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ABSTRACT

Case studies of six public libraries that have adopted the concept of long range, community-based planning were conducted to explore what actually happens in natural settings as public libraries implement long range planning, and to document the differences that exist among these settings in process, goals, implementation, participant perceptions, and outcomes. Located in 4 midwestern states, each of these libraries has fewer than 25 full time equivalent employees and serves populations of between 10,000 and 50,000 persons. Interviews with library directors, staff members, trustees, and community representatives who had served on planning committees were used to collect qualitative data, which were supplemented by statistical and other information provided by the libraries themselves, local Chambers of Commerce, and the American Library Directory. Based on these data, a series of 18 tentative hypotheses were generated to suggest probable relationships among emergent factors. In addition to an overview of the study and the methodology employed, this report discusses the findings in terms of awareness of Public Library Association manuals, the origin of the library's decision, the planning committee, elements of the process, participant evaluations, planning outcomes, and emergent factors. The concluding chapter presents 25 hypotheses in clusters of 6 broad categories and discusses some of the areas in which further research is needed. A selected 102-item bibliography on public library planning and two appendixes containing the interview guidelines and profiles of the six libraries are included. (6 tables, 3 references) (MAB)

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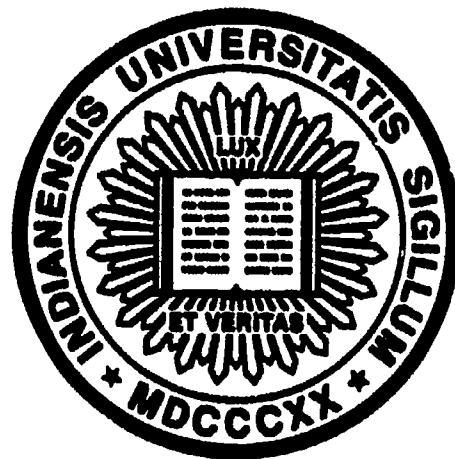
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CASE STUDIES OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN SMALLER LIBRARIES: FINAL REPORT

Verna L. Pungitore, Project Director
Carole E. Nowicke

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October 1991
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Bloomington, Indiana 47405

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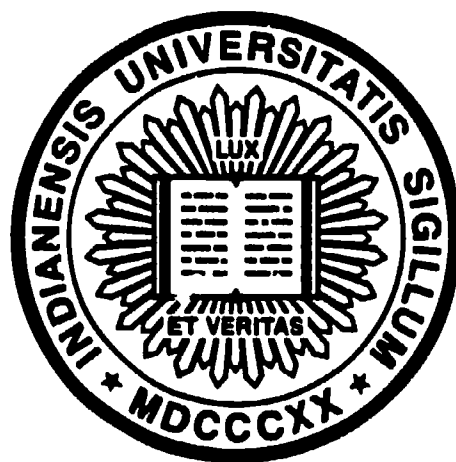
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The Project Director is responsible for the interpretations or meanings given to the interview data.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1980, the Public Library Association (PLA) introduced its first planning manual, *A Planning Process for Public Libraries*. Two years later a companion volume, *Output Measures for Public Libraries* appeared.

Between 1980 and 1984, the techniques outlined in the manuals were disseminated to numerous public libraries through the efforts of PLA, the American Library Association (ALA), and many state and regional library organizations. In 1987, a new version of the planning manual, *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries*, and a second edition of the output measures manual were published under the collective title, the Public Library Development Program (PLDP). The adoption and implementation by smaller public libraries of the techniques promoted in these four planning volumes are the focus of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The nation's nearly 9,000 public libraries comprise a group of diverse institutions serving communities with vastly different demographic, economic, and other characteristics. A

1989 estimate of the percentage of small and medium-sized public libraries that had adopted the idea of long range planning placed the figure at 56 percent. Given the diversity that exists, even among libraries serving between 10,000 and 50,000 people, it is reasonable to expect that differences in implementation and outcomes will be found among those libraries that have adopted PLA's planning process.

