IT Manager (Alabama).

- **Performance Reviews:** By policy, department heads should conduct performance reviews of their subordinates twice in the first year of employment and annually thereafter close to the employee's anniversary date. In practice, it appears that these reviews are inconsistent for full-time positions and not used at all for part-timers.

EOL uses a *Performance Appraisal Summary Sheet (PASS)* form to document each performance review. The process uses a four-level rating system:

- 1.00-1.99 = Unacceptable
- 2.00-2.74 = Acceptable/Some Improvement Needed
- 2.75-3.49 = Meets All Standards
- 3.50-4.00 = Substantially and Consistently Exceeds Expectation

Five major performance areas are rated and weighted:

- Good Employee Standard-General (35%)
- Good Employee Standard-Sick Leave (10%)
- Team Work Standard (35%)
- General Application of Job Knowledge (10%)
- Job Performance (10%)

Mercer's library consultant, as well as our human resources specialist in Florida, reviewed the PASS form. Issue and opportunities with PASS include:

- Need for uniformity in application of PASS by each EOL supervisor/rater is a typical issue in performance reviews.
- Weighting may not reflect the importance of the five standards to employee job performance and library efficiency and effectiveness (e.g., sick leave = 10%).
- Acceptable and Needs Improvement (in the overall scale) typically are different rating categories.
- Not all employees are getting reviewed each year and part-time positions are not reviewed at all.
- Sick leave occurrences do not necessarily mean abuse of sick leave.
- General standards list behaviors that typically are resolved through a progressive discipline process, not the performance review, and "significant incident" is not defined.
- Team Work standards do not define "significant incidents" and the listed standards lack specific measures.
- Job Knowledge standards may not give enough weight to output of work and the listed standards lack specific measures.

- **Rewards:** Beyond the basic pay plan, monetary and non-monetary rewards are limited or non-existent. These rewards could include”
 - Awards and recognition
 - Small monetary rewards (e.g., gas cards)
 - Extra day(s) off
 - Extra pay for special training or certifications
 - Special training opportunities
- **Discipline and Grievances:** The Employee Handbook defines a Disciplinary Process (initiated by the Library), but not a Grievance Process (initiated by the employee). The handbook does not define a formal process for communicating, investigating, and resolving employee complaints, problems, or grievances.
- **Training and Employee Development:** Employees at most Mercer clients say training could be expanded, particularly attendance at seminars. Similar comments were received from EOL employees, but training factors in the GRIPES and Personnel Practices surveys received positive scores.

Mercer did not, however, find a formal Training Plan in place for the various classifications of employees at the library. Such a plan, typically in matrix format, identifies initial orientation and recurring training needed for each employee classification to ensure they do a great job in serving library patrons.

- **Succession Planning:** The Library Director has served EOL for over two decades. It appears she may retire within the next five years and a few other very experienced employees, including two department heads, may follow. EOL has not developed a formal succession plan for the Director and other senior positions, but several department heads are acknowledged as possible future library directors.

Recommendations

18. Human Resources:

- a) **Human Resource Management:** Enhance the role of the Executive Assistant, perhaps with a reclassification, to strengthen the HR function. Most HR support duties should reside in this one position.

As needed on specific issues, consult with the City's Finance Director to take advantage of his experience in HR management.

- b) **Classification and Compensation:** Create a formal compensation plan for each EOL position based on a range-step or minimum-midpoint-maximum format to foster internal equity. Update the Compensation Plan at least every five years, likely via a consultant, to ensure both internal and external equity.
- c) **Job Descriptions:** Continue to update job descriptions at least every three years and as position requirements change or before a vacant position is filled. Add Special Team Duties to any position lacking them.

Although most people now work in one department during their tenure at the library (a few work in more than one department), consider generalizing positions like the Library Assistant II to allow cross-utilization and movement of people between departments, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and encouraging career development. The Special Team Duties in the job descriptions would continue to individualize the role of specific employees.

- d) **Policies and Procedures:** Review and update the EOL Personnel Policy at least every three years and more often if there are significant changes to employment law. Consider other items on Mercer's issues and opportunities list under Findings.
- e) **Hiring:** Expand announcement and advertising of open positions, after internal candidates are considered, to broaden the applicant pool.
- f) **Performance Reviews:** Redo the PASS form and review process to:
- Review part-time positions on an annual basis
 - Reduce the impact of the Sick Leave standard by merging it in the General standard as one of the many factors listed
 - Reweight the now four performance areas by lowering General (say to 25%) and increasing Job Knowledge and Job Performance (say to 20% each)

- g) **Rewards:** Consider ways to give small rewards as stated in the Findings for unusual efforts and accomplishments (e.g., the big snow).
- h) **Discipline and Grievances:** Add a Grievance Policy to the Employee Handbook.
- i) **Training and Employee Development:** Develop a Training Plan for each position classification.
- j) **Succession Planning:** Develop succession plans for the Library Director, Circulation Manager, and any other senior position with an incumbent potentially retiring within the next five years.

When the Library Director retires, conduct a national search, likely facilitated by an executive search firm, with opportunities for internal candidates to apply as well. In addition to technical library management skills, the next Director, like the current Director, needs to be a successful fundraiser and adept at community relations. Perhaps the Foundation would pay the search fees and expenses?

For other senior management positions, a search could be conducted, but more likely the recruitment would be managed by the Board Chair, Library Director, and other department heads, with administrative assistance by the Executive Assistant.

19.

6.) Information Technology

Findings

- **EOL Technology Services:** The Library operates its own IT servers, network, and infrastructure with the assistance of an outside network consultant. The Library operates and maintains 92 computers on the local network, 43 for staff, 29 for the public, ten laptops, and ten other.

Information Technology staff provide both planning and support services. The structure and role of IT is evolving with the addition of a ¾-time position reporting to the IT Manager. Among other assignments, IT staff is responsible for databases purchased by the library and for services via the catalog and website updates (see Technology Plan below for additional assignments).

The new Makerspace recently installed at the library was inspired by innovative library initiatives and was a project spearheaded by technology staff.

The Library receives only limited support from City IT staff in operating the library services, network, and infrastructure. A new fiber optic cable installation will enable the library a better connection to the City's financial and accounting systems.

The Adult Department staff provides basic computer assistance and one computer classes to the public with IT providing supplemental help and classes.

The Jefferson County Library Cooperative provides email services to EOL staff and filtered Internet services to staff and the public.

- **2014-2017 Technology Plan** includes the following five elements:
 - Mission Statement: “The IT Department endeavors to provide technological support designed to meet local needs”
 - Objectives: “Maintain an up-to-date technology infrastructure, continue training efforts for both staff and patrons, and continue evaluation of new technology”
 - Activities for most Objectives
 - A description of the Current Technology Environment: Local Area Network, Wireless Network, Telephone Services, Staff Resources, Patron Resources, and Additional Technology

- Information Technology Goals and Activities are summarized below:
 - 1.) Continue 4-year replacement plan for desktop and laptop computers
 - 2.) Keep software current
 - 3.) Keep technology staff sufficiently trained to perform their jobs
 - 4.) Review web site design every two years (with the help of an outside consultant)
 - 5.) Assist Children’s Department in determining appropriate technology needs
 - 6.) Remove extraneous equipment and services
 - 9.) Ensure an appropriate physical environment for networking equipment
 - 10.) Maintain network security
 - 11.) Expand technology services to the public
 - 12.) Keep projection and sound system up-to-date
 - 13.) Increase internet bandwidth to meet patron demand

IT planning includes staff work-hour requirements for each goal and activity. Annual costs, however, are estimated in the plan for each activity.

Recommendations

19. Information Technology: With 1.75 positions devoted to information technology, the Library seems well-positioned to meet the IT needs of staff and patrons. The Makerspace is an exciting addition, particularly for a smaller library. Other libraries identified to have a similar facility are in Chicago and Chattanooga (larger cities) and Darien and Westport, Connecticut (small cities).

- a) **Mission Statement:** Perhaps focus the statement a bit more to EOL. For example, “Deliver high-quality technology infrastructure and services to enable EOL library departments to provide the materials and services expected by patrons.”
- b) **IT Strategies:** The IT Plan is well organized and thought out, and it provides measureable benchmarks for progress. A few issues need to be considered in the next update:
 - ✓ Risk associated with JCLC funding problems, along with Plan B ideas
 - ✓ Impact of the Makerspace on the need for and use of public computers
 - ✓ Ways to expand Self Check services at the Circulation Desk
 - ✓ Value of RFID and difficulties in implementing the technology (cost and proximity of the Fire and Police Departments per the Library Director)
- c) **IT Workload:** IT workload generally includes the role of the Adult Department in helping with nearby public computers. The partnership, however, seems effective, particularly with a person shared across these departments. Also see Management Organization section earlier in Chapter III.

IV. DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENTS

This chapter of the reports reviews organizational and operational issues and challenges then presents recommendations for the Adult, Children's, Circulation, and Technical Services Departments. Administrative functions, including Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology, are covered at the end of Chapter III.

A. OVERVIEW

In reviewing each department, we gathered information through the Organization and Operations Questionnaire (see **Exhibit 7 in Chapter VI** for a master copy); interviews with all full-time and part-time employees; and collection of data. The questionnaires were reviewed in advance and used as discussion tools during individual interviews with Library employees.

Issues, ideas, and challenges from the questionnaires and interviews were compiled and addressed in various sections and chapters of the report as described below.

- **Employee Job History, Work Goals, and Special Skills:** This information provides background information on employees, the organization plans, and staffing plans for the Library as a whole and the Administrative functions and the five operating departments. This information is used ONLY in aggregate to identify overriding themes at the library or department levels, and is NOT used to assess or critique individual employees.
- **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats:** Library-wide issues are covered in Chapter II-SWOT Assessment, with department issues in this chapter.
- **Department Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives:** Library-wide issues are covered in Chapter III-Strategic Direction, with department-specific issues in this chapter.
- **Employee Job Description, Job Duty Analysis, Backlog, and Transfers:** This information supports the departmental Organization and Staffing Analyses that follow.
- **Operations Improvements:** This information supports the departmental Operations Analyses that follow.

In addition, **issues from departmental survey** are incorporated into the various department analyses that follow based on written comments that explain factor ratings given in the GRIPES, Resources, and Personnel Practices surveys. Most of these comments are incorporated into the Organization & Staffing or Operations analyses.

The analysis of the results of questionnaires and interviews, as well as comments in the employee surveys, resulted in a list of **Emerging Issues** that Mercer explored in meetings with EOL managers and eventually incorporated into this written report.

B. ADULT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The **Adult Services Department** is responsible for adult, reference, and teen and young adult services and programs. The Adult collection is located on the first and second floor with the adult desk on the second floor. Adult space includes study rooms, study areas (chairs and tables), the Makers Space and public computer room, the Investment Corner, and staff offices.

Findings

Strategic Direction

Based on the **Mercer Model for Strategic Planning in the Public Sector** (see **Figure 1 in Chapter II**), organizations should define their strategic direction through development of a mission statement, vision statement, values or guiding principles, and strategies, goals, objectives, and performance measures.

Employee ideas relating to key elements of the department's strategic direction include:

- **Mission:** Staff did not consistently relate the EOL and Adult Department mission statements, but presented different versions with similar themes.

The idea that the library is the focal point of the community is said to be an important mission element.

- **Vision:** Staff is unclear about where the library is going and suggests EOL needs to survey the community and patrons to get a better sense of their needs and interests.
- **Values:** Several staff members mentioned the following values in the employee surveys:
 - Responsive, helpful customer service
 - Close relationships with patrons
 - Excellence, pride in the job, highest possible service level, prompt
 - Creativity, fun, humor
 - Keep up with trends
 - Positive, great team spirit, stewardship
- **Strategies, Goals, and Objectives:** Several Adult Department staff identified the following department-specific goals and objectives:
 - Clean up the collection (an ongoing challenge)
 - Rearrange space allocated to components of the collection (e.g., large print and reference)
 - Apply for more grants
 - Keep up with technology
 - Continually review programs and services for patron support and effectiveness

A SWOT Assessment is a key element in defining an organization's strategic direction. Department-specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities/challenges, and threats that were expressed by multiple staff members in questionnaires and interviews are listed below. Ideas expressed by a single staff member are not included in the list.

➤ **Strengths:**

- Positive attitude of and working relationships among staff
- Quick and thorough response to patron needs
- Collection budget and other financial resources
- Support from the Foundation, Friends, and Junior Women's Committee
- Teen Board

➤ **Weaknesses:**

- Need clearer communication of reasons for and scope of new programs that impact staff time use, with more lead time to prepare
- Lack of deep staff training after initial orientation session
- Comp Time's effect on staff schedule
- It's noisy, particularly around the Adult Desk (the stairway), but also generally in the library
- Maintenance issues with frequently used public computers
- Space limitations (but some opportunities as well)

➤ **Opportunities/Challenges:**

- Need more staff (+1) for current workload and growing services areas (i.e., digital collection, younger patrons, and Adult Desk)
- Revive (or reinvigorate) the Young Friends
- Reorganize the collection (reduce Reference space, expand Teen/Young Adult)

➤ **Threats:**

- If future budget cuts affect staffing or collection development.

Organization and Staffing

The Adult Department is directed by the Adult Services Department Head, who reports to the Library Director. This position is a member of the EOL senior management team.

Staff assigned to the Adult Department includes the following four full-time and two part-time positions (plus one shared with IT) that are assigned to Adult, Reference, and Teen/Young Adults programs, or about five full-time equivalent positions, assuming part-time = .5 FTE. Each position has general duties in these programs, Adult Desk duty, and specially-assigned duties that are listed, with overall time allocations, per responses on the Mercer questionnaires. The department head says she has an “awesome team.”

- **Adult Services Department Head** (Full-time, MLS required): Her time is devoted to five main activities: department administration, program planning, collection development, reference/reader advice, and external relationships (JCLC and state library association). Special duties include liaison to the Friends of the Library, planning programs and book group meetings, and managing the collection for adult fiction and non-fiction, large print books, magazines, and databased and reference materials.
- **Reference Librarian** (Full-time, MLS or MLIS required): Most of her time is devoted to the Adult Desk (40%), as well as collection development and programs. In addition, she appears to act as an informal #2 to the department head. Special duties include supporting patrons doing research, teaching Senior Surfing class, managing adult lease orders, managing publicity on Bham365, maintaining Better World Books, and managing the collection for journals, blogs, and industry publications.
- **Young Adult Librarian** (Full-time, MLS or MLIS required): Most of his time is devoted to the Adult Desk (30%); Young Adults (7th through 12th grades) and the associated collection and programs (45%). Special duties include liaison to a very active Teen Advisory Board, the Teen Summer Reading program, teen and young adult programs, and maintaining the collection for teen books, magazines, audio books, e-books, etc.
- **Research Library Assistant II** (Full-time, BA or BS required): Her time is devoted to reference and computer assistance at the Adult Desk (40%), as well as programs and book clubs, monthly publicity, and the audio-visual (A/V) collection. Special duties include managing the Standing Room Only (SRO) program for *20 and 30 Somethings*, creating the Adult Department calendar and program flyers, managing the Constant Contact account, managing adult audio-visual materials, liaison to local book groups, and maintaining library social media.
- **Adult Services Assistant** (BA or BS required) (Two part-time positions): Both of these positions assist at the Adult Desk, as well as work with the Adult collection, specifically the large print collection and magazine and newspaper subscriptions.
- **Library Assistant II** (.25 FTE in Adult and .75 in IT): For the Mercer study, this position is counted in IT, not Adult (to avoid double counting of positions). Her role in the Adult Department includes the Adult Desk and public computers.

Special Skills of the staff include creativity and craftiness (knit, sew, quilt), public speaking and emceeding events, poetry, music and film, and explaining things to patrons.

