

Virginia Public Library 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Library Commission:
September 2009

*Prepared by:
Whitney Crettol Consulting*

THE PLANNING PROCESS:

The Virginia Public Library completed a comprehensive strategic planning process between April and August 2009. This process was made possible through financial support from the Arrowhead Library System. Composition of the Planning Team included representatives from the City Council, Friends of the Library, Virginia Foundation, and library staff.

A community-based process was utilized, which centered on answering the questions: 1) *What are the pressing needs in our community?* and, 2) *What is the library's role in helping to address those needs?* Major steps included conducting focus groups with community leaders and with staff, reviewing community demographic data and library statistics, discussing organizational mission, identifying service priorities, and developing detailed action plans for the first year of implementation. In addition, indicators were established to track progress toward achieving the library's new goals.

The resulting strategic plan is intended to guide the library for the next five years, with action plans to be revised annually.

WHAT WE FOUND:

A number of themes emerged through our environmental scan process. Foremost on the community's mind are its young people. Out-migration over the past two decades and a recent economic downturn has resulted in a community of predominantly low to moderate income households. Nearly all parents are working and a large number of children are spending their time in child care settings. Although there is a strong local education infrastructure, community members identified as top priorities both early literacy efforts and homework help/youth engagement to support continued learning success. There is also growing demand for home-schooling support.

Community leaders went on to identify the importance of learning as a *lifelong* activity, along with arts and cultural experiences, as part of their vision. Concern was also expressed about social connectedness and cultural sensitivity, especially with regard to an increasing number of community members who may feel marginalized because of their income or race.

Communication was another theme. There is a general lack of awareness of what is happening in the community, including what the library has to offer. Community members feel there is a need for more diverse avenues of communicating about news and local events.

Historically, the Virginia Library has been out in front in utilizing technology and making these resources available to the public. Use of the library's public access computers has increased dramatically in the past three years. Demand is rising especially for employment-related activities (e.g. job searching, resume writing, online filing for unemployment), and online tax filing.

Finally, community members recognize that the City of Virginia, including its library, serve a greater area and function as a regional center. They want to see the Quad Cities working cooperatively on a new vision for the future. (Please see Appendices B, C & D for complete environmental scan reports).

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

Commitment to Customer Service –

The Library's knowledgeable staff provide friendly, individualized assistance to patrons in a confidential manner.

Accessibility –

The Library provides free and open access to everyone, and maintains a barrier-free facility.

Reliability –

The Library is a reliable source of accurate information.

Community Awareness –

The Library aligns its materials and services to match the needs of the community.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Virginia Public Library is the area's go-to source, providing materials and programming to stimulate imaginations and nurture current and future generations of engaged lifelong learners.

LIBRARY GOALS (In order of priority):

- 1. Children of all ages are supported in learning and recreational pursuits that empower them to succeed in school and contribute to a zestful community.**
- 2. Everyone in the community will have resources that broaden their world view, inspire creativity, and lead to healthy, full and active lives.**
- 3. Interested citizens will access, learn to use, and engage current technological resources to find reliable information leading to a connected and informed community.**

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Goal 1 (Children)

- ✓ Total annual juvenile circulation and percentage of total circulation.
- ✓ Number of visits to Learning Express via Virginia Library website.
- ✓ Number of children who are resident card holders.
- ✓ Number of outreach programs / activities.
- ✓ Number of Summer Reading Program participants.
- ✓ Parent report of benefits to children who participated in the Summer Reading Program (end of program survey).
- ✓ Number of preschool story time participants on-site and off-site.

- ✓ Parent / teacher report of benefits to children who participated in story time (end of session surveys).
- ✓ Number of new after-school programs and total participation.

Goal 2 (Stimulate Imagination / Lifelong Learning)

- ✓ Survey of adult program participants regarding whether they learned something new or were creatively inspired.
- ✓ Number of participants in brown bag series and other adult programming.
- ✓ Number of participants in the online book club.
- ✓ Number of patron book reviews/recommendations contributed to Library's blog.
- ✓ Circulation in areas set as priorities for collection development.