The process is based on the assertion that the design of public library services must be planned within the context of local requirements and constraints, and ideally, should include the active participation of local citizens. Evaluation of library services should also be based on locally derived measurements, rather than on adherence to national standards.

Expectations are that, as a result of community-based planning, public library services will become more narrowly focused and tailored toward meeting limited, specific roles which will vary from community to community. By concentrating their limited resources on a small number of primary functions, public librarians

should be better able to respond to the challenges of a changing society.

What is theoretically plausible, however, may not be what actually happens in the real world situation. The very diversity of public libraries, which the planning process is supposed to accommodate, may hinder universal adoption of the techniques. Situational differences on the local level may well influence the extent to which adequate planning skills can be acquired through the use of self-help manuals. Local factors may be important determinants of whether the recommended level of participation in planning by trustees, citizens, and library employees can readily be incorporated into the library's customary decision-making process.

The aim of this research was to conduct field studies of selected public libraries that have adopted the concept of long range, community-based planning in order to:

(1) discover what actually happens in natural settings as public libraries implement long range planning,

(2) document and describe differences that exist among these settings in process, in goals, in implementation, in participant perceptions, and in outcomes,

(3) identify probable factors that may account for differences in local

implementations of planning or in planning outcomes, and

(4) generate a set of tentative hypotheses about conditions that influence the manner in which long range planning is adopted and implemented, and whether it is then continued as part of the library's routine operation, or is used once or twice and then is discontinued.

Study Methods

The research was designed to identify specific factors on the local level that might influence the chosen approach to planning and the perceptions about its value as a management tool. The case study method was chosen as particularly useful in seeking broad differences and similarities in local implementations of public library planning. This method was also deemed appropriate because it would allow the researchers to explore the topic of planning from the perspectives of various participants.

Interviews with library directors, staff members, trustees, and community representatives who had served on planning committees were used in collecting qualitative data. Interview data were supplemented by statistical and other information about the libraries and their communities provided by the libraries themselves, local Chambers of Commerce, and the *American Library Directory*.

In order to identify appropriate libraries to include in the study, telephone calls were made to public library development personnel in several state libraries in the midwestern United States. The names and addresses of public libraries serving between 10,000 and 50,000 people that were known to have developed a long range plan between 1985 and 1989 were requested. In addition, data from an earlier study of the adoption of the Public Library Planning Process were used to identify possible study sites.

Approval to conduct the field studies was obtained by telephone from the directors and trustees of six libraries, located in four midwestern states. From March through July 1990, the researchers visited each library, interviewing between four and eight people at each site. The individuals we interviewed were selected by the library directors as representative of trustee, staff, and citizen participants in the library's planning process.

The interviews were taped and later transcribed. Each participant was sent a copy of his or her interview transcript and given the opportunity to add information or clarify any statements. Transcripts were each analyzed independently by two members of the research team. Analysis consisted of assigning each meaningful bit of information to one of nine broad categories. The categories were de-

rived from the interview questions. These dealt with the participant's relationship with the library, participation in the planning process, perception of how well the process functioned, and any opinions the participant held about the benefits or drawbacks associated with long range planning in general or the library's long range planning endeavors in particular.

Major Findings

Six factors were identified as having an influence on the study libraries' decisions to implement a long range planning process:

1. a state requirement,
2. a local problem,
3. workshop attendance,
4. the director's philosophy,
5. adaptability of the process, and
6. planning success stories

The study suggests that first time use of the manuals, especially in a smaller library, is more effective with the help of an outside facilitator or consultant. Utilizing the services of a facilitator or consultant also emerged as having a potential influence on participant assessments of how well the process worked.

One of the variables identified in the study as being a probable predictor of participant evaluations of the

process was the continuous provision to the staff of information about the purpose and goals of the planning process and the activities of the planning committee. A related variable, which is also of probable importance in predicting how the process and its outcome are perceived by library staff, is the extent to which the staff is encouraged to provide input and feedback to the deliberations of the planning committee.

Two additional factors, probably working in combination with the communication and staff involvement variables, seemed to influence perceptions of the value of community-based planning in the study libraries. These were: (1) the prior conviction on the part of the board and director that planning is a necessary and worthwhile activity; and (2) the director's acceptance of the idea that people in the community should be consulted when planning the library's services.

