TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY
SUMMARY REPORT
AUGUST, 2007

Hartzell-Mika Consulting was engaged by the Traverse Area District Library (TADL) to undertake a review of staffing and organizational structure at the main (Woodmere) Library, and the two branch libraries (East Bay and Kingsley). This review included concentrating on two of the goals identified by Board Vice President George Galic from the Library's recently adopted strategic plan. As part of that process, the consultants spent two days at the TADL interviewing Library administrators and key staff members and they reviewed statistical information for comparably-sized public libraries in Michigan. Based on the consultants' review of the data and from information gathered in the interview process, the consultants have the following observations:

General Observations

1.) The TADL is appropriately staffed at levels consistent with comparable Michigan libraries and operates very efficiently in a busy facility.

The consultants did not discover any areas that should be eliminated, although we have identified several areas where we believe reorganization and consolidation of services and space will result in improved patron service and staff satisfaction.

The TADL has established a strategy to "examine the current allocation of human resources, adjusting as necessary." This report does contain suggestions and recommendations that should assist with this strategy.

The TADL has established a strategy, through the adoption of the 2007 strategic plan, to "apply a zero-based approach to the allocation of resources" as a mechanism to help make its operation as efficient as possible. In a truly zero-based budget, each activity to be funded must be justified every time a new budget is prepared. This mechanism is applied more often in business than in a library environment. Actually implementing a true zero-based budget is a complex undertaking. It is not a common budget methodology even for most businesses or government entities. It can be worthwhile to use a zero-based concept when evaluating the institution and the services it provides. Applying the question "Why do we provide "X" service for our users?" is a good idea, rather than approaching the budget by automatically assuming business as usual based on last year's work.

According to some budget analysts, "… the key single reason why ZBB has not been widely implemented is that it generates a huge amount of work. Just consider a medium sized business along the lines that we have suggested, with three departments … even

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they have to start by preparing 27 budgets, not just three. Then the various levels of management have to wade through all of them and decide on the combination of decision packages they finally recommend." (Source: Duncan Williamson, "Zero Based Budgeting," http://www.duncanwil.co.uk/zero.html.)

In a sense, the TADL subjects the entire institution to a zero-based approach when it turns to the public for tax support. But if this technique is used in developing an annual budget, it means that each service area of the Library needs to provide information to justify the need for support. This approach could be used for each individual department including Youth Services, Circulation, Sight and Sound, Reference and Adult Services, Library for the Blind and Handicapped, Branches, Administration, etc. It was not within our scope of work to take on this task, however, we did talk with a number of staff in order to gather information and provide advice on how existing staff and services could be improved.

The recommendations we are making can be used as alternatives for improving services. It is important to note that the years of experience the TADL's administrators have in the organization are critical in determining which recommendations make the most sense for the TADL.

All staff who were interviewed like working at the TADL. Many people have extensive years of experience. We sense a great deal of pride in the work that is being done, the devotion to serving the public, and in general the work atmosphere established by the Library Director.

5.) Because this is a highly educated community there needs to be a commitment to excellent library services. It is an expectation by users.

Peer Comparisons with other Michigan Public Libraries

The consultants made comparisons with a group of fifteen other Michigan public libraries similar in population size to the TADL. A chart of these comparisons is provided on the last page of this report. We made comparisons using the main Library and branch facilities only and then added a second comparison that includes the three contracting member libraries. This concept was explained to us and it made sense to add these facilities, collections, and services to the comparisons because the contracting member libraries are supported by the taxes collected within the district.

Some observations from the peer comparisons are provided below. These comparisons are made using the total budget of the TADL main Library, the two branches, *plus the three contracting member libraries*. It is also helpful to use the chart on the last page of this report to compare the TADL without including the three contractual libraries. The TADL moves much closer to the average when the three member libraries are excluded. Please note again that the comparisons described below include the three contracting member libraries.