Goal 3 (Connect to the Online World / Information Literacy)

- ✓ Number of new links to the Library's website.
- ✓ Number of hits on the Library website.
- ✓ Number of participants in database training.
- ✓ Survey of participant comfort level using databases after receiving training.
- ✓ Utilization of databases via Virginia Library website.
- ✓ Number of hours of staff training on technology topics.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

<i>Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
1. Present strategic plan to Library Commission and City Council for adoption.	September 2009
2. Communicate the new plan to stakeholders and the public.	September - October 2009
3. Review strategic plan progress as a regular agenda item at staff meetings; make mid-course corrections.	Monthly
4. Discuss strategic plan progress as regular agenda item at Library Commission meetings.	Monthly
5. Compile progress indicator data for annual review.	Annually 2010 - 2014 (September)
6. Board/staff annual 'retreat' to review implementation successes and challenges (including indicator data), review goals, revise strategies, and project budget needs.	Annually 2010 - 2013 (September)
7. Staff develop action plans for the next year.	Annually 2010 - 2013 (October - December)
8. Full round of strategic planning.	Fall 2014 (New plan in place by January 2015)

Appendix A:

YEAR 1 Action Plans September 2009 – December 2010

GOAL # 1: Children of all ages are supported in learning and recreational pursuits that empower them to succeed in school and contribute to a zestful community.

Strategy A: Outreach & Collaboration		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Assist ALS in applying for LSTA grant to do outreach with child care providers.	Dawn	February 2010
2. Outreach story times at early childhood facilities at least twice per year (Y Wee Care, ECFE, Head Start, Chicagami Too, etc).	Dawn	September 2009 – May 2010
3. Develop link with teen groups (Teen Center, IRYA, church youth groups) to promote teen reading programs. [Future: Teen Advisory Group]	Dawn	December 2010
4. Participate in Week of the Young Child event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Booth with Library materials. ▪ Conduct story time. 	Outreach Volunteers (Friends ?)	April 2010
5. Booth at Land of the Loon Festival.	Friends of the Library	TBD
6. Conduct library card drive / contest with elementary schools.	Dawn	September 2010

Strategy B: Homework Help		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Train staff to become familiar with Learning Express database: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in full training. ▪ Present to rest of employees at staff meeting. 	Dawn & Susan H. Dawn & Susan H.	August 2009 September 2009
2. Promote Learning Express: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E-mail information to teachers (all appropriate grade levels), home school organizations, Indian Education, and Key Club. 	Dawn (Susan H.)	September 2009
3. Research Rochester Library homework help model.	Dawn	September 2009
4. Meet with school personnel to explore the need and potential for more consistent tutoring program in the community (e.g. encourage a survey of parents to determine volume of need for additional tutoring).	Dawn	October 2010

Strategy C: Children's Programming *		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. After-school Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apply to Rotary for funds to purchase popcorn machine. ▪ Develop and promote low-staff/low-expense after-school activities (including utilization of movie license) at least quarterly. 	Dawn Dawn	August 2009 Quarterly (September 2009 – May 2010)
2. Preschool Story Time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue on-site with two 10-week sessions annually. ▪ Train another staff person to fill-in as a substitute. 	Dawn Dawn (Susan H.)	October 2009 – May 2010 November 2009
3. Summer Reading Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a simplified process to manage the summer program. ▪ Continue promotional visits to all elementary classrooms. ▪ Conduct summer program with 8 special weekly events. 	Dawn Dawn Dawn (All Staff)	April 2010 May 2010 June – July 2010

* Integrate the celebration of diversity within children's programming.

Strategy D: Children's Resources		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Children's Computers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate two computers in children's area. ▪ Select, purchase, and install children's software. 	Dawn Dawn (Sarah)	December 2009 December 2009
2. Identify appropriate sources and apply for funding to develop Books to Go / Story Kits.	Dawn	May 2010

Strategy E: Parent Education		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Give presentations annually through events organized by ECFE and PTSA.	Dawn	May 2010
2. Publish literacy tips in City utility newsletter.	Dawn	Each Issue (Quarterly)

GOAL # 2: Everyone in the community will have resources that broaden their world view, inspire creativity, and lead to healthy, full and active lives.

