

The Urbana Free Library Long-Range Plan

2006-2011

August 2006

This 2006 version of the *Urbana Free Library Long-Range Plan* is the result of a series of discussions at meetings of the Board of Trustees during 2005 and 2006.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This *Long-Range Plan* is designed to guide The Urbana Free Library from 2006 through 2011.

The Board of Trustees of the library developed the *Plan* in an extensive series of meetings. Others involved in the *Plan* include the staff of the library and Urbana citizens, whose input is sought on a regular basis through questionnaires and informal comments. The *Plan* also reflects concerns and input from the Friends of The Urbana Free Library and The Urbana Free Library Foundation.

The current *Plan* is an extensive revision of a five-year *Long-Range Plan* first developed in 1989.

The library's *Mission Statement* was first passed by the Board of Trustees in 1977 and is continued here in expanded form.

Throughout this document, “goals” are statements of the general, long-term aims of the Library. As such, they are never intended to be “completed,” and they do not lend themselves to easy measurement. “Objectives” are intended to be achieved within a specific time period, and they are intended to be measurable.

Most objectives in this *Plan* are classed as “continuing.” These are objectives that the Library currently meets and intends to continue indefinitely.

Objectives not yet met are classified as “short-term” (to be reached within 2 years) or “long-term” (to be reached within 5 years). Collection goals, however, are 25-year goals, based on the planned capacity of the expanded Library.

Short-term (2-year) objectives should be reached by June 30, 2008, while long-term (5-year) objectives should be reached by June 30, 2011.

The *Long-Range Plan* reflects a review of the entire program of services of the Library. For this reason, it is not limited to a list of objectives to be attained by 2011. In addition to continuing objectives it also includes a number of proposed goals that have been reviewed and rejected by the Board of Trustees.

Because of the rapid rate of technological change, the Library maintains a separate *Technology Plan*, which is revised every two or three years. The Library's *Technology Plan* is an official part of the *Long-Range Plan*.

II. LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of The Urbana Free Library is:

- To select, acquire, organize, and promote the use of a wide range of books and other communications media in order to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the citizens within its taxing jurisdiction.
- To provide the physical space necessary for citizens to consult library materials in comfort and to meet with one another as part of the Urbana community.
- To provide unusually friendly and personal service to all Library users.

In establishing this general mission statement, the Library recognizes that public libraries are institutions with multiple goals, providing a wide range of services to a wide range of individuals, that no simple mission statement can encompass the entire range of appropriate Library activities, and that the evaluation of the relative merit of Library activities is a complex process that will of necessity involve the continued attention of the Board of Trustees and the Library staff.

III. LONG-RANGE PLAN

GOAL A: Library Collection

The Urbana Free Library will maintain and continue to develop a strong collection of books and other materials to meet the current and long-term needs and interests of the citizens of Urbana.

Objective A-1: Collection sizes (Continuing - high priority).

The target figures below are for five major types of materials—books, periodicals, audio recordings, video recordings, and microforms. These are the materials that consume the vast majority of the library’s acquisition funds and storage space.

The library also collects large numbers of pamphlets, clippings, photographs, documents, personal records, and other ephemera. These are covered separately in Objective A-6.

Books will continue to represent the vast majority of the library’s holdings. This *Long-Range Plan* is based on the conviction that—with the exception of many key works of reference—digital books will not supplant physical books.

The Board of Trustee expects to review collection formats and sizes on a continuing basis without altering the fundamental objectives of the *Long-Range Plan*.

Because of the volatility of non-print formats, all projected collection sizes for audio and video recordings are without regard to format.

The size of the collection and its rate of growth will be based on the intent to stay within building capacity until the year 2025, when the Library expects to complete its next expansion project.

Over the next 5 years, rate of new acquisitions will be based on the financial goal of increasing collection expenditures by at least 5 percent per year until collection expenditures are between 12 and 15 percent of the Library’s total operating budget.

Objective A-2: Review the Library’s acquisition policies. (Every 2 years – high priority)

Illinois state law requires that Boards of Trustees of public libraries review their libraries’ acquisitions policies every two years. The Urbana Free Library Board will conduct reviews in keeping with this law.

Objective A-3: Review the retention periods for individual Adult and Children’s Department general magazines, based on the citizen use and on the availability and usefulness of digital files. (Continuing – high priority)

This objective assumes that magazines that are part of specialized collections, depend heavily on illustrations, or are not available in digital form will be kept for longer periods of time than other magazines. Differential retention rates will be monitored and established as needed.

Objective A-4: Re-evaluate electronic media formats, and convert the Library’s collections to new formats in response to major changes in popular technology. (Continuing – high priority)

Due to the high cost of replacing various audio, video, and other media formats, the Library has to be conservative in adopting new technologies, waiting until they appear to be generally accepted, and it will continue to be cautious in introducing new formats.

Unlike books, electronic materials are sometimes discarded simply because they are in obsolete formats in which the library no longer maintains collections.

The status of video recordings in the Library in 2006:

- **VHS tapes.** In mid-2006, the Library owned about ____ VHS tapes. These comprised the Library’s largest collection of video recordings. With the exception of a small number retained for program use, all were available for loan. Regardless of the rate of technological change, the collection will be retained as long as it’s used by the public.
- **DVDs.** In response to public demand and the apparent long-term promise of DVD recordings, the Library began a collection in early 2001. This collection numbered about 3,600 recordings in mid-2006. In spring 2006, the Library ceased purchasing virtually all VHS video recordings.