1) The TADL is 11% below the average $50.01 in operating income per capita at $45.22.
2) The TADL has only 8 MLS librarians in comparison with an average of 17 MLS librarians.
3) The TADL has 64 FTE staff in comparison to the average of 52; this is a significant difference at 23% above the average.
4) The TADL has fewer professional staff as noted above, so the salary and benefit costs are just 8% above the average as noted below in item 5.
5) Salaries and benefits of TADL are $2,599,108 in comparison to the average of $2,410,122.
6) The TADL main Library is 58,000 sq. ft. and the average is 64,762.
7) The TADL total collections number 298,010 in comparison to the average of 251,983.
8) The TADL circulation per capita is 9.8 and the average is 10.7.
9) The TADL authorized millage is 1.1 mills with the average at 1.16 mills.
10) The TADL computers for public use are 88 with the average at 89.

The TADL does not vary all that much from the average for the peer comparison libraries, except in the total staff count and the number of MLS librarians. Other comparisons are also outlined in this report.

New ILS Needed – A Top Priority

This is not news to anyone at the TADL. The consultants heard from almost everyone that the current ILS system is drastically out of date and needs to be replaced. The purchase and installation of a new system is now under investigation. The sooner this can be accomplished, the better.

Recommendation: A top priority needs to be placed on getting the current ILS replaced. The staff committee working with the administration should include all departments (we believe from our interviews that it does). But it is important to make this an active committee with regular meetings and meaningful input from all departments. This will provide for the most intelligent choice of a system that will provide solutions. Again and again in our interviews we heard about the frustrations the Library users as well as the staff are having with the existing system. There is little doubt that the investment in a new system will make staff more efficient and significantly improve library services for the public. A more patron-friendly ILS will be embraced by the library users.

Security

Some staff (especially female staffers) expressed concern about security in the building. This was mentioned often enough for the consultants to realize it is a problem that needs to be addressed. There is an increasing homeless population described to us at about 500 or more individuals who are classified as "homeless" within Grand Traverse County. A number of institutions in the community have provided support for shelter, food, showers, etc. Often during the day the Library is the destination of a number of homeless individuals.

Staff indicated that administrator response to any problem has been good. An administrator is always scheduled in the facility during all hours of operation. With the police station near the Library, response from them has been timely and helpful.

Recommendations:

1) Make sure all staff are aware of the administration schedule for who is "on call" for any emergency.
2) Explore how some area businesses deal with security issues including the homeless population.
3) Identify a direct contact person in the police department.
4) Meet with the police department staff to develop an understanding of when and how to utilize their services.
5) Be sure all staff are aware of the "panic buttons" and how they operate, and the expected time of arrival of an administrator to any situation.
6) Develop a security policy and be certain all staff are aware of the policy.
7) Emphasize the need for all supervisory staff to take responsibility and outline the details and procedures in place.
8) Arrange for a staff in-service training on library and personal security.
9) Develop an emergency manual outlining procedures to be followed under various circumstances and be certain all staff receive a copy and familiarize themselves with the procedures.
10) The consultants did not perceive, from our discussions with staff, that there is a need for security personnel.

Desk Work

Several staff members mentioned the desire for work that can be accomplished at public service desks during times that a staff member is not assisting the public. Staff is looking for something more than "busy work" that would truly assist the Library. The consultants are recommending some changes in how the desks are scheduled (see below under ***Public Service Desk Schedules***), but this is a different issue.

Recommendations:

1) The consultants suggest that this matter be investigated and discussed at a meeting of the administrative staff and department coordinators. Perhaps a "project pool" can be created where staff members can check for tasks appearing on a useful list of work needing to be done and which can easily be established. A careful balance is needed so that any work assignments do not interfere with direct service to the public.
2) In the administrative area, much time is spent by one staff member with phone in hand. The consultants recommend consideration of a hands free system / wireless phone for the staff responsible daily for answering the phones.

STAFFING ISSUES

PEER COMPARISONS WITH OTHER MICHIGAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The chart below shows a comparison of the TADL staffing with fifteen public libraries in Michigan serving similar size populations. Comparisons are sometimes difficult because libraries have different service areas. Although most of the comparison libraries serve a city or township and not an entire county, they do provide good benchmarks for comparison. We have listed the TADL in two configurations below. The first includes the TADL main Library and two branches. The second includes the three contracting member libraries. The first comparison is most useful in looking at the main Library facility and comparing it to other libraries. Most of the comparison libraries have one or no branches except for Dearborn and Livonia which have three each.

