North Carolina Public Library Standards

Contents

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North Carolina Public Library Standards Working Group

Jim Blanton, Director, Buncombe County Public Library

Dr. Jon Gant, Dean, NC Central University SLIS; State Library Certification Commission

Brian Hart, Library Director, Forsyth County Public Library; Chair of State Library Certification Commission

Marian Lytle, Director, Mooresville Public Library

Jenny Gerami-Markham, Assistant Director, Catawba County Public Library

Melanie Morgan, Director, Neuse Regional Library

Jimi Rider, Branch Manager, New Hanover County Library; State Library Commission

Michael Roche, Director, Rockingham County Public Library; State Library Commission

Terry Rollins, Children's Services Librarian, Brown Library

Tiffany Savage, Branch Manager, Sampson County Public Library

Jonathan Wark, Director, East Albemarle Regional Library

SLNC Standards Team

Lynda Reynolds, Public Library Management Consultant

Lauren Clossey, Continuing Education Consultant

Jeffrey Hamilton, Adult Services Consultant

Amanda Johnson, Data Analysis and Communications Consultant

Catherine Prince, Federal Programs Consultant

Jasmine Rockwell, Youth Services Consultant

Karen Dash, Consultant

Introduction

With ingenuity and passion, North Carolina's libraries offer collections, programming, and services to meet the unique needs of the communities they serve. But even within their successes, library staffs seek information to strengthen their efforts. They seek consistent, measurable best practices to determine how their work aligns with that of similar libraries in the state and nationwide. The North Carolina Public Library Standards offer relevant, dynamic, and flexible community-based standards to guide libraries in providing quality service based on community needs.

The North Carolina Public Library Standards offer suggested guidelines for supporting local library communities. **The intent of this document is to be used as a self-assessment tool for public libraries and their governing authority**. This is not intended to be used as guidelines for outside organizations to assess the performance of libraries.

By offering a common language of aspirations, the standards seek to:

» Aid libraries in building on existing strengths and identifying opportunities to improve offerings

» Provide a framework to guide local planning, management, and evaluation processes

» Guide libraries in solving new community problems

» Assist libraries and funders in evaluating the impact of public library service

» Inform the public of the vast array of ways libraries can enrich their lives

» Promote equitable library service for all North Carolinians by offering expectations of minimum levels of service

The ability of libraries to transform lives and communities is reflected in the rapt smiles of children at Storytime, their parents' arms filled with books to share together at home. The value is also reflected in hard numbers: measurements that indicate the return on investment in libraries through their role in promoting literacy, civic engagement, economic empowerment, and digital access for every citizen. As societal expectations of libraries evolve in response to technological innovation, demographic changes, and community challenges requiring a coordinated effort, North Carolina libraries stand ready to deliver. These standards offer libraries a way to not only enhance services but also demonstrate value to stakeholders and their communities.

How to Use the Standards

The North Carolina Public Library Standards are **suggested guidelines**, or best practices, for local libraries and their governing authorities to **self-assess** their operations.

The importance of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) is encompassed throughout these standards as a foundational aspect of all library services including the elimination of barriers to access.

The standards are organized into five Operational Areas:

» Sustainable Organization

» Center for Knowledge and Lifelong Learning

» Community Engagement

» Innovation through Collaboration

» Facilities

Each operational area includes a set of Standards (e.g., Governance, Staffing, etc.) that offer Outcomes and associated Indicators, or suggested practices, in a Self-Assessment format. For each Standard, the Outcome answers the question of "why" libraries might follow or enact the various Indicators.

Except for the Governance Standard, all of the Outcomes and Indicators are organized by Tiers of service. **With the understanding that every library is unique, and that each library must make its own decisions about where to focus efforts**, those tiers are defined as:

» **Essential:** The basic level of library collections, programs, services, etc., to adequately meet community needs

» **Enhanced:** This level recognizes that some aspects of library service stand out compared to their peers

» **Exemplary:** This level recognizes public libraries for being state and national leaders

Acknowledging that each library works within a local set of constraints and opportunities, libraries are considered to have fulfilled a Tier level after achieving the majority of the Indicators. When most or all of the Indicators are achieved, the Outcome can be realized for the Tier level.

The Indicators are structured so that all libraries can conduct a self-assessment based on their unique community needs. The Indicators accommodate libraries of all sizes and configurations, from a library branch serving a small local population to a multi-county regional library with a large Legal Service Area (LSA) population.

The Standards are intended to be cumulative, with each Tier level expected to achieve most or all Indicators for the levels prior. For example, an Exemplary Library will have achieved most or all the Indicators for Essential and Enhanced Libraries. It is also possible for a library to meet the Enhanced or Exemplary Tier level for some Outcomes but not for others.

To assist library efforts, many Standards include helpful resources, information, and links for further study. In the spirit of creating a dynamic set of Standards, libraries are encouraged to suggest additional resources for potential inclusion in subsequent editions, which will be updated annually by the State Library.

Library staff and governing authorities are encouraged to review these standards periodically to determine progress toward their goals. Together, the director, staff, board, and community can review where the library stands, where they would like it to be, and what it will take to get there. These Standards are intended to provide guidance for the journey.

<u>DEFINITIONAL NOTE</u>: For simplicity's sake, references to "Library" within Indicators includes actions taken by the library's governing authority – municipal, county, or governing board.

Sustainable Organization

Many North Carolina public libraries have served as pillars of their communities for decades. This long-term sustainability depends on a strong governing structure; a dedicated and well-trained staff reflective of their community; ongoing, community-based planning efforts; and written, transparent policies detailing library philosophy and methods of conducting business.

▷ Sustainable Organization: Governance

North Carolina's public library systems are governed by a variety of local structures, including Governing Boards, Advisory Boards, or City or County governments. The multiplicity of structures, therefore, do not align well with a series of Tiered indicators but are instead subject to state library laws and codes included below. These laws and codes ensure that libraries are responsive to their communities and are managed in a way that provides transparency and accountability to taxpayers.

The laws and codes, particularly those related to State Aid to Public Libraries, contain requirements including:

» Public library services shall be provided from at least one designated facility with a catalogued collection that is open to the public a minimum of 40 hours per week

» Employ a full-time library director (minimum 35 hours/week) having or eligible for North Carolina public librarian certification

» Secure operational funds from government sources at least equal to the average amount budgeted and available for expenditure the previous three years. . . . State funds shall not replace local funds budgeted and available for expenditure for public library operations.

Links to all applicable laws and codes are included below.

Outcome 1: *The library is legally established and operates in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations, ensuring public confidence in the effective stewardship of public funds.*

Governance: State Library Laws

North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) and North Carolina Administrative Codes (NCAC) that govern public libraries:

» NCGS 125 State Library provides the legal basis for the relationship between the State of North Carolina and public libraries and led to the creation of the Library Development section at the State Library. This statute also establishes the Aid to Public Libraries Fund, librarian certification, and confidentiality of library user records

» 07 NCAC 02I .0200 – State Aid to Public Libraries provides qualifications for State Aid grant eligibility and approved uses

» NCGS 153A Article 14 Libraries provides the legal basis for the establishment of County and City public libraries including the authorization of public library systems, free library service, Board of trustees, qualifications of a library director, and financing library systems

» NCGS 160A Article 20 Part 1 Joint Exercise of Powers provides for the establishment of regional library systems and other library systems that have established interlocal agreements between two or more units of local government

» 07 NCAC 02I .0300 – Organization of Regional Libraries provides for establishment and dissolution of a regional library system including regional agreements and powers and duties of regional board as governing body

» NCGS 143B Article 2 Part 6 Public Librarian Certification Commission provides the legal basis for the Public Librarian Certification Commission including creation, powers and duties, members, and meetings

» 07 NCAC 02J .0100 – North Carolina Public Librarian Certification Commission establishes minimum standards and procedures for public librarian certification

Governance: Other Applicable North Carolina Laws

» NCGS 143-318.9-18 Article 33C Meetings of Public Bodies, also known as the Open Meeting Law, provides the legal basis for the right of the public to attend meetings of public bodies which include library board of trustee meetings both advisory and governing

» NCGS 132 Public Records defines public records and the public's right to obtain copies of public records from agencies of North Carolina government and their subdivisions

» NCGS 121-5 Public records and archives designates the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources as the official archival agency and authority over public records including regulation of records destruction

» NCGS 132-8 Assistance by and to Department of Natural and Cultural Resources gives the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources the right to examine the condition of public records and provide assistance in preserving, filing, and making available public records

» NCGS 14-398 Theft or destruction of property of public libraries, museums, etc. classifies for the theft or destruction of property of public libraries as a Class I misdemeanor if the value does not exceed $50 and a Class H felon if the sum exceeds $50

» NCGS 159 Local Governance Finance, also known as the Local Government Finance Act, provides provisions for administration of finances for units of local government

Governance: Federal Laws

» Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides information and technical assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act

» Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting employees in the private sector and in Federal, State, and local governments

» **Family and Medical Leave Act** (FMLA) entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons

» Indicators

1.1 The library complies with all Applicable State Library Laws

1.2 The library complies with all Other Applicable North Carolina Laws

1.3 The library complies with all Federal Laws

Helpful Resources

United for Libraries, American Library Association
The Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations offers a variety of resources, including informational/training videos.