<u>Strategy F: Adult Programming</u>		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Develop 2010 Brown Bag series plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Goal of at least six events per year. ▪ Seek appropriate local co-sponsors to jointly organize and promote specific events. ▪ Integrate the celebration of diversity within the event series. 	Susan H. & Dawn	September 2009
2. Organize Winter Reading Program	Dawn	January 2010
3. Organize One Book-One Community Program	Dawn	April 2010
4. Friends of the Library capacity-building: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage membership drive and plan for ongoing recruitment of next generation to ensure longevity of the Friends organization. ▪ Request additional fundraising activity to support growth of Library programming. ▪ Request participation in outreach activities (see Strategy A). 	Nancy	December 2010

<u>Strategy G: Readers Advisory</u>		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Promotion of online resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a plan to promote the online book club, Novelist, etc. ▪ Carry out awareness activities as per plan. 	Susan H. Susan H.	October 2009 TBD
2. Hard copy resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate or develop bookmarks and pamphlets for different genres. ▪ Locate or develop read-alike lists. 	Susan H. Susan H. (Dawn)	March 2010 March 2010
3. Promote the Library's blog as a place for individual patrons and local book clubs to make book recommendations and post reader reviews.	Susan H.	March 2010

Strategy H: Collection Development

ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Develop and implement an alternating weeding schedule, following the "Two Cart Rule": <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Nonfiction▪ Fiction▪ Children's▪ Media	Susan H. (Nancy) Nancy (Dawn) Dawn Susan K.	February, May, September December, April, August January, March, October, November June, July
2. Set annual priority areas for collection development.	Nancy (Collection Development Committee)	January 2010

GOAL # 3: Interested citizens will access, learn to use, and engage current technological resources to find reliable information leading to a connected and informed community.

Strategy I: Promotion of Technological Resources		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Databases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a plan for ongoing promotion of databases. ▪ Carry out awareness activities as per plan. 	Susan H. Susan H.	September 2009 TBD
2. Write a series of articles about specific technology topics (and other library resource/event promotion) for publication in Hometown Focus and the DPU newsletter.	Susan H. (Dawn)	Monthly (beginning September 2009)
3. Links to Library website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generate a list of local websites we would like the Library website to be linked FROM. ▪ Approach those entities to establish said links. 	Susan H. Susan H.	November 2009 January 2010
4. Wireless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indicate “Wireless Hot Spot” on the front sign. ▪ Add the word “wireless” to Library directional signs and add more signs. 	Loren Nancy	September 2009 November 2009

Strategy J: Hardware & Software		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Replace three computers with upgraded equipment annually.	Nancy (Sarah)	October 2009 & October 2010
2. Software: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annually upgrade virus protection software. ▪ Upgrade as many machines as possible with Windows 7. 	Nancy (Sarah) Nancy (Sarah)	October 2009 & October 2010 October 2009
3. Add wireless booster for complete building coverage.	Nancy (Sarah)	October 2009

Strategy K: Designated Computer Areas		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Explore potential for re-configuring media department space to add a computer lab. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select a space-planning professional. ▪ Analyze physical space and current/future functions (including staff input). ▪ Provide written recommendations for developing computer lab. 	Nancy Space Planning Consultant Space Planning Consultant	June 2010 September – October 2010 December 2010

Strategy L: Computer Training		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Promote one-to-one tutorials for patrons to learn how to use databases.	Susan H.	October 2009
2. Staff training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult with ALS Application Support Librarian to determine areas of training needed (and sources of said training) to ensure staff can provide adequate in-house IT support. ▪ Participate in training as per above consultation. 	Sarah Sarah	September 2009 December 2010

Appendix B:

Community Focus Groups – Summary

April/May 2009

Community Focus Groups – Summary of Responses

Virginia Public Library

April/May 2009

A total of 20 community members participated in two focus groups. Representation included local business owners, arts/music, health care, mental health, Friends of the Library, public utilities, recreation, marketing professionals, civic and veteran’s organizations, educators, and a local elected official.