Per Exhibit 3a, the **Adult Department increased from two full-time positions in 1998 to three when the new building opened in 2001 to four full-time, two part-time positions, and one shared position (.25) in 2013. Why?** Over the past sixteen years, particularly with the move to the new building, the department head indicates:

- Adult space increased proportionally to the overall library (more than doubled), with the addition of study and quiet rooms/areas and a significant expansion of public computers.
- Adult continued to operate a single service desk, but with more walk-in customers and reference questions each day.
- The Adult collection increased not just proportionally to the overall library (20%), but more due to the addition of digital materials (downloadable books, audio books, music, and magazines).
- Adult circulation increased not just proportionally to the overall library (doubled), but non-book and digital materials tripled.
- Reference, computers, and other questions doubled.
- Teen and Young Adult programs and collections have exploded with a full-time position spending much of his time supporting teens with the help of the Teen Board. A revival of the Young Friends group is coming.

The **Adult department head would like an additional, full-time Library Assistant II in the future** for more desk coverage, maintenance of the digital collections, reorganization of programming and publicity, outreach to community groups and businesses, and collection development and weeding.

In practice, Adult staff are assigned desk duty and special duties (e.g., management of a part of the collection), and work rather independently. Staff appears to adhere to their work plans and task lists assigned by the department head.

Organization and Staffing issues and challenges identified by Mercer include:

- Keeping up with the demand for services and programs by teens and young adults.
- Constant need to adjust work schedules due to time off on Comp Time.
- Watch Information Technology's needs for and use of the shared position.
- Expand staff training on EOL policies, procedures, and goals and objectives.
- Need a graphic designer for flyers, brochures, calendars (now one person's side job).
- Comprehensive orientation program for new staff and ongoing training thereafter.
- Improve intra-department and cross-library communications.
- Develop rewards for a group that has limited opportunity for advancement.
- Part-time staff does not receive performance evaluations.

Operations Management

Major operational issues and challenges identified by Mercer include:

- **2014-2015 Goals:** The department head outlined specific goals and objectives for Adult services and programs, including some creative new program ideas, such as programs for Millennials. Other 2014-2015 goals are:
 - Keep programs at a manageable level for current staff and allow plenty of time to plan events (which doesn't always happen with new events that pop up)
 - Manage the collection to tighten it up, as well as use floor space better
 - Be more creative in developing the collection and seek greater "freedom" and "flexibility" from higher ups to innovate rather than just following tradition (i.e., more DVDs, Blue Rays, and music).
 - Enhance department training and develop an orientation program for new staff, particularly for those new to a public library.
 - Create some time to focus, retreat, and think.

- **Facility:** The Adult Department collection occupies the entire 2nd floor and much of the main/1st floor. The department has collection development and weeding programs and is looking for ways to expand the young adult collection in response to heavy use, perhaps by reducing space for reference materials that are seldom used and are available digitally. Staff thinks the Friends space in the basement can be better used for ongoing services and storage of overflow materials for departments (see the Friends section in Chapter III).
Parking limitations were cited, particularly for events and programs.

- **Adult Desk:** The desk is located on the 2nd floor by the stairs. The department, unlike other departments, has a desk schedule. Most staff spends 40-50% of their time rotating through the Adult Desk. The area around the desk and stairs is said to be noisy.

- **Staff Duties:** Mercer's questionnaire shows staff apply a high percentage of their skills and experience (80-100%), most staff time is devoted to priority A and B work, job descriptions are up-to-date, and backlogs are limited (hours to a few days).

- **Scheduling:** A scheduling issue is the difficulty in filling schedule slots due to the need to use up Comp Time earned due to programs (often awarded at double-time).

- **Holds:** The hold policy for new books is unusual in the JCLC. For about six months, new books are kept on the shelf and can be checked out only by walk-in patrons and are not eligible for inter-library loan (although the same books can be ordered from other JCLC libraries by EOL patrons). Staff gets pressure on this issue from other libraries.

- **Other Issues:** Dealing with malware and spyware on high-use public computers. Getting more grants to support programs and events. Figuring out what to do with "stuff" stored in the basement.

Recommendations

20. Adult Services Department

- a) **Strategic Direction** (Also See Chapter III, Strategic Direction): The department needs to work on developing a department-level mission statement that is compatible with the library's mission.

Specifically, Adult staff needs to consider what limits or priorities need to be put on service and program growth considering funds available. The suggested community survey would assist in the limiting/prioritization process, as well as in defining a vision for library services and programs over the next twenty years.

Staff has a lot of good ideas for goals and objectives, but these need to be refined and linked (Goals = 3-5 years and Objectives = 1-2 years in support of specific goals).

- b) **Organization and Staffing** (Also see Chapter III, Management): The Adult Department is close to its optimal staffing level considering current responsibilities and programs. Instead of adding a position, as staff suggests, Mercer recommends a more diligent review of priorities as discussed above to align staffing with responsibilities. This review likely will result in dropping or not scheduling some services that although nice may not be critical to meeting community needs.

Comp Time, performance evaluations, training, and rewards are discussed in Chapter III, Resource Management-Human Resources.

The evolution of the Information Technology Department resulted in the sharing of a Library Assistant II position with the Adult Department. The EOL Director should watch time utilization of this position across the departments to ensure the 75% IT and 25% Adult remains optimal.

Departmental management practices appear to foster a positive work environment and close staff relationships. Well done!

- c) **Operations Management** (Also see Chapter III, Resource Management): Although a wonderful facility, the library has some weaknesses (space, storage, noise) as discussed in Chapter III. We applaud the aggressive weeding program in the Adult Department to reprioritize and open up shelf space.

Public computers are numerous and highly-used, causing maintenance issues. The Makerspace is next door. Because these IT resources are located on the second floor, the adult desk is the natural place to seek help in their operation. IT and Adult should develop an operations and maintenance plan for both space and equipment.

C. CHILDREN’S DEPARTMENT

The EOL Children’s Department is responsible for services and programs for children from birth through elementary school. Children’s space and resources are located at the back of the 1st floor and include a program room and two tutor rooms. Children’s programs also are presented in the library’s large conference room.

Findings

Strategic Direction

Issues and challenges relating to the strategic direction of the department include:

- **Mission:** Mission understanding, both at the EOL and department levels, is a mixed bag. Per the Mercer questionnaires, several employees are not sure what it is and others list certain elements (e.g., “provide information, education, literacy, love of reading, center of the community”), but not a complete mission statement.

The department head says the mission is “to provide the highest quality of service to our community and to meet the educational, cultural, and social needs of our patrons.”

- **Vision:** Most departmental staff members lack a clear understanding of the EOL or department vision statements. Common visional elements in responses to Mercer questionnaires are:
 - New technology
 - Continue to serve
 - Community-focused
 - Programs drawing all ages
- **Values:** Staff members lack a clear understanding of EOL organizational values and say they had no input into developing a Values Statement (if there is one).
- **Goals and Objectives:** Goals (3+ years) and Objectives (one year) seem to be used interchangeably in responses to the Mercer questionnaire. Several staff members listed the following as goals or objectives;
 - Continue, increase, or create new programs of the highest quality
 - Keep up with technology, including the Makerspace, Internet presence, e-books, and online services
 - Enhance the collection (books and non-books), specifically by increasing movies and music

Department-specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities/challenges, and threats expressed by multiple staff members in questionnaires and interviews are listed below. Ideas expressed by a single staff member are not included in this list.

➤ **Strengths:**

- Programs
- Collection
- Library as a gathering place/community center
- Staff knowledge and experience
- Materials and resources
- Use of technology
- Community involvement

➤ **Weaknesses:**

- Need to cull out/weed books, particularly picture books and non-fiction
- Need to improve customer service skills and collection knowledge of some staff
- Sign-out process for part-time employees is cumbersome
- Need to apply EOL and department rules to all employees on a consistent basis
(Note: This appears to be a unique issue at the time the surveys were distributed and is now resolved per our follow-up interview with the Children's head)

➤ **Opportunities:**

- Improve space use (e.g., more bookcases or end cases, expanding Children's shelf space on 1st floor, organize materials based on patrons)
- Greater outreach and involvement in schools and day care centers (e.g., on-site programs and services)
- Have a library in each village

➤ **Threats:**

- Budget cuts
- Losing support from the Library Board, Library Foundation, and City Council
- Program reductions

Organization and Staffing

The Children's Department is allocated five full-time, two part-time, and two temporary or seasonal positions, or about 6.5 full-time equivalent positions assuming part-time = .5 FTE and temporary/seasonal = .25 FTE. The role, duties, and time allocation of each position, per responses on the Mercer questionnaire, are shown below:

- **Children's Department Head** (requires an MLS degree): Reports to the Library Director and is a member of the EOL senior management team. Responsible for overall management of the department, as well as developing and implementing programs, collection development, management of the department, customer service, liaison to the JWC and Friends, and coordination with volunteers per the Mercer Questionnaire.
- **Children's Librarian** (requires an MLS or MLIS degree): Responsible for customer service/desk duty (50%), collection management (e.g., weeding), planning and implementing elementary school programs and summer reading program (focus on 3rd-6th grades), and liaison to Mountain Brook schools,
- **Children's Assistant** (requires a four-year degree): Two full-time and one part-time position in this classification. One full-time position is responsible for desk duty (75%), special programs for families, and Story Time; the other for customer service/desk duty (55%), summer reading program, other programs, collection development (non-fiction, DVDs, Play Away), Story Time, and publicity/online presence.

The part-time position works about 19 hours per week and is responsible for publicity (45%), desk duty (30%), programs and outreach (30%), and collection development for DVDs and Easy Reader (15%).

- **Library Assistant II** (requires a bachelor's degree): One full-time, one part-time, and two temporary summer positions in this classification. The full-time position is responsible for desk help (about 50% of her time), collection management (i.e., deletions and statistics), SNAP program, bibliographies and book displays,

Part-time and temporary positions are responsible primarily for desk duty, but also for assisting with programs and materials. The part-time positions works about 19 hours per week and the temporary position(s) work 19 hours per week (if two positions) or 40 hours per week (if one position) in the summer (June through September).

Special Skills of the staff include performing musician, arts and crafts, theater and improvisation, storytelling, teaching and child development, event organization, and computers.

Department-level Organization and Staffing findings, issues, and challenges identified by Mercer are:

- Library personnel rules may not be uniformly enforced or applied across the department's workforce. (Note: This issue was expressed by ½ of the Children's Department employees in their surveys)
- Work load may not be well-balanced among employees, perhaps due to qualifications and capabilities of some employees. (Note: This issue also was expressed by ½ of the Children's Department employees).
- The knowledge and customer service skills of some employees may need to be improved to effectively serve patrons during desk duty.

(Note: The above three bullets are issues unique to the time the surveys were distributed and per the Children's department head are now resolved).

- There is limited opportunity for advancement (Note Mercer's comment in other places in the report on this recurring issue in small organizations).
- There is limited time for personal growth and enhancement of collection knowledge due to work load.
- Performance Evaluations are not completed for part-time employees, which is a library-wide issue.
- Work backlogs are limited (a few hours to a few days).
- Job descriptions are being re-written at the present time.
- Only two task transfers are suggested in the Mercer questionnaire:
 - Employee Newsletter (to Administration)
 - Playaways (from Technical Services)

Operations Management

Mercer was impressed by EOL's services and programs for children. Our library consultant noted that:

- Families flock to the library for Story Time.
- Children's programs are supported by community volunteers and donor funds.
- The children's collection is strong, especially in the area of picture books.
- Children's staff provides outstanding, age-appropriate programs.
- There is a strong sense that this library is sought out by residents in Mountain Brook and nearby communities for its excellent programs for children.

Mercer identified the following Operations Management findings, issues, and challenges relating to the Children's Department:

- Covering the desk is a challenge due to the workload for programs and outreach, as well as because of the lack of a formal desk schedule (except for lunches).
- Part-time employees (in Children's and EOL generally) object to the sign-out process (i.e., need to find a department head to be released at the end of a shift). Some say it is demeaning or insulting. One person suggests a time clock as an alternative.
- Parking is an issue, particularly when EOL sponsors a major program.
- The collection meets the needs of most patrons. However, some children's materials must be stored in overflow space in the basement, weeding needs to be expanded, and some elements of the collection (e.g., DVDs and music) could be expanded.
- Policies are said to be applied unevenly (e.g., scheduling, work week structure, disciplinary needs/corrective actions).
- Potential for more outreach to Day Care Center (transportation to EOL may be difficult and expensive for these centers).

Recommendations

21.Children’s Department

- a) **Strategic Direction** (also see Chapter III, Strategic Direction): Improve communication of the EOL mission and create a mission statement for the Children’s Department, perhaps modeled on the thoughts in the employee questionnaires (“provide information, education, literacy, love of reading, and a center of the community”... to Mountain Brook’s children).

Create a 2025 vision statement for Children’s Department, again using words in the questionnaires (“new technology, community-focused, continue to serve, programs drawing all ages), with associated goals (3+ years) and objectives (1 year) to accomplish the vision in a step-by-step manner.

Develop department-level values that link to the EOL’s overall list of values.

- b) **Organization and Staffing** (also see Chapter III, Management): Like Adult, Children’s needs to continuously balance opportunities to serve with resource needs.

As noted in questionnaires, Children’s should review and work down issues listed in Mercer Findings under Organization & Staffing and Operations Management.

- c) **Operations Management** (also see Chapter III, Resource Management): Create a schedule for the Children’s Desk, with that task a primary priority of the department.

The library generally should review the part-time sign out process.

As part of the Community Needs Assessment suggested in other parts of the report, the needs and value of Day Care Center outreach should be addressed within resource capabilities.

See Chapter III-Facilities Management for recommendations on parking and facility use.

D. CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

The EOL Circulation Department is responsible for processing books and other materials in and out of the library, staffing the Circulation Desk, running back room operations (e.g., drop-off stations), stocking the shelves, and administering holds for customer pickup.

Findings

Strategic Direction

Issues and challenges relating to the strategic direction of the department include:

- **Mission:** Although a few Circulation employees pointed to the mission statement in the Employee Handbook, most employees do not have a clear understanding of the EOL or Circulation missions or identify the mission with more general statements or listing activities, such as:
 - Provide high quality service
 - Help patrons meet cultural, social, and educational needs
 - Circulate materials in/out
 - Organize materials
 - Re-shelve materials
- **Vision:** Again, employees are not clear on the library's long-term vision, typically responding with lists of activities or general statements (e.g., keep up with technology, be the best library in Alabama).
- **Values:** Two-thirds of Circulation employees indicate the library does not have a formal values statement, saying it is not posted and no employees had input is there is one. As noted earlier, however, values are clearly listed in the Employee Handbook!
- **Goals and Objectives:** Circulation employees agree on the following 3-5 year goals and one-year objectives:
 - Keep up with the latest technology and library trends (e.g., provide more Kindles and Nooks to check out)
 - Increase outreach to adults, finding new ways for the community to interact with the library

Department-specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities/challenges, and threats expressed by multiple staff members in questionnaires and interviews are listed below. Ideas expressed by a single staff member are not included in this list.

➤ **Strengths:**

- Circulation staff members are professionals and good to work with
- The library as a community gathering place (i.e., the building is interesting and inviting)
- Children's Department and summer reading program
- The collection
- Resources for students

➤ **Weaknesses (and Areas for Improvements):**

- Need more check out stations (and higher use of Self-Check)
- Lack of consistency in policies and procedures, particularly enforcement of library policies (e.g., fees and waivers, fees for late return of DVDs)
- Release new books to inter-library loans instead of holding them to walk-ins for six months
- Continue to weed the collection to open up shelf space

➤ **Opportunities (and Challenges):**

- Weed more
- Expand social media promotion of the library
- More music CDs, movie DVDs, and e-books (with remote access)

➤ **Threats:**

- Lack of City funding or donations
- Lack of public support for the library
- Lack of staff

Organization and Staffing

The Circulation Department is assigned six full-time and 5.25 part-time positions, or about 8.5 FTEs:

- **Department Head:** Responsible both for management of the Circulation Department and EOL's building maintenance function, including custodial work.
- **Library Assistant II (LA II):** Five full-time and .25 of a full-time who is shared with Technical Services (see Technical Services for discussion of the role of this position).
- **Library Assistant I (LA I):** Five part-time, who are the equivalent of about 2.25 full-time positions (four working 19 hours per week and one working 15 hours per week).