Working Together: Roles and Responsibilities Guidelines
The State Library of North Carolina offers a simple chart developed by the Connecticut State Library that explains the roles of the Library Director, Board, and Friends in different areas of library responsibility for Governing Boards and Advisory Boards.

State Library of North Carolina Management Resources
The State Library offers a wide variety of resources for library directors and trustees, including links to training, manuals, and statistics.

General Records Schedule for Local Government Agencies
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Records Retention and Disposition schedule for local government agencies.

Public Libraries Records Retention and Disposition Schedule
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Records Retention and Disposition schedule for public libraries.

▷ Sustainable Organization: Staffing

The library is an institution of education and empowerment for the community. To create this culture of learning, the library hires skillful, dedicated staff who are afforded the tools and supports, including fostering an environment of mutual respect and cooperation, to ensure ongoing learning and skill-building.

Outcome 2: *The library is sufficiently staffed with personnel who reflect the diversity of the community and participate in professional development to provide quality service to the community.*

» Indicators

Essential	
2.1	Staffing meets a standard per 25,000 population of: » 2.5 ALA-MLS full-time equivalent (FTE) » 7.5 FTE – includes ALA-MLS staff Paid staff are present during all business hours.
2.2	All state and federal laws in recruiting, hiring, and terminating employees are followed.
2.3	Written job descriptions are used to hire, develop goals, and conduct performance evaluations.
2.4	The library creates human resource policies or an Employee Handbook for employee orientations. Review for updates on a regular basis.
2.5	Orientation for new staff includes equity, diversity, and inclusion awareness training.

Essential Con't	
2.6	Paraprofessional/support staff participate annually in at least 5 hours of professional learning.
2.7	Professional staff participate annually in at least 20 hours of professional learning.
2.8	The library conducts a diversity audit of their staff to determine its fit with the community's profile.

Enhanced	
2.9	Staffing meets a standard per 25,000 population of: » 5 ALA-MLS full-time equivalent (FTE) » 12.5 FTE- includes ALA-MLS staff
2.10	Inclusive hiring practices are utilized, including a diverse hiring committee.
2.11	The library develops a staffing plan that addresses job descriptions, competencies, organizational development, and succession planning.
2.12	The library ensures all employees are proficient in carrying out the library's values and philosophy.
2.13	Paraprofessional/support staff participate annually in at least 10 hours of professional learning.
2.14	Professional staff participate annually in at least 30 hours of professional learning.
2.15	The library provides equity, diversity, and inclusion training to the staff every two years.
2.16	The library actively recruits and employs staff representative of their community demographics, with a focus on cultural and multilingual diversity.

Exemplary	

2.17	Staffing meets a standard per 25,000 population of:
	  » 10 ALA-MLS full-time equivalent (FTE)
	  » 20 FTE- includes ALA-MLS staff

2.18	The library actively recruits and considers diverse candidates for job positions, including bilingual candidates.
2.19	The library provides trained professional staff in areas such as adult services, youth services, IT, and/or Outreach.
2.20	The library provides in-house and continuing education activities for staff, trustees, and volunteers.
2.21	Paraprofessional/support staff participate annually in at least 20 hours of professional learning.
2.22	Professional staff participate annually in at least 40 hours of professional learning.
2.23	The library creates policies and strategies for strengthening and maintaining organizational diversity.

Helpful Resources

Library Competencies (American Library Association)
Core competencies for professionally trained staff including Librarians Serving Children and Youth in Public Libraries, Reference and User Services Librarians, Developing Core Leadership Competencies, and Core Competencies of Librarianship.

State Library of North Carolina Continuing Education
The State Library offers a wide variety of continuing education opportunities, including links to archived webinars, upcoming online courses, and other web-based training resources.

[Project Ready: Reimagining Equity & Access for Diverse Youth](#)
Project Ready offers free, online professional development modules for librarians and other professionals interested in improving their knowledge about race and racism, racial equity, and culturally sustaining pedagogy.

[NC LIVE](#)
Training for librarians and library staff through NC LIVE, a statewide library cooperative supporting 200+ public and academic libraries across North Carolina.

[OCLC WebJunction Training Resources](#)
OCLC offers resources, including free training, to strengthen library staff members' knowledge, skill, and confidence.

▷ Sustainable Organization: Funding

Libraries earn the public trust by being accountable and transparent about the use of public money. North Carolina public libraries are primarily supported by local tax revenues. The library governing authority seeks and secures funding from public and private sources and monitors and expends these funds with integrity and to support the goals of the library. Donations, endowments, grants, and State Aid supplement but do not replace local funding.

Outcome 3: *The community is effectively served by a library that is appropriately funded and transparently administered to meet community needs.*

» Indicators

Essential	
3.1	The library is in compliance with 07 NCAC 02I.0200 - State Aid to Public Libraries, which establishes qualifications for State Aid grant eligibility and approved uses, including requirements for local government funding, salaries, etc. (CODE).
3.2	The library follows fiscal procedures consistent with local, state, and federal government requirements.
3.3	The library prepares an annual budget based on the library's strategic planning goals and objectives.
3.4	The library director provides written financial reports for review and communicates regularly on financial matters.
3.5	The library develops a long-range capital plan for the library and updates it on an annual basis.

Essential Con't	
3.6	The library submits an annual application for State Aid and Public Library Survey to the State Library ([CODE](#)).
3.7	The library submits a full audit of the library's finances annually to the State Library ([CODE](#)).

Enhanced	
3.8	The library fosters community financial investment in the library through Friends of the Library groups, foundations, philanthropists, donations, and gift program, etc.
3.9	The library applies for local, state, or national grants that are supplemental to local government funding.
3.10	The library sustains or increases supplemental funds from local, state, or national sources each year.

Exemplary	
3.11	The library establishes and maintains an endowment to provide enhancements to basic services.
3.12	The library develops partnerships with other local government or nonprofit agencies with aligned missions and goals to apply for additional funding opportunities.
3.13	The library explores group purchases and collective bargaining opportunities in order to expend funds effectively and efficiently.

Helpful Resources

E-Rate Program
The Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) E-Rate program provides discounted rates for telecommunications, internet access, and internal connections to eligible schools and libraries.

State Library of North Carolina Grant Information
The State Library administers two grant funds. Federally allocated funds from IMLS through LSTA and State allocated funds through the Aid to Public Libraries fund.

ALA Programming Librarian
Bi-Monthly Email Newsletter Link (featuring grant opportunities)

Library Grants Blogspot
For anyone interested in library grant opportunities

Foundation Directory Online *(through subscription)*
Online database of U.S. Foundations

▷ Sustainable Organization: Planning

In addition to managing the day-to-day concerns of the library community, libraries must continually assess both the changing needs of their stakeholders and the changing delivery mechanisms of library service. Technology, evolving expectations of libraries, and natural and community health disasters demand forward-thinking planning that builds upon community and library traditions.

Outcome 4: *The library develops and implements a dynamic planning process that reflects strategies based on community needs and priorities.*

» Indicators

Essential	
4.1	The library develops a comprehensive strategic plan that identifies the library's strategies for achieving goals and objectives based on community needs and interests.
4.2	The library's planning process includes significant community feedback gathered through focus groups, surveys, interviews, patron comments, staff observations, and usage statistics.
4.3	The library's strategic plan includes specific goals for surveying community diversity.
4.4	The library's planning includes facilities planning. (See Facilities, Design)
4.5	The library's strategic plan is updated every five years (CODE).

Enhanced	
4.6	The library's strategic plan articulates a method for reflecting the demographic, ethnic, and social diversity of its community and regularly reviews and evaluates the linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity of its community.
4.7	The library's strategic plan is reviewed annually by board members and staff, including evaluation of progress toward goals.
4.8	The strategic plan and annual review of progress are reported to the governing authority and made available in hard copy or online for the community.
4.9	The library's planning process includes discussion of systemic racism and racial equity.

Exemplary	
4.10	The library uses its strategic plan and annual review of progress to determine whether additional funding is necessary, and if so, pursues additional funding through grant writing, private fundraising, or increased tax support, as necessary.
4.11	The library develops a Technology Strategic Plan at least once every three years, with at least one staff member keeping ongoing track of trends in library technology. In preparing to do so, the library regularly tracks the following metrics: - Number of hours public computers and other devices are in use by patrons - Average wait times for public computers and other devices - Number of wireless sessions - Number of printing sessions originating from patrons' laptops or mobile devices - Number and type of e-resources (e.g., databases, e-books and online periodicals, movies) utilized - Number of attendees in technology classes - Number/type of one-one-one technology help sessions - Number/type of online reference requests (See Technology)

Helpful Notes

While a library's strategic plan generally focuses on those areas of primary interest as identified by library staff, board, patrons, and other community members, some potential areas for consideration might include:

» Administration and Finance/Fundraising

» Advocacy Efforts

» Collections Management

» Community Partnerships

» Disaster Readiness

» Personnel Management

» Preservation Planning

» Public Services

» Public Relations

Helpful Resources

Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) National network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. This organization offers Racial Equity Action Plans: A How-To-Manual, as well as a variety of tools and resources including Advancing Racial Equity in Public Libraries: Case Studies from the Field.