Using the main Library figures (with the two other branches included) the consultants make these observations:

1) The TADL has significantly fewer professional librarians (accredited master's degrees) in comparison to the peer group of libraries. The TADL would have to double the count of professional librarians to meet the average of 18 librarians for this comparison group of libraries. Just 12% of the staff at the TADL have a professional degree compared to 32% in the peer comparison group.
2) The TADL main Library has 56.25 full-time employees. This is 8% above the average.
3) The TADL population served is 86,465, just 6% below the average of 91,693.
4) Not shown on this chart is the total budget for personnel. The average amount spent for this group on wages and fringe benefits is $2,410,122. The TADL spends $2,372,396, just 2% below the average. If the three contract member libraries at Fife Lake, Interlochen, and Peninsula are added, the total comes to $2,599,108 – just 2% above the average.
5) The TADL is very much at the average in its staffing counts and costs except for the professional librarian counts. We believe there is a need to increase the number of professional staff. But this should be done only after a careful analysis of the needs of each service area. Changes can be made through attrition. Some suggestions for changes are included in this report.

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6) Is there more staff than needed? No. Is the current staff being used as efficiently as possible? As in most organizations there is always opportunity for improving efficiency. Our report includes suggestions for possible changes.

Traverse Area District Library
Peer Comparisons with Michigan Public Libraries
Staffing

Library	Central Library	Branch Libraries	ALA-MLS FTEs	ALA-MLS % of Staff	Total Librarian FTEs	Other Staff FTEs	Total Paid Staff FTEs	Library Service Population
Canton	1		19.75	34%	19.75	38.06	57.81	76,366
Dearborn	1	3	20.15	31%	20.15	44.3	64.45	97,775
Farmington	1	1	16.4	31%	16.4	37.2	53.6	92,534
Midland	1		16	37%	16.5	26.5	43	75,939
Holland	1	2	16	26%	16	45.15	61.15	105,994
Livonia	1	3	19	33%	19	38.5	57.5	100,545
Rochester Hills	1		22.63	38%	22.63	36.73	59.36	92,363
Royal Oak	1		9.7	42%	9.7	13.3	23	62,656
Southfield Public Library	1	1	26.38	42%	26.38	36.48	62.86	82,532
Traverse Area with branches	**1**	**2**	**7**	**12%**	**8**	**48.25**	**56.25**	**86,465**
Traverse Area with branches & member libs*	**1**	**5**	**8**	**12%**	**9**	**55.25**	**64.25**	**86,465**
Troy	1		22.36	36%	22.36	40.25	62.61	80,959
Waterford Township	1	1	15	48%	15	16.3	31.3	72,307
West Bloomfield Township	1	1	20.63	41%	22.08	28.4	50.48	96,957
Battle Creek	1	1	12.6	21%	23.1	36.38	59.48	90,804
Westland	1		8.2	25%	9.2	23.43	32.63	86,602
Ypsilanti	1	1	16.63	39%	16.63	25.88	42.51	79,826
Average		**1.3**	**17**	**32%**	**18**	**34**	**52**	**86,289**
*Adds Fife Lake, Interlochen, and Peninsula				Source: Library of Michigan 2005/2006 State Aid Reports				

From our interviews with Library administration and staff we have derived a few recommendations for staffing changes that should improve the TADL operations.

Clarifying Organizational Structure & Procedure

In talking with staff, the consultants were struck by the number of individuals who seemed unsure about who their supervisor was, who claimed to have not received feedback through an evaluation, and who stated that "X is in charge of that, but everyone goes to Y because that's who handles it." It is the experience of the consultants that organizational efficiency is greatly improved when everyone understands their role in the organization, the appropriate procedures, and the chain of command to be followed.

There needs to be a clearer reporting structure. In many ways a "flatter" structure is better. This means that the chain of command is set up so that the Director is not that far removed from any person in the organization. We observed that the history of the organization and how things were set up before the new library was completed, have carried over to the new building. There does not seem to be a clear demarcation in the responsibilities assigned to the Assistant Director and to the Library Manager.

Although we were not able to interview the Assistant Director, we did talk with the Library Manager and the Director. The organization and job description for the Assistant Director shows that this person reports to the Director and is responsible for public relations, the LBPH, Youth Services, and the East Bay and Kingsley branches. All other departments report to the Director including Circulation, Sight and Sound, Adult Services, Technology, and Processing. The Library Manager handles human resources and finance.