Organization and Staffing issues and challenges identified by Mercer include:

- **Compensation:** Circulation staff has degrees, but are paid less than other professionals in the library. Makes them feel less valued.
- **Special Skills:**
 - Computers
 - Public Relations
 - Theater
 - Policy and training manuals
 - Social media
 - Graphic design using Publisher
 - Public speaking
 - Journalism
 - Build and fix things
- **Job Descriptions:** Up-to-date and accurately reflect assigned duties.
- **Backlogs:** Minimal, except for video contracts.
- **Transfers:** Minimal or none needed. But, the department head has some responsibility for facility maintenance, which does not appear to interfere with her primary duties.
- **Job Duty Analysis:** The role of the department head includes responsibility for the building and purchasing of general supplies (50% of her time).

Library Assistant II positions spend 60-65% of their time at the Circulation Desk; Library Assistant I positions spend the same amount of time in the collection (i.e., shelving).
- **Scheduling:** Many part-time employees attend college, meaning the library has to schedule around their classes rather than vice versa. The department has a goal of two people at the Circulation Desk at all times, which could be an LA II and LA I or two LA IIs. Other staff on duty include at least one person in the back room and one for the shelves.

Operations Management

Operations Management issues and challenges identified by Mercer include:

- **Circulation Desk:** As noted earlier, Circulation staff operates the circulation desk at the entrance to the library and the department aims to have two full-time people available at all times to assist patrons (or one full-time and one part-time).

Circulation does not have a formal desk schedule to guide them, but know who's at work and what they are doing. The schedule, therefore, revolves around who work and when they work. The Circulation department head says this level of scheduling is adequate.

- **Circulation System:** The Sierra system from the JCLC is said to work well by staff, but several issues were identified by a significant number of employees:
 - The use of date cards with manually entered return dates is old “technology”
 - Issuance of a receipt from the Sierra system is optional
 - Most regional libraries use RFID technology instead of date cards
 - There is potential value in adding a second self-check computer
 - The self-check computer (or system), however, can be “finicky”
- **Self-Check:** While there is a self-check machine available, Circulation staff is readily available so it is easy for patrons to choose the full-service option. Library and Circulation staff says that patron prefer face-to-face interaction with desk staff rather than using the self-check machine. Current library best practices, however, encourage a goal of 80% to 90% of circulation accomplished via self-check.
- **Policies and Procedures:** Although Circulation procedures are written down and a Sierra system manual from JCLC is available, staff says:
 - The *Onboarding* process for new staff is informal
 - The limits of staff authority need better definition
 - Should Circulation or Adult be responsible for holds?
 - Some EOL materials have the wrong phone number (not the main #)
 - Late fees for videos are 3x other materials and may discourage return if the item is very late
 - Information may not be communicated effectively to part-time employee who may not be scheduled on the day of a staff meeting
- **Facility:** Several staff members note that the area around the Circulation Desk is a bit crowded, particularly for patron movement. Should the catalog and/or large print shelves be moved?

Recommendations

23. Circulation Department

- a) **Strategic Direction** (also see Chapter III, Strategic Direction): As in other departments, refresh staff's understanding of the EOL mission and created a Circulation Department mission statement. Do the same with vision, values, goals, and objectives.
- b) **Organization and Staffing** (also see Chapter III, Management): As discussed in Chapter III, review the assignment of Facilities Management duties to the head of the Circulation Department.
- c) **Operations Management** (also see Chapter III, Resource Management): As discussed in Chapter III, increase the use of self-check by patrons, which may, over time, allow a Circulation Desk staff of one person.

Review comments under Findings on staff-identified issues with Sierra, most important being the use of physical date cards and the future value of implementing an RFID system.

Also review comments under Findings on policies and procedures, most important being administration of holds, authority limits, and the phone number.

Related to the use of the building that was discussed in Chapter III, rethink the use of space around the Circulation Desk to improve patron flow.

E. TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Findings

The Technical Services Department is responsible for ordering, receiving, in-processing, cataloging, and accounting for collection and material purchases, including books, DVDs, A/Vs, other collection materials, and library supplies. In partnership, the Adult and Children's Departments determine what materials are needed in the collection (additions and deletions), Technical Services acquires these materials, and Circulation shelves them and signs them in and out. As such, Technical Services is the non-public element of EOL's collection management process.

Strategic Direction

Issues and challenges relating to the strategic direction of the department include:

- **Mission:** Technical Services staff does not have a clear understanding of the EOL mission, although they do understand their department's role within the mission. Mission elements cited include serving the community with materials and services and the library as a gathering place.
- **Vision:** Most employees are not clear on the long-term vision, but do understand EOL needs to keep the library relevant to Mountain Brook citizens and to keep up with technology.
- **Values:** Only the department head had knowledge of organizational values. Other employees could not identify a formal values statement (in documents or posted) and do not see that staff was involved in values creation (if there are values). Organizational values, however, seem to be lived across the department. See Chapter III, Survey Results, for more information on values.
- **Goals and Objectives:** Some staff members are not aware of any goals and objectives, with one asking, "What are the Director's goals?" A few list apparent goals and objectives in the employee questionnaire, including:
 - Keep up with the changing role of libraries
 - Keep materials current and operate efficiently (getting materials ordered, in-processed, and on the shelves quickly)

A common goal expressed by Technical Services staff is to create a second full-time position in the department.

Department-specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities/challenges, and threats expressed by multiple staff members in questionnaires and interviews are listed below. Ideas expressed by a single staff member are not included in this list.

➤ **Strengths:**

- Weeding and culling the collection to meet community needs
- Innovative programs and services, particularly for kids
- Serving as a community gathering and meeting place

➤ **Weaknesses (and Areas for Improvements):**

- Need to improve communications between departments (silos?)
- Technical Services is a bit isolated working in the basement
- Need to create a second full-time position in the department
- Adult and Children's Departments need to spread out orders across the year to even out Technical Services' workload

➤ **Opportunities (and Challenges):**

- Create a five-year plan that updates the mission, vision, values, strategies, goals, and objectives
- Better internal communications
- Reduce the number of reference books

➤ **Threats:**

- Cuts in funding
- Changing trends in information availability may have a negative impact on library use (e.g., e-books and Internet access to materials rather than via EOL)
- Loss of community support

Organization and Staffing

The Technical Services Department is assigned the following single full-time and five part-time or shared positions, which are equivalent to about 3.6 FTEs. A detailed list of job duties by staff member are included in the job descriptions for each position.

- **Department Head** (requires MLS from ALA accredited school): Reports to the Library Director and is a member of the EOL senior management team. Major responsibilities are department management, as well as accounting (35%), cataloging (25%), acquisitions (20%), and database management (15%).
- **Library Assistant II – Full-time** (requires a two-year degree): This position works 67% to 80% (various percentages are cited in interviews) in Technical Services and in Circulation the rest of the time. Major responsibilities in Technical Services are paying invoices (30%), ordering materials (25%), receiving materials (20%), and reconciling accounts (15%).
- **Library Assistant II – Two Part-time** (requires a high school diploma or GED):
 - 1) Works 19 hours per week. Major responsibilities are processing children's materials (59%) and add/delete the same items in the catalog system (20%).
 - 2) Works 19 hours per week. Major responsibilities are processing adult and young adult materials (60%) and add/delete same the materials in the catalog.
- **Technical Services Assistant – Two Part-time** (requires a high school diploma or GED):
 - 1) Works 19 hours per week. Major responsibilities are create computer records for materials (40%), receive new materials (35%), and process new materials (15%).
 - 2) Works 15 hours per week (formerly 21 hours). Major responsibilities are clean damaged disks (45%) and label CDs and DVDs (45%).

Organization and Staffing findings, issues, and challenges identified by Mercer include:

- The department head spends 35% of her time on accounting for materials purchases by categories (e.g., Adult, Children’s, and special collections) and sub-categories (e.g., non-fiction, fiction, and A/V). This function formerly was performed by a full-time accounting position in Administration, which now is part-time.
- All staff members are well-trained and seem dedicated to meeting department and library goals and objectives.
- Staff members note the importance of transitioning the 75-80% Library Assistant II to a full-time position in Technical Services.
- Communications are said to be good unless something happens (e.g., hiring or a new program) between monthly staff meetings. In between news travels the “grapevine.” Monthly staff meetings are said to be “brief” and focused on “news,” not issues and challenges.
- Respect and Support is said to be “excellent” by the department head, but declines farther down the management and policy-maker chain. Board members and staff in other departments have little interaction with staff in Technical Services (the Basement Syndrome).
- Special Skills include accounting, teaching, and dance and theater.
- Job descriptions are up-to-date and accurately describe requirements and duties.
- Backlogs are limited, except that it takes up to two weeks to in-process non-critical materials and get them on the shelf (see Operations Management that follows).
- Transfers to/from other EOL staff are limited (i.e., circulation reports to Circulation, equipment trouble-shooting to IT, and catalog updates from Adult and Children’s as done in the past), except for the accounting duties of the department head.
- A very high percentage of time (94% to 100%) is spent on Priority A and B activities.
- Few job openings at EOL mean limited opportunities for career advancement.
- Some staff indicate a need to improve the disciplinary process (i.e., said to be inconsistent person-to-person).
- No performance evaluations, or raises (COLA only), for part-time employees. Some full-time positions have not had evaluations recently.
- No formal salary structure. Hard to reclassify (been requesting for years). Only get COLA raises.

Operations Management

Operations Management findings, issues, and challenges identified by Mercer include:

- This department is responsible for ordering and processing materials. Our impression is that this is a very efficient, effective unit that is meeting self-imposed goals.
- Staff is extremely committed to moving the inventory quickly to the shelf, particularly to make sure they get new “hot” materials to the shelf by the sell date. This is a tremendous customer service victory. People are really pleased when new books are on the shelf the day they arrive in the book store.
- The department has defined guidelines and procedures for cataloging and processing all formats and all types of materials.
- The library does all cataloging and the majority of the processing in-house. They do not outsource these functions to vendors. Technical Services is the Keeper of the Catalog, but the Adult and Children’s Department have a formal mechanism for communicating updates or corrections as needed to Technical Services. Most of these changes are minor (e.g., coding).
- The department manager tracks spending and makes sure all orders are accounted for. Spreadsheets (in Excel) are used to track material spending by categories and sub-categories as noted earlier. This duty formerly was the responsibility of a full-time Accountant position.
- Technical Services has asked Adult and Children’s Departments to spread out material orders across the year to balance workload in Technical Services, with a limited or non-response so far.
- Sierra transition lacked technical support (e.g., staff had to load the system on their computers) and limited training.
- Technical Services first tries to solve equipment and computer problems, then calls in IT. They’d like IT to do more.
- JCLC systems support has declined as financial support is reduced.
- Part-time sign-out procedures are problematic.
- Parking is said to be an issue, but improved as there now are dedicated spaces for staff.
- Micro-management by higher ups was cited by two employees.

Recommendations

24. Technical Services Department

- a) **Strategic Direction** (also see Chapter III, Strategic Direction): Like other departments, Technical Services staff needs a refresher course on EOL mission and values, as well as needs to define a department-specific mission statement, goals, objectives, and performance measures.
- b) **Organization and Staffing** (also see Chapter III, Management): The transfer of accounting duties to the department has had a major impact on staff workload in Technical Services. The call for a full-time Library Assistant II may derive from the 35% time lost for accounting duties. We discussed shifting or role-sharing this responsibility to EOL Finance in Chapter III, Resource Management.

We understand the desire of Technical Services to have a second full-time position as backup to the department head and for catalog maintenance. Shifting the remaining 25% to 30% of the LA II fully to Technical Services would have to be worked out with Circulation to ensure they have adequate coverage, but may require all accounting duties to stay in Technical Services (with an added .25 FTE of staff time).

Many of the other organizational and staffing issues (communications, career advancement, disciplinary process, salary structure, performance evaluations) have been addressed in other parts of the report.

- c) **Operations Management** (also see Chapter III, Resource Management): Review and address various Operations Management issues identified under Findings.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter of the report presents an Implementation Process, Schedule, and Issues and Challenges to support implementation of recommendations in the Mercer Report.

A. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The Implementation Process began early in the project as the consultant met with the Library Boards, EOL and City management, and EOL staff during fact finding activities and the review of preliminary ideas. The process continued as we presented and reviewed the Draft Reports. The process to implement the recommendations is based on a structure of Oversight and Management, Technical Actions and Coordination, and Monitoring and Reporting.

Oversight and Management

The **Library Director** is the natural person to manage and oversee the implementation process and periodically report to the Library Board, City Council, and City Manager. Her role should include:

- General oversight of implementation actions.
- Facilitation of meetings and reports.
- Policy development, review, and decisions.
- Contract and agreement review and approval.
- Finance and budgeting.
- Communications and public information.

Technical Actions and Coordination

In support of the Library Director, the library's five department heads should serve as the **Implementation Management Committee** for the assessment. This group would be responsible for:

- Development of detailed implementation plans, as needed.
- Supplemental analyses that may be required.
- Management and tracking of progress in implementing recommendations.
- Development and implementation of new policies, organization and staffing plans, work processes, business practices, etc.
- Interagency and interdepartmental coordination.
- Measurement and presentation of budgetary impacts and changes.
- Development of implementation activity and performance reports to the Library Director.

Similarly, the Library Director, as needed, would organize **Technical Committees for Specific Recommendations**. These committees would include the EOL managers and employees required for implementation of specific recommendation. These committees would have duties similar to the Implementation Management Committee.

Reporting and Monitoring

The Library Director and Implementation Management Committee would receive reports from the Technical Committees then provide quarterly Status/Progress Reports to the Library Board for review and action.

These **Quarterly Reports** should cover:

- Progress to date on the implementation of the various recommendations.
- Issues, obstacles, and changing situations affecting implementation.
- Work accomplished and performance against agreed upon implementation standards and schedules.
- Upcoming activities in the quarter to follow.

The Library Director would incorporate these reports into **Quarterly Reports to the Library Board and to the Mayor and City Council** until all recommendations are implemented.

B. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The following **implementation issues and constraints** need to be resolved to ensure the community makes progress on implementing recommendations in the Mercer Report.

Library Board

- Ensure the EOL Strategic Direction is clear and staff fully understands their roles and citizen expectations.
- MORE!

Library Director

- Organize the implementation effort.
- MORE!

Department Heads

- Work with department staff to address and implement department-level recommendations
- Review/update EOL departmental mission statements and values to ensure all employees understand and buy into them.
- Resolve any employee survey or questionnaire issues within their control.
- MORE!

C. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND SCORECARD

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan will be developed and inserted into the Final Report after review and discussion of the Draft Report with the EOL Director and department heads.

Major implementation actions are identified on **Exhibit 8** that follows in Chapter VI. For each action item the plan identifies:

- A Reference to the page in the text where the recommendation is discussed,
- A priority Ranking,
- A suggested Completion Date,
- The person(s) primarily responsible for implementation of each recommendations,
- Comments and explanations, and
- Costs and/or Savings.

Key implementation actions and timetables are highlighted below:

- Track and take action on EOL-controlled issues and opportunities in the employee surveys and questionnaires by the summer of 2015 and reapply the surveys in late 2016 or early 2017 to measure progress.
- Update the EOL mission, vision, and values, and define goals, objectives, and performance measures related to the mission by the middle of 2015.
- MORE!

Recommendations

25.Implementation: In the very near future, set up the implementation process (management, committees) as detailed earlier. Then, review, fine-tune, and follow the draft Implementation Plan, giving periodic status reports to the Library Board, City Manager, and the Mayor and City Council.

VI. EXHIBITS

This chapter of the report provides seven exhibits that provide data to support our findings and recommendations in the text of the report.