The status of audio recordings in the Library in 2006:

- **Music CDs.** The Library maintained a large collection in this area in 2001. By mid-2006, the Library owned a total of about 13,200 ____ music CDs.
- **Books on cassette tape.** In 2001, virtually all of the Library’s recorded books were on cassette tape. By mid-2006, the Library’s Adult Department owned about 1,900 ____ books on cassettes.

- **Books on CD.** The growing tendency of automobiles to be equipped with disc rather than tape players, as well as the prevalence of portable disc players, led to many requests for books on disc. The Library had a few recorded books in this format in 2001, but by mid-2006, the Library owned about 615 ____ books on CD.
- **Cassette/book sets.** The Children’s Department maintained a collection of these sets stored in plastic hang bags. By mid-2006, the Library owned about 1,025 ____ book/cassette sets for children.

Status of Digital Content

- **In 2006, the Library has access to the Media Mall through Lincoln Trail Libraries System. The Library will continue to monitor developments in digital areas.**

Objective A-5: The Library specifically does not plan to collect materials in a number of formats for public lending. (Continuing)

Although other libraries have developed collections of the following materials for public lending, the Adult and Children’s Departments of The Urbana Free Library will not do so. These materials include:

- Computer software (with the exception of CD-ROM educational games)
- Videocassette and DVD players
- Videogame cartridges and players
- Audio and video recording equipment
- Original art works
- Framed reproductions of art works
- Sheet music
- 16mm, 8mm film, 33rpms,
- Pets
- Laptop computers

The Archives collects materials in some of these formats if the materials fall within the Archives’ subject areas, but they are not circulating materials.

Objective A-6: Provide space for the Archives collection. (Continuing – high priority)

The Archives continues to acquire new materials but withdraws older materials only if they are no longer relevant to the collection, or if their storage formats are superseded. It is the intent of the Library to provide sufficient space in the Library or in adjacent buildings to house the collection.

Objective A-7: Provide multiple copies of high-demand books, CDs, and video recordings.
(Continuing – high priority)

The library will continue to acquire enough duplicates to meet citizen demand.

With the exception of some high-demand videos and CDs, the Library does not provide multiple copies of most audio and video recordings.

Objective A-8: Continue to seek the development of meaningful CCD collections among Illinois public libraries. (Continuing– low priority, unless other libraries show an interest)

The Urbana Free Library has supported the concept of CCD (cooperative collection development) for many years. Without planned collection strengths, much of the power brought by regional and statewide access to bibliographic online databases is wasted. The issue is of particular concern to public libraries, which have few “natural” collection strengths beyond local history.

The Library will seek the development of statewide CCD agreements resulting in comprehensive collections of materials of particular interest to public libraries, and it will actively support and participate in such agreements. The Library’s understanding is that such collections will be of sufficiently limited scope to allow participating libraries to develop comprehensive collections without weakening their core local collections.

The library will evaluate creating a CCD collection in its expanded building, possibly building on its strong collection of children’s folklore, home remodeling and of historic model-making magazines.

Objective A-9: Emphasize Archives local history acquisitions, processing, and display in key areas. (Varying times and priorities)

A number of areas have been selected for special note:

Maintain the most complete collection possible of Champaign County newspapers on microfilm, subsidizing the microfilming if necessary. (Continuing – high priority)

Improve intellectual control and accessibility of holdings by processing archival collections, including organizational records, personal papers, maps, and photographs in accordance with archival standards. (5 years – high priority)

Complete the transcription of oral history tapes. (5 years – high priority)

Conduct systematic photographic documentation of Urbana buildings. Archives staff members routinely photograph significant buildings when they are built or demolished. Within 5 years, the Archives will seek to conduct a comprehensive photographic survey of Urbana's building stock, either through grant funding or through cooperative work with the University or other local cultural organizations. (5 years – low priority)

Create a permanent display area in the Archives for historic materials. (5 years – high priority)

Objective A-10: In response to demand, continue to collect materials and provide equipment for use by people with visual and other disabilities, and to refer qualified persons to services for the blind and physically handicapped. (Continuing – high priority)

Services to users with limited sight, mobility, and hearing remains a priority of the Library.

Objective A-11: Public relations. (Continuing – high priority)

The library will continue to place emphasis on developing public awareness of the strength of its collections.

GOAL B: ELECTRONIC BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND DATABASE ACCESS

The Library places continuing and high-level emphasis on electronic access to its own collection and to the collections of other libraries throughout the state of Illinois and the nation, as well as electronic access to the contents of a wide range of bibliographic and other materials.

Online bibliographic access is also covered in the library's *Technology Plan*.

Objective B-1: Continue to maintain a high-quality bibliographic database with an authority file, good circulation capabilities, and an online catalog. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective B-2: Maintain a sufficient number of patron workstations throughout the building for access to the Library's online catalog. (Continuing – high priority)

Because demands for Internet access tend to swamp all other uses, including catalog access, the Library will maintain dedicated catalog workstations.

Objective B-3: Provide access to the widest variety of databases possible, and in the simplest possible way. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective B-4: Provide remote access to various databases whenever financially feasible. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective B-5: Provide and maintain an online index to a wide range of Champaign County historical materials. (5 years – high priority)

Conclude the conversion of the existing Archives surname index card file to records in *Local History Online*.

Investigate and implement a Web-based database platform for *Local History Online* that achieves improved functionality and interoperability with other electronic resources.