It was suggested by the study that the director exerts a variety of both subtle and overt influences on every facet of the process. The director's influence begins with the initial decision to adopt planning techniques and extends throughout their implementation. Indications are that the director also acts to influence the outcomes of planning and the staff's perceptions of the value of long range planning.

One of the purposes of the study was to generate a series of tentative hypotheses that would suggest probable relationships among emergent factors. Because the case study method was used to gather qualitative data, these relationships were not hypothesized in advance for testing during the study. Instead, they derive from interpretations of the interview and other data gathered from the six study libraries and tentatively validated through abbreviated field visits to three additional libraries.

In order to develop the hypotheses, study data were examined in reference to the existing literature on the adoption and implementation of innovation. Major hypotheses that were generated from the case studies are listed below. These have been identified as potentially useful to future studies of the implementation of long range planning in smaller public libraries.

Hypothesis 1:

In those states which mandate that public libraries have a long range plan and which offer informational planning workshops, libraries serving between 10,000 and 20,000 people will tend to concentrate on the product rather than the process involved in complying with the state requirement.

Hypothesis 2:

Small public libraries that encounter difficulties with respect to such matters as operating funds, space, physical facilities, or technology will be more likely to implement long range planning than will libraries that do not have a pressing local problem.

Hypothesis 3:

The outcome of the planning process is related to the extent to which the reasons for undertaking the process are understood by the library board and director and are adequately conveyed to the planning committee.

Hypothesis 4:

If the director believes that the community employs its librarians to use their professional judgments concerning the provision of services, the library will tend to decide against using a planning process that stresses direct citizen participation.

Hypothesis 5:

Smaller public libraries will decide to implement a planning

process if it is perceived to be flexible enough to be adapted easily to the library's specific requirements and constraints.

Hypothesis 6:

The outcome of the planning process is related to the fit between the composition of the planning committee and the library's reasons for planning.

Hypothesis 7:

If the director perceives that planning is a management responsibility, planning will tend to be conducted informally within the library by the director with limited staff involvement and without the implementation of a specific long range planning process.

Hypothesis 8:

The extent to which the library board or director guides the work of the committee will influence planning outcomes.

Hypothesis 9:

Libraries serving between 10,000 and 20,000 people that have access to demographic and comparative data through re-

gional networking and state library consultants will opt for an intermediate to comprehensive level of effort with regard to data collection, while using a basic level of effort for most of the other elements in the process.

Hypothesis 10:

Libraries serving over 35,000 people will tend to use an intermediate to comprehensive level of effort in determining the nature of their planning committees and the number and types of surveys conducted.

Hypothesis 11:

When citizen surveys are used, they will tend to be telephone surveys rather than written surveys.

Hypothesis 12:

Libraries with staffs numbering at least ten F.T.E. will tend to use more of the elements of the planning process than will smaller libraries.

Hypothesis 13:

Libraries with at least ten F.T.E. employees will utilize staff reports or presentations to the planning committee as a means

of data gathering and providing for staff input into the process.

Hypothesis 14:

Communication with staff during all phases of planning has a strong, direct relationship to the staff's acceptance of the goals and outcomes of the process.

Hypothesis 15:

There is a strong direct relationship between staff perceptions of the value of planning and their perceptions of their degree of participation in planning activities.

Hypothesis 16:

The perception of the value of citizen participation in long range planning is a function of the individual's perception of his or her own level of participation in the process.

Hypothesis 17:

Evaluations of the outcome of planning by participants in the planning process are related to their prior expectations of what the product of the process will be.

Hypothesis 18:

Participant evaluation of the outcome of planning is a function of the relationship of the participant to the library, the participant's perception of his or her own involvement in decision making during the process, and the extent to which planning goals and objectives were made clear to the participant.

The interview data were analyzed and interpreted with findings from the general diffusion literature in mind in order to assess similarities. Results of the present study suggest that many of the factors identified in the general literature on diffusion and implementation of innovation are found in situations involving the local implementation of the public library planning process. These include: integration, discussion, need, feedback, involvement, and adaptability.