- **Exhibit 1: Results of the SWOT Assessment**
- **Exhibit 2: EOL Organization Plan**
- **Exhibit 3a: EOL Staffing History**
- **Exhibit 3b: EOL Staffing Projections (1996 Waters Study)**
- **Exhibit 4: Library's 2012-2017 Five-Year Plan of Service**
- **Exhibit 5: 2014-2017 Technology Plan**
- **Exhibit 6: Master Management Philosophy Profile**
- **Exhibit 7: Master Organizational Questionnaire**
- **Exhibit 8: Implementation Plan (in the Final Report)**

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- **Exhibit 5: 2014-2017 Technology Plan**
- **Exhibit 6: Master Management Philosophy Profile**
- **Exhibit 7: Master Organizational Questionnaire**
- **Exhibit 8: Implementation Plan (in the Final Report)**

Exhibit 1

RESULTS OF THE SWOT ASSESSMENT

The SWOT Assessment compiles findings from interviews with members of the Emmet O'Neal Library Board, Friends of the Library, Junior Women's Committee, Library Foundation, City officials, and Library employees in order to identify Emerging Issues and Challenges.

The assessment identifies:

- **Strengths:** Current strengths, areas of excellence, high-value services, areas receiving customer/stakeholder praise, and the like. These strengths should be protected and enhanced by the Management Study.
- **Weaknesses:** Current weaknesses, areas needing improvement, low-value services, areas receiving customer/stakeholder complaints, and the like. These weaknesses should be resolved or significantly improved by the Management Study.
- **Opportunities:** Opportunities are future opportunities, challenges, ideas, alternatives, and comparative examples that may be applicable to the Library. These opportunities should be incorporated into recommendations for future service expansions, enhancement, and reengineering by the Management Study.
- **Threats:** Threats are national, regional, and local threats that would cause the "wheels to fall off" and compromise the organization's ability to provide services per the expectations of the Library Board, city officials, customers and patrons, and stakeholders. These include national recessions; the impact of federal and state laws; natural disasters; resource shortages; facility and equipment limitations; loss of key employees, and the like.

When recording issues and ideas in the assessment, we look for themes across the entire group of interviewees, as well as lists for two sub-categories:

- **Library and City Officials and Stakeholders**, which includes the each member of the Library Board, the Chair of the Friends of the Library, the Chair of the Junior Women's Committee, the Chair of the Library Foundation (still to be interviewed), major patrons, and City officials and managers.
- **Library Employees**, including full-time and part-time positions in each library department.

1.) Overall SWOT Assessment with Key Ideas and Issues

The following key ideas and issues in each category are compiled from the longer list of stakeholder and employee concerns in the following sections based on the number of times each issue or idea is mentioned by different persons interviewed.

Major Current Strengths

- Valuable, high-quality, diverse library programs
- Community gathering place
- Committed and well-coordinated Library Board
- Support from Foundation, Friends, and Junior Women's Committee
- Skills, experience, and teamwork of library staff
- Breadth and depth of the collection

Major Current Weaknesses

- Need a long-term vision, broadened mission statement, updated values statement, and full-scope strategic plan for the library and its departments
- Better internal and external communications (top-to-bottom, side-to-side, library-to-city)
- Better definition and more equitable application of internal policies, procedures, systems, and controls
- Better use of an already cramped space (weeding, basement, parking, reference area, large print books)
- Increase the number of stations and use of self-checkout technology

Major Future Opportunities and Challenges

- Gather more feedback from the communities through surveys and focus groups, rather than word of mouth, to better define community interests and needs for library programs, elements of the collection, space use, and technology application
- Keep up with technology applications supporting library services (e-books, administrative, Makerspace, etc.)
- Succession planning (Director and two department heads can retire soon)
- Expand outreach and communications to better inform the community and schools of library offerings

Major Threats

- National recession affecting the local economy and city revenues
- Loss of support and funding from the City
- Loss of support from patrons and the Library Board
- Collapse of the JCLC, including the inter-library loan system and technology support

2.) Library and City Officials and Stakeholders

SWOT comments are listed below for the Library Board, Friends of the Library, Library Foundation, Junior Women's Committee, library patrons and donors, and City Officials (Council Liaison, City Manager, Finance Director, and IT Manager). Comments listed multiple times are at the top of each category and **bolded**.

Current Strengths

- **Valuable programs (e.g., Children, Teens, Summer Reading, Book Clubs)**
- **The Library as a community "gathering place"**
- **Well-educated and committed staff**
- **Responsive service to patrons**
- **Collection**
- **Community support and appreciation**
- **Communications (e.g., e-newsletters, flyers, brochures)**

- Library Board is visible and known to the community and staff
- Leadership (Board, Director, Department Heads)
- Staff is proactive, listens to patrons, watches library trends
- Funding from the City
- Relationship and communications with the City Council and City Manager
- Fundraising through the Friends and the Foundation
- Library-Schools relationship

Current Weaknesses

- **Long-range planning**
- Is the staffing level appropriate (comparing old to new building)?
- Parking can be a hassle
- Limited use of self-checkout at Circulation Desk
- What is the basis for staff salaries (not a part of the JCPB)?

Future Opportunities and Challenges

- **Keeping up with Technology (e.g., digital materials, Makerspace)**
- **Succession Planning for Director and two department heads**
- Communicate ALL that the Library does and offers (inventory services and programs)
- Keeping Teens and 20s involved in the library (expand Young Friends)
- Adequate administrative support services
- Food and drinks (Café?)

Threats

- **Future of JCLC programs like inter-library loans and software (funding problems)**
- **Declining funds from City and fundraising**

3.) Library Employees

Mercer interviewed the Director, all Department Heads, all full-time employees, and most part-time employees. The issues and ideas below are a compilation of all of these interviews.

Current Strengths

- **High-quality programs in Adult and Children's Departments**
- **Breadth of the Collection, as well as annual funding and weeding**
- **Knowledgeable, dedicated, friendly staff**
- **Gathering place (safe, nice place to hang out, aesthetic atmosphere, the "Hub")**
- **Responsive, friendly, and helpful service**
- **Support from the Foundation, Friends, and Junior Women's Committee**
- **Loyal patrons and community support**
- **Use of technology (current, staying relevant, Makerspace)**
- **The best local library and Children's Department (Summer Reading Program)**

- **City funding level**
- **Blue Ribbon Award**
- **Cross-department collaboration**
- **County-wide inter-library loan system**
- **Public relations and community outreach**
- **Good resources for students**
- **Reference and research assistance**
- **Story Tellers**
- **Programs support the developmental needs of kids**
- **Study Rooms (but not enough)**
- **Foster love of reading and learning**
- **Try new things**
- **Competitive salaries (some, but not all departments) and benefits**
- **Circulation system works well (but self-checkout has limited use)**

Current Weaknesses

- **Definition of “where the library should go” needs work (e.g., what to do with non-tradition elements of the collection)**
- **Staff communications (top-to-bottom, side-to-side, and to-from the City) relating to decisions, policies, changes made**
- **Management non-decisions (deferring)**
- **IT Manager is said to work like an Assistant Director (an old position that was eliminated) at times (e.g., attends job interviews, updates job descriptions)**
- **Space is maxed out even with rigorous weeding in most departments (Friends area in the basement is seen as “dead space” most of the year)**
- **Need in increase culling in the Children’s Department (has an overflow area in the basement)**
- **Inconsistent application of work rules, such as Comp Time (i.e., “favorites”?)**
- **Only one self-checkout station at Circulation Desk (other libraries said to have more), but current system is said to be “glitchy”**
- **Move to RFID system for checkout**
- **Increase hours for key part-time position in Technical Services (now about 75%)**
- **Need better noise control in lobby and entry corridor**
- **Only library that puts 6-month hold on new items to the EOL collection**
- **Need to expand outreach services to Day Cares and the community**
- **Spread material order throughout the year instead of in peaks**
- **Malware and spyware on public computers (do “funky” things)**

- **Provide the members of the Friends, Foundation, and JWC with a deeper understanding of how the library operates and the programs it offers**

- **Top-Down management, but not micromanaging**
- **Perceived or real favoritism across departments**

- **Who should do “holds” (Adult or Circulation)?**
- **Crowded shelves make it hard for patron to find books**
- **Dust on the shelves**

- **Need more/better IT help**
- **Increase the number of public computers**
- **Computers turn off at 5 PM (patron lost updates)**
- **Need a public fax machine**
- **Little need for Adult “Playaways”**
- **Need greater variety of e-books**

Current Weaknesses (continued)

- Lack of staff or too much staff department-to-department
- More staff needed for community outreach to schools, day cares
- Adding programs in mid-year without consultation when department staff is fully committed
- Need time to gain a better understanding of what's in the collection
- Scheduling driven by availability of PT staff
- PT staff may miss monthly staff meeting (How to keep them informed?)

- Simplify the payables process (some double entry)
- Expenses are being tracked on spreadsheets

- Parking shortage, particularly for events
- Update security system
- Wrong phone number on printed materials (not main #)
- Need better signage
- Need sturdier carts for shelving books

- Update Employee Handbook (2005 version in effect)
- Performance Evaluation process (e.g., add peer feedback, review PT people)
- Expand advertising for position openings
- Develop an employee grievance/complaint policy and process
- Lack of "deep" staff training after initial orientation (retraining and continuous education, library procedures)
- Lengthen department meetings beyond 30 minutes once a month
- Review department head scheduling on holidays and Friday (a fairness issue)
- Comp Time causes later days off, thereby stressing staff schedules
- How to deal with difficult employees?
- Why department head sign-off when staff member leaves for the day?
- Pay not fair (Is there a pay scale or plan?)
- PT employees not getting raises (only COLA)

Future Opportunities and Challenges

- **Get more feedback from the community via surveys and focus groups rather than by word of mouth**
- **Expand outreach and communication about library offerings, including to schools**
- **Expand self-checkout options and use**
- **Shrink reference books with increasing use of digital resources**
- **Expand the large print collection (#3 in circulation)**
- **Expand materials available for “paging”**
- **Weed more**
- **Create a Circulation policies and procedures manual**
- **Add staff in some departments (Teens and Graphic Designer in Adult)**
- **More equally apply policies (e.g., cell phone reimbursement, salaries, performance evaluations, comp time)**
- **Expand parking**

- **Better communication within staff and to Board, Friends, Foundation, JWC, and City**
- **Young Friends need a staff liaison**
- **Create more group study rooms**
- **Create a teen gathering space**
- **Develop a Coffee House/Cafe**
- **Develop a new employee orientation program (library and department levels)**
- **Use flat screen TVs to show library information and programs**
- **Provide i-pads for story time**
- **Develop Makerspace programs for K-6**
- **More book clubs for kids**
- **Close on Sundays**
- **4-day weeks with the option to skip lunch for all**
- **Increase display space**
- **Need a ramp by back door for loading and unloading**
- **Larger selection of music CDs and movie DVDs**
- **Increase use of Twitter and social media**
- **Refresher training on technology and policies/procedures**

Threats

- **Another recession or national economic slowdown**
- **Reduced financial support from the City and donors**
- **Loss of City, Library Board, or community support**
- **Failure or collapse of JCLC and inter-library loan system**
- **Reduction in programs and/or staff**
- **Natural disaster**

- **Removing or reducing service points in Adult, Children’s and Circulation**
- **Reductions in programs or staff**
- **Misunderstanding or misapplication of policies and procedures (need manuals)**

Exhibit 2

Emmet O'Neal Library Organizational Chart FY2013-2014

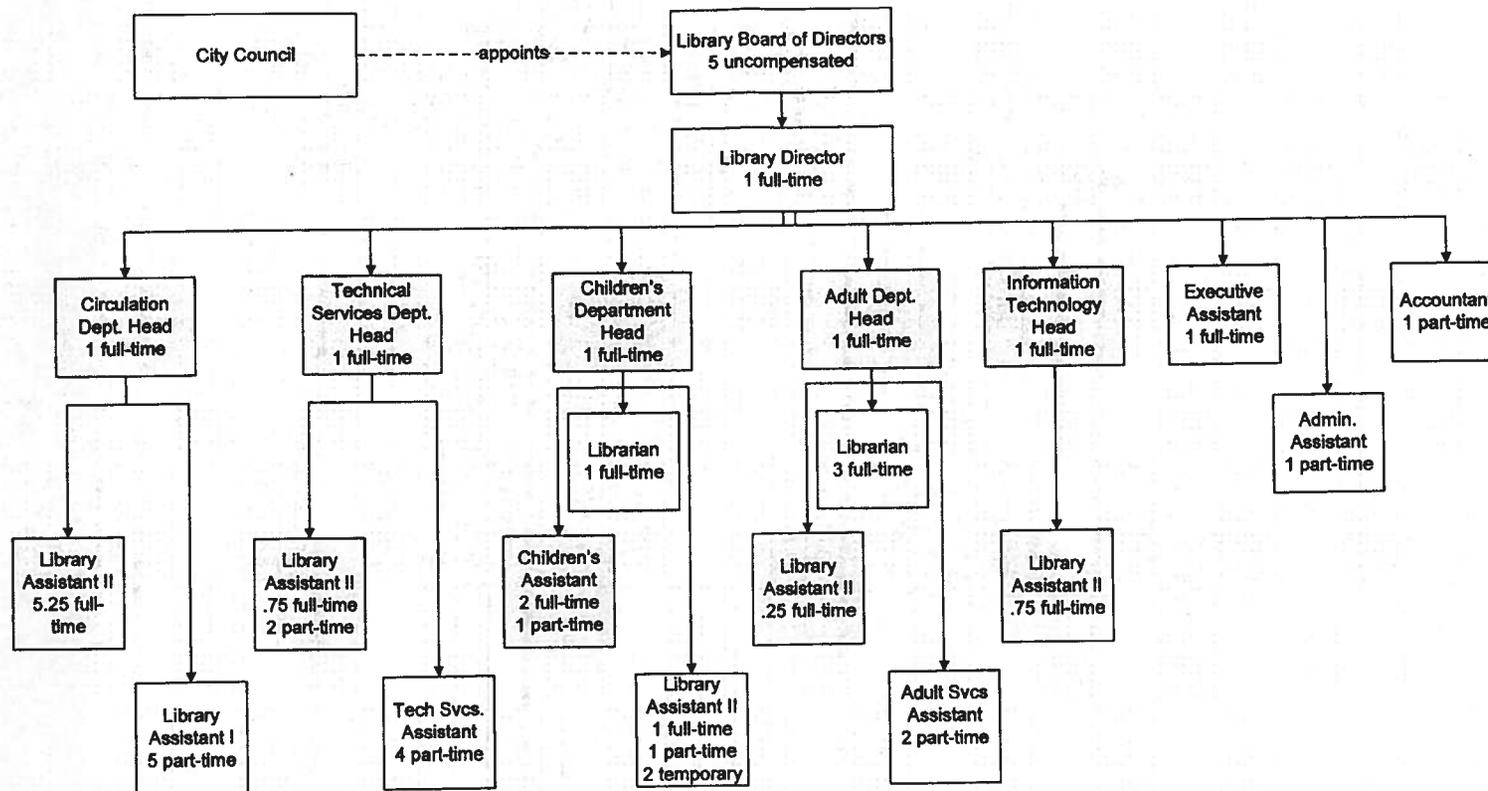


Exhibit 3a

Emmet O'Neal Library Staffing Profile

	1998	2013
Circulation FT	1 Agnesia	1 Agnesia
	2 Davis	2 Carden
	3 Donlevy (split with Adult)	3 Daughthee
	4 Llewelyn	4 McCarley
	5 Ross	5 McKinnon (split with TS)
	6 Slater (split with Adult and TS)	6 Morrison
	7 Young	7 Young
	8 VACANT	
Circulation PT	1 Branch	1 Hawkins
	2 Carr	2 Johnson
	3 Drennen	3 Kulovitz
	4 Moore	4 Williams
	5 Shep	5 Powell
IT FT		8 Eubank
Tech Services FT	9 Sexton	9 Sexton
	Slater (split with Adult and Circ)	McKinnon (split with Circ)
Tech Services PT	6 Bates-Watkins	6 Bates-Watkins
	7 Parrott	7 Beaver
	8 VACANT	8 Jones
		9 Bonnor
Childrens FT	10 Chambers	10 Angwin
	11 Moon	11 DeMedicis
		12 Herbert
		13 Melton
		14 Repolesk
Childrens PT	9-13 - 5 (Combined to make FF)	10 Carlisle
	14-15 - 2 VACANT	11 Stackpole
	16 - 1 (Summer)	12 Ingram (Summer)
		13 Olson (Summer)
Adult/Ref FT	Donlevy (split with Circ)	15 Layne
	Slater (split with Circ and TS)	16 Moellering
	12 Waterman	17 Wesley
		18 Westfall
Adult/Ref PT	17 VACANT	14 Donlevy
		15 Marx
Administration FT	15 DeBrecht	19 DeBrecht
	14 Hammack	20 Stewart
	15 Smathers	
Administration PT		16 Wilcutt
		17 VACANT
Maintenance	16 Johnson	*Frozen Position*
TOTAL	16 Full-Time	20 Full-Time
	20 Part-Time *	17 Part-Time
	*3 Work Study Students Unfilled	