▷ Sustainable Organization: Policies

Written policies provide a foundational and transparent resource for communicating expectations of all members of the library community, including staff, boards, patrons, volunteers, donors, and others. Such policies should be considered "living" documents that evolve as expectations, priorities, or environmental factors such as technology or applicable laws change.

NOTE: For simplicity, references to Policies include both Policies and Procedures.

Outcome 5: *The library develops transparent policies representative of sound management practices to ensure efficient and effective library operations.*

» Indicators

Essential	
5.1	The library has a written set of policies to govern library personnel, operations, and services which are transparent and easily accessible to library staff and the public.
5.2	Library policies are written to emphasize that basic services are free and welcome to all.
5.3	The library complies with North Carolina law regarding confidentiality of customer records (NCGS 125-19).
5.4	Policies are updated to reflect changes in applicable local, state, and federal laws, and with relevant court decisions.
5.5	The library reviews all policies at least every five years, updating as needed.

Enhanced	
5.6	The library establishes an Information Security Policy.
5.7	The library considers the use of fine-free policies. While patrons would be liable for lost books, the library would be considered whole when the item is returned.
5.8	The library reviews all policies at least every three years, updating as needed.

Exemplary	
5.9	The library reviews all policies every year, updating as needed.
5.10	Library policies are made available in multiple languages, as appropriate for the community.
5.11	Library policies are reviewed and revised for implicit biases and barriers to service.

Helpful Resources

Policy Topics

The library may choose to include the following policy topics:

» Personnel policies, including hiring, evaluation, salary, retirement, employee conduct, etc.

» Circulation policies, including loan periods, fines, overdues, etc.

» Collection development policies, including intellectual freedom, gifts and donations, weeding, etc.

» Facility use policies, including accessibility, displays, meeting room use/ signups, etc.

» Public safety policies, including unattended children, inappropriate behavior, emergency, and disaster response, etc.

» Volunteers/Friends of the Library (See Community Engagement, Volunteers/ FOL)

Policy examples (Public Library Association)

The Public Library Association offers policy examples from the American Library Association and other public library systems.

[Privacy Toolkit (American Library Association)](#)
Current issues and threats to privacy, potential solutions, and resources offered by the American Library Association.

Center for Knowledge & Lifelong Learning

The most successful libraries establish themselves as a center for knowledge and lifelong learning for people of all ages, backgrounds, and needs. Through a unique mix of robust, community-centered collections, economic development, programs, and services, the library can equip its citizens to live their most productive and enjoyable lives.

▷ Collections

For many, the heart of the public library remains its collections, available in a variety of formats and reflective of community needs. As electronic resources become more prevalent, libraries will assess collection demands and plan acquisitions in a dynamic, evolving manner. While collection development is constrained by resources, the library may explore the value of collaboration and resource sharing.

Outcome 6: *The library develops a Collections Management Plan and maintains collection practices that ensure collections are frequently reviewed and updated to reflect the diverse needs of all community members.*

» Indicators

Essential	
6.1	The library develops a Collection Management Plan that is reviewed and revised regularly and is consistent with the library's planning goals.
6.2	The Collection Management Plan includes policies for addressing customer materials requests, weeding policies, preservation policies for historical materials, and procedures for handling gifts or donations.
6.3	The library conducts a diversity audit of their collections to ensure the collection reflects the ethnic, cultural, and language diversity of the community.
6.4	The library orders collection items throughout the year to ensure an ongoing selection of new materials.
6.5	The library maintains materials in a variety of formats – including audio, video, and digital/electronic resources -- reflective of community needs.
6.6	The library includes adaptive technology to ensure inclusive access to print and electronic materials.
6.7	Library collections are weeded every 3 years.

Enhanced	
6.8	The library researches and acquires books and other materials that offer additional and diverse perspectives, including those in other languages.
6.9	The library promotes use of its collections through marketing, displays, and programs to increase user awareness and appreciation.
6.10	The library utilizes interlibrary loan or joins a consortium such as NC Cardinal to supplement local collection development.

Enhanced Con't	
6.11	The library offers a Library of Things: e.g., lends gardening tools and seeds, art supplies, kitchen appliances, toys, musical instruments, science kits, recreational equipment, etc., that meet community needs.
6.12	Library collections are weeded every 2 years.

Exemplary	
6.13	The library actively promotes their diverse collections with the community, including community reads or other programming.
6.14	The library offers materials related to traditionally marginalized communities that include their history, culture, and contemporary issues.
6.15	Library collections are weeded on a continuous basis.

Helpful Resources

Collection Development and Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit
ALA Collection Development tools and resources including selection and weeding.

We Need Diverse Books
Resources for "putting more books featuring diverse characters into the hands of all children."

NC Cardinal
NC Cardinal is a catalog and resource sharing program of the State Library of North Carolina.

CREW: Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries
Guidance for librarians and staff for culling outdated and no longer useful materials from collection, including e-books. Prepared and maintained by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

▷ Center for Knowledge and Lifelong Learning: Economic Development

The library is well-established to support the economic growth of its community. A trusted resource of education and technology, the library offers job seekers and small business owners the opportunity to develop their careers. Similarly, the library can offer technology and support to people seeking to connect with government services.

Outcome 7: *Workers and small businesses achieve increased success through the use of library collections, resources, programs, and services to attain jobs, business support, and government services.*

» Indicators

Essential	
7.1	The library offers sufficient numbers of public computers and sufficient internet bandwidth to assist job seekers in searching for and applying for positions. (See Technology)
7.2	The library offers resources about job searching, resume development, software applications, career development, and associated topics.
7.3	The library seeks out and forms partnerships with organizations that can assist workers in applying for jobs.
7.4	The library offers access to information and technology that connects library customers to government resources at the local, county, state, and federal level.

Enhanced	
7.5	The library, perhaps through partnerships, offers Jobs Assistance classes in searching for and applying for jobs, resume-writing, etc.
7.6	The library seeks out and forms partnerships to offer workers computer skills classes.
7.7	Library staff members assisting people with e-government needs are familiar with the use of government websites, forms, and application systems used by community members.
7.8	The library seeks out and identifies partnerships to assist small businesses in their growth and development.
7.9	The library identifies and provides information on training and educational resources not available in the library.
7.10	The library offers summer internships for high school students.

Exemplary	
7.11	The library works with area employers, Chambers of Commerce, and community colleges/universities to identify needed worker skills and assists in the provision of worker skills training.
7.12	The library identifies partnerships with individuals or organizations to assist in offering specialized technology and technology training to the public.
7.13	With partners, the library develops and circulates start-up resource packets or kits for prospective entrepreneurs.
7.14	Library staff conduct targeted outreach to unemployed and underemployed people to promote training programs and identify additional training needs.
7.15	The library sponsors or hosts a community job fair of local and regional employers.
7.16	The library offers information and services to job seekers, entrepreneurs, and people interested in government services in languages reflective of the community.

Helpful Resources

NC Works
NC Works offers career centers and resources for job seekers and employers throughout North Carolina.

NC Workforce Development Boards
The state funds 23 local Workforce Development Boards of community leaders charged with planning and oversight responsibilities for workforce programs and services in their area.

North Carolina Workforce Resources
The NC Department of Commerce offers information regarding statewide workforce development partners and federal resources and grant opportunities.

▷ Center for Knowledge and Lifelong Learning: Services

As socioeconomic and digital divides persist in many communities, the library offers critical services to level the informational and technological playing field. Traditional service delivery may be augmented to ensure participation by people with disabilities, those unable to come to the library facility, and non-English speaking people.

Outcome 8: *The library offers age-appropriate services free of charge to all within its service population to educate, inspire, and equip people to be their best.*

» Indicators

Essential	
8.1	The library acknowledges and respects the community's cultural diversity as services are planned and delivered.
8.2	Library staff offer in-person information and reference services that are accurate and derived from sources that meet professional standards of authority and timeliness.
8.3	Library staff provide assistance to patrons with navigating library technology.
8.4	The library offers adaptive technology for people with disabilities to utilize library services.
8.5	The library offers photocopier, printer, fax, and scanning technology services.
8.6	The library offers at least one public space for individual work or small meetings.

Essential Con't	
8.7	The library staff offer Readers Advisory Services.
8.8	The library has a system for reserving public space.
8.9	The library offers multiple methods of service delivery.
8.10	The library works with at least two community partners – government, business, or nonprofit agencies – to bring value-added services to library patrons and other community members. (See Innovation through Collaboration, Partnerships)
8.11	The library obtains public feedback on library collections, programs, and services every 2 years, including customer satisfaction and additional needs.