The interviews with staff indicated many are not sure exactly who in the administrative structure handles human resources and personnel issues. There seems to be a division of responsibilities between the Library Manager and the Assistant Director. The consultants recommend these changes:

1) Make clear assignments of responsibilities to the Assistant Director and to the Library Manager. The Library Manager could be responsible for the business operations of the Library including budget preparation and monitoring, union negotiations and handling of grievances, physical facility operations at the main Library and the branches, all supply and equipment ordering, business office functions and support (payroll, mail, switchboard, meeting room booking, etc.), cataloging, processing, and circulation. These are all support functions.
2) The Assistant Director could oversee all public services departments including youth, adult, branches, law, LBPH, and Sight and Sound.
3) The two positions under the Director should handle the personnel (hiring, discipline, firing) under their supervision. Turnover of staff (especially full-time staff) is very low. This is a good sign. Hiring of key personnel should involve the Director, the Assistant Director, the Library Manager and the appropriate department head when vacancies occur.
4) For the immediate future have the Technology Manager report to the Director because of the current emphasis on the new ILS system.

This is only one possible illustration of how to assign responsibilities to the two administrative positions. The Director knows the strengths of these employees and needs to make the assignments as appropriate to their talents. There are many possibilities. The Director may also want to retain direct reporting from some departments. But the key objective is to have an organization set up so the staff understands there is a reporting and supervisory structure.

The consultants developed the following chart based on the job descriptions provided by the TADL.   There are 25 positions total, with 8 positions listing the Library Director as the person the employee reports to, and another 5 positions where the Director is listed as a secondary person to whom the employee reports.

Employee Reporting Structure
(From Job Descriptions provided by the Library)

POSITION	Education	Department	Reports to
Assistant Library Director	MLS	Administration	Library Director
Library Manager	Bachelor's finance, business, personnel, liberal arts or communication	Administration	Library Director
Administrative Assistant	High school	Administration	Library Director
Department Coordinator	Bachelor's degree	Circulation	Assistant Library Director or Library Director
Librarian I – Children's Services	MLS	Young Adult	Children's Department Coordinator, Asst. Library Director
Librarian I – Reference	BA or BS degree	Adult Services	Adult Services Coordinator
Librarian II – Reference Section	MLS	Reference	Library Director
Librarian II – Department Coordinator	MLS	Reference	Assistant Director or Library Director
Librarian II – Youth Services	MLS	Youth Services	Library Director
Technical Services Coordinator	Bachelor's degree in computer science or MLS	Technology	Library Director
Network Specialist	Bachelor's degree	Technology Group	Technology Coordinator
Public Computing Center Assistant	Formal education in computer applications	Reference	Public Computer Center Coordinators
Public Computing Center Coordinator	Bachelor's in applied technology or liberal arts	Adult Services	Adult Services Coordinator
Department Coordinator – Sight and Sound	Bachelor's	Sight and Sound	Assistant Library Director or Library Director
TCTV2 Director	Bachelor's or experience	TCTV2	Director
TCTV2 Staff Producer	Ability to perform described duties	TCTV2	TCTV2 Coordinator
General Clerk	Ability to perform described duties	Varies	Administrative Assistant
Public Computing Center Desk Clerk	High School	Public Computing Center	Public Computer Center Coordinators
Administrative Clerk	High School	Administration	Administrative Assistant
Accounting Clerk	High School	Processing	Library Manager
Acquisition and Account Clerk	Ability to perform essential duties	Processing	Library Director
Non-public Service Library Assistant II	2 yr. library technician course	Varies	Library Director
Library Aide	High School	Varies	Designated Employee
Library Assistant I	High School	Varies	Designated Employee
Public Service Library Assistant II	Bachelor's Degree	Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped	Assistant Director or Library Director

Recommendations:

Some of these recommendations may involve meeting with the union. Again, it is important to recognize that the administrative staff is the best judge of how to accomplish these recommendations.