ELEMENTS OF A COMMUNITY VISION

Participants first imagined a time in the future when the community has achieved its full potential and everyone is proud to call it home. They then answered the question: *What does that success look like, and for whom?*

Who	Result
Young Children	All enter school ready to learn.
Children.	A community that puts children first.
Children	Top-notch schools.
Parents & Children	Creative no-cost ways to provide activities for youth.
Teens	Have a variety of quality recreational/leisure opportunities.
Students & Adults	Understanding of and engagement in government from local to national (e.g. involved, voting, etc).
Young Adults	Are able to stay, have gainful employment, and raise their families here.
Working Age	Viable jobs that keep people here (pay well, rewarding, work that adds something positive to the community).
Urbanites/Professionals (from afar)	Are drawn here by community assets including a rich arts scene; stay over the long-term.
Newcomers / Whole Community	Awareness of what activities our community has to offer; participation in them.
Low-income, People with mental illness	Have a social connection, education resources, information.
Low-Income Households / Whole Community	Moved beyond survival mode to financial security.
Boomer Seniors	Community resources more centrally located.
Elders	Have social connections other than gambling.
Whole Community	No more anonymous negativity (i.e. Orchids & Onions).
Whole Community	Contribution of time to all local causes / active volunteerism.
Whole Community	Quad-Cities cooperating as a unified region.

Whole Community	Wireless.
Whole Community	Adequate affordable housing.
Whole Community	Preserved /restored downtown area.
Whole Community	Regular public transportation to other regional centers (Duluth, Twin Cities, etc).
Whole Community	Access to top-notch health care locally.
Whole Community	Cultural sensitivity.
Whole Community	Strong arts community.
Whole Community	Diversified economy with prosperous businesses.
Whole Community	Re-framed approach to economic development supporting locally-conceived/locally-grown businesses.

STATE OF THE COMMUNITY TODAY

Considering the community's current situation, participants were asked to identify: 1) conditions that could help the community move toward the vision outlined above (strengths & opportunities), and 2) conditions that might impede progress toward that vision (weaknesses & threats).

Strengths/Opportunities

- + Interested people.
- + Friendly people who engage in conversation on the street.
- + Sense of volunteerism / wonderful hearts (turn-out for individual benefit dinners, etc).
- + Many active service clubs.
- + Strong non-profit community (Salvation Army, Good Will, etc).
- + Large, active religious community - many churches.
- + A lot of professionals.
- + Excellent schools (as evidenced by the ACT scores this year).
- + Community commitment and pride in both public and private schools.
- + Geographic location.
- + Natural resources / beautiful area.
- + Public land for recreation (Mesabi Trail, Big Aspen, etc).
- + Parks & Recreation department and other recreation (bike trails, tennis, golf, lake walk, etc).
- + Two parks.
- + Opportunity for new use of lakeside once Seppi plant is removed.
- + Cultural activities - concert series and other arts offerings.
- + Land of the Loon and annual classic car events.
- + Great library.
- + Historical Society.
- + Downtown with businesses that are going concerns; can be difficult to find a parking spot.

- + Community Foundation.
- + Library.
- + Range of health services (hospital, Range Mental Health Center, etc).
- + YMCA.
- + Shopping / retail center for area.
- + Community college.
- + Assisted living and nursing homes.
- + Emergency services, including full-time fire department.
- + Housing & Redevelopment Authority.
- + Historical Society.

Weaknesses/Threats

- Community is not welcoming to newcomers; “pack-sackers”.
- Not always welcoming to people of color / intolerant of any differences
- Lack of diversity and awareness (discriminatory police behavior?); history of isolation and separation of ethnic communities.
- Profound racism.
- Assumption that everyone is Christian; lack of support for cultural and religious diversity.
- Stigma attached to mental illness, special needs.
- Upsetting level of substance abuse (especially alcohol), gambling, other addictions.
- Next generation is not getting involved in civic clubs.
- People are too busy.
- Not adequate marketing of local events; people are not aware of what’s going on, especially those new to the community.
- Do not take advantage of arts/music events that are offered locally; lack of awareness?
- People not utilizing small town businesses as much as they should (“small town code of ethics”).
- Downtown is not charming anymore.
- Undesirable neighborhoods (unattractive, run-down).
- Lack of housing and there are many homeless people.
- Don’t have a nice community center facility.
- Land-locked; need for re-zoning?
- City of Virginia is land-locked.
- Not enough dentists and doctors.
- Not enough youth programming.
- Stagnant population / declining number of children.
- Lack a vision of new/modern; not able to think “outside of the box”.
- Lack of cooperation between communities.
- Long winters + mosquitoes.

