IFLA Metropolitan Libraries Section
http://www.ifla.org/VII/s46/index.htm
Making Cities Stronger

Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development
“Strengthening the role of public libraries in urban life”

- 167 library, corporate and associate members (U.S. & Canada)
- Programs, conferences and special research projects
- Current areas of focus:
  - Capacity Building
  - Urban Youth
  - Urban Assets
  - Future Forecasting

URAL COUNCIL
Executive Leadership Institute

Librarians for America’s Neighborhoods

Urban Libraries Council
THE Engaged Library:
Chicago Stories of Community Building
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- Value Proposition
  - Defining the Return on Investment
  - Direct vs. Indirect Benefits
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- **Direct Economic Benefit**
  - Save the consumer money?
  - Have you added value?
  - Time is money

- **Indirect Social Benefit**
  - Long-term
  - Community enhancements
Librarians Study The Value Proposition

- *Placing a Value on Public Libraries*, Glen Holt, Don Elliott, 1999 ([www.slpl.lib.mo.us/libsrc](http://www.slpl.lib.mo.us/libsrc))
- *The Economic Impacts & Benefits of Florida Public Libraries* – Information Institute, Florida State University, 2001 ([www.dlis.dos.state.fl.us](http://www.dlis.dos.state.fl.us))
- The Economic Impact of Libraries on South Carolina, School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina, 2005 ([www.libsci.sc.edu](http://www.libsci.sc.edu))
Library Value Conclusions

- Direct Return on Investment
  - $1 generates $3 in benefit (Pittsburgh)
  - $1 generates $2.86 (South Carolina)
  - $16 million in new spending (Seattle)
  - $1 generates $6.54 (Florida)
Library Value Conclusions

- Indirect Social Benefits
  - Access to information saves consumer $
  - Access to computer technology
  - Job/Career resources
  - Business resources (small business)
  - Support for education
  - Community asset (business development; destination, character, livability)
  - Image & identity
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- Traditional Physical Development Strategies
  - Business tax abatements/credits
  - Preferential financing
  - Land and/or other real property

- Emerging Human Investment Strategies
  - Skilled, educated workforce
  - Responsible government
  - Good schools & public amenities
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- Methodology
  - Survey ULC member libraries
  - Field studies
  - Analysis & evaluation in the context of emerging economic development programs
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- **Early literacy services** contribute to long-term economic success
- **Library employment and career resources** prepare workers with new technologies
- **Small business resources and programs** lower barriers to market entry
- **Public library buildings are catalysts** for physical development
Model Distinguishing Economic Benefits Derived from Library Service and Administrative Functions

**Public Library**

- Information Resources
- Library User
- Targeted Library Programs
- Library Administration

**Economic Benefits**

**Traditional Service Benefits**
- Cost savings to individuals relative to private market costs for comparable goods and services
- User identified/context centered benefits

**Program Related Benefits**
- Impacts on human resource base
- Impacts on other agency services and outreach
- Impacts on small business start-up and success

**Benefits of Business Operations**
- Employment and wage contributions
- Purchasing and services
- Construction
- Impact of active civic space
- Impacts on surrounding neighbors, businesses
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- Early literacy services contribute to long-term economic success
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Literacy</th>
<th>School readiness/academic success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Campaigns</td>
<td>Elevate awareness of the need to read early and often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Lap-Sit to PreK reading activities</td>
<td>Elevate levels of early literacy, expand learning resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach to parents and caregivers</td>
<td>Elevate levels of early literacy, improve quality of child care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care training and certification</td>
<td>Strengthen community-wide child care provider network, improve child care worker qualifications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Recommendations for linking library programs to early literacy:

- Broaden support for outreach to parents and area caregivers
- Strengthen partnerships with area child service providers
- Evaluate literacy program and collect meaningful data over time.
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- Library employment and career resources prepare workers with new technologies
## Making Cities Stronger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Development</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to technology</td>
<td>Expand employment aptitudes, competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to internet</td>
<td>Expand access to employment search and application opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to technology training</td>
<td>Expand employment skills and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language training, adult literacy resources &amp; services</td>
<td>Expand employment opportunities, economic sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career skills workshops (w/agencies)</td>
<td>Provide support for career pathways, expand audiences/reach of agencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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- Recommendations for linking library programs to workforce development:
  - Strengthen connections with area workforce development agencies
  - Build better employer connections
  - Know your customers
  - Know the broader workforce outlook/trends.
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- Small business resources and programs lower barriers to market entry
### Small Business Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to databases and other resources</th>
<th>Reduce cost for research and planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance for start-ups and micro-enterprises</td>
<td>Reduce costs and barriers to entering market, reduce failure rates, expand audience for other local agencies involved in small business support, expand small business sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance to existing businesses</td>
<td>Strengthen viable small business sector, expand reach and lower costs of other local agencies with shared facilities and resources, increase clustering of enterprises for competitive advantages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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- Recommendations for linking library programs to small business:
  - Invest in targeted staff development and training
  - Build community-wide access to business information resources
  - Aggressively market business resources
  - Understand and support small business clusters and financing
  - Provide tailored support for micro- enterprises
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- Public library buildings are catalysts for physical development
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Development</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown (often “central” or “main”)</td>
<td>Contribute to vibrant urban and suburban life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-use, residential</td>
<td>Anchor development, generate foot traffic, revitalize commercial and cultural activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mall, commercial development</td>
<td>Provide amenity value, generate foot traffic, increase quality of life and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint-Use</td>
<td>Generate traffic, but not sales competition, strengthens developer financing pro forma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce development costs, generate synergy of consumers/service providers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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- Recommendations for linking libraries to physical development:
  - Demonstrate that public and private services can work together in mutually supportive ways
  - Identify ways in which public libraries can complement local development plans
  - Provide data to change developer perceptions
  - Understand the challenges in shared buildings.

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○ What’s the big deal?
  ● Publication can be used to create a dialogue with elected officials and economic development professionals
  ● Examples of best practices on how libraries can link their efforts with economic development
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- Thank you!