1) Merge some of the job descriptions to make the list of positions much smaller. Provide one job description for Librarian I, Librarian II, Library Assistant I, Library Assistant II, and Department Coordinator.
2) Within each description list the specific tasks for reference librarian, children's librarian, etc. Set up the clerical series to show increasing responsibilities or complexity of the work as the series goes from general clerk to higher clerical classification. The coordinator descriptions may need to remain separated based on the wide differences in service areas and responsibilities, but there still may be enough similarities to make combining some of these positions in one job description logical. The goal is to reduce the number of job descriptions.
3) Revise the Library's organizational chart to reflect the actual reporting structure and chain of command. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, each employee should report to and be evaluated by one supervisor
4) Revise the job descriptions to accurately reflect position requirements and job tasks.
5) Update the Staff Manual.
6) Acknowledge the value of the MLIS degree and reflect the same in salaries paid to part time staff.
7) Create a pool of "floating staff," cross-trained between departments and scheduled for a set number of hours per week, and who can be assigned to departments as the need arises (i.e., the Children's Department during summer reading sign-up).
8) Develop and institute a system-wide evaluation procedure and process to be conducted on an annual basis.
9) Create an orientation process for new employees that includes a tour of the buildings and branches (maybe member libraries if there are enough frequent questions regarding them), and an explanation of the services provided at each service desk (plus time to observe what happens at each).
10) Assure that each administrator is aware of how each service desk operates – if they are responding to the panic button or on night / weekend duty they need to know how all of the Library areas operate.
11) Establish regular departmental staff meetings.

DEPARTMENTAL ISSUES

As noted in the introduction, the consultants spent two days at the TADL, primarily meeting with individuals. Additional time was spent in observing various departments, and while more time onsite would have been useful, discussions with the TADL staff and the consultants' past experiences allow us to make the following suggestions.

Technical Services Department

The lack of a permanent head of Technical Services appears to have created a processing backlog, and to have forced department heads to duplicate processing work within their own

areas. In addition, the Library Director has assumed responsibility as interim department head, diverting his attention from other areas.

Recommendations:
1) The open position(s) in Technical Services should be filled as quickly as possible.
2) There is a consistent backlog of materials in the Children's Department of new books that are reviewed by the Head of Children's Services for cataloging problems, inconsistencies, etc. This individual seems quite capable and knowledgeable in technical services and may be worth a temporary move from Children's Services to Technical Services. This move would alleviate the Director being involved in Technical Services, add expertise to the Technical Services area, and allow for a new person in Children's Services with fresh and creative ideas / programs, and also allow for collaboration and some responsibility with Sight and Sound for the new YA area.
3) A review of the procedures in technical services should be accomplished – for example, our observations revealed that 4 separate individuals were involved in checking-in serials.
5) With a new ILS system being considered this is a logical time to reconsider technical services, work flow, the data required by services areas, etc.

Regional Services to the Blind and Handicapped

The TADL operates a regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH). Although the service covers the tax support area of the Library (Grand Traverse County), it also includes a much wider 16-county service area. Some state support (about $42,000) is received, but a good portion of the services are funded by Grand Traverse County taxpayers. The consultants have had direct work experience with services to the blind and handicapped and are aware of the very personal nature of this service. Having the service "close to home" rather than delivered from Lansing is important to those receiving the service. Salaries and benefits for department employees is a direct cost of this service, but there are certainly other cost considerations.

Recommendations:

1) There is a need to account for the total costs of this service beyond the more obvious direct personnel costs. There are the costs of space and utilities, administrative overhead, supplies, and other expenses. We recommend that the true costs of this operation be developed.
2) With this information in hand, a cost-per-person figure can be developed showing the actual cost of serving each LBPH user.
3) It is our understanding that the Library of Michigan (or perhaps the Library of Congress) will not allow any service area smaller than certain defined regions of multiple counties. There is a need to have this policy in writing when approaching potential funders.
4) Each county (or library) in the service area could be approached for financial help based on the number of users from their county using the service. Certainly it would help to have

some of the users of the service be a part of the "ask" for this support. If outside state support is discontinued the Library will then have a record of who turned down the opportunity to provide support for the service.

5) The consultants recommend the Library do this background work prior to any possible future reduction in state support and have a Board-approved plan for discontinuance of this service if local support is not sufficient to operate it.

6) The nature of LBPH services make them attractive to private donors, service clubs, and foundations. The consultants suggest seeking non-tax revenue to assist with LBPH costs.

