

This master plan is the result of many months of discussion among people who care about and are dedicated to Jefferson Parish and its library system. It is based on sound library best practices and requirements established by the State of Louisiana.

As with any plan that suggests change, it is important to note that the some suggestions are concrete; others offered are meant to be a starting point for discussion between the Parish and library leadership. The recommended improvements and changes reflect the anticipated growth of the parish; the evolution of print and nonprint information; the day-to-day needs of the community; restrictions imposed by geography; convenience for the patrons; and establishing equity for all citizens in the parish.

The plan should be viewed as an active blueprint to improve the current library system to better meet the needs of library users; to attract new users; and to allow the library to fulfill its role as an integral part of the health and vitality of Jefferson Parish. For this plan to be active and meaningful it will require a) buy-in by the staff, b) investment of financial resources, c) a commitment by the Library Board, staff, and the Parish. The plan has been constructed to rationally match the budgetary and operational parameters of Jefferson Parish Library (JPL).

Parish residents want a quality library system, buildings, and service. While the process of determining this master plan was as inclusive as possible, we could only be clairvoyant up to a point. The decision by JPL to embark on this evaluation and resultant master plan confirms that it is an “active learning organization.” The willingness of JPL to look inward in order to look forward is indicative of its positive belief in the power of service. Based on the success of the past, the strength of support by the citizens and the Parish, and optimism for the future, this plan is realistic.

In summary, should Jefferson Parish agree to implement the recommendations of this plan (by 2030), then JPL will:

- › Equitably balance the ratio of population and distribution of branches (see Figure 2).
- › Increase the total square feet of library space, number of seats, and collection size to meet minimum State of Louisiana standards (see figure 12).
- › Have a distribution, location, and size of branches that match the corresponding shifts in population.
- › Provide space for added staff to better serve the increased population.
- › Will, in most categories, increase its percentile ranking among its peer libraries (see Figure 13).
- › Shift the ratio of space for seating, computers, and collection to match the needs of the citizens.

“There is a lot that can be written prospectively about the library’s potential impact, given the fact that public libraries are one of the most democratically distributed physical institutions in America. What does that mean when we compare this resource to other community resources? It’s looking at the potential impact that we could have if we had more resources.”—Bob Molyneux, SirsiDynix