Enhanced	
8.12	Library staff are trained to offer information and reference services that are accurate and derived from sources that meet professional standards of authority and timeliness, both in person and remotely.
8.13	At least one library staff member is trained to offer technology assistance services to patrons.
8.14	The library provides wireless printing from patron's phones or laptops.
8.15	The library offers at least two flexible public spaces to accommodate individual work, group, or small-medium public meetings.
8.16	The library provides outreach to special populations to promote library services. (See Community Engagement, Outreach)
8.17	The library works with at least four community partners – government, business, or nonprofit agencies – to bring value-added services to library patrons and other community members. (See Innovation through Collaboration, Partnerships)

Exemplary	
8.18	The library trains patrons in using current technology, including people with disabilities.
8.19	The library offers notary services.
8.20	The library facilitates or serves as a custodian of local history.
8.21	The library offers at least three flexible public spaces to accommodate individual work, group, or large public meetings.
8.22	The library has an online system for reserving public spaces.
8.23	The library offers access to meeting rooms after hours.
8.24	Basic library publications, such as library card applications, flyers, brochures, etc., are translated into the most prominent languages in the community.
8.25	The library works with at least six community partners – government, business, or nonprofit agencies – to bring value-added services to library patrons and other community members. (See Innovation through Collaboration, Partnerships)
8.26	The library obtains public feedback on library collections, programs, and services every year, including customer satisfaction and additional needs.

Helpful Resources

Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)
Division of the American Library Association offering publications, guidelines, and resources including:

» Professional Competencies for Reference and User Services Librarians

» Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers

» Health and Medical Reference Guidelines

Legal Reference for Public Libraries: Distinguishing Between Information and Advice (*Overall advice about legal reference applies to any public library staff across U.S.*)

▷ Center for Knowledge and Lifelong Learning: Programming

Increasingly, children, teens, and adults look to the library for educational programming; for teens and adults, this programming might include college, career, and "life" training. As the welcoming, friendly heart of many communities, the library is ideally positioned to strengthen the skills and economic opportunities available to community members through its programming.

Outcome 9: *The library develops and hosts educational, recreational, and cultural programs designed to meet the diverse needs and interests of their communities.*

» Indicators

Essential	
9.1	The library acknowledges and respects the community's cultural diversity as programs are planned and presented.
9.2	The library provides out-of-school programs for children and teens.
9.3	The library provides inclusive year-round programs for all ages, abilities, genders, ethnicities, income levels, etc.
9.4	The library provides current information about community organizations that offer other programs of interest to patrons.
9.5	The library evaluates program offerings yearly.

Enhanced	
9.6	The library provides intergenerational programs.
9.7	The library evaluates programs quarterly using feedback solicited from program attendees.
9.8	The library has a written policy defining the scope of library programs and connects with other library policies, such as collection development and community spaces, and supports strategic plans.

Exemplary	
9.9	The library provides programs outside of the library building in conjunction with other community organizations.
9.10	Programs are held at times and locations that are convenient based on community feedback.
9.11	The library evaluates programs quarterly using feedback solicited from program attendees and other community members.
9.12	The library provides programs in languages other than English according to community needs.

Helpful Resources

North Carolina Adult Programming Environmental Scan
The North Carolina Adult Programming Environmental Scan, prepared by Dr. Noah Lenstra of the UNC-Greensboro School of Library and Information Science, offers numerous helpful recommendations and resources for strengthening adult programming throughout the state of North Carolina. Dr. Lenstra's study suggests that North Carolina public librarians reported the following as the most impactful adult programs: (1) Collection-related; (2) Economics/Job/Law; (3) Culture or History; (4) Health; and (5) Technology, Science, or Makerspace (tied with (5) Crafts or Other DIY).

Project Outcome
Free toolkit designed to help public libraries understand and share the impact of essential library services and programs by providing

simple surveys and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. Project Outcome also provides libraries with the resources and training support needed to apply their results and confidently advocate for their library's future.

National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment (NILPPA)
Through the National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment (NILPPA), the American Library Association (ALA) is collecting data from libraries across the country to understand and document the characteristics, audiences, outcomes, and value of U.S. library public programming.

Community Engagement

Throughout the state, library stakeholders often reflect on the importance of sharing library resources with all members of the community and particularly underserved populations. Through publicizing the library's rich offerings, organized outreach efforts, and the extensive contributions of Volunteers/Friends of the Library, the library can further enrich the community, including as a driver of economic development.
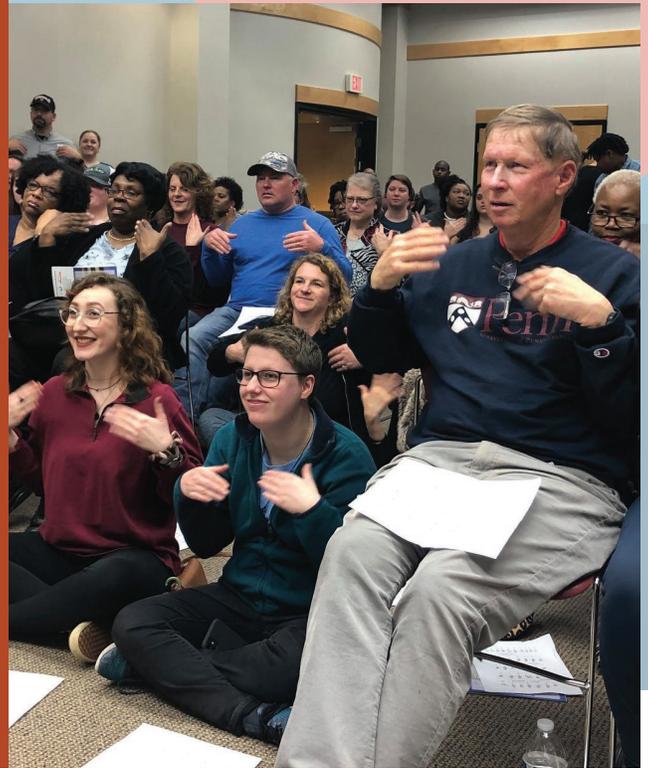
▷ Public Relations

It is often surprising to learn that, throughout North Carolina, community members, including library neighbors, are sometimes unaware of the library's collections, programs, or services. To further knowledge of the library's treasure trove of resources, the library might strengthen its public relations efforts, utilizing traditional marketing methods and new, low-cost technological communications.

Outcome 10: *The community understands the tremendous value of their library and the significant return on public investment in the library through multi-faceted marketing efforts, strengthening public support for library funding.*

» Indicators

Essential	
10.1	The library incorporates public feedback into a marketing plan as part of their public relations efforts and updates the plan at least every 3 years.
10.2	The library develops and includes a unique, recognizable logo on most publications and promotional materials.
10.3	The library communicates its Return on Investment (ROI) to the community, governing authority, funders, and other stakeholders.
10.4	The library develops a contact list of community leaders, schools, churches, organizations, and other agencies and communicates with them regularly through correspondence, promotional materials, or newsletters.
10.5	The library maintains a list of media contacts and regularly sends them information about library events, programs, and services.
10.6	The library participates in local events such as fairs, parades, festivals, and school events, including parents' nights, potentially signing people up for library cards.
10.7	The library uses at least six of the potential venues below to promote and publicize library services on a regular basis.
10.8	The library conducts a regular assessment of library facilities.
10.9	The library educates all staff on the library's practices and procedures for marketing and public relations.

Enhanced	
10.10	Incorporating public feedback, the library updates its marketing plan at least once every two years.

Enhanced Con't	
10.11	The library has staff members who belong to and represent the library in community groups such as business associations, local organizations, and focus/interest groups.
10.12	The library has staff members who meet with school librarians and school media specialists at least twice per year.
10.13	The library participates in regional, state, and national promotions such as National Library Week, Children's Book Week, and National Library Card Sign-up Month.
10.14	The library recognizes all contributions to the library by way of personalized letters/emails, Board resolutions, press releases, plaques, or receptions, as appropriate.
10.15	The library establishes community advisory groups, including teens.
10.16	The library uses at least eight of the potential venues below to promote and publicize library services on a regular basis.

Exemplary	
10.17	The library seeks input on community needs and priorities at least once every two years.
10.18	The library employs a staff member whose primary responsibility is to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate marketing activities. The staff member has access to continuing education and training in public/ community relations and library marketing.
10.19	The library uses at least ten of the potential venues below to promote and publicize library services on a regular basis.

Potential Venues to Promote and Publicize Library Services

» Advertising specialty items
» Annual report (an edited report used for promotional material)
» Promotional emails/mailings to targeted audiences
» Displays, exhibits, bulletin boards, digital signage

- » Face-to-face promotion (person to person, door to door)
- » General information brochure
- » A user-friendly, accessible-to-all website which provides location(s), hours, and contact info
- » Newsletter/e-newsletter
- » Posters, flyers, bookmarks, brochures
- » Paid advertising (print, web, billboards, television, or radio)
- » Radio or television PSA and/or interviews
- » Social media (library blog, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
- » Bookmobile or outreach vehicle (such as parades, partnership events, special functions, etc.)
- » Community partners' websites, emails, etc.