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Given where we are today, and where we want to go, participants responded to the question: *What needs to be done to make progress toward the vision?*

- Develop a plan for best use of former Seppi site.
- Develop a NEW vision for the future vs. just trying to recapture the past.
- Virginia Foundation could show leadership in developing a vision and pro-actively funding its implementation, rather than waiting passively for proposals to come in.

- Work cooperatively rather than competitively with other Quad Cities.
- Collaborative partnering between the Quad Cities.
- Consolidation of Quad-City schools.
- Four-year college here.
- Position Virginia as a regional center.
- Community-wide effort to give the town a ‘make-over’.
- Build more decent, affordable housing and provide programming for those who need support.
- Address community “not-in-my-back-yard” resistance (e.g. youth foyer project).
- Incentives to draw in and retain businesses; encourage entrepreneurship.
- Educate community to develop an understanding of diversity.
- Housing policy to regulate rental housing and mitigate negative impact of absentee landlords on neighborhoods.
- Address the needs of our ‘invisible’ population of very poor / homeless persons in the community.
- Intervene early to help those children who will not be ready for school.
- Get all youths engaged early in some interest area (sports and beyond); those who fail in high school are not involved in anything. Create local opportunities and break the cost barrier.
- Summer swimming option (outdoor pool or clean up the lake).
- Motivate people to get involved.
- More avenues for information to be shared rather than relying only on MDN.
- Continuous and better communication to raise awareness of what is available/going on locally (on the web, brochures, etc.).
- Money / government funding.

LIBRARY PRIORITIES

Finally, participants were asked to vote on library priorities by answering: *What roles can the Library focus on to make the greatest contribution toward addressing community needs?*

Library “Service Responses”	Number of Votes
Create Young Readers: Early Literacy	22
Know Your Community: Community Resources & Services	16
Succeed in School: Homework Help	15
Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning	15
Learn to Read & Write: Adult, Teen, and Family Literacy	13
Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access	13
Be an Informed Citizen: Local, National, and World Affairs	11
Celebrate Diversity: Cultural Awareness	11
Make Informed Decisions: Health, Wealth, and Other Life Choices	11
Build Successful Enterprises: Business & Nonprofit Support	9

Visit a Comfortable Place: Physical & Virtual Spaces	9
Express Creativity: Create and Share Content	8
Make Career Choices: Job & Career Development	7
Understand How to Find, Evaluate, and Use Information: Information Fluency	7
Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing & Listening for Pleasure	6
Get Facts Fast: Ready Reference	3
Welcome to the United States: Services for New Immigrants	3
Discover Your Roots: Genealogy & Local History	0

Appendix C:

Library Staff SWOT Analysis

April 2009

STAFF FOCUS GROUP
SUMMARY OF RESULTS
Virginia Public Library
4-17-09

A total of nine (9) staff participated in a traditional SWOT analysis, with the following results:

STRENGTHS: *What does the library do best?*

- Good, well-rounded collection.
- Long-time staff provides good knowledge base and continuity.
- Staff are friendly, well trained, work hard and do their jobs well.
- Have wide reach to access other resources (i.e. ILL); smaller libraries sometimes refer patrons for these services.
- Virginia has been out in front with technology (early automation, first to offer public internet access in Minnesota, wireless); have up-to-date computers and equipment for loan.
- Do a good job with the programming we offer.
- Building has a nice atmosphere – color and upgrades after the fire.
- Patrons feel comfortable here.
- Have an auditorium that is well utilized by the community.
- Full-time, trained reference staff.
- The library is a draw for newcomers to the community.

WEAKNESSES: *What do you think the library could improve?*

- Two-story building is difficult to manage, lacks storage space, has no room for expansion of the collection (e.g. requires weeding of materials that are still circulating well).
- Lack of public awareness of what the library has to offer.
- Short staffed.
- Could have more adult and children's programming.
- Low on IT support – lost the staffperson with this expertise, software is getting outdated.
- Need for more cross-training and communication between different areas/functions so staff are able to fill in comfortably.
- Ability of staff to attend training has decreased with declining personnel.
- Lack quiet study space/loud kids in the library after school.
- Longevity of staff results in being pretty settled and not as open to change as we could be/harder to “think outside the box”.

