



# LAKE OSWEGO NORTH END DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION



## STAKEHOLDERS

LORA  
Stakeholders Advisory Group  
Friends of the Lake Oswego Library  
Lake Oswego Chamber of Commerce  
Lake Oswego Downtown Business  
District Association  
Lakewood Center for the Arts

# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LIBRARIES

## STUDY TEAM

Leland Consulting Group  
Myhre Group Architects  
DKS Associates  
KPF Consulting Engineers Inc.  
GEL Oregon Inc.  
Rick Williams Consulting  
Lake Oswego Library  
LORA



LELAND CONSULTING GROUP

## INTRODUCTION

Libraries represent an ever-evolving importance in communities today. Today, libraries are hubs for community activity. In addition to checking out books and materials, patrons often visit the library for community events and organizational meetings, children's activities, research and resources, and the use of new technology. In this challenging economies, including today's, library visitorship rises. Libraries also serve as important town halls and safe activity centers for children afterschool and usage by people of all ages is on the rise.

In addition to the qualitative value libraries bring as resource centers and iconic community gathering places, libraries contribute an economic, or halo effect to their neighboring businesses.

Central libraries serve a unique function in downtowns, often attracting people who live further in the outskirts into a downtown area they may not otherwise visit. Lake Oswego is no different. While the city's population was estimated to be approximately 37,000 in 2009, the library service area is estimated to be 40,000, encompassing Lake Oswego residents as well as residents from neighboring communities, cities, and the county.

This memorandum aims to offer insight into the economic benefits of libraries and new library development as well as changing trends libraries are seeing given new technology.

## LIBRARIES ARE ON THE RISE

Due to an evolving need by library patrons as well as adaptations by American public libraries, visitation and usage of public libraries is on the rise.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services reports an increase between 1997 and 2007 of per capita library usage, particularly in metro areas, especially relative to rural areas. Urban, metro library use has not only seen a rise in per capita visitation, but also in per capita circulated materials, meaning the number of materials checked out. This figure has risen much more rapidly in ten years than it has in non-metro areas, indicating that libraries are on the rise in urban areas especially.<sup>1</sup> According to a Harris Poll, 68 percent of all Americans have a library card, a number that has risen from five percent in 2006.<sup>2</sup>

The rise in library usage is explained by many factors, including increases in the availability of technology, different media resources, and community gathering and event facilities.

A recent Harris poll found that library visitors continue to view the library as a critical fixture in their communities. The poll estimates that 92 percent of Americans "view their library as an important educational resource" while "70 percent consider it a pillar of the community." Seventy one percent consider it a community center, 70 percent a family destination, and 69 percent cultural center.<sup>3</sup> Young people are still very much drawn to the library, including 40 percent of 18-30 year olds who are likely to visit the library when faced with a problem.

Equally important, however, reading is on the rise and library users still find their resources more reliable than Internet searches. Internet terminals have become more prevalent in modern libraries—increasing by 90 percent per capita since 2000.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Service Trends in US Public Libraries." Institute of Museum and Library Services, December 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Harris Poll, August 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Harris Poll, August 2008.

<sup>4</sup> "Service Trends in US Public Libraries." Institute of Museum and Library Services, December 2009.

Given the rise of the internet and numerous online resources, it would be easy to assume that library visitation would decline, but library visitors recognize resources of a different quality and standard than is found on the internet. The results of search engine research can often be unreliable, have improper or insufficient citations. Ebooks are typically not accessible for free and can be costly. The question regarding internet resources is not a question of volume but a question of access as well as quality and an informed advisor to help distinguish good resources from bad. To most library users, the preference remains the library to seek important information. To others, the library is the only source of computer access. A 2006 survey reported by Hart Research indicates that 70 percent of people on computers in libraries only have access via that source. While that number may progressively decline, the importance of the library as a digital connection is still quite critical.<sup>5</sup>

However, technological changes libraries are already witnessing span beyond the availability of multimedia resources for visitors. The Multnomah County Library Main Branch demonstrates a newer innovation to library facilities—the use of RFID or Radio Frequency Identification, a system that enables library visitors to check their own materials out at the entrance. Library staff sees this as a welcome technology, in that it frees up resources to be able to give patrons individual and more personalized attention. This advent also aids in the efficient design and use of space.