7) Another alternative, of course, is that TADL could continue providing the service from its own budget sources. This is difficult to justify to local taxpayers when the Library is actually serving 16 counties with LBPH services.

Sight and Sound Department

The TADL operates a specialized audiovisual department that is unusual for a library of its size. Most public libraries provide a much more limited collection and service staff for audiovisual services. Many collections are "self-serve" with staff available from the reference or an information desk to provide some assistance. Staff in Sight and Sound have specialized knowledge and backgrounds. They are hired for the expertise they have with music and / or film. This special service generates significant user response. The department is busy and circulation of Sight and Sound materials is high. Obviously the community has embraced this as evidenced by the use it receives.

The organization chart shows a staff of 5 public service employees and 5 pages. Our interview with staff member, Keith Schwartz, (the Department Coordinator was not available for an interview) noted 3 full-time and 3 part-time staff with 3 rotating "substitutes." This is a considerable amount of staffing resources allocated to this department.

There appears to be a long history of development of this collection by the Library Director. The investment of time and resources appears to have paid dividends in the use it generates.

Recommendations:

1) The Director is responsible for and does the selection for the materials in this department. With the obvious expertise of the individuals working in the department we recommend delegating a good proportion of the selection of materials to the Sight and Sound staff, but based on a selection policy approved by the Director. This will also insure that collection development would continue should the Director leave for any reason in the future.

2) A survey of the users of this department would be very useful. If one has not been done we recommend that some capture of information be done by staff in the department. A simple survey form and a map could be used to capture information on age, sex, and

residence of users and why they use the collection. Some questions which could be asked: Is the use of the collection widespread, or is it provided to a smaller cross-section of the population? Are the users mainly residents of Grand Traverse County or from other areas? The results would be helpful in a number of ways.

3) Comparison figures with 16 peer Michigan public libraries show that the TADL is significantly higher in the amount of audio materials in its collections. The average audio collection in this group is 16,321. The TADL has 34,805. This is 15% of the total of the TADL materials collection. The average is 7%. Again, this shows the emphasis placed on this collection.

4) Sight and Sound staff have created special indexes that assist staff with locating specialized music and video resources normally not locatable through traditional cataloging and indexing sources. If these resources could be made available online (perhaps through a new ILS system), it would add to patron satisfaction and the ability of other staff in the system to use the resources. Also, the creation of these resources for availability online provides an opportunity for wider use (on a national basis) for this information. The specialized collections that TADL have developed in Sight and Sound do get used nationally through interlibrary loan.

Young Adult Department

The Young Adult Department is in an area on the 1st floor directly across from the circulation desk and adjoining Sight and Sound. It is not a particularly attractive area for teens. The consultants learned that a $25,000 donation has been received for this department earmarked for renovation of the space.

Recommendations:

1) There is a great opportunity to open up the entry to Sight and Sound where YA is now housed. A separate YA area could be created taking advantage of the windows and combining a part of the Sight and Sound space with YA. Comfortable seating and creation of a special atmosphere will attract teens to the area.
2) If a clear view of the YA area is created from the Sight and Sound service desk, supervision of both spaces with only one combined service desk will be possible.
3) Collection development (including print, graphic novels, audiovisual, etc.) and programming for YA can still be managed by the youth services coordinator.
4) The creation of programming in cooperation with Sight and Sound staff would be a great attraction to YAs. Teens (especially boys) are definitely attracted to technology, especially gaming and media.
5) Public access computers for this area are essential.

Public Service Desk Schedules

The TADL operates seven days a week and provides staffing (two people at five public service desks), including Circulation, Sight and Sound, Children's Adult Services / Reference, and Public Computing Center (PCC).

Recommendation:
> Allow each supervisor to schedule desk assignments appropriate to patron traffic. Always scheduling two people at all service desks (as a general policy) does not take into account the changes in use patterns during the week, during certain times of the day, or during certain seasons. Department supervisors should be the best judges of how to most efficiently assign desk work. This may result in less need for substitutes as they are now used, however, the consultants view this as an opportunity to get more of the "behind the scenes" work done.

