



Memorandum

TO: San José Public Library Staff **FROM:** Jane Light
SUBJECT: **Service Affirmation for the** **DATE:** February 23, 2009
San José Public Library

The goal of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library is to be “a center for education where people can learn, improve lives and pursue dreams”, a place that “connects people with technology and human expertise.” These goals as well as the mission and vision for the King Library are closely aligned with the mission and vision of the San José Public Library System.

The objective of this document is to share with the staff and faculty of the San José State University Library and the San José Public Library a comprehensive overview of the Core Services and Service Affirmation of the San José Public Library. I hope you will take time to read this document as it clearly puts into words the goals and service philosophy of our library. These are the values we feel are essential to maintain as we partner with SJSU Library, as open and utilize new branches, and as we refine and expand our services to better serve our customers.

Key source documents included as attachments are:

San José Public Library System

- Underlying Principles
- Mission, Vision, Values
- Service Code

Core Services of the SJPL System (from *Investing in Results, 2000*)

The *new* Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library

- Mission
- Working Vision

San José Public Library System

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

Adopted 6/1991

1. The San José Public Library System provides as much responsive public service as resources allow.
2. In doing so, the System attempts to be as cost effective as possible.

Why are these principles important?

- They provide our focus and generally define why we are here and how we conduct business as a service organization.
- From them, our mission, vision, and value statements emerge.
- They provide the backdrop for our service code.
- Every objective in our annual work plan can be traced back to these principles.
- Planning and evaluation efforts, special projects, policies, procedures, training, and both direct and indirect public service are driven by these principles.
- They provide a gyroscope for SJPL in both good financial times and bad. When resources grow, the amount of responsive public service grows. When resources shrink, the amount of such service is also likely to decline. In either case, growth or retrenchment will be done with responsiveness and cost effectiveness in mind.

What do these principles mean and how should they be used?

They contain three key phrases that must be understood and then translated into action:

1. “responsive public service” refers to our ability to understand the needs of both library users and potential library users and to focus resources to meet those needs with effective services and operations. We learn about the community by doing demographic research, creating neighborhood profiles, conducting surveys, listening to individuals and groups, getting suggestions, reading studies, etc.
2. “as resources allow” acknowledges that there will be limits to what we are able to do. This reality should never be used as an excuse for failing to be creative or being unwilling to rethink issues or approaches.
3. “as cost effective as possible” brings focus to the issue of using resources as efficiently as our skills will allow. It means that we will get the maximum return on effort. It includes defining expectations in terms of customer need, measuring results, identifying costs that include staff time, and making judgments.

These two principles must be used together. If we are not being responsive to the public, then we have no right to call ourselves a “public” library. And if we are not cost effective, we miss opportunities and limit our ability to provide as much service as resources allow. In either case, we would have failed to meet our obligation to the public.

Who has responsibility for implementing these principles?

Each employee has the responsibility to understand these principles and to use them on a day-to-day basis. Everyone in a supervisory or management position has the added duty of helping others translate them into specific action. In using them consistently well, we will always be able to feel positively about ourselves as individuals and as an organization.

Core Services of the San José Public Library System

<p>Provide access to information, library materials and digital resources</p> <p>Customers are linked to the information they need through access to books, videos, digital and other information resources.</p>	<p>Promote lifelong learning and provide educational support</p> <p>Provide programs that promote reading, literacy and learning for all ages and support school readiness and success.</p>
Adopted 3/2000	

Affirming San José Public Library Service

As an organization we acknowledge that the first and only responsibility of the public library is to serve its customers and be responsive to what they need and want. Unless this challenge is met willingly by the organization and its staff members every day, a library cannot expect to continue to be valued and supported by the community it serves. *Source: New Paradigm for Branch Libraries Task Force Report, 2000*

The following precepts are the basis of the San José Public Library service delivery. By adhering to this service affirmation, we support the effective delivery of the established core services.

1. The Library listens to its customers, understands their needs, and is responsive in providing the materials, information and services customers want.