Helpful Resources

Library Value Calculator
The Massachusetts Library Association and Chelmsford MA Library created a library value calculator, which offer a streamlined way to quantify the services offered by public libraries. Two adaptations are provided below:
What's Your Library Worth?
What is Your Library Worth to You?

True Value Calculator
Syracuse University School of Information Studies created a libr ary value calculator that includes quantifying the cost of library staff labor to learn the true value of public library visits.

▷ Community Engagement: Outreach

Community engagement and outreach function in two important ways: first, the library informs the broader community about collections, programs, and services available at the library; and second, the library brings those resources to people within the community who are challenged to come to the library. A key principle for doing so is meeting people where they are – in their language style, communication preferences, and their literal location.

Outcome 11: *All community members, including current non-users and new residents, have knowledge of library programs and feel welcome to utilize library services.*

» Indicators

Essential	
11.1	The library identifies underrepresented populations or non-users – including newcomers and non-English speakers -- and researches: » Their reasons for not utilizing the library and » Potential ways to reach them, including through partnerships with local agencies, faith communities, businesses, etc.
11.2	The library reaches out to underrepresented populations and non-users and promotes library offerings to them, including through partnerships.
11.3	The library places flyers throughout community gathering spaces to promote the library's offerings (in languages of community).

Enhanced	
11.4	The library brings "pop-up" or regular library services to underrepresented populations and non-users through outreach including participation in community events, school events, partnership arrangements with local organizations, social media, etc.
11.5	The library promotes "sensory-friendly" library programs/events for children, teens, or adults with special health care needs.

Exemplary	
11.6	The library works with community partners serving the non-English speaking community to educate and welcome people to the library.
11.7	The library promotes "sensory-friendly" spaces for children, teens, or adults with special health care needs.
11.8	The library provides regularly scheduled mobile service to underrepresented populations and non-users through offsite or community locations, such as pick up/drop off locations, including those of partners.
11.9	The library funds installation of reading materials along a marked path (e.g., StoryWalk®) on library grounds and/or in the community to promote reading as well as the library's offerings.
11.10	The library prepares and distributes packets such as "Welcome to the Library" for new residents and "Books for Babies" for new parents.

Helpful Notes

Some groups whom libraries might wish to target for outreach include:

» People without computers or consistent internet access
» Rural communities, especially people living far from a library branch
» Low-income families
» Children in day care facilities
» Fragile elderly people, including those in congregate care facilities

» Underrepresented communities

» Non-English-speaking residents, including teens

» LGBTQ+ community, including teens

» People with disabilities, including children and teens

» New residents

» New parents

Helpful Resources

Books for Babies
National literacy program supported by United for Libraries, division of the American Library Association.

Let's Move in Libraries
UNC-Greensboro's "Let's Move in Libraries" initiative, inspired by Former First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! initiative, seeks to promote healthy eating and active living through library-based and outreach activities such as StoryWalk®.

▷ Community Engagement: Volunteers/Friends of the Library

Many community members invest in their libraries through their volunteer efforts, including through participation as a Friend of the Library member or as a Library Foundation member. This support pays enormous dividends in supplementing staff efforts and, for Friends groups, in supplementing library budgets.

Outcome 12: *Library patrons and the community benefit from the contributions of dedicated library volunteers, including Friends of the Library and/or Library Foundations.*

» Indicators

Essential	
12.1	Written policies and procedures direct the work of volunteers (including academic interns and other non-employees) and establish a process for recruitment, orientation, assignment, training, evaluation, and recognition.
12.2	Volunteers support the work of library employees but do not substitute for the efforts of paid staff members.
12.3	The library provides orientation and training to volunteers.
12.4	The library develops and implements a volunteer recognition program.

Enhanced	
12.5	The library reviews and updates training and orientation regularly.
12.6	The library has a Friends of the Library (FOL) chapter or foundation, with which the library has a Memorandum of Understanding.

Enhanced Con't	
12.7	The library has a staff member to act as a liaison to the FOL group.
12.8	The FOL members are kept informed about library services and encouraged to promote them. (See Innovation through Collaboration, Advocacy)
12.9	The library staff promote FOL memberships and activities.
12.10	The library offers the FOL communication, organization, and storage space such as a bulletin board, shelves, or closet, based on availability.

Exemplary	
12.11	The library develops and maintains job descriptions for volunteers.
12.12	The library develops and maintains a volunteer manual.
12.13	The library includes representatives of the FOL in strategic, advocacy, and funding planning efforts.
12.14	The library encourages FOL members to participate in local, state, and national professional organizations.
12.15	The library invites an FOL representative to trustee meetings.

Helpful Resources

Friends of North Carolina Public Libraries
Statewide organization providing network for sharing ideas and resources to strengthen Friends of Libraries in North Carolina.

Volunteer Match Learning Center
This website offers webinars regarding best practices for engaging, training, and working with volunteers.

United for Libraries
A division of the American Library Association, United for Libraries works to support those who govern, promote, advocate, and fundraise for all types of libraries.

Innovation through Collaboration

The library's collections, programs, and services can be enhanced and extended through innovative collaborations with the community. Advocating for the library's sustainability and partnering with other organizations can further engage the community and offer exciting new service possibilities.

▷ Advocacy

In a time of tremendous access to online information, some key government stakeholders may not be as aware of the library's significant community value and therefore unsure of the return on their investment in libraries. Fortunately, the library has many potential stakeholders who are not only aware of the library's enormous contributions to the community but are also passionate about sharing this information through advocacy efforts.

Outcome 13: *Government and funding officials understand the unique value of the library due to the advocacy efforts of Library staff, trustees, Friends, and community members.*

» Indicators

Essential	
13.1	The library develops and sustains a core group of advocates, including staff and Board members, Friends of the Library, volunteers, and other community members.
13.2	The library cultivates relationships with elected and appointed officials who have fiscal and policy influence over the library.
13.3	The library invites elected officials and community leaders to library events and programs.
13.4	The library provides information about issues affecting the library as well as key messages for advocates.

Enhanced	
13.5	The library provides resources and encouragement to staff and supporters to ensure they can be successful advocates.
13.6	Library staff and supporters/advocates attend events, hearings, and programs where matters that affect the community is discussed.

Exemplary	
13.7	The library designates an advocacy coordinator responsible for managing, tracking, and communicating library advocacy efforts.
13.8	Training in advocacy skills for the benefit of the library is offered to library advocates.
13.9	The library designs and disseminates issue-oriented and mission-driven information and materials.

Helpful Resources

[The Small but Powerful Guide to Building Support for Your Rural Library](#)
Toolkit created by the Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services.

[The Library Story: A Strategic Storytelling Toolkit for Public Libraries](#)
Toolkit designed to help libraries use storytelling to more effectively communicate with your community. Includes activities, templates and tips to spark storytelling ideas.

[Advocacy in Action: Local Library Awareness Campaigns](#)
OCLC WebJunction platform to help libraries plan and execute successful library awareness campaigns in your local community.

[State Library of North Carolina Advocacy](#)
The State Library of North Carolina offers a wide variety of advocacy resources to market the power of libraries.

▷ Innovation through Collaboration: Partnerships

The library can leverage community partnerships to cost-effectively expand and enhance both library and non-library offerings. While the number of partnerships matters, the quality of library partnerships is of greater importance. In identifying potential partner organizations, libraries might consider the types of partnerships defined by the Statistical Report of North Carolina Public Libraries:

» Communicative partnership: Library and partners communicate information about each other's programs, services, and/or resources by distributing promotional materials, giving referrals, setting up displays, making presentations, etc.

» Cooperative partnership: Library and partners provide mutual assistance in working toward a common goal by sponsoring activities, donating incentives, recruiting volunteers, etc.

» Collaborative partnership: Library and partners work together by sharing staff, resources, and/or costs

Outcome 14: *Strong partnerships between libraries and other community organizations extend innovative services and benefits to the community.*

» Indicators

Essential	
14.1	The library initiates partnerships and collaboration with community organizations that align with the library's mission and goals.
14.2	The library seeks out and builds partnerships with organizations serving underrepresented library populations, including those speaking other languages and people with disabilities.

Essential Con't	
14.3	The library shares information about partners' services at the library and provides links to community organizations on its website/social media.

Enhanced	
14.4	The library establishes cooperative agreements with partners to develop shared programming and services.
14.5	The library pursues partnerships to expand non-traditional services at library locations (e.g., food or clothing distribution).
14.6	The library and its partners share information about each other's programs and services at their locations and through their websites/social media.
14.7	The library hosts community partners' meetings, including support groups for populations with disabilities and their caregivers.

Exemplary	
14.8	The library works with local businesses or organizations in rural, underrepresented, or immigrant communities to offer access to library collections and services.
14.9	The library offers space for quarterly or monthly "office hours" for local agencies to serve patrons (e.g., free legal clinic, social worker).