In person visits have also increased by 10 percent since a 2006 American Library Association survey while visits to the library website have also increased substantially. Our knowledge of retail indicates that retailers who are able to integrate their customers' online experiences with their store operations perform better (in terms of sales) in the digital age. In this capacity, libraries operate very similarly. Libraries are increasingly offering online media and resources to their patrons as well. Visitorship to library websites have increased by nearly 17 percent since 2006.<sup>6</sup>

Prevailing research indicates that libraries are on the rise and becoming increasingly important despite technological changes in the market.

## THE VALUE OF LIBRARIES IN DOWNTOWNS: QUALITATIVE AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF LIBRARIES

*"Library is an anchor store that won't go out of business no matter how bad the economy gets. In fact, the worse it gets, the more traffic we see."*

-James LaRue, Director of the Douglas County Libraries

Libraries provide both a qualitative and quantitative benefits to communities, particularly to downtowns.

Great downtowns provide a varied mix of destination uses that attract visitors who may otherwise not frequent downtown. The greater the mix of uses, the more vibrant it will be. Libraries are known to draw tourists and local suburbanites, they help contribute to public safety and quality of life. New York State libraries saw nearly 11.5 times the attendance to their public libraries as they did their sporting events in 2008.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh found the library to be the most visited regional asset, attracting more visitors than the Carnegie Science Center and Pittsburgh Steelers combined.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contribution to Local Economic Development". Urban Libraries Council. January 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Harris Poll, 2008.

<sup>7</sup> New York Libraries: How They Stack Up! Revised October 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contribution to Local Economic Development". Urban Libraries Council. January 2007.

The Urban Libraries Council cites that libraries today contribute to early childhood literacy as well as the adult community members by scheduling workforce initiatives with career training, job and career searches. Libraries also often provide workshops and resources for small business owners.<sup>9</sup>

In a South Carolina Public Library Economic Impact Study, 49 percent of members of the business community cited the library as their source for business research. Fifty three attribute their business' success to their library.<sup>10</sup>

Libraries have a broader psychological impact on the community by sending a message that the local government is committed to education. Libraries are trusted public places and often do not suffer the same kind of public scrutiny that other government entities have to manage. Instead, they evoke a sense of community pride. They offer assistance to those in need of employment services, and can bridge the digital divide between classes and generations.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, ninety two percent of respondents in the South Carolina survey agreed that libraries contribute to quality of life. Thirty eight percent suggested that they attract new businesses, and 44 percent suggested they attract new patrons.<sup>12</sup>

## Retailers Want to be Near Libraries

Studies show that libraries generate frequent repeat foot traffic to neighboring businesses without competing for sales, and in fact increase sales for adjacent and nearby businesses. In downtowns, libraries also create “economically vibrant urban spaces” and contribute to an 18-hour downtown with activity in the mornings, afternoon, and evenings for different library patrons.

Libraries are increasingly finding themselves in mixed use development projects, and in Astacadero, California, the incorporation of a new library in the project presented exciting opportunities for retailers. Unable to secure a lease with two large bookstore chains, the developer elected to lease an anchor space to the library, which would assure him that he has secured a long-term tenant. In the process, retailers responded positively as they knew foot traffic would increase as well.<sup>13</sup>

Libraries are increasingly locating in malls for this very reason, and in the process, catering to patrons who may not otherwise visit the library.

Research from numerous studies also shows that between 25 and 75 percent of library visits are combined with shopping and other business in the neighboring area. Average spending among different studies shows an additional \$23-25 in spending that would not have otherwise been spent if not for a visit to the library. For example:

Seattle Library<sup>14</sup>:

- + The Seattle Library attributes nearly \$16 million in new spending to the construction of its new library, built in 2004.
- + The library's circulation doubled to nearly 8,000 people per day.
- + The new and innovative design as well as the presence of a new high tech library have created the imaged of a city “icon” that attracts the creative class because of the knowledge and brand it builds as a city with the desired amenities for new business.

<sup>9</sup> Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contribution to Local Economic Development”. Urban Libraries Council. January 2007.

<sup>10</sup> “South Carolina Public Library Economic Impact Study.” The School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina, January, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contribution to Local Economic Development”. Urban Libraries Council. January 2007.

<sup>12</sup> “South Carolina Public Library Economic Impact Study.” The School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina, January, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contribution to Local Economic Development”. Urban Libraries Council. January 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Seattle Public Library Central Library: Economic Benefits Assessment, 2005.