- Services and collections are relevant to community needs, readily accessible, and easy to use.
- Technology appropriately expands and enhances service.
- Digital resources are a growing and vital part of the collection.

Source: Investing in Results, 2000; Branch Facilities Master Plan, 2000

2. The Library's facilities and services are accessible, welcoming and easy to use.

- Appropriate facilities, which are inviting and well maintained
- Foster lifelong learning
- Welcoming and lively cultural and lifelong learning center for the community

Source: Mission, Vision, Values, Investing in Results, 2000

3. The Library recognizes its responsibility to promote services outside our buildings to everyone in the community.

- Physical walls do not define the library – it exists in the customer's living room when they are using our Web services, and in the child care center where children are using materials and curriculum the library provides.
- We provide services resulting in use by the broadest base of the public.

Source: Vision

4. Library services to children and youth are the responsibility of all staff members.

- Promote lifelong learning and provide educational support
- Educational support for children and youth
- Provide programs for youth that promote the love of reading and use of the library

Source: *Core Services, Operational Services*

5. The Library provides training for customers of all ages in the use of library resources.

- Teaching customers to use information resources
- Libraries today play a tremendous educational role supporting schools, families and individual learning needs.

Source: *Operational Services, Branch Facilities Master Plan, 2000*

6. Employees are the single most important resource of the library.

- Employ a diverse, well-trained staff committed to user service and actively involved in city and university affairs.
- The Library is committed to the training and development of its most important resource, library staff.

Source: *new King Library Working Vision, 2001*

7. The library participates in cooperative projects and partnerships with other City departments and other organizations.

- Develop and participate in cooperative programs and partnerships with other organizations, including libraries, at the local, regional, state and national levels.
- A close working relationship with other libraries, community agencies and organizations that foster cooperation
- Active public participation and collaboration

Source: *Joint Library Working Vision, Vision, Branch Facilities Master Plan*

8. The Library supports intellectual freedom and the freedom to read.

- The American Library Association's "Bill of Rights"
- Services are provided in a non-judgmental manner that is sensitive to and supportive of human differences.
- We serve with expertise and caring and maintain a high degree of approachability. We approach each service transaction in a positive manner with courtesy, honesty, accuracy, friendliness, and sensitivity.
- Defense of intellectual freedom and the confidentiality of each individual's use of the library.

Source: *Vision, Values, Service Code,*

9. The San José Public Library Main and Branches are one system. The resources of the system as a whole are available to any customer regardless of their point of access.

- The Main Library serves as a resource to the branch libraries and to the system as a whole.
 - a) The collection of the Main Library is a system resource providing materials of greater depth and breadth than space would allow in a branch library.
 - b) The Main Library reference collection and staff assigned to that unit act as system resources for reference service.

- c) System support services based at the Main library include Circulation, Outreach, Interbranch Delivery, Technical Services, Administrative Services and Collection Development.
- Branch libraries and the Bookmobile are an integral part of service delivery to the unique and varied communities that make up San José.
 - a) Services and collections that are relevant to community needs, readily accessible, and easy to use
 - b) Library services that are known and valued by the culturally diverse community
 - c) A welcoming and lively cultural and lifelong learning center for the community

Source: *Vision*

10. The Library provides service in as cost-effective a manner as possible.

- Planning and evaluation efforts, special projects, policies, procedures, training and both direct and indirect public services are driven by the following principles:
 - a) Provide as much responsive public service as resources allow.
“Responsive public service” refers to understanding the needs of users and focussing resources to meet those needs. “As resources allow” acknowledges there will be limits to what we are able to do.
 - b) To maximize cost effectiveness, use resources as efficiently as possible.