Helpful Resources

Directory of North Carolina Senior Centers
Senior centers offer a variety of information related to health, housing, employment, and social services for the state's senior citizens.

North Carolina Area Agencies on Aging
NC Councils on Aging offer advocacy, planning, program and resource development, information brokerage, and other services to help North Carolina's older adults.

ARC of North Carolina
The ARC is an organization for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and their families.

Food Research & Action Center: State Anti-Hunger Organizations
State directory of anti-hunger organizations, including North Caroling agencies.

Feeding the Carolinas
An organization dedicated to ensuring equitable access to healthy food across North and South Carolina.

North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NC DMVA)
The NC DMVA Governor's Working Group seeks to strengthen opportunities for job creation, workforce enrichment, health and wellness, and other services and benefits for veterans.

Rural Opportunity Institute
Organization to support building trauma-informed and resilient communities to end generational cycles of trauma and poverty in North Carolina.

Legal Aid of North Carolina
Statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity.

North Carolina Conservation Network
Statewide network of over 60 environmental, community, and environmental justice organizations focused on protecting North Carolina's environment and public health.

Facilities

As unique as their communities, libraries are housed in a diverse variety of structures across North Carolina. As populations grow, and expectations of libraries change, library leaders and their funders may consider whether their facility is appropriately sized and designed to meet community needs for services in a comfortable, safe environment.

NOTE: Facilities and Technology should be assessed at the branch level, if applicable, unless otherwise noted as System Level.

▷ Size

Outcome 15: *The library facility is sufficiently sized to enable the library to maximize the community benefits of its collections, programs, and services.*

Essential	
15.1	Library leadership periodically reviews population growth in the service area and considers the need for new and expanded facilities. (System Level)
15.2	Facilities planning takes into account a minimum of twenty years of population growth projections. (System Level)
15.3	Buildings are capable of supporting the infrastructure necessary for present and future technologies. (System Level)
15.4	The library meets Essential Standards according to tables (see below) for: » Facility Total Gross Square Footage per Capita by LSA Population Size » # Library Seats per 25,000 population » # Public Access Computers per 25,000 population » Square Footage per Public Access Computer (PAC) station » Square Footage per Staff Office » Square Footage per Staff Workstation

Enhanced	
15.5	The library meets Enhanced Standards according to tables (see below) for: » Facility Total Gross Square Footage per Capita by LSA Population Size » # Library Seats per 25,000 population » # Public Access Computers per 25,000 population » Square Footage per Public Access Computer (PAC) station » Square Footage per Staff Office » Square Footage per Staff Workstation

Exemplary	
15.6	The library meets Exemplary Standards according to tables (see below) for: » Facility Total Gross Square Footage per Capita by LSA Population Size » # Library Seats per 25,000 population » # Public Access Computers per 25,000 population » Square Footage per Public Access Computer (PAC) station » Square Footage per Staff Office » Square Footage per Staff Workstation

▷ Facilities: Size

The needed size of library facilities is determined by considering a number of factors which include, but are not limited to:

- » Collection size (shelving needs)
- » Population serviced
- » Programs and services offered in the facility
- » Furnishings, fixtures, and equipment to be housed
- » Estimated or actual number of people coming into the facility in a year (attendance)

The recommendations going forward roll up various factors into a population factor.

Recommended Facility Total Gross Sq Feet per Capita by LSA Population Size
(Square Footage)

Facility Size up to 24,999 Population	
Essential	0.7 square feet
Enhanced	0.75 square feet
Exemplary	0.8 square feet

Facility Size 25,000-99,999 Population	
Essential	0.65 square feet
Enhanced	0.7 square feet
Exemplary	0.75 square feet

Facility Size 100,000 or More Population	
Essential	0.6 square feet
Enhanced	0.65 square feet
Exemplary	0.7 square feet

Library Seats

Recommended Number of Seats per 25,000 Population	
Essential	62.5 seats
Enhanced	100 seats
Exemplary	125 seats

Library Public Access Computer Stations

Recommended Number of PACs per 25,000 Population	
Essential	25 PACs
Enhanced	37.5 PACs
Exemplary	50 PACs

Note: PAC standards are subject to patrons' increased use of personal devices and may need adjusting down (See Sustainable Organization, Planning).

Public Access Computer (PAC) Stations

(seated Square Footage)

Recommended Amount of Square Feet per PAC	
Essential	30 square feet
Enhanced	40 square feet
Exemplary	50 square feet

Staff Offices

Staff Office Size Square Footage	
Essential	100 square feet
Enhanced	125 square feet
Exemplary	150 square feet

Staff Workstations

Staff Workstations Square Footage	
Essential	60 square feet
Enhanced	65 square feet
Exemplary	70 square feet

▷ Facilities: Design

Library design is distinctive and reflective of communities. Nonetheless, community expectations of libraries; library delivery mechanisms, including library and personal technology; and environmental impacts such as natural and community health disasters demand evolving design considerations.

Outcome 16: *The library facility's design facilitates flexible use of library space, enhancing patrons' ability to effectively navigate the library's collections, programs, and services.*

» Indicators

Essential	
16.1	The library provides service for all residents of the jurisdiction at geographic locations according to the Essential Standards table. (see below)
16.2	Where possible, the library is on a fixed transportation route (e.g., public transportation route or near main roadways).
16.3	The library facilities meet current building, safety, and fire codes and conform to Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards.
16.4	The library maintains dedicated funding and a schedule for capital improvements and maintenance of facility and grounds. (System Level.)
16.5	The library has a long-range facility plan that addresses library usage, projected growth, community needs, and technological changes affecting the delivery of collections, programs, and services. The plan is reviewed annually and revised every five years in a process that includes public input. (System Level)

Essential Con't	
16.6	Facility planners consider the future of physical storage versus digital media and access to such and the importance of flexibility, adaptability, and expandability, when designing for new developments. (System Level)
16.7	Buildings are capable of supporting the infrastructure necessary for present and future technologies.
16.8	Library facilities: » Have exterior signs so that the library is clearly visible from the street » Have directional signage to the library » Feature interior signage adequate to help patrons make good use of the facility
16.9	Electrical power outlets/charging stations are strategically located throughout the library based on furniture placement and to accommodate individual patrons using personal devices.
16.10	The library provides a safe, convenient method to return items 24 hours/7 days.
16.11	The library identifies opportunities for and implements "touch-less" services – e.g., self-service zones, virtual programming, curbside pickup, space reconfigurations, and capacity considerations.
16.12	The library offers at least one alternative service location(s): pop-ups, bookmobile, storefronts, low-touch kiosks, drive up pickup, etc.
16.13	The library meets local code or offers one parking space per every 400 gross square footage of its facility, whichever is greatest.

Enhanced	
16.14	The library provides service for all residents of the jurisdiction at geographic locations according to the Enhanced Standards table. (see below)
16.15	The long-range facility plan is reviewed annually and revised every three years in a process that includes public input. (System Level)
16.16	The library promotes energy efficiency, usage of natural daylight, waste reduction, and improvement of air quality.

Enhanced Con't	
16.17	When possible, newly constructed and renovated library facilities are "green" or sustainable facilities, constructed with ecologically sound materials.
16.18	The library provides additional facilities accommodations (e.g., wheelchair turnaround space in restrooms) to support the needs of people with disabilities.
16.19	The library offers 2 or more alternative service locations: pop-ups, bookmobile, storefronts, low-touch kiosks, drive up pickup, etc.
16.20	The library meets local code or offers one parking space per every 300 gross square footage of its facility, whichever is greatest.

Exemplary	
16.21	The library provides service for all residents of the jurisdiction at geographic locations according to the Exemplary Standards table. (see below)
16.22	The long-range facility plan is reviewed annually and revised every two years in a process that includes public input. (System Level)
16.23	When possible, the facilities work toward or meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards established by the U.S. Building Council.
16.24	The library includes sensory-friendly spaces for people with disabilities.
16.25	The library provides a gender-neutral or family bathroom.
16.26	The library offers 3 or more alternative service locations: pop-ups, bookmobile, storefronts, low-touch kiosks, drive up pickup, etc.
16.27	New facility design considers building a "drive-through" or "teller" window to facilitate curbside pickup.
16.28	The library meets local code or offers one parking space per every 200 gross square footage of its facility, whichever is greatest.

Proximity of Library facilities to Population

(minutes of drive time)

Urban Drive Time to Library Facility	
Essential	20 minutes
Enhanced	15 minutes
Exemplary	10 minutes

Rural Drive Time to Library Facility	
Essential	30 minutes
Enhanced	20 minutes
Exemplary	15 minutes

NOTE: The library may establish other service targets based on unique community needs.

▷ Facilities: Safety

Natural and community health disasters have altered society's definition of safety in public spaces. Considered secure, accessible public spaces for all community members, libraries continually adapt to ensure a safe experience for all.