- + Most importantly, restaurants, coffee shops, and hotels noticed the greatest increase in business as a result of the new library.
- + The new library is attracting a large number of suburbanites into the city. 32 percent of visitors cited the library as their main reason for visiting downtown.

Just as in Seattle, libraries typically see a jump in visits following a remodel or relocation. Whether it is a new, larger facility, better location, access, parking, visibility, architectural interest, marketing or all of the above, cities enjoy ample new visitors to their new facilities.

After expanding its downtown branch, Denver's library visits also doubled from 1,500 to 3,000 daily.<sup>15</sup>

## Mixed-Use Development and Private Investment

Libraries function as anchors in that they lure visitors from wide geographic areas into their communities. Much like retail anchors, they are valued for their ability to attract other retailers, visitors, and halo spending. Unlike retailers, libraries offer assurances of long-term tenancy.

Given a shaky economic environment, retailers fight to survive for market segment share as well as the attention and dollars of the customers in their market area. In a similar economic environment, libraries act as resources for people, businesses, and community organizations that are struggling. In a troubled economy, libraries often thrive. Since libraries are also public institutions, there is minimal to no financial risk of closing their location, and developers in mixed use projects can be assured of long term tenancy.

Likewise, libraries share parking efficiently with residential and hotel uses, as most residential uses parking at night, while libraries use it during the day. Entertainment and restaurants, particularly dinner-oriented dining work compatibly with libraries as shared parking uses.

Examples of mixed use libraries include:

### **Hollywood Library and Bookmark Apartments**

The library opened in 2002 as the largest circulation branch in Multnomah County. The library houses a 13,000 square foot library with 47 market rate apartments at a total of 44,000 square feet, and a small ground floor café at just over 800 square feet.

Given that the library requires the architecture of an iconic building, the exterior façade of the library and accompanying residential units above were required to be of a higher quality matching the need for an iconic civic building. Though this added to construction costs, it also elevated the overall look of the building. Also, this project worked well because the housing units were rental housing, which eliminates the complication of multiple owners above the library.

The library played a key role in securing the financing needed for the project, especially with the mix of affordable housing units.

The library, residential, and café shared parking well, which minimized the number of needed spaces (only 28 total) and reduce project costs.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The Thriving Library, successful strategies for challenging times. "The Library's contribution to downtown revitalization and economic development". Marylaine Block

<sup>16</sup> "Hollywood Library and Bookmark Apartments". Metro Centers case study.

**Other Projects Include:**

- + The Sellwood-Moreland Library/Library Lofts in which the library signed 30-year lease for the ground floor anchor tenant of the mixed-use building, 2002.<sup>17</sup>
- + The Kansas City Downtown Council formed an LLC to purchase the National Bank Building, renovated and leased to the library as part of a larger tax-increment financed project that included offices, retail and housing.<sup>18</sup>

**SUMMARY**

Research indicates that despite technological innovations and increasing use of the internet, libraries today are on the rise because of the greater functions they serve within a community. No longer are they simply a repository for books. Instead, they offer meeting rooms for community groups, workshops and education for visitors of all ages, important resources for patrons and so much more.

More and more frequently, libraries are also serving as a strong economic driver and anchor in development projects and malls because of their leasing reliability, and large attractors for patrons from throughout their service areas. Their compatibility with other land uses and parking compatibility make them sought after anchors.

---

<sup>17</sup> “County Library Mixed-Use Buildings”. Community Building Sourcebook, Portland, Oregon.

<sup>18</sup> The Thriving Library, successful strategies for challenging times. “The Library’s contribution to downtown revitalization and economic development”. Marylaine Block.

## Sources cited and additional studies

American Library Association (ALA) Study from 2002

<http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=archive&template=/contentmanagement/contentdisplay.cfm&ContentID=89659>

“County Library Mixed-Use Buildings”. Community Building Sourcebook, Portland, Oregon.

“The Economic Impact of Public Libraries on South Carolina”. January 2005.

[http://www.libsci.sc.edu/SCEIS/final\\_report\\_26\\_january.pdf](http://www.libsci.sc.edu/SCEIS/final_report_26_january.pdf)

The Economic Value of Vermont's Public Libraries 2006-2007. State of Vermont Department of Libraries, revised February 2007.