Source: *Underlying Principles – San José Public Library System*

<p align="center">new Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library</p>	<p align="center">San José Public Library System</p>
<p align="center">Mission</p> <p>The <i>new</i> Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Silicon Valley's unique collaboration between San José State University and the City of San José, provides excellence in information resources and services for a lifetime of learning.</p> <p align="center">Adopted 2/2001</p>	<p align="center">Mission</p> <p>The mission of the San José Public Library System is to enrich lives by fostering lifelong learning and by ensuring that every member of the community has access to a vast array of ideas and information.</p> <p align="center">Adopted 3/2000</p>
<p align="center">New King Library Working Vision</p> <p>The City of San José / San José State University Joint Library -- a "new library community" formed by a unique collaboration between the City of San José's Public Library and the San José State University -- will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, accessing information, acquiring knowledge, and achieving wisdom • Provide to users information services and materials when and where these are needed, in a manner best suited to each user's needs • Be responsive to changes while meeting the needs of users in a comprehensive Metropolitan University and in a major urban setting • Incorporate appropriate technology, effectively used • Employ a diverse, well-trained staff committed to user service and actively involved in city and university affairs • Develop and participate in cooperative programs with other organizations, including libraries, at the local, regional, state and national levels 	<p align="center">SJPL Vision</p> <p>We strive to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library services that are known and valued by the culturally diverse community, resulting in use from the broadest base of the public. • A welcoming and lively cultural and lifelong learning center for the community. • Timely and accurate information assistance that will inform and empower the public. • Services and collections that are relevant to community needs, readily accessible, and easy to use. • A well-trained and highly capable staff that reflects the diversity of San José and works well together to provide quality service to all users. • Appropriate facilities which are inviting and well maintained. • Technology that appropriately expands and enhances service. • Defense of intellectual freedom and the confidentiality of each individual's use of the library. • A close working relationship with other libraries, community agencies and organizations that foster cooperation, making the most efficient and effective use of the taxpayers' resources.

San José Public Library System

VALUES

Adopted 6/1991

- Our users are not only our customers, they are the reason the library exists. We provide quality service and treat all users fairly and equally. Services are provided in a non-judgmental manner that is sensitive to and supportive of human differences.
- Our employees and volunteers are valued as individuals and for their important contributions to the organization. An open exchange of ideas is encouraged throughout the system. We nurture our talents and each other.
- We are a learning organization that is not afraid to change and take appropriate risks in pursuit of meeting community needs. We constantly reassess our services and methods and try to see ourselves through the public's eyes.
- We maintain high standards in our work and help instill a sense of pride in all employees, as well as a strong sense of responsibility and integrity.
- Both staff and users are encouraged to enjoy their library experience.

San José Public Library System

SERVICE CODE

Revised and Adopted 2/2009

In late 2006 the City identified six key values that continue to apply to all employees. These are:

- Integrity
- Innovation
- Excellence
- Collaboration
- Respect
- Celebration

The Library Department had adopted these values. In addition, it makes a commitment to customer service through the following statements and principles.

1. Our users are not only our customers, they are the reason the library exists.
2. We treat others as we ourselves wish to be treated.
3. Library department staff facilitates access to library services, information and programs. We approach each customer interaction and service transaction in a positive manner with courtesy, honesty, accuracy, friendliness, and sensitivity. We serve with expertise, a caring attitude and maintain a high degree of approachability by showing awareness of user needs in our interactions, including the use of open and positive body language.
4. We treat all users fairly and equally and protect their right to confidentiality.
5. When service disputes arise, we realize they are not personal, and our resolutions of these disputes are not punitive. We strive to reach “win/win” solutions.
6. When we are in doubt about the handling of any situation or are dealing with “grey areas” of policy, we will lean in the direction of our users. All staff members are empowered to attempt to resolve issues. Decisions which utilize common sense and department guidelines and which are made on the user’s side of an issue are not overruled.
7. All staff will address concerns about our service. It is our responsibility (individually and collectively) to initiate suggestions and recommendations for policy and procedure changes, and to inform staff of all efforts in this area.
8. Units with a system-wide scope of responsibilities (e.g. Access Services, Technical Services, Libraries – San José Way, Library Information Technology, and the Business Office) are viewed as indirect public services and will consistently define policies and procedures with the public and our customers in mind.