Public Computing Center (PCC)

This service currently operates in a separate room on the 2nd floor of the Library. Computers are arranged in two rows. At all times while the consultants were in the Library on Thursday July 26 and Friday July 27, the room was almost always filled to capacity with a line of others waiting to use a computer. This area reflected considerable labor-intensive activity.

Recommendations:

1) Do as much as possible to decentralize computer monitoring. Install internet capable computers in the Children's area, the Young Adult department, and Sight and Sound. Placing public computers in these areas will add to the number of units in the building and help to reduce the current wait time for a computer in PCC. Most public libraries the consultants have visited have public computers in all areas of the Library.
2) The consultants recommend that this service be moved from the room it is in to a public area on the 2nd floor. Relocate the printing equipment to a desk on the floor and merge this desk with the Reference and Adult Services desk. A single public service desk can be designed to clearly separate these two services, yet combine staff for a more efficient operation. Often computer users are seeking information with which reference staff can assist. Every attention should be paid to limiting staffing for the computer service desk. The scheduling needs to be carefully monitored by the Adult Services Coordinator.
3) Set up the computers in a similar way they are now arranged (but on the public floor) so users can be monitored. The computers should be "self-serve" and as automated as possible to monitor them for timed public use.
4) It appears that many of the computer users simply want to check email. The consultants recommend creating a bank of email-only computer stations with a shortened time limit (perhaps 15 – 30 minutes maximum, renewable if no one is waiting) to increase turnover on these machines.

5) Re-use the current PCC room for another purpose. Perhaps relocation of the network support staff to this area (who can also assist with patron issues related to computer use) and / or as a work area for Reference and Adult Services. Library administration can make the best decision on re-use of the space.
6) Purchase laptops with wireless capability that can be used by staff to do training for the public. Some space could be devoted to this in the existing PCC or perhaps utilizing other rooms in the facility for this purpose.
7) Offer training classes on a pre-announced schedule and / or refer patrons with time-intensive training needs to the appropriate community resource (i.e., adult education, the community college, etc.) Staff's one-on-one assistance with patrons in regard to computer needs should be limited.

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Reference Services

Reference Services receives a fair amount of phone calls, which is typical for any large library. However, while staff expressed satisfaction in their work there were a few suggestions for improvement.

Recommendations:

1) Consider a wireless headset for reference staff so that they can be hands-free and roam the Library searching for responses to patron queries or the internet.
2) Establish a better system of monitoring calls from patrons who require a "call back."
3) Establish guiding principles for reference walk-in and telephone queries.

Technology Services

Vacancies exist for a new head of Technology and two staff members. Considering the importance of technology in today's libraries this is an area that is gaining greater relevance to all areas of the library and will be especially so with TADL considering a new ILS. Since December, the lack of a specific designated leader for this area has been harming the department and the Library as a whole because of a lack of prioritization and the disorganization of 3 individuals at the same level who believe what they are doing is equally important.

The Technology area needs a manager that has professional credentials. Ideally this person should have computer and technology expertise combined with an MLIS. In today's job market, such an individual is in high demand and the salary the TADL could offer may not be attractive enough. But hiring a person with a formal education in technology combined with the ability to oversee a technology staff is a critical need for the Library, especially with the high priority that needs to be placed on deciding upon a new ILS system. Trying to pare down the technology

staff when more technology and expertise is needed, will increase staff frustration. The problems come directly back to Library administrators who must then deal with situations for which they do not have the proper background. A good person with leadership and technology expertise is a critical need. Not filling this position may look like a good budget move, but an efficiently operating new ILS system should be the priority. That requires a knowledgeable and capable technical staff

Recommendations:

1) Hire a new head of Technology Services, preferably one with an MLIS degree and library experience with ILS systems. This individual needs to be decision maker and one who can prioritize when decisions need to be made.
2) Be sure this area is fully staffed to support Library needs.

THE LIBRARY BUDGET

The consultants reviewed the current budget of the TADL. In order to get a fairer review of the budget figures, we deleted the $410,570 in member library charges that the TADL pays out to the three contractual member libraries in Fife Lake, Interlochen, and Peninsula. This brought the total expenditures to $3,923,569. Using this expenditure figure for the estimated 2006 year end expenditures, we developed percentage figures for areas of the Library's budget that are used for typical comparisons to other libraries.