OPPORTUNITIES: *What needs do you see in the community that could be opportunities for the library to make a difference?*

- More patronage of library in a bad economy as our services are free.
- Increasing understanding of the importance of early literacy/children's reading.
- Access to more databases and other electronic resources (our own and through ALS).
- Employment related activity is up – job searching, resume writing, online filing for unemployment.
- Use of library computers for online tax filing.
- Virginia Foundation's Library Fund to generate revenue and love of the library.
- Growing educational needs – more homeschoolers, student research, professional support (physicians, attorneys), proctoring of tests for distance learning.

THREATS: *What outside forces do you feel could negatively affect the library?*

- City Council makes decisions without knowledge of how a library runs, without consulting staff, and declines invitation to visit the library and learn more.
- Bad economy and budget cuts.
- Increased online use from home, reading electronically rather than actual books.
- Library functioning as drop-in center for homeless (staff could use more mental health training?).

Appendix D:

Library & Community Profile

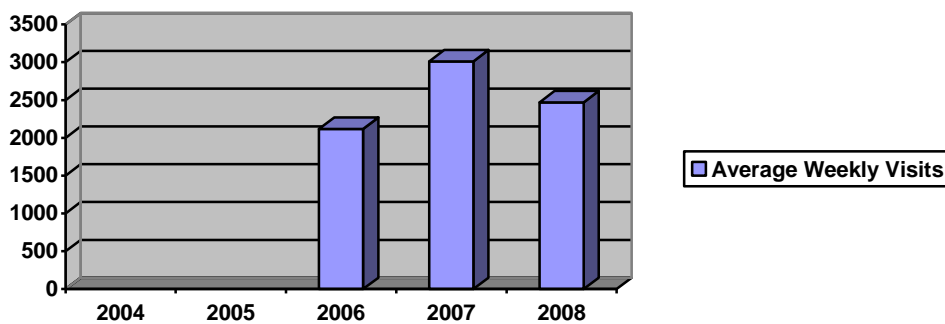
May 2009

Library & Community Profile: Virginia Public Library May 2009

I. LIBRARY STATISTICS

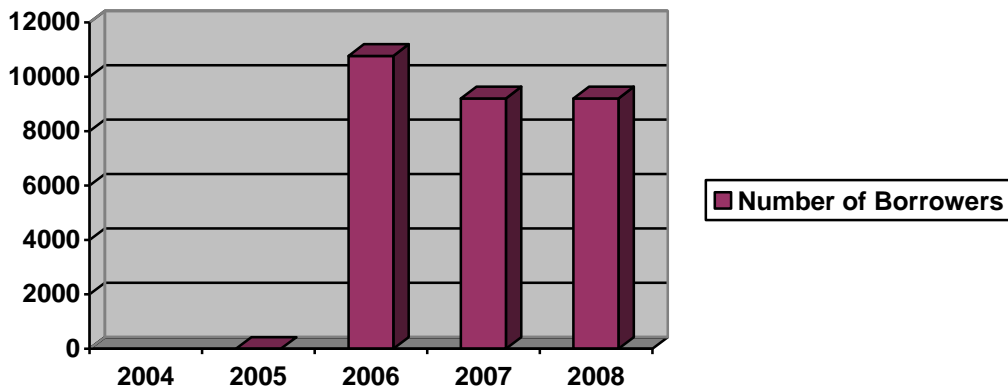
Library Traffic

The Virginia Library has generally been open 44 hours per week over the past five years. After a brief increase in evening hours late last year, the recent loss of library aides has resulted in hours dropping down to the current 49 per week. There are gaps in data around the 2005 fire which led to closure of the library for many months. Since re-opening, library traffic has been up and down rather than showing a consistent trend.



Number of Resident Borrowers

In the past, all library card holders were maintained in the system regardless of whether they were active. In 2004/2005, ALS began purging inactive users on a periodic schedule. The dip in borrowers in 2007 is reflective of the purge process. According to current population estimates, more than 100% of Virginia residents have library cards.