**The Emmet O'Neal Library
STAFFING PROJECTIONS FOR EXPANDED FACILITY**

Staff Summary

	<i>existing</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2017</i>
population	20,000	20,000	21,000	22,000	23,000	24,000
circulation	238,909	240,000	315,000 ¹	330,000	345,000	360,000
staffing (fte):						
Director	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Administrative Assistant	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Ass't. Director/Ref Libn.	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Principal Librarian ²	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Librarian ³	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.2	3.5	3.6
Library Clerk ⁴	8.5	8.5	7.7	7.8	8.0	8.5
Library Page (Shelver) ⁵	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.9
Building Services ⁶	<u>1.0</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>
Total Staff	21.0	21.0	22.1	22.6	23.2	24.0
Volunteers	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	4.0

NOTES:

1. Assumes a twenty-five percent (25%) increase in usage the first full year of being in the expanded space.
2. Includes head's of Children's, Circulation, and Technical Services.
3. Includes Adult Services and Children's Assistant; increase to be Adult Services.
4. Includes Children's, Circulation, Reference, and Technical Services. Projected reductions assumes "Patron Self Check" in expanded space accounting for twenty-five percent (25%) of total circulation. Productivity based upon a Library Clerk being able to manage 40,000 circulation transactions per year in a fully automated environment.
5. Includes Children's and Circulation. Projected reduction (in 2002) assumes all Pages (Shelvers) under one supervisor (Circulation). Productivity based upon a page (Shelver) being able to shelve seventy-five (75) items per hour, including sorting, general "reading" of the shelves, and normal shelf straightening.
6. Increase a result of additional space to maintain.

**The Emmet O'Neal Library
STAFFING PROJECTIONS FOR EXPANDED FACILITY**

Public Service Desk Schedule Calculations

<i>unit</i>	<i>Monday - Thursday</i>					<i>Total Staff Hours</i>
	<i>9 am - 11 am</i>	<i>11 am - 1 pm</i>	<i>1 pm - 3 pm</i>	<i>3 pm - 6 pm</i>	<i>6 pm - 9 pm</i>	
Staff on Duty						
Circulation	2	3	2	3	3	
Adult	1	2	1	2	1	
Children's	2	1	1	2	1	
Total Staff on Duty						198
X # of Hours	10	12	8	21	15	
	<i>Wednesday</i>					
Circulation	2	3	2	3		
Adult	1	2	1	2		
Children's	2	1	1	2		
Total Staff on Duty						51
X # of Hours	10	12	8	21		
	<i>Friday</i>					
Circulation	1	2	1	2		
Adult	1	2	1	1		
Children's	1	1	1	1		
Total Staff on Duty						34
X # of Hours	6	10	6	12		
	<i>Saturday</i>					
Circulation	2	3	3	3		
Adult	2	2	2	2		
Children's	2	2	2	2		
Total Staff on Duty						54
X # of Hours	12	14	14	14		
	<i>Sunday</i>					
Circulation			3			
Adult			2			
Children's			2			
Total Staff on Duty						28
X # of Hours						
TOTAL STAFF HOURS PER WEEK						365
Plus Off Desk Time @ Twenty-Five Percent (25%)						91
Sub-Total Staff Hours Per Week						456
Plus Vacation and Sick Leave Allowance @ Ten Percent (10%)						46
Total Staff Hours Per Week						502
Staff Hours Per Week Converted To FTE (502 divided by 39)						12.87
Say						12.9

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Exhibit 4

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THE EMMET O'NEAL LIBRARY FIVE YEAR PLAN OF SERVICE

2012-2017

MISSION

It is the mission of The Emmet O'Neal Library to provide the highest quality library and informational services for all the people of our community.

GOAL 1

To provide the most up-to-date reference and literary materials available and to have our community aware of the services available and the value of the library as an information center.

Objective 1.1

Satisfy the information needs of those individuals presently receiving library service.

Task 1.1.1

Measure the progress and services of The Emmet O'Neal Library against the Standards for Alabama Libraries, as adopted by the Public Library Division of the Alabama Library Association in April, 1988. (Ongoing)

Objective 1.2

To create an awareness of the resources and services available to the citizens of Mountain Brook through The Emmet O'Neal Library by implementing a specific and coordinated public relations program.

Task 1.2.1

Coordinate existing public relations programs developed by The Friends of The Emmet O'Neal Library with the programs of The Emmet O'Neal Library. (Ongoing)

Task 1.2.2

Publicize the resources and services of The Emmet O'Neal Library in local newspapers, **The Mountain Brook Reporter** (the publication for the City of Mountain Brook), **Village Living** and the local cable channel. (Ongoing)

Task 1.2.3

Continue to create and implement programs to further the public interest in library activities and to eliminate those that prove to be less effective/popular. (Ongoing)

Task 1.2.4

Coordinate public relations activities with other agencies in the City to foster an awareness of library services and activities through the City. (Ongoing)

Task 1.2.5

Continue involvement with Mountain Brook Chamber of Commerce. (Ongoing)

Objective 1.3

To develop a comprehensive program for technology training for the public, especially senior citizens (Ongoing.)

Objective 1.4

Research new reference sources and maintain core collection of valuable and timeless reference sources. (Ongoing).

Objective 1.5

Research, purchase and maintain online databases to supplement the ones available through JCLC and the AVL, especially those that would be advantageous to local students. (Ongoing).

GOAL 2

To encourage a love of reading and learning in our young people

Objective 2.1

Provide efficient library services to the young adults of our community (those persons between 13-21).

Task 2.1.1

Continue programs for young adults. (Ongoing)

Task 2.1.2

Continue to improve young adult book collection. (Ongoing)

Task 2.1.3

Continue to improve young adult audio book collection. (Ongoing)

Task 2.1.4

Provide after school programming for junior high school students

Task 2.1.5

Continue Summer Reading Program for young adults. (Ongoing)

Task 2.1.6

Continue to work with area teachers to provide supplemental enhancement to the curriculum. (Ongoing)

Task 2.1.7

Continue to work with area school librarians to provide supplemental enhancement to the curriculum. (Ongoing)

Objective 2.2

Provide efficient library services to the youth of our community (those persons between birth-13).

Task 2.2.1

Continue to develop and work with the support committee of The Friends of The Emmet O'Neal Library. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.2

Continue to develop and work with the Junior Women's Committee of 100 (JWC of 100). (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.3

Continue to provide services to elementary school age children through reading programs during school year, special programs and/or films and visits to the library by students. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.4

Continue to provide programming for young children ages 24 to 36 months. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.5

Continue to provide programming for young children ages 12 to 24 months. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.6

Continue to provide programming for young children ages 0 to 12 months. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.7

Continue to provide programming for pre-school age children. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.8

Continue to provide programming for elementary school age children. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.9

Have students come to The Emmet O'Neal Library during Children's Book Week (or at other times) for orientation and to obtain library cards if

they do not already have them. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.10

Continue to improve audio/visual collections for children. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.11

Continue to provide educational computer games for children in children's department. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.12

Continue to provide support to area teachers through Teacher's Corner. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.13

Continue to work with area teachers to provide supplemental enhancement to the curriculum. (Ongoing)

Task 2.2.14

Continue to work with area school librarians to provide supplemental enhancement to the curriculum. (Ongoing)

GOAL 3

To serve as a cultural and learning center for our community.

Objective 3.1

Provide efficient library services to adults of community.

Task 3.1.1

Continue to improve non-fiction book collection. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.2

Continue to improve fiction and large print book collections by purchase of additional copies of bestsellers. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.3

Continue to improve e-book collections. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.4

Continue to improve reference book collection. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.5

Continue to improve audio book collection by purchasing additional copies of best sellers and concentration of purchase of items on CD. (Ongoing)

Exhibit 5

Emmet O'Neal Library Technology Plan 2014 – 2017

Mission Statement

In fulfilling the mission of the Emmet O'Neal Library (EOL) to provide quality library and informational services for all the people of Mountain Brook, Alabama, the Information Technology Department of the Emmet O'Neal Library endeavors to provide technological support designed to meet local needs.

To this end, our objectives include:

- 1) maintaining an up-to-date technology infrastructure,
- 2) continuing training efforts for both staff and patrons, and
- 3) continuing evaluation of new technology.

Current Technology Environment

Local Area Network

Domain Controllers and Network Servers

EOL maintains 1 Dell PowerEdge T620 Server that runs VM software that allows up to 10 virtual servers to run Windows Server 2008 revision 2. EOL currently runs two virtual domain controllers, three virtual file servers, a virtual print server, and a virtual remote server on this hardware. EOL uses GT Key, Inc. as the network consultant to insure use of best practices and compatibility with all county-wide library networking infrastructure.

Backups and Remote Storage

EOL uses Symantec Executive Backup on a Dell PowerEdge 2950. We run and verify backups daily on all servers.

Router

JCLC provides a router and maintains the routing table for access to and from EOL.

Switches

EOL uses four data switches to manage data lines within the building. The servers and key staff computers are attached to a Cisco switch that allows layer-3 switching to improve network traffic speeds.

The remaining computers are networked via three 24-port 3Com 3300 switches.

Task 6.3.3

Send staff to workshops sponsored by Alabama Public Library, the Jefferson Country Library Association and the Alabama Library Association and allow staff to participate in reference and technology continuing education workshops. (Ongoing)

Task 6.3.3

Improve staff-patron relations through in-service training and conduct staff training on AVL and other online databases to ensure knowledge of searching capabilities and information availability. (Ongoing)

Task 6.3.4

Encourage cooperation between schools and public library through regular correspondence. (Ongoing)

Task 6.3.5

Have regular department head meetings followed by regular staff meetings. (Ongoing)

Task 6.3.6

To update policies and procedures and guidelines for administrative actions which facilitate the selection and retention of qualified employees, including the Employee Handbook and Library Policies. (Ongoing)

Objective 4.2

To continue working with the art committee to provide this environment.

GOAL 5

To utilize the most effective technology.

Objective 5.1

Apply library automation where feasible to library operations to maximize the benefits of resource sharing to provide library services for the citizens of Mountain Brook.

Task 5.1.1

Continue to provide networked computer information. (Ongoing)

Task 5.1.2

Continue to offer computer classes to Seniors. (Ongoing)

Task 5.1.3

Continue to offer Computer classes to all residents.

GOAL 6

To hire and retain a well-trained, service-oriented, friendly staff.

Objective 6.1

To develop training programs for new employees at The Emmet O'Neal Library.

Objective 6.2

Educate all staff members on use of patron operated machines available at The Emmet O'Neal Library.

Objective 6.3

Continue to provide education and training for existing staff.

Task 6.3.1

Improve the quality of library services offered at The Emmet O'Neal Library by encouraging continual in-service training for existing staff. (Ongoing)

Task 6.3.2

Ensure that all reference staff can direct customers to library reference resources, both print and online. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.6

Continue to improve downloadable book collection by purchasing additional copies of best sellers. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.7

Continue to improve instructional language collection. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.8

Provide staff with no-circ reports. (Ongoing)

Task 3.1.9

Improve funding for library materials comparable to other communities in area. (Ongoing)

Objective 3.2

To provide library patrons with the information they need as quickly and conveniently as possible.

Task 3.2.1

Redesign, regularly update and continually improve library's website (Ongoing)

Task 3.2.2

Allow customers to contact library staff via email in order to receive information in a timely fashion (Ongoing).

Task 3.2.3

Maintain neatness of reference collection, including weeding and reading of shelves on a regular basis (Ongoing)

Task 3.2.4

Increase accuracy rate for reference transactions, giving priority to in-person customers over call-ins (Ongoing)

Task 3.2.5

Request materials from other libraries for our customer before filing other library requests (Ongoing)

GOAL 4

To provide a convenient, attractive, contemplative environment.

Objective 4.1

To maintain the cleanliness of the facility.

New Switch.

Bandwidth

EOL has a 10 Mbps Metro-area Ethernet fiberoptic line to JCLC for Internet access and access to the county-wide book collection management system called Innovative Millennium. In addition, EOL has a secure, fiberoptic cable line to the City of Mountain Brook for access to financial information.

Computers

EOL has 92 computers on our local network, 79 of which are connected to the Internet through the wired Metro-e Internet connection.

Computer Category	Number
Staff	43
Public	29
Laptops	10
Other	10
Total	92

Email

JCLC provides email to EOL staff members. EOL maintains 2 email addresses: info@eolib.org and marylynw@eolib.org for situations where JCLC provided email is not able to be used due to file transfer limits. Various free gmail accounts are maintained by the IT Department as needed for use with social media and e-reading authentication.

Internet Access

JCLC also provides filtered Internet access to our staff and public computers. JCLC uses an 8e6 filtering appliance that insures compliance with the Child Internet Protection Act.

Website

EOL has a Website (www.eolib.org) with content that is maintained by the IT staff. Library staff contribute regular content, which is updated on the Website by the IT manager. Kinetic Communications is the Website consultant for design updates and major programming changes to the Website.

Social Media

EOL maintains the following social media accounts:

- Facebook www.facebook.com/emmetoneallibrary
- Twitter @eolib
- LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/companies/emmet-o'neal-library
- YouTube www.youtube.com/user/emmetoneallibrary
- Reference/Adult department blog www.eolib.blogspot.com
- Childrens department blog www.eolchildrens.blogspot.com
- Foursquare
- Instagram
- SnapChat
- Pinterest
- Flickr
- Picassa

EOL does not have a separate social media policy for its employees as computer and Internet use are clearly covered in the EOL Personnel Policy, pp. 9 and 10.

Wireless Network

EOL is a "WiFi hotspot" for the community, providing filtered wireless access to the World Wide Web. The Wireless Network Policy is attached as Appendix A to this document. Charter Communications provides the Internet Access for our WiFi network.

Router

The EOL WiFi network is routed through a LinkSys Broadband Firewall Router.

Access Points

Two Cisco Aironet 1200 wireless access points (one for the first floor and one for the second floor) are attached to the WiFi router using Cisco Aironet 1230 power-over-ethernet lines.

Internet Filtering

A St. Bernard IPrism 1200 Web filter appliance provides filtering of Web content for our wireless network. We filter pornography, child pornography, and chat functionality to comply with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Telephone Services

EOL contracts with CNC to manage our telephone system. Staff phones are the Mitel Superset 4025.

EOL provides cellular telephone and Internet service to key employees.

Staff Resources

Software

For all staff, EOL supports the Microsoft Office Professional 2010 suite of applications, Innovative Sierra, and Internet Explorer 9.0. For select administrative staff, EOL also supports the use of QuickBooks and Giftworks software.

Printing

Staff members have access to color laser printers and two color copiers, as well as black-and-white printing.

Patron Resources

EOL provides 29 computers that are dedicated for patron use. Five of these computers provide access to the Library Catalog only. The Computer Use Policy is attached as Appendix B to this document.