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/misc/plvalue06-07.pdf>

“Hillsboro Station Community Planning”. Community Building Sourcebook, Portland, Oregon.

“Hollywood Library and Bookmark Apartments”. Metro Centers case study. October 2005.

“Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contribution to Local Economic Development”. Urban Libraries Council. January 2007.

[http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/1001075\\_stronger\\_cities.pdf](http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/1001075_stronger_cities.pdf)

“Multnomah County Library system wins national honor”. October 6, 2009, OregonLive.com.

[http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2009/10/multnomah\\_county\\_library\\_system\\_1.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2009/10/multnomah_county_library_system_1.html)

“Public Library Benefits Valuation Study” St. Louis Public Library, April 2001.

<http://www.slpl.lib.mo.us/using/ciba.htm>

“Public Libraries a Wise Return on Investment” (Colorado library survey). Library Research Service.

<http://www.lrs.org/public/roi/>

“Libraries: How they Stack Up”. An OCLC Report. OCLC, 2003.

<http://www.oclc.org/reports/2003libsstackup.htm>

“Library's Contribution to Your Community”. Illinois Regional Library Systems, 2002-2003.

<http://labs.lcls.org/content.aspx?c=/lctyc/main.shtml>

New York Libraries: How They Stack Up! Revised October 2008.

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/stackup.htm>

“Return on Investment for Public Libraries”. Library Research Service (Colorado), 2007-2008.

<http://www.lrs.org/public/roi/>

Seattle Public Library Central Library: Economic Benefits Assessment, 2005.

[http://www.spl.org/pdfs/SPLCentral\\_Library\\_Economic\\_Impacts.pdf](http://www.spl.org/pdfs/SPLCentral_Library_Economic_Impacts.pdf)

“Service Trends in US Public Libraries.” Institute of Museum and Library Services, December 2009.

“South Carolina Public Library Economic Impact Study.” The School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina, January, 2005.

State of Americas Libraries Report 2008

<http://www.ala.org/ala/newspresscenter/mediapresscenter/presskits/2008statereport/draft-0001c-press.pdf>

Taxpayer Return on Investment in Florida Public Libraries: Summary Report. Sept., 2004.

<http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/roi/pdfs/ROISummaryReport.pdf>

The Thriving Library, successful strategies for challenging times. “The Library’s contribution to downtown revitalization and economic development”. Marylaine Block.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=tyfx-PtPDLUC&pg=PT137&lpg=PT137&dq=shopping+impact+of+a+library+to+downtown&source=bl&ots=B4ze8cxavj&sig=suuwzRUoFA\\_HOhyHKE-w4PP5LAW&hl=en&ei=dO9dS6DpM4yEswPm2Z2SAw&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=res ult&resnum=5&ved=0CB0Q6AEwBDgU#v=onepage&q=shopping%20impact%20of%20a%20library%20to%20downtown&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=tyfx-PtPDLUC&pg=PT137&lpg=PT137&dq=shopping+impact+of+a+library+to+downtown&source=bl&ots=B4ze8cxavj&sig=suuwzRUoFA_HOhyHKE-w4PP5LAW&hl=en&ei=dO9dS6DpM4yEswPm2Z2SAw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=res ult&resnum=5&ved=0CB0Q6AEwBDgU#v=onepage&q=shopping%20impact%20of%20a%20library%20to%20downtown&f=false)

Value of Public Libraries. Massachusetts Library Association, October 2003.

<http://www.masslib.org/LibraryValue.html>

What happens when a public library service closes down? Richard Proctor, Bob Usherwood and Gill Soboczyk

“Taxpayer Return-on-Investment (ROI) in Pennsylvania Public Libraries”. Pennsylvania Library Association, September 2006.

<http://www.statelibrary.state.pa.us/libraries/cwp/view.asp?Q=127515&A=248>

Taxpayer Return on Investment in Florida Public Libraries: Summary Report. State Library and Archives of Florida

<http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/roi/pdfs/ROISummaryReport.pdf>

Value for Money: Southwestern Ohio's Return from Investment in Public Libraries. November 2006.

<http://9libraries.info/docs/EconomicBenefitsStudy.pdf>

Worth Their Weight – An Assessment of the Evolving Field of Library Valuation. Americans for Libraries Council (Libraries for the Future), May 2007.

<http://www.bibliotheksportal.de/fileadmin/0themen/Management/dokumente/WorthTheirWeight.pdf>