Outcome 17: *The library's facilities incorporate a variety of features to ensure a safe staff and patron experience.*

» Indicators

Essential	
17.1	The library's building exterior is well-lit and visible from the street.
17.2	The library offers sufficient, well-lit parking located near or adjacent to the facility. (See Facilities, Design)
17.3	The library's 24-hour drop off location is easily accessible, safe, and well-lit.
17.4	The library has an emergency/disaster preparedness plan. (System Level)
17.5	The library observes all jurisdictional safety and health protocols. (System Level)
17.6	The library staff receives annual training on safety and security. (System Level)

Enhanced	
17.7	Security cameras are installed as needed covering the interior and exterior of the facility.

Enhanced Con't	
17.8	The library emergency plan includes provisions to open the library when possible during a local or national disaster. (System Level)
17.9	The library staff receives bi-annual training on safety and security. (System Level)

Exemplary	
17.10	Indoor material returns include fire mitigation materials and features.
17.11	The library emergency plan is coordinated with local emergency management agencies. (System Level)
17.12	The library staff receives quarterly training on safety and security. (System Level)

▷ Technology

Technology continues to interrupt, enhance, and push library services far beyond expectations from even 10 years ago. The pace of technological change will continue to accelerate, challenging libraries to assess, plan for, and meet patrons' needs for technological service delivery and broadband access.

Outcome 18: *The library maintains a robust technology infrastructure to ensure equitable access that builds, stimulates, and accommodates user demands for technology.*

» Indicators

Essential	
18.1	The library has a technology plan (System Level) that: » Regularly reviews and employs emerging technology » Monitors current use of networks, devices, and bandwidth » Includes a Disaster Preparedness and Recovery plan (See Sustainable Organization, Planning) » Includes a designated refresh/replacement cycle of 3-5 years, depending on user needs
18.2	The library technology budget includes a schedule and funds to replace or upgrade equipment every five years and funds for the ongoing maintenance and updating of equipment. (System Level)
18.3	The library has an Acceptable Internet Use policy posted within the library.
18.4	The library provides internet speeds per simultaneous user at peak usage according to the Essential Standards table. (see below)

Essential Con't	
18.5	The library maintains a website and updates it every 3-5 years. The website is accessible for people with disabilities. (System Level)
18.6	The library website provides community information, databases, and an online library catalog. (System Level)
18.7	Where appropriate, the library takes advantage of the E-rate program. (System Level)
18.8	The library adopts current industry standards for physical or wireless networking in conjunction with library renovations or new construction. (System Level)
18.9	The library monitors and protects its operating network, workstations, application software, and website with appropriate security measures such as: » Firewalls and authentication processes » Anti-virus software » Removal of unauthorized software, cookies, and temporary files » Critical updates and patches

Enhanced	
18.10	The library technology budget includes a schedule and funds to replace or upgrade equipment every three years. (System Level)
18.11	The library provides internet speeds per simultaneous user at peak usage according to the Enhanced Standards table. (see below)
18.12	The library staff receive training on how to track and monitor bandwidth to build capacity. (System Level)

Exemplary	
18.13	The library technology budget includes a schedule and funds to replace or upgrade equipment every two years. (System Level)
18.14	The library provides internet speeds per simultaneous user at peak usage according to the Exemplary Standards table. (see below)

Exemplary Con't	
18.15	The library circulates technology (laptops, devices, hotspots).
18.16	The library provides audio/video editing, graphics, and development software.
18.17	The library offers digital media labs and replaces outdated equipment every 2 years.
18.18	The library pursues and offers emerging and automated technologies as they become available.

Internet speeds per simultaneous user at peak usage

Divide internet download or upload speeds[1] by the number of simultaneous users[2] accessing internet during peak usage[3] .

Download	
Essential	1-10 Mbps
Enhanced	11-25 Mbps
Exemplary	26 + Mbps

Upload	
Essential	.05 -1 Mpbs
Enhanced	1.1 - 12.5 Mbps
Exemplary	12.6 + Mbps

[1] **To determine internet speed**: libraries can use information provided by their internet service provider or conduct at speed test. Tested speeds depend on many factors, so libraries may choose to test on multiple occasions to determine typical speeds. Tests should be completed on a device connected via ethernet cable as close to the broadband router as possible at a time when no others are using the internet. If choosing to use information provided by the internet provider, conducting a speed test periodically is recommended to ensure the library is receiving the contracted speed.

[2] **To determine simultaneous internet users**: libraries should add up the number of staff computers being used, the number of public access computers being used, and the number of devices using the Wi-Fi at peak usage.

[3] **To determine the number of devices connected to Wi-Fi during peak usage**: libraries may determine the number of connected devices through managed Wi-Fi portals or through their routers during the busiest time at their location. If that information is not accessible, libraries may choose to use a formula, such as assuming 50% of patrons in the library building are connected to the Wi-Fi at any given time.

Number of Staff Computers	Number of Public Access Computers or Tablets	Number of patron-owned devices at peak hours	Total Simultaneous Users
10	15	Gate count at peak hours = 100 Assume 50% connected to Wi-Fi = 50	75

Formulas: 75/download speed = mbps per user | 75/upload speed = mbps per user

Helpful Resources

Technology Planning
Articles and Resources from OCLC WebJunction

Tech Trends
American Libraries Magazine

Public Libraries Leading the Way – Information Technology and Libraries
Series of columns highlighting technology-based innovation or approach to a problem from the public library perspective.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
Ensuring website content is accessible to all people of all abilities.

NCDIT Broadband Infrastructure Office
This office serves as a statewide resource for broadband access and other connectivity initiatives led by the state of North Carolina.

[State Library of North Carolina Homework Gap Project](#)
The State Library of North Carolina offers a resource toolkit for working with families of K-12 students affected by the Homework Gap.

[Toward Gigabit Libraries](#)
Toolkit to help libraries learn about and improve their current broadband infrastructure.

[M-Lab Speed Test](#)
"Measurement Lab (M-Lab) provides largest collection of open internet performance data on the planet".

Appendix A: Methodology

The North Carolina Public Library Standards are the result of a two-year intensive effort to determine the Standards needs and priorities of the North Carolina public library community, including public library directors and staff; board members and Friends of the Library; community members, including patrons and potential patrons; government officials, library partner agencies, and other supporters of public libraries.

In 2019, through a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, the State Library of North Carolina convened a State Library Development team to assess the need for revised and updated North Carolina Public Library Standards. The 2019 State Library team planned extensive opinion research efforts, including five regional focus groups throughout the state for winter 2019 and spring 2020. Additionally, librarians and the State Library's leadership team offered insights through interviews and survey responses.

The State Library recruited a larger Standards Working Group representing a variety of libraries across the state to analyze feedback and make recommendations regarding the creation of revised Standards. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic the Working Group did not formally meet. Many of its members, however, provided their feedback in the 2019-early 2020 meetings and plans were made to involve the Group during the subsequent grant period. These truncated opinion research efforts nonetheless resulted in a rich set of preliminary findings.

In summer 2020, a second LSTA grant funded the continuation of the project with the assistance of an outside consultant. Within this second phase of the process, 10 online public stakeholder meetings were offered, including six open to all library stakeholders and organized by the state's region (Northeast, Southeast, Northwest, Southwest, Triangle/Triad, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg) and an additional meeting each for Librarians and Library Staff, Members of Boards and Friends, Library Partners, and Teens.

The State Library and public libraries publicized these meetings through a State Library dedicated webpage, upcoming events calendar, and social media; information sent out to the NCPLDA, NCLA, CE, FONCPL, Adult, and Youth library listservs; personal emails and invites to library systems across the state; and individual public libraries posting the information to their websites.

As a result of these meetings, 109 stakeholders provided their input.

Public Meetings Stakeholder Group	Number of Attendees
Librarians and Library Staff	49
Members of Library Boards/Friends of the Library	46
Partners	5
Teens	9
Mix of Public, Staff, BOT/FOL, Community Partners, and Other	43
Total Stakeholders	109

For Staff and Board/Friends stakeholders unable to attend their public meetings, or who wanted to provide additional feedback, two surveys were developed, to which seven staff members and 15 Board members/Friends responded.

Additionally, 11 public library stakeholders, including five current or former governmental officials, provided their detailed feedback regarding the needs and priorities for library standards.

The results of the Stakeholder Opinion Research efforts, as well as those of a comprehensive Environmental Scan of 11 other states' Public Library Standards; standards in aligned industries; and best library practices and trends, including those associated with COVID and its human and financial effects on libraries, were summarized for the State Library Team as well as the 11-member Working Group. In a series of meetings over fall 2020 and winter 2021, the Working Group helped refine the structure and format of the North Carolina Public Library Standards and provided their feedback regarding the working draft of these standards in April 2021.

Appendix B: Selected Glossary

Accessible Ease with which a person may enter a library, gain access to its online systems, use its resources, and obtain needed information regardless of format.

Adaptive technology Systems, devices, and software specifically designed to make library materials and services more accessible to people with physical and/or cognitive disabilities, including, but not limited to, large print books, closed captioned video recordings, Braille signage, voice amplification devices, screen magnification and screen reading software, voice recognition software, etc.