Software

EOL provides the Microsoft Office Professional 2010 suite of office productivity software, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Publisher.

In addition, EOL provides Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, and Mozilla Firefox for Internet browsing.

Printing

EOL provides black-and-white printing services for patrons, at a cost of 10 cents per page.

Printing is managed via a print-release software program, PrintQuest. Patrons print, and then go to the circulation or reference desk, where a staff member releases the printout and collects payment.

Copying

EOL offers copying services to patrons at a cost of 10 cents per page for black-and-white copies.

Black-and-white copiers are located on the first and second floors. Both copiers are attached to Jamex brand coin-op machines to collect payment.

Self Checkout Machine

EOL offers one self-check station for patrons. The station is a SIP2 Self-check unit that runs a program called Service Point II (SPII). SPII allows patrons to scan a library card, scan books to check out, and then provides a dated receipt for each book.

Technical Support

EOL provides limited technical support to patrons through the staff librarians and, in some cases, the Information Technology staff.

Classes

EOL provides some classes to patrons for a nominal fee. Class schedules are posted on the library's Website (www.eolib.org) and in the Adult Services area. Classes are offered on a "first-come, first-serve" basis and are conducted in the Electronic Classroom.

Additional Technology

Sound and Projection Systems

EOL has two built-in sound and projection systems (the community room and the storytelling room). Both systems allow computers to be connected.

Educational Games Computers for Children

The children's department at EOL has 6 AWE early literacy computers with education games for children. In addition, there are 3 touchscreen computers for younger children. There is a "peek-a-book" station that allows children to listen to stories.

Information Technology Goals and Expected Activities 2012-2015

Listed below, in descending order of importance, are the technology goals and associated activities projected for the next 3 years.

Within each goal, activities are ranked in order of importance with estimates of associated costs. Given the current economic climate, some activities may not be feasible, particularly if they are associated with increased cost.

Goal 1: Continue a 4-year replacement plan for desktop and laptop computer equipment.

Activities:

- Replace 29 leased PCs with newly leased PCs in several public areas of the library. The current lease expires in July 2015.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$600/month	Critical	Yes, ongoing expense through computer lease line item

- Replace staff PCs and laptops on a 4-year schedule.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
FY 2014-2015 4 desktops 3 laptops \$8,000	High	Yes
FY 2015-2016 23 desktops \$22,000	High	Yes
FY 2016-2017 15 desktops \$15,000	High	Yes
FY 2017-2018 4 desktops 3 laptops \$8,000	High	Yes

Goal 2: Keep software current.

Activities:

- Renew antivirus software annually.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$600/year	Critical	Yes

- Due in June 2014

- Renew internet-filtering software for WiFi network annually.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$2,000/year	Critical	Yes

- 2-16-2014 renewed at \$1,500.00

- ~~Maintain software assurance on all Microsoft software to facilitate upgrades~~

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$10/workstation	High	Yes

Goal 3: Keep technology staff sufficiently trained to perform their jobs.

Activities

- Attend regular conferences and seminars.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$3,000/year	Critical	Yes

- *Attended Internet Librarian 10-2012*
- *Attended LITA forum 10-2013*
- *Plan to attend Internet Librarian 10-1014*

Goal 4: Review Website design every two years.

Activities:

- Work with an outside consultant to redesign the Website aesthetic and navigational structure to a more updated look and feel, including mobile accessibility, integration of outside Web content (e.g., Blogs, Podcasts, etc.), and allow for quick updates to content. (completed)

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$8,000	moderate	Plan for 2014 budget

Goal 5: Assist Children's Department in determining appropriate technology needs.

Goal 6: Remove extraneous equipment/services.

Activities:

- Surplus and send to public auction any equipment that has not been used in 1 year.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
None	High	n/a, may actually bring in revenue

Goal 9: Insure an appropriate physical environment for networking equipment.

Activity:

- Investigate the cost for hardware and labor to install a "chiller" for the server room. (The temperature in the room that holds our servers and other technology infrastructure regularly exceeds the recommended maximum temperature of 68° to 75°F.)

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$3,000	Moderate	No

Goal 10: Maintain network security.

- Create individual login names for all full-time employees. Currently, EOL workroom areas have common login names so that all employees have access to the same resources when they login to the network.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
None	Moderate	n/a

- Implement roaming profiles for employees so that they can access their accounts from any computer, since part-time employees typically do not have dedicated computers. This login strategy will provide both a great level of network security and a means of tracking individual employee computer use.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
None	Low	n/a

Goal 11: Expand technology services available to the public.

Activities:

- Renovate electronic classroom into mixed-use space for both classes and Makerspace activities.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$20,000	High	Grant from MBLF

- Create video podcasts of adult brown bag programs and lectures.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
None	Moderate	n/a

- Expand WiFi service to the courtyard outside the library.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$3,000	Low	No

- Replace the printing system for patron printing with something that is more user-friendly and that will work with a card/coin machine.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
\$5,000	Low	No

Goal 12: Keep projection and sound system up to date.

Activities:

- Investigate the cost and feasibility of providing video-conferencing services to the public.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
Unknown	Low	No

Goal 13: Increase internet bandwidth to meet patron demand.

Activities:

- Increase bandwidth on wireless network.

Estimated Cost	Importance	Already Budgeted
Unknown	Low	No

A

**Mountain Brook Traffic Operations Study
Prioritized List of Candidate Study Intersections**

KEY:

Project recommended for APPLE study
Project not recommended for APPLE study but
with special comments
Project not recommended for APPLE study

1. Montevallo Road at Church Street/Montrose Road
 - Queues on Montevallo Road during the morning and afternoon peak hours
 - No left turn lane for Montevallo Road onto Montrose Road
 - **SCOPE** – evaluate intersection for both non-widening and widening solutions
2. Montevallo Road at Overbrook Road
 - Heavy left turns on the westbound Montevallo Road approach with no left turn lane causes delays and AM peak church/daycare drop off causes for delays on Overbrook Road.
 - **SCOPE** – evaluate intersection for both non-widening and widening solutions
3. Cahaba Road at 21st Avenue/Fairway Drive (2 intersections)
 - Access to Little Hardware
 - Left turn from Cahaba Road onto Fairway Drive needs a left turn arrow
 - **SCOPE** – evaluate treatments for Little Hardware driveway and left turn phasing
4. Mountain Brook Parkway at Overbrook Road/Pine Ridge Road
 - Mountain Brook Parkway experiences high volumes of traffic during AM, PM, school and church peak hours, sometimes causing the end of the queue to be by the church or Mountain Brook Junior High.
 - **SCOPE** – evaluate intersection for proper signal timing and phasing and investigate possible widening solutions
5. Brookwood Road at Crosshill Road (2 intersections)
 - Severe queues and delays from Old Leeds approach and increased traffic volumes for school peak hours.
 - **SCOPE:** Perform detailed traffic analysis of intersections to develop traffic control recommendations
6. Montevallo Road at Norman Drive/Country Club Boulevard
 - Signal timing issue; Montevallo Road traffic running lights and near miss collisions
 - **SCOPE** - Review signal timing
7. Old Leeds Road at Pine Ridge Road
 - Left hand turns into Pine Ridge Road cause queue(s) that can stretch to Beechwood Road.
 - **SCOPE** – Review signal timing

8. South Brookwood Road at Overton Road

- Heavy left hand turns during AM peak hour from eastbound Overton Road approach to access the school and heavy southbound right turns during school PM peak hour.
- **SCOPE** – review signal timing

9. Oakdale Road at Oakdale Drive

- Signage is confusing to drivers and pavement markings need to be updated.
- **SCOPE** - Review signs and markings at intersection

10. Montevallo Road at Euclid Avenue/Leach Drive (partially in Mountain Brook)

- Drivers are using right turn only on southbound Montevallo Road approach as a through lane and Leach Drive has small queues in the AM peak hour.
- **SPECIAL COMMENT** – the potential solution for this intersection involves pavement marking changes. The City of Mountain Brook should contact the City of Birmingham and discuss an arrangement regarding this intersection.

11. Country Club Road at Salisbury Road

- Sight distance is an issue (approx. 65 feet)
- **SPECIAL COMMENT** – the input regarding this intersection appears to be more regarding cut-through traffic in general and not specific intersection problems. A traffic count will be conducted as part of the APPLE project on Country Club Road south of Montclair Road to determine the present level of cut-through traffic as compared to counts in 1997 and 2008.

12. Country Club Road at Ridge Road

- No evident issue was found
- **SPECIAL COMMENT** – the input regarding this intersection appears to be more regarding cut-through traffic in general and not specific intersection problems. A traffic count will be conducted as part of the APPLE project on Country Club Road south of Montclair Road to determine the present level of cut-through traffic as compared to counts in 1997 and 2008.

13. Old Leeds Road at Cherokee Road

- At Cherokee Road approach, sight distance is the biggest issue and unable to see oncoming vehicles from

14. South Brookwood Road at Woodridge Road

- During school AM peak hour, Woodridge Road is experiencing delays and approx... 6-7 car queues from Mountain Brook High School, and experiencing more left hand turns from the South Brookwood Road approach to access Bethune Drive to get to the High School.

15. Church Street at W. Jackson Boulevard

- School peak hours cause queue(s) and delays with parents attempting to enter the "line(s)" to pick up their children and pedestrians/crossing guards.

16. Old Leeds Road at Beechwood Road

- Queue(s) begin at Old Leeds Road and Pine Ridge Road.

17. Montevallo Road at Overhill Road

- Overhill Road during AM peak hour builds up due to heavy left hand turns onto Montevallo Road, which carries a high volume of vehicles during this time.

18. Cahaba Road at Montevallo Road
 - Left hand turns from all directions cause delays/queues, along with being in a downtown/central hub for the city with shopping and restaurants/cafes leave pedestrians the cause for some delay.
19. Cahaba Road at Lane Park Road (partially in Mountain Brook)
 - Left hand turn to access U.S. 280
20. S. Brookwood Road at Brookwood Forest School
 - Parents parking and blocking the thru lane causing delays for thru traffic.
21. U.S. Hwy 280 at Mountain Brook Center
 - Access and egress is very difficult due to high speeds and merging traffic on U.S. Hwy 280.
22. Cherokee Road at U.S. Hwy 280
 - Cannot make left turn from Cherokee without getting into U.S.Hwy 280 left turn lane (very difficult to change 6 lanes) to make a U-turn at its intersection with Overton Road.
23. Old Leeds Road at Stone River Road (not in Mountain Brook)
 - Cannot make a left turn onto Stone River Road from Old Leeds Road during the morning peak hour

Sign-In Sheet

Public Involvement Meeting

Mountain Brook Traffic Operations Study

February 10, 2014

Name	Address
RICHARD CAUDLE	3644 VANN RD B'ham AL 35235
JENNIFER HOLMES	3644 VANN RD BHAM AL 35235 18300 DEER CREST DR BIRMINGHAM AL 35242
Virginia Smith	
Billy Pritchard	
Sam Maston	
Katie Grayson	3791 Montevallo Rd S B'ham, AL 35213
Scott Skipper	3644 Vann Rd. B'ham, AL 35235
Alice Womack	
Lloyd Meltzer	
Jan D Carl	
Benton Carter	36 Clarendon Rd.
Madoline Markham	(Village Living)

City of Mountain Brook
Public Involvement Meeting
Mountain Brook Traffic Operations Study
Tuesday, February 10, 2015 6:00 PM
Mountain Brook City Hall

- Council
 - Birmingham jurisdiction over intersection at Lane Park Rd.
 - Concerned about federal money
 - Don't want to widen roads just to help congestions
 - Residents come before 20 year plan
 - Exclude Brookwood Forest School from selection
- Britton Carter
 - Mountain Brook Parkway at Overbrook Rd
 - School and church peak times
 - Sat through roughly 8 cycles
- Katie Grayson
 - Montevallo Rd. at Church St.
 - Confusing and difficult to use
 - Concerned about home
 - Only access into/out of her home is onto Montevallo/Montrose
 - No alleyway like other residences
- RPCGB
 - Mentioned Federal Money
 - Takes 3-5 years from concept to construction
 - Explained process to council about the grant

Richard Caudle

From: John Meier <jomeier@juno.com>
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2015 3:01 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Mountain Brook Intersection

The intersection at Oakdale Rd and Oakdale Dr (at the "triangle" median) now has a yield sign for traffic going east (straight) on Oakdale Rd. This was an improvement but it is not marked clearly as to who must yield to who. Also, paint and reflectors marking the route for northbound traffic on Oakdale Rd are worn off and confusing. Please re-evaluate this intersection for improved signage and pavement markings to avoid accidents.

Sent from my iPhone US

MR Richard L Caudle, PE/Project Manager
Mountain Brook Traffic Study
Skipper Consulting, Inc.

Mr. Caudle,

I just read the article in the 2/12/14 Over The Mountain Journal noting the 2/13/2014 deadline for submissions, but I hope this will be given consideration, as I have been having conversations about with several families in our neighborhood in Crestline Village, while unaware that the city was undergoing such an important review.

I am writing to request that consideration be given to a few seconds delay of the green light for those driving east at the intersection of Montevallo Road and Church Street/ Montrose Street. For those driving west at that intersection, we are consistently unable to get through the intersection due to someone trying to turn left onto Montrose Road.

This is the only arm of the intersection that doesn't have a turn lane. It does have a little drop down "slot" but drivers can't get down there due to oncoming traffic, thus the turning car blocks everyone behind them. It is particularly bad during morning and afternoon rush hours, and when the elementary and junior high schools let out.

In recent weeks I have sat in line with the green light visible, but watched the light turn red TWO cycles before I could get to the intersection. I, myself, have often been the one holding up drivers behind me, as I needed to make the left turn to go to church.

Things have gotten so bad that I have seen recent examples of someone in the line facing west getting so frustrated that they break into the oncoming lane trying to quickly get to the small slot from which one has to drop before preparing the final part of the left turn onto Montrose. Twice in the last two months I witnessed someone doing this, only to be met head-on by a driver coming north on Montrose then turning east onto Montevallo. They met on Montevallo just before the offending driver could get into the slot. They didn't wreck, but it's just a matter of time before this happens.

People are getting frustrated with the long tie-ups at this intersection. If the east-bound traffic had a few second delay before their light turned green (and the west bound traffic had the green light first), it would allow at least a few cars to either get through the intersection, or get to the position where they could drop down to the left turn holding slot.

I feel this letter is rather wordy, but I hope you can locate the issue by the details given. We don't need a lot of money in a study. Just have someone stand out there during the rush hours and the problem will be painfully obvious.

Thank you for considering this issue.

Hans Watford, MD
8 West Montcrest Drive
Mountain Brook, Al 35213
(205)-249-3476 (cell)

cc: MR Sam Gaston, City Manager
City of Mountain Brook, Al

Richard Caudle

From: Dale M Moore <dmac@uab.edu>
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2015 7:23 AM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Mtn Brook Traffic Study

Hi Richard,

I would like to add another intersection for consideration to your already long list.

Headed east (I guess.... towards Irondale) on Old Leeds Road to take a left on Stone River. This intersection is super busy from about 7 – 8:30 weekday mornings. I am headed to take my kid to Cherokee bend and I assume that is the goal of most of the other drivers turning left at this intersection. There isn't a light or stop sign for a long way down Old Leeds so work traffic headed west flows pretty much unheeded. You just have to dart in to the left when there is a small break.

It seems to be even worse if you are on Stone River and want to make a left onto Old Leeds! I don't go this way, but while I am waiting to make my left from Old Leeds, I can see those folks piling up and they have to wait on me (and the many cars behind me) to turn before they can get onto Old Leeds.

I can see way down Old Leeds and it looks like Highlands Day has a Sheriff that helps them direct traffic. I think that is the reason we do end up with small breaks down on our end. However, it just seems this isn't enough time to make safe left turns at this intersection. But it is only during this morning rush – from my perspective.