GOAL C: CIRCULATION

A central purpose of The Urbana Free Library is lending books and other media from its collection to residents and property tax payers of the City of Urbana, to nonresidents who have paid the Library's tax-substitute fee, and to cardholders from other Illinois libraries that are linked to The Urbana Free Library through reciprocal borrowing agreements.

Objective C-1: Maintain the simplest possible registration process commensurate with collection protection. (Continuing – high priority)

The tremendous population turnover in Urbana makes it necessary to maintain more detailed circulation records than would be necessary in many smaller and more stable communities.

Objective C-2: Achieve circulation of at least 25 items per capita annually. (5 years – high priority)

The circulation rate of 22 items per capita (during the last 12 months preceding construction) placed Urbana in about the top 1 percent of American public libraries, reflecting both the nature of Urbana's community and the quality of library service provided.

Objective C-3: Increase patron registration to a minimum of 45 percent of the population of Urbana. (5 years – high priority)

The library will continue to place special emphasis on encouraging Urbana citizens to obtain library cards.

The 2000 population of Urbana was 36,395. The total number of registered borrowers in June 2006 was 13,674, or 38 percent of the population of Urbana.

The library will develop a mechanism to identify segments of the population who do not have library cards and will develop marketing and outreach programs aimed at the identified groups.

Objective C-4: Continue to stress interlibrary loan and to work statewide to increase fill rate and speed. (Various times – high priority)

The Urbana Free Library is committed to providing high-quality interlibrary loan service to its users and to the users of other libraries. It remains a major "net provider" of interlibrary loan service, and it retains its commitment to overnight turnaround on requests. (Continuing)

The Library will continue to work actively to end the LTLS practice of making no distinction between local holds and interlibrary loan requests in the LTLS multi-library shared online computer system. (1 year)

Local holds are requests that books held by users' local libraries but currently in use be held only for local users after the books are return to their libraries.

Interlibrary loans are requests that books not currently available at users' local libraries be sent from other libraries.

The quality of interloan service provided by The Urbana Free Library is undermined by the decision of the Lincoln Trail Libraries System to allow its database to accept interlibrary loan requests on Urbana Free Library items that the Library does not make available for interlibrary loan due to high local demand. This causes confusion and problems.

Interlibrary loan is a voluntary, cooperative practice among libraries, not a mandated service. Reflecting long-term, standard interlibrary loan practices nationwide, The Urbana Free Library reaffirms its fundamental right to determine which items are available for interlibrary loan.

Objective C-5: Continue to watch for ways of improving the retrieval of delinquent loans and collecting delinquent fees. (Continuing – medium priority)

The Library will continue to work to find cost-effective ways to retrieve overdue materials and to collect fees for the late return and non-return of materials.

Objective C-6: Intra-system reciprocal borrowing. (Continuing – high priority)

The library maintains its long-term commitment to full participation in reciprocal borrowing between public libraries in LTLS. It will continue to urge its cardholders to take advantage of the collections of other libraries in addition to The Urbana Free Library. It will correspondingly lend materials to cardholders from other LTLS member libraries on the same basis that it lends materials to its own cardholders, provided that cards were issued in correspondence with LTLS standards and are in good standing.

Objective C-7: Statewide, inter-system reciprocal borrowing. (Continuing)

The Library participates in statewide, inter-system reciprocal borrowing.

In the case of significant losses through statewide, inter-system reciprocal borrowing, the Library will ask the Illinois State Library to mitigate the risks related to statewide participation.

Objective C-8: Continue to fine-tune the circulation process for improvements that will provide greater access to materials for Urbana citizens. (2 year – high priority)

At least every two years, the Board of Trustees and staff will review library lending policies for possible changes.

Objective C-9: Study acquisitions vs. use to make sure that collection development accurately reflects the interests of local citizens. (Every 5 years – high priority)

In order to be sure that money spent on new materials (particularly new non-fiction for adults) corresponds with reader interests, the Library will at least once every five years conduct a study comparing acquisitions with circulation on a subject-by-subject basis.

Objective C-10: Provide automatic notification to borrowers of items about to become overdue and of books received through holds or interloans, either through e-mail or autodial systems. (2 years – medium priority)

Experimentation in 2005 demonstrated that such services will work only when materials with short loan times can be automatically excluded from the notification system.

GOAL D: REFERENCE SERVICE

Providing friendly, accurate, and non-judgmental information service on as wide a variety of subjects as possible to library users of all ages is a central and long-term goal of the library.

Objective D-1: Maintain a strong collection of printed reference materials. (Continuing high priority)

Objective D-2: Continue to explore all methods of obtaining access to digital reference databases, employing those that best meet local needs. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective D-3: Maintain reference services at a minimum of 125,000 questions annually. (Continuing – high priority)

In FY 2006, total questions asked were 124,788.

Objective D-4: Continue community information and referral as part of reference service, and not create “proactive” outreach services. (Continuing – high priority)

In 2001, the Board voted that “proactive” services were a national vogue of the 1960s and 1970s and not within the proper scope of public library services.

Objective D-5: Continue to emphasize homework assistance. (Continuing – high priority)

All public service departments place strong emphasis on helping children and young adults find materials needed to complete their homework assignments.

Objective D-6: Continue to explore interactive online reference services to optimize community service. (Continuing – low priority)

Objective D-7: Continue to work to increase community awareness of reference services. (Continuing – high priority)

GOAL E: READER GUIDANCE

Assisting readers in the selection of appropriate materials is an important function of the library.

Objective E-1: Have all professional public service staff members serve as readers' advisors.
(Continuing – high priority)

The Library expects all professional public service staff to be able to advise readers on materials of interest.