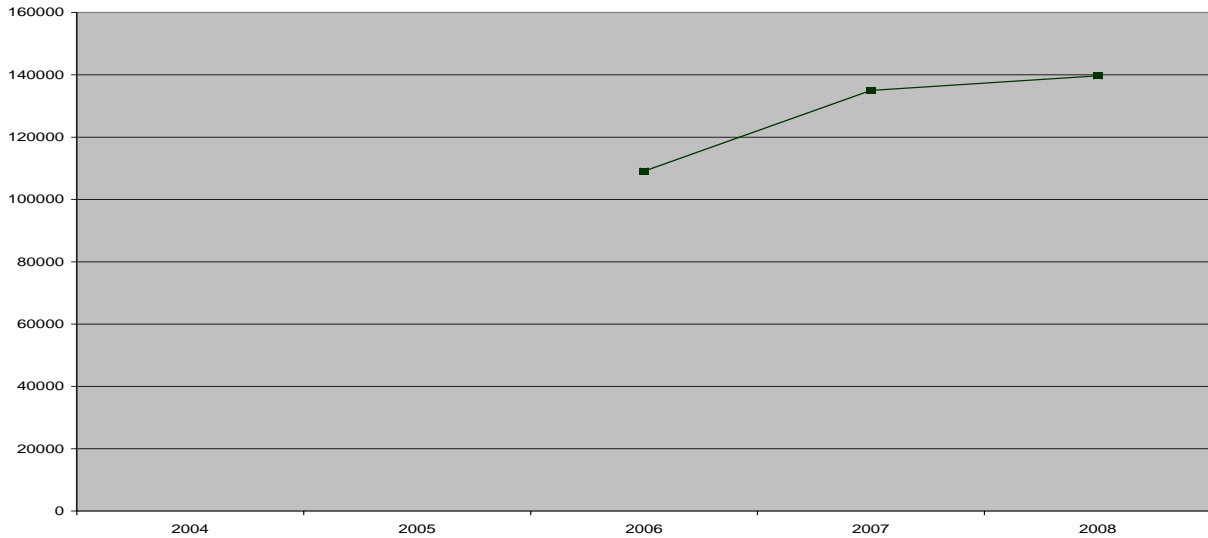
Collection Size

Type of Material	2004	2008	Change
Print	84,650	68,094	- 16,556
Audio	1,400	3,249	+ 1,849
Video	2,200	2,004	- 196

An April 2009 review of last check-out date identified 4,847 items in the library's collection (about 7 %) that have not circulated during the past three years.

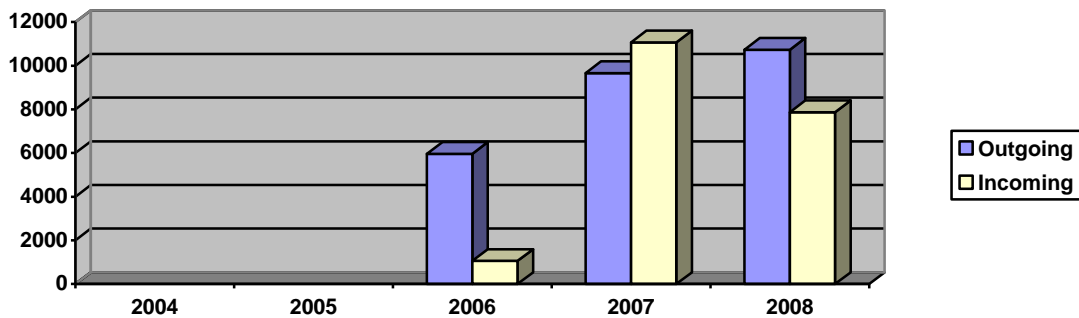
Circulation

Despite the ups and downs in library traffic, circulation of materials has increased by 28 % over the past three years.



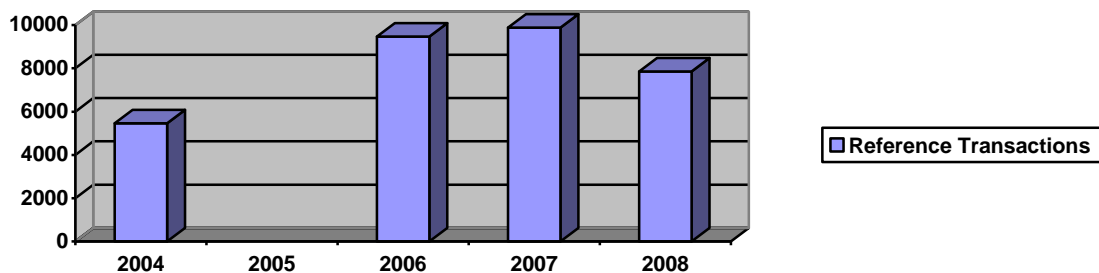
Inter-Library Loans

The Virginia Library is handling a large and growing number of inter-library loan requests.