Budget Area	Amount	Per Cent of Expenditures
Total Expenditures	**3,923,569**	**100%**
Personnel	**2,723,269**	**69%**
Library Materials	**325,000**	**9%**
Repairs & Maintenance	**201,300**	**5%**
Utilities	**130,000**	**3%**

It is normal for these four areas of the budget to account for 80 to 90% of the expenditures. The consultants recommend that the Library increase the expenditures for library materials to 10% of the Library's budget (if the gift additions remain constant). If this would be established as a goal, the Library could gradually improve this area of the budget over a few years.

We did note that the TADL adds a large number of gift books to its collection each year. A report provided to us by the Library Director show that about 20% of the materials added were gifts. We know this is a high percentage of gifts from our experience, but there are no comparison figures available. If these gift materials were to be valued at the price the Library would have to pay for them, this could add perhaps another $100,000 in value to the library

materials expenditures. But we still believe the goal of 10% cash expenditure for materials is still a very worthwhile goal.

Overall, we believe your budget is adequate. The TADL is very close to the average in most comparison categories with peer libraries in Michigan that we identified. The Library is efficiently budgeted and efficiently operated.

We have provided several recommendations and suggestions for change. These should be reviewed in detail by the Library staff who are best able to determine what ideas will lead to service improvements.

Traverse Area District Library
2006 Peer Comparisons

Library	Population	Total FTE Staff	Total MLS Librarian Staff	Operating Income Per Capita	Collection Expend. Per Capita	Salaries & Benefits	Main Building Square Footage	Total Collections	Circulation Per Capita	Authorized Millage Levies*	Computers for Public Use
Canton Public Library	76,366	58	20	64.97	3.58	2,394,527	53,000	273,646	19.5	2	112
Dearborn Public Library	97,775	64	20	50.49	3.13	3,413,111	85,643	305,896	11.7		143
Farmington Community Library	92,534	54	16	65.63	3.03	2,859,611	72,000	280,693	12.4	1.6	107
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library	75,939	43	16	49.11	3.62	2,138,151	105,000	274,934	10.8		22
Herrick District Library	105,994	61	16	48.67	2.69	2,847,704	72,291	284,870	11.3	1.5	87
Livonia Public Library	100,545	58	19	43.63	2.94	3,046,602	64,500	295,885	6.5	1	42
Rochester Hills Public Library	92,363	59	23	43.91	2.74	2,595,693	70,000	253,283	13.5	1	67
Royal Oak Public Library	62,656	23	10	34.79	2.22	1,049,342	42,000	139,309	3.7	1	23
Southfield Public Library	82,532	63	26	89.20	3.09	3,319,594	124,000	254,926	7.3	2.2	194
Traverse Area District Library	**86,465**	**56**	**7**	**44.99**	**2.67**	**2,372,396**	**58,000**	**230,547**	**8.7**	**1.1**	**69**
Traverse Area District Library with member libraries**	**86,465**	**64**	**8**	**45.22**	**3.37**	**2,599,108**	**58,000**	**298,010**	**9.8**	**1.1**	**88**
Troy Public Library	80,959	63	22	53.19	3.20	2,503,723	50,000	258,763	17.5		96
Waterford Township Public Library	72,307	31	15	33.15	1.83	1,499,487	27,300	132,586	4.4	0.93	42
West Bloomfield Township Public Lib.	96,957	50	21	65.12	2.71	2,174,040	64,000	263,173	19.5	1.7	162
Willard Public Library	90,804	59	13	49.43	2.97	3,066,136	55,000	270,096	10	2	86
William P. Faust Public Lib. of Westland	86,602	33	8	26.26	2.08	1,250,729	33,450	180,459	5.8	1	43
Ypsilanti District Library	79,826	43	17	37.43	3.32	1,804,387	60,000	265,196	7.8	1.6	91
Average*	**86,289**	**52**	**17**	**50.01**	**2.91**	**2,410,122**	**64,762**	**251,983**	**10.7**	**1.16**	**89**

*May include more than one voted millage   **Member libraries are Fife Lake, Interlochen and Peninsula

***Average uses Traverse Area District Library with branches & member librariesto determine figure   Source - Library of Michigan - Michigan Public Libraries Statistics, 2006