Objective E-2: Provide reference materials designed to assist in readers' advisory service and promote current awareness. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library provides published materials and databases as needed to help with readers' advisory services and current awareness of new materials. Current awareness services are designed to notify participants when new items in their areas of interest are received by a library.

GOAL F: PROGRAMS, EXHIBITS AND SPECIAL SERVICES

The Library places high priority on the provision of programs, publications, displays, activities, and other services that enhance the Library experience.

Objective F-1: Children's programs. (Continuing – high priority)

For many years, the Library has placed extremely strong emphasis on providing a wide range of book- and culturally-oriented programs for children, and it regards these programs as among the most important of the Library's services.

The Library will continue to offer such programs as school and preschool visits, summer reading programs, and programs for children in the elementary and middle grades.

Objective F-2: Programs for parents, and for parents and children to attend together. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will continue to emphasize public programs designed for parents and young children from birth through the preschool years to attend together, and programs designed specifically for parents.

Objective F-3: Programs for young adults. (Continuing – medium priority)

The Library will continue to offer such programs as class visits, summer reading programs, the "teens read" program, etc.

Objective F-4: Programs for adults and seniors. (Continuing – medium priority)

The Library will continue to hold occasional programs for adults. It will continue to explore possible programs for adults that fit the Library's profile of services and are not replicated by other local agencies.

Objective F-5: Programs sponsored by The Urbana Free Library in cooperation with other agencies. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library has provided programs in conjunction with the Urbana School District and the Public Health District, and it will continue to seek opportunities for jointly sponsored programs relevant to Library goals.

Objective F-6: Formal classes. (Continuing – varying priorities)

In general, the Library has felt that provision of formal classes is the responsibility of Urbana public schools, Parkland College, and the University of Illinois. The Library will consequently limit classes to those—such as genealogy, local history, use of online databases, etc.—that are directly relevant to the Library’s collections, strengths, services, or community role.

Genealogy classes. The Library’s genealogy classes have been offered for years and are almost always sold out. They will continue indefinitely. (High priority)

Explore options of holding other classes, including suitable co-sponsorship with other agencies. (Low priority)

Objective F-7: Exhibit and display space. (Continuing – high priority)

The ability to display materials associated with the Library, with the Urbana City government, and with the entire Urbana community is an important service of the Library.

The Library will continue to provide displays in the Adult and Children’s Department display cases, on Library bulletin boards, etc.

Objective F-8: Free notary public service at the Adult Department reference desk. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library’s Adult Department professional staff will continue to maintain their notary public licenses and provide notary service at no charge to Library users.

Objective F-9: Meeting room space for non-profit groups when Library meeting rooms are not in use for Library purposes. (Varying times and priorities)

The Library will continue to provide use of the Auditorium and Conference Room for free public meetings of local not-for-profit groups. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will explore mechanisms for providing wireless internet connectivity and public use of Audio Visual equipment in the Auditorium and Conference Room. (2 years – medium priority)

The Library will explore after-hours use of the Auditorium. (5 years – medium priority)

Objective F-10: Purchase some video recordings with public performance rights, to allow their use with children’s programs. (Continuing – low priority)

Objective F-11: Public relations in regard to programs, exhibits, and other special services. (Continuing – high priority).

The Library will continue to place special emphasis on developing public awareness of its programs, exhibits, and special events.

GOAL G: READER SPACE

Urbana citizens spend a great deal of time in the Library. Provision of space for people to read, study, work, and interact informally is an important service of the Library

Objective G-1: Maintain a variety of reader environments and spaces. (Continuing – high priority)

Social interaction

As citizens increasingly disassociate themselves from community groups and bundle with computers and other solitary activities, libraries gain importance as public meeting spaces. The Urbana Free Library recognizes the importance of the Library as a community space.

Reader Seating

- 4-person tables
- 2-person tables (primarily game tables)
- Carrels
- Arm chairs
- Sprawling space for children, such as Megan's Room
- Scattered reading areas for groups of teenagers
- Places to use laptop computers

Quiet reading room

As libraries become increasingly busy, it is difficult to provide the quiet reading spaces associated with libraries of a generation or more ago. Cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices are banned from the Library's quiet reading room.

Study rooms

Study groups, tutors, and local committees need places where they can meet without disturbing other readers. The Library provides study rooms for use by these and other appropriate groups.

Objective G-2: Places to eat or drink while reading. (Continuing – high priority)

The library will continue to provide coffee and other beverage services to its users.

Objective G-3: Places to use laptop computers. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will serve users who bring laptop computers to the Library with wireless access to the Library's catalog and databases, as well as to the Internet. The Library will also provide a sufficient number of conveniently placed 110-volt receptacles.

GOAL H: WEB SERVICES

The Library places continuing and high-priority emphasis on web access as the electronic doorway to information about the Library and to the many library services offered via Internet access.

Web access is also covered in the Library's *Technology Plan*.

Objective H-1: Continue to maintain a high-quality web site with easy navigation to all electronic services provided by the Library. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective H-2: Provide access to information about the Library with examples, contact information, directions, and content. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective H-3: Monitor developments in online technologies and deploy any that enhance other goals listed in this document. (Continuing – medium priority)

GOAL I: HOURS OF SERVICE

Providing adequate public service hours is extremely important to the success of the Library.

In the case of Urbana, this is a particular challenge because of the up-at-all-hours nature of the community. Downtown Urbana, for example, is crowded until after midnight most nights. It is frequently difficult to evict all library users at closing time.