Thanks
Dede Moore

Dede Moore
Director of Finance for UAB Facilities
FAB 140
205-934-7832

Richard Caudle

From: Katie Grayson <katieeubanks@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2015 8:33 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Comment on Mountain Brook Traffic Operations Study

Name: Katie Grayson
Address: 3791 Montevallo Road South, Mountain Brook, AL 35213
Phone: 770-365-5682

Dear Mr. Caudle,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Mountain Brook Traffic Operations Study. I attended the Public Involvement Meeting on February 10, and as I mentioned then, I am most interested in the intersection of Montevallo Road and Church Street/Montrose Road. My house is located on the southwest side of the intersection, and my driveway is perpendicular to Montevallo right at the turn lane from Montevallo onto Church to head down into Crestline Village.

While I agree that the intersection needs improvement, I am concerned that any potential changes would limit access to our driveway or would involve encroaching into our front yard area.

Also, as I mentioned the other night, although some maps show that an alley (Montevallo Alley) runs to our house, it was actually never completed to our house and ends at our neighbor's house. So the only access to our house is via the driveway. When we were looking into purchasing the house, we talked with the city planner's office about the possibility of extending the alley to our house, but they told us if we connected it to our driveway it would become a public road and that it would mean a significant amount of traffic would be using our driveway. Obviously that is not a feasible option. But we are concerned that if our driveway is impacted, we would not have any means of accessing our house, and although some maps indicate the alley extends to our house, that is not the case.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment, and I look forward to seeing you at future meetings.

Katie Grayson

Richard Caudle

From: Caroline Mears <caroline.mears@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2015 2:15 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Traffic feedback

Mr. Claude,

I was told that you are accepting feedback related to Mountain Brook traffic. Thank you for taking the time to consider my comments and be open to suggestions from our community. Since the rework of the traffic including eliminating the 280/Cherokee intersection I have to say I feel traffic has been substantially worse and in times very dangerous. I wanted to share my thoughts for 2 reasons – the safety and economics of Mountain Brook.

The first experience I have is that now I feel the only way to get out of our community is to either use Montevallo Road or Mountain Brook Parkway. Today at 1:00 pm there was some sort of accident on Lakeshore that backed up traffic all the way down Mountain Brook Parkway to the Overbrook intersection. I just feel this is extremely unsafe as there are no safe places to reroute and get through. What if there was an emergency in Mountain Brook in addition to the accident that is backing up our traffic into our community – our citizens are not safe and would not have quick access by car or ambulance to the main hospitals in the area that previously were all extremely accessible by using Highway 280 (UAB, St. Vincent or Brookwood).

The second reason is the consumer effect. I work down 280 past the Summit. Before all the traffic changes I had the option to get to 280 down Montevallo, Mountain Brook Parkway or Cherokee Road. After the changes those locations were either so backed up with terrible traffic or eliminated that I no longer go through Mountain Brook to get to work – I drive through Irondale and take the interstate to 459 to connect with 280. Because of this I no longer shop or dine in Mountain Brook Village – it is not convenient on my rides to and from work and even if I wanted to go the drive to the village takes so long and is so congested by the time I get there I am put out. My dollars instead have gone to shops in the Irondale and Vestavia communities that are easily accessible on my way to work. I have to think that people who we are trying to attract to our community and move to this neighborhood may be more attracted to our neighboring upscale communities of Homewood and Vestavia as they do not seem to have as much impact with traffic changes. Also if people cannot get to our villages easily because of it being a headache between traffic and parking they will also not shop in our area. I know there has lately been such a push for “shop local” but I have to say the traffic constraints in our villages are a major detractor for me to shop local. I know the community is counting on those tax dollars to improve and build our neighborhoods and I hate to say it is a major turnoff to shop in Mountain Brook.

Thank you again for respectfully considering my comments regarding our community’s current traffic situation.

Sincerely,

Caroline Mears

Richard Caudle

From: The O'Neal Family <joneal5@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 9:00 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Cherokee Rd and 280

Coming from Cherokee Forest neighborhood, this is the most dangerous intersection in Mountain Brook. To turn left you must turn right and merge over six lanes to reach the vturn at Overton Rd.

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE Tablet

Richard Caudle

From: John Gaffney <johngaffney55@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 8:04 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Recommendation for Mountain Brook intersection traffic study

My name is John Gaffney and I live at 8 Beechwood Road, Mountain Brook, 35213.

I recommend that the intersection of Mountain Brook Parkway and Overbrook Road be included in the upcoming traffic study.

The reasons for my recommendation are :

1. There is a constant flow of traffic at the intersection, regardless of time of day and day of week.
2. The amount of traffic seems to have increased substantially since the re-design of Highway 280 in that more traffic is entering the City and exiting the City now through this particular intersection.
3. The intersection has become a major entrance/exit to the City and has a large number of trucks, including delivery, construction, and service vehicles use this intersection daily in addition to resident traffic that adds to congestion and creates a greater safety concern.
4. The intersection is also impacted by the traffic from the growing ministries of Canterbury United Methodist Church, located 1 block from the intersection.
5. The Intersection is also impacted by the many activities at Mountain Brook Junior High, less than .5 miles away.
6. The traffic attempting to leave the City through this intersection seems somewhat stymied due to no turn lanes and turn signals limited to only morning rush hours.
7. As a result of all of this activity above, I have witnessed several near accidents and multiple occasions of overly frustrated drivers stuck at the intersection instead of moving through smoothly.

For all the reasons above, I highly recommend that the Intersection of Mountain Brook Parkway and Overbrook Road be included in the study.

Please contact me if I can provide additional information.

John Gaffney
936-8912

Sent from my iPad

Richard Caudle

From: Paul Darden <pauldarden@fairwayinvestments.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 4:50 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Mountain Brook - Montevallo Rd. intersection

Hi Richard,

I live on Norman Drive in Mtn. Brook and have one area of concern for the comments you are taking on intersections.

Intersection – Montevallo Rd./Norman Drive/Country Club Blvd

Concern – Witnessed on several occasions cars headed east on Montevallo Rd. speeding through yellow light while I am sitting on Norman Dr. turning left onto Montevallo. If unaware of this speeding car, a driver turning left from Norman onto Montevallo could collide at the intersection with the car racing to beat the red light. Not sure how this Intersection is timed as there are multiple cycles, but may consider a delay between the Montevallo traffic signals and those on Norman and Country Club.

Thanks for your help and attention!

Paul T. Darden
Development & Construction Manager



BUILT ON CHARACTER

2830 Cahaba Road Birmingham, AL 35223
205-802-7202 (phone) 205-802-7223 (fax)
pauldarden@fairwayinvestments.com (email)
www.fairwayinvestments.com

Richard Caudle

From: John Jeffcoat <john@jeffcoat.us>
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 11:20 AM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Mtn Brook intersections for traffic analysis

I would like to add the intersection of Brookwood Road, and Crosshill Road to the list to be considered for analysis.

There are two triangles at this location, and traffic is very congested before and after school. This is a highly travelled route to the high school, and teenage drivers make it even more dangerous.

Thank you.



John R. Jeffcoat
Plumbing, Heating & Air-Conditioning
www.eagleservicecompany.com
205-251-1844

Richard Caudle

From: Danee Costa <danee@interfirstcapital.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 2:16 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: 2700 Mountain Brook Center

Richard,

I wanted you to know how unsafe I feel coming and going from work at 2700 Highway 280 South since they took the stop light out. The traffic is very aggressive coming off Red Mountain on to Highway 280. It's coming at us between 60 and 80 mph. I can barely see around the bend where we exit on to 280. I have to watch 4 lanes coming at me plus the person who might be trying to turn into our building or make a u-turn to go into Office Park. I try and punch it as fast as I can to get out. The people coming from Red Mountain do not think about the people entering the highway from a dead stop. If you turn out and look in your rear view mirror there is someone right on your rear end. It's really scary if the light is red at Office Park. I'm always scared I'll be rear ended. There is no emergency lane to pull over in if you do get rear ended. Also, the building I work in is just a single lane when you pull in the parking lot. It is frightening when you are leaving and someone is entering at about 60 mph because they are trying to turn across the highway. You should not be able to turn left across the highway if you're heading towards downtown into our building. We use to eat at the restaurants across the street but it's too much trouble to get in and out of over there now. It adds 10 minutes to wherever you have to go to get in and out of this building. ALDOT turned the highway into an interstate. The police have stated to me when I've asked about slowing down the traffic that they do not make any money from giving out tickets so they are not going to try. Please help make coming and going in and out of our office building safer. I'm truly scared every day.

Danee' Costa

Richard Caudle

From: Ashley Monroe <ashley.monroe0@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 8:25 AM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Attn: Richard

I am writing to request that the Montevallo Road and Church Street intersection be included in the traffic study that MB is about to conduct. For those residents *residing on Montevallo Rd*, as well as roads that feed into Montevallo Road, I suggest that a left turn lane be made available to access Montrose Road.

On a normal morning commute, it can easily take waiting through several lights (if you are behind a car making a left turn) to clear the intersection. This causes major delays in accessing Crestline Elementary as well as MB Junior High. Due to its proximity, Montevallo Road is heavily traveled before and after school operating hours, by residents driving children to school, participating in the morning work rush, morning and afternoon hospital & home health shift workers, citizens gaining access to I20/I-59, and those needing entry into the Irondale community and beyond.

This traffic issue causes unnecessary congestion and more specifically, safety issues, in the Mountain Brook community. It affects our children that walk to school, taxpayers that walk or run for exercise, young residents learning to drive, MAX transit buses transporting community personnel as well as disabled residents to school & work, laborers contracted to work in the community and anyone else traveling our roads.

I urge you to please give the intersection of Montevallo Road and Church Street your highest consideration.
Thank you for your time,

-ashley monroe
Sent from my iPhone

Richard Caudle

From: Orlean Hydinger <ohbigo4@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 10:31 AM
To: Richard Caudle
Cc: Elizabeth Roberts; Heather Euler
Subject: Dexter and church street intersection.

Dear Richard,

I am writing concerning the intersection at Dexter Avenue and Church Street. At the last piggly wiggly meeting I talked with a lady from the city planning and asked if this intersection was going to be discussed. She said no because it was not going to go through. At the meeting the person after you spoke about this intersection and the final bullet point said it had been rejected do to the fact that it would require eliminating parking spaces, which are at a premium in that area.

Having before this meeting canvassed people who work in the village as well as friends who shop there, they were surprised this would even be considered. You would have a crosswalk stop, a stoplight there, and stoplight at Euclid within 50 yards. The backup of cars due to all these stops would make anyone want to avoid that street. The tenants on that block have paid and chosen to be on a storefront on a main street but would lose some of this benefit from loss of parking and people not wanting to deal with that congestion. If this is for the parents who back up on Dexter during school hours trying to turn left, there must be a better solution.

Finally, is this intersection part of what is going to be discussed on the 10th or has it really been rejected as was stated at the last meeting? A reply would be appreciated.

Thank you

Orlean Hydinger

Co Manager of Church Street property

Richard Caudle

From: Sam Gaston <gastons@mtnbrook.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2015 4:29 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: FW: Re: FW: traffic light change

Richard,
Can you fold this request for a study into the Little Hardware situation and give us proposal?

Sam S.Gaston
City Manager
City of Mountain Brook, AL.
56 Church Street
P.O. Box 130009
Mountain Brook AL. 35213
(205) 802-3803 Phone
(205) 870-3577 Fax

From: Ted Cook [mailto:cookt@mtnbrook.org]
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2015 12:43 PM
To: Sam Gaston
Subject: Fwd: Re: FW: traffic light change

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Charles Clark" <clarkch@mtnbrook.org>
Date: Jan 14, 2015 12:40 PM
Subject: Re: FW: traffic light change
To: "Ted Cook" <cookt@mtnbrook.org>

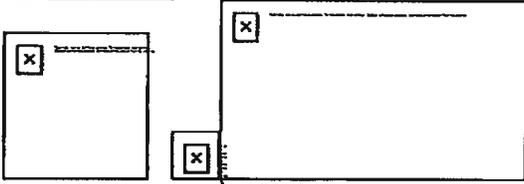
I know it is an issue and has been for several years. However, this light is tied in with the light at 21st Ave/Cahaba Rd. I would recommend that the city have a traffic engineer look at it and make recommendations. We have also gotten complaints about the issue with Little Hardware. I don't think due to the complexity of the traffic control, we are qualified to make a decision to just change the light at one intersection without having an understanding of the impact it would have on the other. Also, we have no way of knowing if the traffic box would handle an additional signal.

Lt. Chuck Clark
Patrol Division
Mountain Brook Police Department
101 Tibbett Street
Mountain Brook, AL 35213
205.802.3850 (Office)
205.874.0646 (Fax)
clarkch@mtnbrook.org

On Wed, Jan 14, 2015 at 12:35 PM, Ted Cook <cookt@mtnbrook.org> wrote:

Did you have this looked at?

Chief Ted Cook
Mountain Brook Police Department
101 Tibbett St.
Mountain Brook, AL 35213
(205) 802-3852



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Sam Gaston <gastons@mtnbrook.org>
Date: Wed, Jan 14, 2015 at 8:37 AM
Subject: FW: traffic light change
To: Charles Clark <clarkch@mtnbrook.org>, Ted Cook <cookt@mtnbrook.org>

Have you had the chance to review this request and come up with a recommendation?

Sam S.Gaston

City Manager

City of Mountain Brook, AL.

56 Church Street

P.O. Box 130009

Mountain Brook AL. 35213

(205) 802-3803 Phone

(205) 870-3577 Fax

-----Original Message-----

From: William and Michele Baker [<mailto:wmbaker@wwisp.com>]
Sent: Monday, December 22, 2014 6:44 PM
To: gastons@mtnbrook.org
Subject: traffic light change

I apologize if this is not your area and if possible please pass it on to whomever.

On my return route from work I come into English Village and take a left from Cahaba Road onto Fairway Dr., across from Billy's. It has always been somewhat slow as it is an unprotected left turn. The changes on Hwy 280 made it worse as I think more cars have been routed into back roads with Cahaba Rd. being one of them. Now with Little Hardware, which I really like, in it's new location, the turn has become almost impossible. Could you please look into putting in a protected left turn signal at the intersection?

Sincerely,

William and Michele Baker
4968 Spring Rock Rd

Richard Caudle

From: Karon Staples <ksstaples@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 4:55 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Mountain Brook traffic study

Richard,

I am writing to ask that you consider the intersection between Montevallo Road and Church Street, specifically where cars turn left onto Montrose. I believe there needs to be a left hand turn lane dedicated to those turning left. I live about 5 houses down Montevallo, and I sit at that light for two or three turns of the light multiple times a day due to one car turning left, and I only have 1/2 block to go! I also watch traffic back up all day long, all due to just one car turning. I think it could make quite a difference to traffic on Montevallo, especially during peak traffic hours.

Thank you so much for your consideration -
Karon Staples

Richard Caudle

From: Catherine Loveman <cloveman@charter.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 2:48 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Mtn Brook intersections

Richard -

I'm writing to you concerning an intersection in Mountain Brook that needs to be studied.

Montevallo / Church / Montrose

There have been some improvements made (Church to Montrose - with the addition of left turn signals) but Montevallo Road crossing that intersection needs to be studied as well.

*** Mainly cars turning left onto Montrose from Montevallo before getting to Church street.

Often times cars turning left are unable to for several traffic light cycles throughout the day at peak hours and non-peak hours.

This causes traffic to back up beyond Cherry Street in the morning. Cherry is also "output" of Crestline Elementary traffic onto Montevallo- heading toward this intersection.

As you know - Montevallo Road feeds two schools (the largest elementary school and the junior high) - very close to this intersection.

Thank you for your time.

Catherine C. Loveman

Richard Caudle

From: Charles Anderson <cwanderson@HOAR.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2015 4:05 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Mtn Brook Intersections

The worst stretch of traffic that I have regularly encountered in Mountain Brook is Montevallo Rd between Overbrook and Church St/Montrose Rd. At peak traffic times, it can take 10 or more minutes to travel this stretch.