INTRODUCTION

Overview

For many years managers of public libraries depended upon national standards as a justification for budget requests, as a means of library self-appraisal, as a basis for library development, and as a guide to the improvement of services. The standards were periodically revised by the Public Library Association (PLA) despite widespread acknowledgement that there were inherent weaknesses in minimal national institutional standards.

Then, in the mid-1970s, in an effort to provide the diverse population of public libraries with a more appropriate response to rapidly occurring social, economic, political, and technological changes, PLA embarked upon a radical shift in direction. Instead of continuing to produce a single set of institution-oriented standards which would be valid for all public libraries, the new approach called for user-oriented, locally developed standards which would be based on the identified needs of individual communities.

After a number of years of development and field testing, PLA produced a recommended planning process which it claimed could be used by any public library or public library system to set its own standards based on community-centered, long range planning and evaluation of services. The goal was to provide public librarians, not with "rules for sameness," but with the skills and tools that would help them assess community needs, set objectives and priorities, make sound decisions, and evaluate results. It was assumed that the ultimate outcome of disseminating the planning process would be the development of library administrators and trustees skilled in making locally appropriate decisions and in implementing creative change.

The PLA planning manual appeared in 1980 (Palmour and others). A companion volume (Zweizig and Rodger 1982) describing standardized procedures to be used by public libraries to measure what a library gives to its community (output) was published two years later. The output measures were designed to provide a

means of evaluating the library's progress toward its long range objectives.

Between 1980 and 1984, the planning and measurement techniques, as outlined in the two instruction manuals, were disseminated to numerous public libraries of all sizes through the efforts of PLA, the American Library Association (ALA), and many state and regional library organizations. Feedback from users of the manuals was obtained and, in 1984, the Public Library Development Program (PLDP) was initiated. This effort by PLA eventually resulted in the 1987 publication of a new version of the planning process manual (McClure and others) and a revision of the measurement manual (Van House and others). Because these four volumes comprise the managerial innovation which is the focus of this study, a brief description of the manuals is presented here.

The First Editions

A Planning Process for Public Libraries (Palmour and others 1980) consists of three sections: "Preparing to Plan," "The Planning Process," and "Collecting and Using Data." The section devoted to preparing to plan includes a chapter on the composition and role of the planning committee, a chapter that discusses how to tailor the process to the library, and one that

briefly describes the kind and sources of information useful in planning.

With regard to the planning committee, the manual recommends that the library:

plan in conjunction with its community. It is not the library that is developing the plan, but a planning committee, which includes representation not only from the library but also from the community in general and the library's governing body (where such exists). It is not the library that is making decisions about what it will do for its community so much as the community which is deciding what it wants its library to be. This shift in the locus of power from the library to the community is critical if the library is to serve its entire community and not just a small segment of the population that has traditionally used libraries (p.7).

Planning information is described in terms of both primary and secondary data. "Primary data come directly from individuals, library users and other members of the community, and are usually collected by means of a survey. Secondary data have already been collected and recorded elsewhere, as in published sources like the census and unpublished sources like local planning department files. A third kind of information, which may be either primary or secondary, is library statistics" (p. 28).

The second section of the manual is titled, "The Planning Process." It is composed of chapters that parallel the phases in the planning process: "Community Library Needs," "Current Library Services and Resources," "The role of the Library in the Community," "Goals, Objectives, and Priorities," "Strategies for Change," and "Implementation and Second Cycle." This part of the manual presents each of the planning steps in terms of the kinds of information that should be collected and the several uses for the information.

The third section of the manual is comprised of a lengthy, detailed description of data collection methods. It includes examples of statistics and performance measures, and examples of survey questions. Appendices include examples of goals and objectives, sample forms and maps for compiling a community profile, and sample tables for presenting library services data.