According to the Illinois state standards for public libraries, a library in a town the size of Urbana should be open an absolute minimum of 64 hours a week, with 72 hours recommended for better libraries. The standards also specify that all libraries in towns the size of Urbana should be open Sundays at least nine months a year, with 12 months strongly recommended.

The Urbana Free Library is currently open 70 hours a week, year round, including Sundays.

Objective I-1: Maintain 9 to 5, Monday through Friday service regardless of other hours of service. (Continuing – high priority)

In order to function as an organization, the Library must be open during standard business hours. In addition, it is heavily used mornings and early afternoons by school groups, day-care centers, parents with pre-school children, and retired citizens.

Objective I-2: Maintain identical hours all year long. (Continuing – high priority)

Some small libraries are closed Sundays during the summer. The Urbana Free Library will not follow this practice. Attempting to cut staff at the beginning of the summer, when hourly staff members are easiest to hire, then replace and retrain them in the fall is an administrative nightmare. In addition, changes in hours always cause confusion and annoyance among library users.

Objective I-3: Study citizen needs for hours of service. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will continue to survey citizens concerning their need for access to the Library.

Objective I-4: Locate funds to extend Archives hours. (Varying times and priorities)

Currently the Archives is open from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. This is 18 fewer hours per week than the rest of the Library.

Extend Archives hours one or two nights a week to 9:00 p.m. While the rest of the Library closes at 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and at 6:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, the Archives closes at 5:00 p.m. every night. This is unpopular with Library users, many of whom work days and find that they can use the Archives only on weekends. (2 years – high priority)

An annual grant of about \$10,000 from Champaign County has provided funds since July 1, 1990, to (among other things) extend Archives hours from 4:00 until 5:00 p.m.

Extend Archives hours to full regular Library service hours. (5 years – medium priority)

Objective I-5: Explore the extension of Library hours (5 years – high priority)

Users routinely have to be forced to leave the Library at closing time, and they call long after closing hoping to find the Library open.

Within 5 years, the Library will explore:

- Extending hours on Sunday afternoons.
- Extending hours Friday evening until between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.
- Opening the Adult Department until 10:00 p.m. weekdays.
- Opening earlier on weekdays and Saturdays.

Objective I-6: Provide special service hours on special occasions. (Continuing – high priority)

In the past, the Library has extended service hours for early telephone reference on election days, late-night service on income tax night, and special Archives work nights. It continues to provide these.

Objective I-7: Continue to monitor, explore, and develop alternative methods for providing service when the Library is closed. (Continuing, medium priority)

Possibilities include:

- After hours book return. (Currently provided)
- After hours book pickup. (In development)

- 24-hour access to the Library's web site. (Currently provided)
- 24-hour access via the Library's web site to the LTLS database, enabling cardholders to look up materials, place holds, renew materials, etc. (Currently provided)
- 24-hour access via the Library's web site to databases purchased by The Urbana Free Library. (Currently provided for selected databases.)
- Email reference and Archives service.
- Online, after hours reference services.

Objective I-8: Public relations for service hours. (Continuing -- high priority).

The Library will continue to publicize its regular service hours and its special after-hours services. Service hours are listed on all of the Library's many pamphlets and flyers, and in the telephone book.

GOAL J: EXTENSION SERVICES

One important service of public libraries that serve large communities or widely spread populations is bridging the physical gaps between users and their libraries.

Objective J-1: Not provide bookmobile service or branches unless a significant change occurs in the area to be served. (Continuing)

Urbana is a compact community with excellent bus service and with downtown parking. In addition, it has no major node where a branch might successfully be placed.

In public library planning, the general rule of thumb is one outlet for every 50,000 people. In 2006, Urbana's population was under 38,000.

Objective J-2: Continue to provide homebound delivery by the Friends of the Library. If the Friends are unable to provide the necessary labor, the library will seek relationships with other groups. (Continuing – medium priority)

For over 20 years the Friends of The Urbana Free Library and other library volunteers have provided selection and delivery of library materials to homebound citizens. This is an important service, and the Library will continue it as long as the service has volunteer support.

Objective J-3: Explore creating deposit collections. (5 years – low priority)

Deposit collections are collections of books placed in locations by a library, but not staffed by library personnel. Responsibility for the supervision and care of the books rests with people at the deposit site.

The Urbana Free Library has experimented with deposit collections in the past but has had limited success due to poor supervision by people at the deposit sites.

The Library will remain open to the possibility of creating deposit collections but will not actively seek opportunities to do so.

Objective J-4: Explore remote drop off boxes and pickup services. (2 years – medium priority)

The Library will remain open to the possibility of creating remote locations for the return of library materials and possibly for the pickup of materials.

Objective J-5: Provide pickup from and deliver to retirement centers that have activities directors to coordinate the service. (Continuing – high priority)

In 2006, The Library provided pickup and delivery services to Clark Lindsey Village and to Canterbury Ridge.

If similar residential centers develop in Urbana, the Library will explore extending this service to them as well.

Objective J-6: Explore pickup and delivery services to underserved or restricted populations. (Continuing – medium priority)

Objective J-7: Explore acquisition of a vehicle for deliveries, staff travel to meetings, etc. (2 years – medium priority)

The Library will explore purchasing a vehicle for Library use, or a shared arrangement with the City of Urbana

GOAL K: SERVING UNSERVED AREAS

One of The Urbana Free Library's long-standing problems is the large number of people who live immediately outside the Urbana city limits and are not taxed for Library service. Because the Library regards itself as a distinctly City library, working closely with Urbana City government, it cannot consider conversion to a special taxing district with larger boundaries in the foreseeable future. Finding a way to serve non-resident borrowers without converting to a district library is an important goal of the Library.