Good luck with the traffic study.

Thanks for your time,
Charles

Charles Anderson | Database Administrator
Two Metroplex Drive, Suite 400
Birmingham, AL 35209
tel / 205.423.2224
fax / 205.423.2323
hoar.com



Let's build something better.

Richard Caudle

From: Sam Gaston <gastons@mtnbrook.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2015 1:33 PM
To: Morgan Murphy
Cc: David Ennis; Bernard Frei; Piggot Phil; Jim Noles; Chip Welch; Richard Caudle
Subject: Re: APPLE grant suggestion

Thank you for your suggestions.

The city council, at its meeting on January 26th, will set a date for the public involvement meeting. Be looking for notifications about when this meeting will be held and try to attend.

Sent from my iPhone
Sam Gaston

> On Jan 21, 2015, at 11:26 AM, Morgan Murphy <morgan@murphymedia.com> wrote:

>

> Sam:

>

> I'd like to nominate the intersection of Country Club Road, Ridge Drive, and Salisbury (and possibly Montclair) as a candidate for the APPLE grant from the Regional Planning Commission.

>

> You may remember that our neighborhood came to a city counsel meeting in large numbers four years ago to protest the removal of the speed humps, which greatly slow the 4,000 cars that traverse our street daily. At that time, we discovered past recommendations from Sain & Associates that recommended closing Country Club Road to Montclair.

>

> Many of us wished to see that closure study take place, and the need is even greater now as use of our streets as a cut-through will be increasing with the added retail pressure of the nearby Lane Park development. Do you have any suggestions for us improving our odds of being picked up as one of the study recipients?

>

> Best,

>

> Morgan Murphy

> 3620 Country Club Road

>

>

>

>

> <FairwayDriveStudy.pdf>

> <FairwayStudyRecommendations.pdf>

Richard Caudle

From: Sam Gaston <gastons@mtnbrook.org>
Sent: Monday, December 01, 2014 10:09 AM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: RE: Crosswalk

Fine with me. I assume this will come from the required Public Hearing and input from the Council?

Sam S.Gaston
City Manager
City of Mountain Brook, AL.
56 Church Street
P.O. Box 130009
Mountain Brook AL. 35213
(205) 802-3803 Phone
(205) 870-3577 Fax

From: Richard Caudle [mailto:richard@skipperinc.com]
Sent: Monday, December 01, 2014 10:05 AM
To: Sam Gaston
Subject: RE: Crosswalk

We might also considering adding this area of Church Street (from Euclid Avenue to West Jackson Boulevard) into the candidate list for the RPC Apple Study to address comprehensive pedestrian safety in this corridor.

From: Sam Gaston [mailto:gastons@mtnbrook.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2014 1:29 PM
To: Richard Caudle; Charles Clark
Cc: Greg Hagood
Subject: RE: Crosswalk

Let's see if the Pig is approved first.

Sam S.Gaston
City Manager
City of Mountain Brook, AL.
56 Church Street
P.O. Box 130009
Mountain Brook AL. 35213
(205) 802-3803 Phone
(205) 870-3577 Fax

From: Richard Caudle [mailto:richard@skipperinc.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2014 12:42 PM
To: Charles Clark; Sam Gaston
Cc: Greg Hagood
Subject: RE: Crosswalk

Since there are no observed pedestrian-related crashes in this section of roadway, the next step would be to make a series of observations to determine the number of pedestrian-vehicle conflicts that occur.

From: Charles Clark [mailto:clarkch@mtnbrook.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2014 12:29 PM

To: Sam Gaston
Cc: Richard Caudle; Greg Hagood
Subject: Re: Crosswalk

checked wreck reports for the listed location for the past four years and none involved pedestrian crossings or pedestrians.

Lt. Chuck Clark
Patrol Division
Mountain Brook Police Department
101 Tibbett Street
Mountain Brook, AL 35213
205.802.3850 (Office)
205.874.0646 (Fax)
clarkch@mtnbrook.org

On Tue, Oct 28, 2014 at 1:52 PM, Sam Gaston <gastons@mtnbrook.org> wrote:
I can ask the police dept to pull this info for you.

Sam S.Gaston
City Manager
City of Mountain Brook, AL.
56 Church Street
P.O. Box 130009
Mountain Brook AL. 35213
(205) 802-3803 Phone
(205) 870-3577 Fax

From: Richard Caudle [mailto:richard@skipperinc.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 1:44 PM
To: Sam Gaston
Subject: RE: Crosswalk

Just going through some old emails and came across this email below. The subject of these existing crosswalks have never entered into discussion on the Piggly Wiggly. I have looked at these crossings several times and haven't noticed anything outstanding about them. Perhaps we need Chief Cook to pull 3 to 5 years of crash reports for Church Street between Dexter and West Jackson and see if there is anything related to the pedestrian crossings.

From: Sam Gaston [mailto:gastons@mtnbrook.org]
Sent: Thursday, July 31, 2014 7:55 AM
To: Elizabeth Dreher
Cc: Richard Caudle
Subject: RE: Crosswalk

As we progress on the Piggly-Wiggly and needed traffic improvements, this crosswalk on Church Street will also be considered for improvements.

Sam S.Gaston
City Manager
City of Mountain Brook, AL.
56 Church Street

P.O. Box 130009
Mountain Brook AL. 35213
(205) 802-3803 Phone
(205) 870-3577 Fax

From: Elizabeth Dreher [mailto:edreher0@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2014 10:38 PM
To: Sam Gaston
Subject: Crosswalk

Are you on "What's Happening in Mt Brook?" I know George talked to a policeman at some meeting about how dangerous the Crestline crosswalk and the policeman hadn't a clue. Someone from the city council should check out the Facebook "What's Happening in Mt Brook" if they're not already because for 3 days now people have been chiming in on how dangerous that crosswalk is - just put the flashing lights like on the parkway!!!

Betsy Dreher
Ray & Poynor Properties
205-936-5971
edreher0@gmail.com

Richard Caudle

From: Sam Gaston <gastons@mtnbrook.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2015 8:02 AM
To: Jodie Hobson
Cc: Richard Caudle
Subject: RE: Traffic Congestion--APPLE Grant

And, yes, the Leach/Euclid/Montevallo Road intersection is actually in Birmingham or at least the west half of Montevallo.

Sam S.Gaston
City Manager
City of Mountain Brook, AL.
56 Church Street
P.O. Box 130009
Mountain Brook AL. 35213
(205) 802-3803 Phone
(205) 870-3577 Fax

From: Jodie Hobson [mailto:jodiehobson@ymail.com]
Sent: Monday, January 19, 2015 11:27 AM
To: gastons@mtnbrook.org
Subject: Traffic Congestion--APPLE Grant

I understand from reading the article in The Reporter, February 2015 edition, that Mtn. Brook has a grant to study up to 80 intersections--not yet identified. The article asked for suggestions to help identify intersections that might be improved to to reduce traffic congestion. Thank you so much for the opportunity to comment on this traffic and for all of your efforts to assist in making our neighborhood a better, safer place.

I have 4 suggestions:

1. **Intersection of Montevallo Road and Church Street.** At the time of peak school drop off of children and in the afternoons for pick up of the children--it is impossible to turn onto Church Street. There is only one lane open on Church Street. The cars (dropping children off/picking up), are parked actually in the road--Church Street. Therefore, no one can turn onto Church Street (either right or left off of Montevallo). I believe it is a state law that a vehicle cannot block a street, but this is done every day (school season) here in Mtn. Brook. The police must see it. Is there no other place(s) for people to park--other than actually in the street? I have to say, it is hard for me to imagine that it would cross my mind to park in a street, blocking the street. Twice a day, every day in school season, no other vehicles can get by--as a practical matter Church Street is made into one lane as a result of the parents being allowed to park on Church Street--blocking it. It is an accident waiting to happen--and with children around. Traffic is backed way up on Montevallo Road --both ways--as a result. One absolutely cannot get through and as a result, many residents are late to appointment, work, etc. There must be something that can be done and studied.
2. **Intersection of Montevallo Road, Leach, and Euclid.** This may or may not be in Mtn. Brook-- but it has a HUGE impact on traffic on Montevallo Road in Mtn Brook. it is the intersection of Montevallo, Euclid, and Leach. If one is traveling west on Montevallo Road and comes to that light, here are two lanes on Montevallo Rd.. In one lane, it is marked straight or left. The other lane is marked right turn only. What is happening is that if you are on Montevallo traveling west, and want to continue straight at the intersection--if someone is in front of you, needing to turn left--there is no

left hand turn signal on the light. So, one is left to sit at that light--while maybe only one car can turn left. For expediency, MANY people circumvent this, by merely getting in the right hand only turn lane--but they do not turn right--they are passing people --people in the left/straight lane-- on their right. This is against the law to pass on the right of someone. It is an accident waiting to happen, when people are zooming by you on the right--it is not expected --as one can clearly see the intersection lane is marked right turn only--you aren't expecting anyone to pass you on the right--not everyone turns left--some go straight. So, if you are going straight, someone passes on right--it returns to one lane and there are accidents.

3. **Montevallo Road**--there is so much speeding. There are sidewalks, with people walking, jogging, with dogs and children. It is a family neighborhood. People travel so fast down Montevallo--that if anyone made any error--perhaps a person or dog misstepped off the sidewalk into the road--they would be hit. What if a child fell off their bike, or Razor? They would be hit--as there is NO room for error. Study whatever intersections--but maybe there should be more lights? Police used to patrol Montevallo Road but the last time I called and asked for some relief--as another dog was hit--the policeman told me it does not help to stop speeders--they are not residents but only people passing through, so it does not help. I find that difficult to believe and I fear that the next speeding car will hit a person.

4. **Intersection of Montevallo Road at Mountain Brook Baptist church.** It needs a left hand turn lane, (my humble opinion from observation), but perhaps the study could provide some suggestion to relieve all the congestion and back up at this intersection.

Again, thank you .
Jodie Hobson
3923 Montevallo Road

Richard Caudle

From: Britt Redden <baredden@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 9:07 AM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Re: traffic

What can we do to make sure it is in the 8. Montevallo is the "280" of Crestline and it definitely needs to be fixed. I would also add that the intersection at Mountain Brook Baptist needs consideration as well but I think the Church Street intersection should be the highest priority.

On Wed, Feb 4, 2015 at 8:54 AM, Richard Caudle <richard@skipperinc.com> wrote:

That intersection is definitely on the list for consideration. We have about 16 intersections on the list right now, which must be cut down to 8.

From: Britt Redden [mailto:baredden@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 8:48 AM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: traffic

Richard - I wanted to make sure that the intersection at Montevallo and Church is being considered in the traffic study. I have lived in Mountain Brook my entire life and tell my children all the time that traffic used to not be like this. I remember days when there was no turn light at that intersection. With that said, it is a problem right now and needs to be addressed. I also feel that the new location of the Piggly Wiggly will also increase traffic as those that live in the flat lands that might have traveled Euclid to get to the grocery store before will be more likely to travel Montevallo. Thank you for your time.

Britt Redden

Richard Caudle

From: Casey Horn <caseyhorn141@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 2:35 PM
To: Richard Caudle
Subject: Street

Please look at a designated turn lane from montevallo to mon tries turning left!

Sent from Casey's iPhone



Dana O. Hazen, AICP
City Planner
56 Church Street
Mountain Brook, Alabama 35213
Telephone: 205/802-3821
Fax: 205.879.6913
hazend@mtnbrook.org
www.mtnbrook.org

MEMO

DATE: February 19, 2015
TO: Mayor, City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
FROM: Dana Hazen, City Planner
RE: Newspaper Racks

The Birmingham News Distributor has reported that none of the City's public newspaper racks are being used in Mountain Brook Village, Crestline or English Village. As such, staff recommends that the following newspaper racks (see attached maps) be removed:

- Crestline – 2
- Mountain Brook Village – 3
- English Village - 1

As a point of reference, the Birmingham News is sold in the following private establishments:

Crestline:
CC Food Mart

Mountain Brook Village:
Starbucks
Minute Man Gas Station

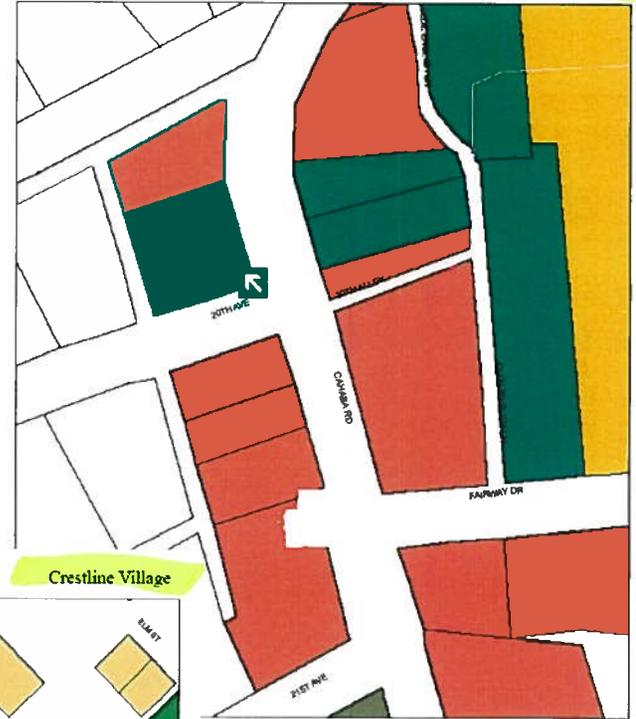
English Village:
none

Mountain Brook Village



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English Village



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Crestline Village



Page-45 GRID-F09



7
Dana O. Hazen, AICP
City Planner
56 Church St
P.O. Box 130009
Mountain Brook, Alabama 35213-0009
Telephone: 205/802-3805
Fax: 205.879.6913
hazend@mtnbrook.org
www.mtnbrook.org

DATE: February 19, 2015
TO: Mayor, City Council, City Manager & City Attorney
FROM: Dana Hazen, City Planner
RE: Conditional Use: Family Share Massage, 2816 Culver Road (Mountain Brook Mall)

In 2010, Little Flower Day Spa took over a previous personal service establishment (Salon Xanadoo) in a suite at the front of Mountain Brook Mall (which had the same or fewer “stations” for personal services).

In March 2014, Little Flower Day spa expanded into a “satellite suite” at the rear of the mall with 3 new stations (2 massage rooms and one station for waxing and foot massage). The owner of Little Flower Day Spa was unaware that a conditional use was required for this expansion, as it was operating under the same ownership and business license as the original portion of the spa at the front of the mall.

The owner of Little Flower Day Spa has since sold the original portion (at the front of the mall) and has changed the name of the “satellite” massage suite to Family Share Massage. It was in doing so that she applied for a new business license and came to realize that a conditional use approval is required for the expanded/new space at the rear of the mall.

Family Share Massage has been in operation for one year. The spa is open 7 days per week from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Peak times are primarily from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. on the weekends and from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. on week days. On weekdays there is generally only one therapist working, but there are between 1-3 therapists working during weekend peak hours. Therefore, the parking demand ranges from 1-6 spaces. Employees park in the private lot at the rear of the mall.

On-site parking at the Mountain Brook Mall is legal non-conforming, and the mall has several vacant suites. The suite in question is approximately 1100 square feet, which would result in a nonconforming retail credit of 5.5 (or 6) parking spaces. Therefore, no more than 3 personal service stations are permitted at this location (code requires 2 parking spaces per station). Based on the nonconforming parking credit, it appears that the proposed use meets the parking requirement for this location, but is limited to no more than 3 stations (as proposed).

The zoning ordinance requires council approval of a service use as a *conditional use*, and states that any proposed conditional use will be reviewed as to the following:

- Whether the use would disparately impact public parking in the area;
- Whether vehicular or pedestrian circulation would be impacted by the use;
- Whether the use is compatible with surrounding existing uses;
- Whether the hours of operation or peak traffic times would impact existing uses.