Advocacy Efforts on the part of the library administration, staff, boards, users, and other community members to encourage ongoing and expanded use of library services and financial support for those services in the community as well as among local, state, and federal governing and funding agencies.

Anti-virus software Computer program designed to periodically check the hard drive of a computer (or all the computers attached to a network) for the presence of man-made computer viruses and eliminate them if found. The anti-virus software used on computer networks usually includes an update feature that automatically downloads profiles of newly created viruses soon after they are detected.

Bandwidth Amount of information that can be sent through a connection between two computers in a given amount of time. A connection that can transmit more data in a shorter period of time is said to have more bandwidth than another, slower connection. Bandwidth directly affects the quality of transmitted information. Synonymous with broadband.

Capital plan Process of budgeting resources for the future of the organization's long-term plans. Projects qualifying as capital include furnishings and equipment (including computer hardware and software); the replacement of a roof; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; and minor renovations of library buildings such as installing an elevator. Large projects such as new buildings, additions, or a major renovation of an extensive portion of the library require a detailed capital plan.

Collection management plan Framework for the growth and development of collections in support of the library's mission. Elements of a good collection development policy include: 1) statement of purpose; 2) responsibility for selection; 3) criteria for selection; 4) description of selection process; 5) handling of gift items; 6) weeding (deselection); and 7) steps for handling objections to materials. Collection Development Policy is another term used for Collection Management Plan.

Collection turnover rate Measurement of the activity of a library's collection, indicating the number of times each unit of library material would have circulated during the year if circulation was spread evenly throughout the collection. Formula: Annual Circulation ÷ Item Holdings = Turnover Rate

Community relations How a library relates to and makes itself known to the community it serves. It includes interaction with funding bodies, organizations within the community, beneficial partnerships, marketing, social media, the impact of library services on the community, etc.

Digital media lab Space in a library designed to give patrons access to hardware and software needed to create digital media, including video recordings, sound recordings, podcasts, e-books, websites, digital images, and animation. Synonymous with Maker Lab.

Disaster preparedness plan Set of written procedures prepared in advance to deal with an unexpected occurrence that has the potential to cause injury to personnel or damage to equipment, collections, and/or facilities sufficient to warrant temporary suspension of services (flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, etc.) See also Emergency plan.

Diversity Representation of all our varied identities and differences (race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, tribe, caste, socio-economic status, thinking and communication styles, etc.), collectively and as individuals.

Diversity audits

>   » **Collections** Evaluation/inventory of an existing collection to determine diversity of collection for community served.

>   » **Staff** Evaluation of current staffing to compare the makeup of your staff to the makeup of your service area community.

E-government Use of technological communications devices, such as computers and the Internet, to provide information on public services to citizens and other persons.

Emergency plan Set of guidelines or steps prepared in advance to help the library staff deal with unusual occurrences that may temporarily disrupt normal operations (assaults, bomb threats, security violations, etc.) but are not usually disastrous. See also Disaster Preparedness plan.

Endowment Permanent fund accumulated by an institution over an extended period consisting of gifts and bequests invested to provide an ongoing return, all or a portion

of which is expended, sometimes for purposes specified by the donor(s), leaving the principal intact to generate further income. See also Foundation.

Equity Ensures fair treatment, equality of opportunity, and fairness in access to information and resources for all.

E-rate Federal program established under the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (TCA) and implemented in 1998, with oversight by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to allow schools, public libraries, and rural health care institutions to apply for substantial discounts on rates paid for telecommunication services.

Friends of the Library (FOL) Group of individuals who value public library services to the community and are willing to volunteer their time, talents, and efforts to promote the library's goals and objectives in whatever way will be helpful. They are organized to help support the work of the library, not to engage in the work and responsibilities of the library board members or the library staff.

Foundation Legal organization established to raise significant funds for the library beyond public funding. Library foundations are often used to build an endowment, support a capital campaign, or fund special programs or services. See also Endowment.

Full time equivalent (FTE) One or more individuals whose total working hours add up to 40 per week. To calculate FTE, determine the number of hours worked each week by all staff in a given category (clerical, support staff, etc.) and divide the total by 40.

Inclusion Builds a culture of belonging by actively inviting the contribution and participation of all people.

Information security policy Administrative, technical, or physical safeguards a library uses to access, collect, distribute, process, protect, store, use, transmit, dispose of, or otherwise handle confidential customer or staff information. Synonymous with Privacy Policy.

Intergenerational Programs which and services to increase cooperation, interaction, and exchange between people of different generations, allowing them to share their talents and resources, and support each other in ongoing relationships that benefit both the individuals and their community.

Interlibrary loan Process of making an item of library material available by one library to another library upon request. It includes both lending and borrowing.

Internet use policy Guidelines established concerning the manner in which computer

systems and equipment may be used by patrons and staff. Synonymous with Acceptable use policy.

Legal service area (LSA) Number of people that reside within the boundaries of the geographic area the library was established to serve.

Library of Things Collection of objects loaned, and any organization that practices such loaning. Objects often include kitchen appliances, tools, gardening equipment and seeds, electronics, toys and games, art, science kits, craft supplies, musical instruments, and recreational equipment.

Marginalized communities Excluded from mainstream social, economic, educational, and/or cultural life. Examples of marginalized populations include, but are not limited to, groups excluded due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status.

Marketing plan Series of actions undertaken through promotion, outreach, etc., to successfully interest potential clients/patrons in a product or service and to persuade them to use it. Originally developed for the commercial sector, marketing plans are being used more by public libraries.

Mobile service Delivery of library services by physically bringing library staff and materials to the user, for example, in a specially equipped vehicle, such as a bookmobile. Such services may be available to all users or tailored to meet the needs of a specific category of user (elderly, homebound, developmentally disabled, children in daycare, etc.).

Outreach Library programs and services designed to meet the information needs of users who are unserved or underserved, for example, those who are visually impaired, homebound, institutionalized, not fluent in the national language, illiterate, or marginalized in some other way.

Partnerships Collaborative relationships between the library and other government, school, civic, and social organizations to ensure effective services for the community.

Paraprofessional Staff Library support staff, usually someone who holds at least the baccalaureate degree, trained to understand specific procedures, and apply them according to pre-established rules under normal circumstances without exercising professional judgment. Library paraprofessionals are usually assigned high-level technical support duties, for example, in copy cataloging and serials control.

Per capita Per person; the number of people in a library service area.

Pop-up Set up quickly for short-term operation in a temporary location.

Professional Learning Formal training that library personnel utilize to improve job-related knowledge. Synonymous with Continuing Education.

Reader's advisory Services provided by an experienced public services librarian who specializes in the reading needs of the patrons of a public library. A readers' advisor recommends specific titles and/or authors, based on knowledge of the patron's past reading preferences, and may also compile lists of recommended titles and serve as liaison to other education agencies in the community.

Return on investment (ROI) Technique for quantifying the extent to which investment in a library helps generate income or other tangible benefits for its parent institution, clientele, or community. One way of measuring ROI is to calculate what patrons would spend, in time and direct costs, to get the information they need without access to the library. Library Use Value Calculators are often used as a tool to determine ROI.

Sensory friendly Addresses the underlying sensory processes for the behaviors that make it hard for individuals to participate fully in their lives. The program/space provides the environments and sensory opportunities needed to get an individual's nervous system ready to engage in life's opportunities.

StoryWalk® consists of reading material, typically from a children's book, installed along a path. As you stroll along the path, you are directed to the next page in the story. Pages frequently are accompanied by activities or information.

Strategic plan Systematic process by which a library formulates achievable policy objectives for future growth and development over a period of five years*, based on its mission and goals and on a realistic assessment of the resources, human and material, available to implement the plan. The process may require the collection and analysis of data on current operations and user preferences as the basis for evaluating competing options. *CODE: 07 NCAC 02I .0201 (10)

Square footage Measurement of the length and width, in feet, of a room/area. Example: If a room is 12 feet by 20 feet, the total square footage is 240 square feet (12 x 20 = 240). Add the square footage of each room/area to determine the total square footage.

Support Staff Library staff members, not trained as librarians, who have acquired a technical understanding of library practices and procedures and contribute on a daily basis to the smooth operation of a library but are not qualified to make policy decisions or participate in other activities of a professional nature.

Sustainable (green) facility Designed to minimize negative impact on the natural environment and maximize indoor environmental quality by means of careful site selection, use of natural construction materials and biodegradable products, conservation of resources (water, energy, paper), and responsible waste disposal (recycling, etc.). In new construction and library renovation, sustainability is increasingly achieved through LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, a rating system developed and administered by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

Technology strategic plan Addresses a library's software and hardware needs, expected replacement cycle of existing hardware and software, maintenance contracts, procedures for repair, staff and/or public training needs, etc., and the projected costs of these items.

Underrepresented populations Subset of a population that holds a smaller percentage within a significant subgroup than the subset holds in the general population. Specific characteristics of an underrepresented group vary depending on the subgroup being considered.