In the 1980s, the Library attempted to contract with the Urbana and Somer Township governments to provide library service to township residents, but it was unsuccessful.

In 2000, an attempt was made to create by referendum a contracting library district comprising those portions of the Urbana School District that lay outside the Urbana city limits. The effort failed by a vote of 41 to 59 percent.

Objective K-1: Work actively with the City and other agencies to encourage annexation of adjacent unincorporated land. (Continuing – high priority)

Among other things, the Library provides cards to residents of annexing property as soon as they have made a formal commitment to enter the city.

Objective K-2: Encourage the creation of a new library taxing jurisdiction outside the Urbana city limits, which could contract with Urbana for public library service. (5 year – high priority)

The Library will attempt to work with a citizens committee to try once again to create a contracting district consisting of those portions of the Urbana School District that lie outside the city limits of Urbana.

Objective K-3: Resist the expansion of the taxing jurisdictions of other libraries into unserved areas where residents might be expected to borrow the majority of their items from Urbana. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective K-4: Work actively with the Illinois State Library and the Illinois Library Association to find ways to provide universal public library service in Illinois. (Continuing – high priority)

GOAL L: ACCESS TO LIBRARY FACILITIES

The Urbana Free Library prides itself on its commitment to ease of access for Urbana citizens.

In addition, it strives to comply fully with ADA requirements and respond to emerging access needs.

Objective L-1: Conduct comprehensive code reviews of the building on a regular basis. (5 years – high priority)

Reviews will be conducted every five years.

Objective L-2: Provide adequate public parking. (Various times – high priority)

Provide more surface parking on the Library block. The Library will continue to acquire land on the Library block to improve public parking. This will require the purchase of structures and their removal. (Continuing)

Seek arrangements through the City for use of underutilized downtown parking by library users. (2 year)

Given its downtown location, the Library does not plan to provide free parking weekdays before 4:00 p.m.

Repeated surveys of Library users show that none use the City parking deck.

Large numbers of elderly users and mothers with small children require automobile parking near the Library.

Objective L-3: Improve the configuration of the Library's book return boxes. (1 year – high priority)

Book return boxes need to be convenient to drivers, easy for staff to unload, and in locations that do not lead to endangerment of pedestrians. The configuration of the Library's current book return boxes forces drivers to get out of their cars to reach the boxes. The Library's boxes need to be replaced and the island reconstructed to proper angles.

Objective L-4: Review and improve exterior directional signage. (Continuing – medium priority)

Exterior signs at the Library building are very limited.

Two small directional signs to the library are located on Lincoln Avenue at Green Street and on Vine Street at Elm Street. Both face north only. The Library will explore additional locations and the possibility of adding signs with the now widely-recognized national library logo.

Objective L-5: Accessibility equipment

Equipment (such as enlargers, Kurzweil machines, etc.) to improve accessibility to the Library's collections is listed in the *Technology Plan*.

GOAL M: PUBLIC RELATIONS

For the Library to be successful in providing effective community service, citizens need to be fully aware of its services.

Objective M-1: Promote a specific Library image. (Continuing – high priority)

Continue to promote the quality of service, emphasizing the collections and national rankings of the library.

Objective M-2: Continue to use news releases, the Library website, PSAs, Library publications, participation in community events, and other current methods to promote the Library. (Continuing – high priority)

As of mid-2006, Library promotional methods included:

- *This Month at The Urbana Free Library*
- The Children's Department *Monthly Calendar*.
- Posters and banners to publicize Library events.
- Participation in school registrations to distribute card application forms, distribute informational leaflets on the Library, explain non-resident issues, and answer general questions about the Library.
- Multiple entries in the telephone book, so that users find information under any logical terms they select.
- Participation in community events such as Urbana Park District Neighborhood Nights, Market at the Square (the Urbana farmers' market), Urbana Sweetcorn Festivals, events at Lincoln Square, "School Nights" at Urbana public schools and at the library, and the University of Illinois's "Quad Day."

Objective M-3: Explore new promotional methods: (Continuing – high priority)

Possible new methods include:

- A yearly mailing to all residents.
- Using listservs, blogs, and RSS feeds of new books and arrivals.

- Placing brochures and other information at new locations.
- Using UPTV programs.
- Participating in the Downtown Urbana banner program.
- Participating in *MySpace*.

GOAL N: PUBLICATIONS

Since 1977, The Urbana Free Library has published nine books and three maps on the history and people of Champaign County, and a book on the organization and indexing of municipal documents. According to the editor of *American Libraries*, the journal of the American Library Association, The Urbana Free Library was at one time the smallest public library in America with an active publishing program.

Objective N-1: Commence publishing an historical pamphlet series related to Champaign County events and people. (5 year – medium priority)

Historical pamphlets would focus on specific topics of scope too limited for book publication.

Objective N-2: Reprint high-demand publications as stock runs out. (Continuing – high priority)

As of mid-2006, stocks were exhausted of J.O. Cunningham's *History of Champaign County* and of the *Pioneers of Champaign County*. Stocks were very low of the *Combined 1893, 1913 and 1929 Atlases of Champaign County* and of *Upon a Quiet Landscape: The Photographs of Frank Sadorus*.

Objective N-3: Seek to collaborate with local authors and organizations.

GOAL O: STAFF WORK ENVIRONMENT

Workspaces and staff facilities are adequate in most areas of the main Library building, but more problematic in the Tepper Building west of the Library. The Library will continue to monitor developments and revisit the situation in 5 years.