Reference Requests

Reference requests have gone up overall. Despite a dip last year, the number of reference transactions was still 44 % higher than in 2004.



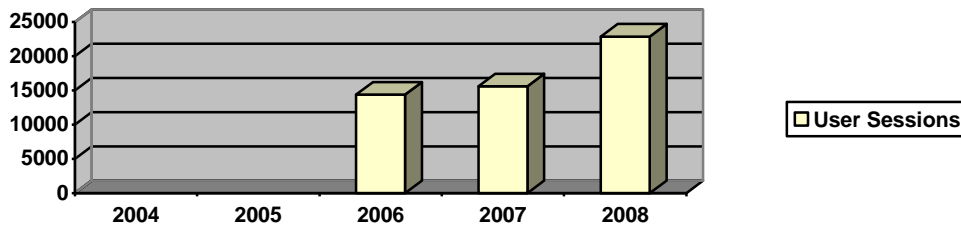
Programs

Library programming has been growing in Virginia, especially for children. The number of children’s programs has doubled over five years, with attendance more than tripling. Although opportunities for adults are a much smaller piece of the program pie, they have also tripled in number with attendance increasing by 75 % during this time period.

Target Audience	Number of Programs	Type of Programs	2008 Attendance
Adults	9	Author visits, Community Read, Adult Winter Reading Program	367
Children	127	Preschool story times, Summer Reading Program events	4,810
		Total Attendance:	5,177

Public Computer/Internet Usage

Usage of the Library’s 18 public access computers has increased steadily, with a nearly 60% increase in the past three years. Wireless service is also available at this location. The Library has a webpage, but does not have information about how frequently it is accessed.



Operating Expenditures

Year	Staffing	Collection	Other	Total
2004	\$ 610,965	\$ 56,800	\$ 78,700	\$ 746,465
2008	\$ 742,152	\$ 72,457	\$ 77,640	\$ 892,249

Current staffing totals 9.0 FTEs – a decrease of 1.32 FTEs from 2008. Staff includes two MLS credentialed Librarians, two BA level Library Associates, and support staff.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

The City of Virginia has experienced a 10% decrease in population since 1990. Below are some key demographic indicators [*Figures taken from the 2000 U.S. Census unless otherwise noted*].

Time of Count	Number of Residents	Change from Previous Period
1990 Census	9,410	
2000 Census	9,157	- 253
2007 Estimate	8,509	- 648

Race

Although the vast majority of residents (95 %) are Caucasian, the 2000 Census counted 442 persons of color in Virginia. In addition, 73 individuals identified themselves as Hispanic.

Age

Age Group	Number of Residents	Percentage of Total Population
Children 0-17	1,742	19 %
Adults 18-64	5,286	58 %
Adults 65 & over	2,129	23 %

Education

The Virginia School District operates three schools in the city. The District's 2007 on-time graduation rate was 89.9 % [*Source: MN Department of Education*]. There are also 110 children enrolled at Northland Learning Center, and 12 children being home-schooled in the district. Only 17 % of the adult population (age 25 & over) has a bachelor's degree or higher in Virginia.

School	Number of Students [January 2009]
Parkview Elementary Pre K – 3	459
Roosevelt Elementary 4 – 6	309
Virginia High School 7 – 12	786
Total Students:	1,554

Income

In 2007, the average wage of \$ 34,684 in St. Louis County was nearly \$ 8,000 below the state average [*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*]. The County also has a high unemployment rate which just reached 10.1 %, compared to 8.2 % in Minnesota overall [*March 2009, DEED*]. The 2000 Census indicated that 15.9 % of Virginia's residents (1,393 individuals) were living below the poverty line.

Housing

Housing Type	Percentage of Total
Owner-occupied	57 %
Rental	35.3 %
Vacant housing units	7.7 %

In 2000, Virginia's median assessed home value was \$ 54,000, and average rent was \$ 338.