Objective O-1: Monitor staff work space. (Continuing – high priority)

The most crowded staff workspaces are the Adult Department staff office, which must house an additional staff member starting in the summer of 2006, and the general administrative staff office, which provides space for the Office Manager and the IT manager, as well as public reception space.

If the Library were to hire a second Associate or Assistant Director, there would be no place for that person to work, unless the Executive Director moved to the current office of the Associate Director, and both Associate Directors shared the Executive Director's current office.

Objective O-2: Monitor storage space. (Continuing – high priority)

As of the summer of 2006, Archives storage space was already limited, and the Archives has had to turn down offered donations of large collections.

Objective O-3: Monitor the physical environment in the Library and in the Tepper building. (Continuing – high priority)

Areas of concern include humidity control, fire alarms, smoke alarms, and other security features.

GOAL P: FINANCES

Long-range financial stability is a major goal of the Library, because most Library costs are fairly inflexible. The Library uses its funds for daily operations rather than special projects. Almost all Library funds are spent for books and other library materials, for staff, and for maintenance of the existing building and equipment. Because of the lack of discretionary expenditures, erratic funding would cause serious problems. Any sudden drop in Library funding would mean major dislocation of Library services, including the dismissal of highly-trained staff. Restoration of services when funds were restored would require hiring and training new staff, which in turn would place even greater pressure on existing staff.

Objective P-1: Locate new sources of Archives funding. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will encourage gifts, endowments, and bequests.

The Library will request that Champaign County increase its current support of the Archives beyond the customary \$10,000 per year.

Because of the large number of Champaign residents who use the Archives, the Library Board will continue to ask the City of Champaign for support.

Objective P-2: Provide additional funding through appropriate user fees. (Continuing)

After considerable experimentation with fees, the Library has arrived at a satisfactory fee structure. Except as listed below, it does not intend to increase existing fees or institute new ones.

As a matter of governing philosophy, the Library is opposed to fees in situations where users return materials on time and do not purchase anything.

Part of this decision on fees is due to the nature of library service and the Library's commitment to equal service to all citizens. Access to Library service for local citizens should not be based on individual ability to pay.

In addition to being discriminatory, fees discourage the use of library services, which is contrary to the goals of the Library. Fees are used to encourage users not to bring materials back late. If they are successful in this undertaking, they should not be used for services the Library hopes people will use.

High photocopying fees encourage the theft and mutilation of library materials.

The Library's objective is to charge fees for:

- Late return of borrowed materials.
- Photocopies of library materials.
- Out-of-state interlibrary loan, where the Library will pass through fees.
- Library merchandise.
- Damage and loss of materials.
- Borrowers' cards issued to residents of areas that pay no library taxes.
- Mail order services, particularly the provision of copies of materials from the Archives collections.

The Library determines late fees by comparing them with those of other local libraries. Photocopy fees are charged on a cost-recovery basis for regular paper copiers and on a primarily supplies-plus-maintenance basis for microfilm reader/printers. Library merchandise is usually sold at a small markup, on the assumption that it provides advertising. Non-resident cards are issued at the cost non-residents would pay in library taxes if their property were annexed to the city of Urbana. Fees for copies of documents provided by mail order are determined on a full cost-recovery basis, including both materials and staff time.

On a continuing basis, the Library will review these fees to be sure they are at the appropriate levels.

Objective P-3: Locate funds for future expansion and building enhancements. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will:

- Continue to cooperate with The Urbana Free Library Foundation's fundraising efforts for capital expense needs.
- Locate funds to reconstruct the east porch, where the foundation and concrete deck are slowly disintegrating.
- Locate funds to provide insulated windows in the 1917 portion of the building.
- In 2010 and 2015, formally assess the adequacy of the facility.
- No later than 2020, begin active plans for expansion, including developing a building program for an expanded library and locating funding.

- By 2023, begin work on expansion.
- In 2025, complete the expansion of the Library.

Objective P-4: Provide service to areas outside the Urbana city limits by intergovernmental contract. (2 year – high priority)

This issue is discussed elsewhere in this *Plan*. The most likely area to be served is that portion of the Urbana School District that lies outside the city limits of Urbana, but other district outlines are possible.

Objective P-5: Locate additional grant funding. (Continuing – high priority)

Over the years, the Library has supported a wide variety of services and projects through grants from the Illinois State Library, the Illinois Arts Council, the Illinois Humanities Council, and other sources.

The Library seeks grants in its high-priority areas, but its choices are often limited by the priorities of agencies supplying grants.

In applying for grants, the Library will take a cost/benefit approach, weighing the staff effort required for grant applications and reporting against the dollar value of the grants.

The Library will continue to be wary of grants designed to move the Library in directions that are not in the best interests of service to the Urbana community.

Objective P-6: Create schedules and budget lines for equipment replacement and building repair. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will create a schedule for equipment replacement and make it a part of its annual budget.

With library expansion complete, the architects will provide a schedule for major maintenance and replacements costs, which will be made part of the Library's annual budget.

Objective P-7: The Library will establish an equipment replacement fund that can be drawn upon for major costs, such as replacement of HVAC components, purchase of new automation systems, replacement of vehicles, etc. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective P-8: Annually revise the Library’s *Five-year Financial Plan*. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library Board will prepare an updated *Five-year Financial Plan* each year to accompany its annual budget proposal to the City of Urbana. The intent of the *Plan* will be to:

- Help the Library to notify the City of upcoming financial pressures.
- Help the Board of Trustees to set priorities and directions.

GOAL Q: FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

The Library is committed to maintaining the Library and its grounds in the best possible physical condition.

Objective Q-1: The Library will avoid deferred maintenance on its structure, furnishings, and equipment. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective Q-2: The Library will purchase maintenance contracts on its most complex mechanical systems, including in particular its HVAC system. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective Q-3: The Library will outsource routine maintenance that can better be performed by specialty firms with proper equipment. (Continuing – high priority)

Typical examples include basic daily cleaning, large-scale carpet cleaning, and window washing.

Objective Q-4: The Library will take steps to repair damaged paint, scratched and chipped furniture, stained or worn upholstery, damaged carpet, and similar problems as quickly as possible. (Continuing – high priority)

Objective Q-5: The Library will establish a fund for replacement of major facilities components, as described in Objective P-7. (Continuing – high priority)

GOAL R: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

In order to maintain the Library as a smoothly-operating organization, a great deal of administrative staff time must be devoted to such management tasks as planning, organizing, personnel management, budgeting, staff communications, staff training, and so on.

Objective R-1: Complete and maintain the *Policy Manual*. (Continuing and 1-year – high priority)

Any missing sections of the Library's *Policy Manual* will be prepared and approved. (1 year – high priority)

The *Policy Manual* will be reviewed every 2 years and updated as needed. (Continuing – high priority)

Policies and bylaws will be made available to the general public on the Library's Web pages. (1 year – high priority)

Objective R-2: Continue to update the Library's introductory manual for new staff members. (Continuing – high priority)

The *Handbook* will be reviewed every two years and updated as needed. All existing Library staff will receive copies of new editions of the *Handbook*.

The *Handbook* will be posted on the Library's intradepartmental web pages.

Objective R-3: Provide orientation programs for new Council, Board and staff members. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library offers the following:

Council: Tours of the Library by the Director or other administrative staff members.

Board: Extensive packets of materials, plus orientation tours by the Director.

Staff: Copies of the *Staff Handbook*, very extensive orientation by supervisors, and extensive information from the Office Manager.

Objective R-4: Carry out comparative salary studies. (Varying times – high priority)

The Library will monitor pay levels for comparable work. (Continuing)

The Library will conduct a full salary survey. (Every 5 years)

GOAL S: VOLUNTEERS

The Urbana Free Library will continue to rely on its outstanding volunteers to make possible many special services that the Library could not otherwise afford to offer.

Objective S-1: Cooperate with the Friends of the Library to increase membership. (Continuing -- high priority)

Objective S-2: Public recognition for volunteers. (Continuing – high priority)

The Library will continue to post names on the main Library bulletin board, publish names in a separate folder distributed in the Library, and send annual “gifts” to volunteers. In years gone by it held an annual reception for volunteers, but very few volunteers attended.

The Library will seek additional ways to recognize and honor its volunteers.

Objective S-3: Explore ways to work with local volunteer agencies. (Continuing – high priority)

GOAL T: REVISION OF THE ***LONG-RANGE PLAN***

The Urbana Free Library Board and staff will monitor progress on the ***Long-Range Plan*** and revise it as required.

Objective T-1: Monitor progress on objectives. (Varying times – high priority)

The Library will informally review progress on the ***Long-Range Plan***. (Annually)

The Library will monitor its progress on achieving the objectives of its ***Long-Range Plan*** and prepare a revised ***Plan***. (Every 5 years)

To make this process feasible, the ***Long-Range Plan*** will be kept as streamlined as possible.

Objective T-2: Revise the *Long-Range Plan* by June 30, 2011. (5-year – high priority)

IV. LIST OF LOCAL AND STATE TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archives – The “Champaign County Historical Archives” is the Library’s local history and genealogy department.

CCD – “Cooperative Collection Development” involves libraries agreeing to develop complementary strengths in specialized areas and to draw upon each other’s collections in response to special needs.

Documents Center – The Urbana Municipal Documents Center was a nationally-unique project that organized, converted to microfiche, and computer-indexed Urbana municipal documents and records. It was funded primarily by City funds. Administratively, it was part of the Library’s Special Collections Department. With the end of the Documents Center, the term “Special Collections Department” was abandoned. The Documents Center index is part of the Library’s *Local History Online* database.

I&R – “Information and Referral” services are designed to provide people who need social services with directions to the correct agencies.

ILLINET – The Illinois state interlibrary loan network.

I-SHARE – The resources of 65 Illinois libraries belonging to CARLI, the Consortium of Academic & Research Libraries in Illinois.

ISLAC – The Illinois State Library Advisory Committee

LSTA – The federal Library Services and Technology Act. Formerly the “Library Services Act” (LAS – 1956) and the “Library Services and Construction Act” (LSTA – 1964). This act is the major federal source of grant money to public libraries. LSTA funds in Illinois are administered by the Illinois State Library.

LTLS – The Lincoln Trail Libraries System is one of 12 such organizations that blanket the state of Illinois. Systems are supported by state funds and governed by their members. They are designed to coordinate and support the activities and development of their members. The Lincoln Trail Libraries System covers nine counties in east-central Illinois and has about 150 public, academic, school district, and special library members.

OCLC – The Online Computer Library Center maintains the world’s largest online bibliographic database.

SILC – The “Statewide Illinois Library Catalog” is Illinois’s connection to the OCLC First Search service.

V. TECHNOLOGY PLAN

The Library's current *Technology Plan* is by Board of Trustees action a part of the Library's *Long-Range Plan*.