The 1982 edition of *Output Measures for Public Libraries* presents instructions and procedures for collecting and reporting twelve basic output measures: circulation per capita, in-library materials use per capita, library visits per capita, program attendance per capita, reference transactions per capita, reference fill rate, title fill rate, subject and author fill rate, borrowers' fill rate, registra-

tion as a percentage of population, turnover rate, and document delivery.

In addition, *Output Measures* recommends a second level of measures for those libraries needing more than the basic level. These level II measures involve alternative analyses of collected data or more elaborate data collection. For example, instead of using a single measure to describe the library's total circulation per capita, the library is urged to look at per capita circulation figures for specific user groups, or for different classes of materials.

Public Library Development Program

In the Summer 1987 issue of *Public Libraries*, Carolyn Anthony characterized the Public Library Development Program as providing "Options and Opportunities":

Four years in the making, the program describes a process of planning and review that can lead to continuous development. Planning, role setting, measurement, and a national public library data service comprise the program. Two components are presented in *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures*, a new publication that outlines a fresh approach to the planning process. *Output Measures for Public Libraries*, second edition, bears a close resemblance to its predecessor, but includes substantial new sections on

measurement, data collection, and analysis as well as interpretation and use of measurement results.... Intended to be useful in the public library with at least one professional, PLDP aims to guide the library and community in making choices among options and opportunities. A chapter of the new planning manual is devoted to selecting library service roles. (p. 55)

Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries (McClure and others 1987) is organized into eight chapters. As in the first manual, each chapter corresponds to a particular phase in the process. In this edition, however, the phases are identified in simpler, more understandable terms: "Planning to Plan," "Looking Around," "Developing Roles and Mission," "Writing Goals and Objectives," "Taking Action," "Writing the Planning Document," and "Reviewing Results."

For each phase, the manual offers the planners a choice among three levels of effort (basic, moderate, extensive) and indicates the differences in commitment of people, resources, etc., depending on the level selected. Hence, the appropriate subtitle: "A Manual of Options and Procedures."

The manual illustrates each phase in the process with examples of such elements as data needed to plan and where to find it, budget documents,

and flow charts. As each phase is defined, the necessity for it is explained. The manual includes numerous work forms (planning budget, planning chart, options for planning, role setting, writing the mission statement, ranking objectives, and so forth). Also included are sources for additional information at the end of each chapter, a glossary of output measures taken from the companion volume, *Output Measures for Public Libraries*, second edition (Van House and others 1987), and an index.

The Public Library Development Program is envisioned as an ongoing program devoted to the development and dissemination of tools and activities that will help public librarians in the areas of planning, measurement, and evaluation of services. One of PLA's goals with regard to the PLDP is to involve as many librarians and trustees as possible in community-based long range planning for their specific institutions in order to improve the overall level and quality of public library service nationwide.

It should be mentioned that another PLA manual exists, which has not been widely disseminated to local libraries. This is the *PLDP Manual for Trainers* (O'Donnell 1988). None of the individuals we interviewed had heard of the trainers' manual. As the title implies, it is designed to serve as a guide for people "with training re-

sponsibilities for the planning, measurement, and evaluation components of the Public Library Development Plan." The manual presents the planning material in a clear and succinct way, providing suggested meeting agendas, forms, and activities. A detailed chart, "Planner's Guide to Training Materials," presents a matrix of methods, techniques, and potential responses by participants, and possible drawbacks to the use of specific techniques.

Although obviously intended for use by workshop presenters at the state and national level, the manual might also be valuable to first time implementers of the planning and role setting process in that it would alert them in advance to potential problem areas. Because none of those we interviewed were aware of the trainers' manual, it will not be included in the study report.

Problem Statement

The nation's nearly 9,000 public libraries comprise a group of diverse institutions serving communities with vastly different demographic, economic, and other characteristics. A 1989 study (Pungitore, Wilkerson, and Yoon) estimated that some 56 percent of the population of small and medium-sized public libraries (those serving 50,000 people or less) had at that time adopted and implemented

the idea of long range planning. Given the diversity that exists among public libraries, it is not unreasonable to expect that differences in implementation and outcomes will be found among those libraries which have decided to adopt PLA's planning process. The usefulness of the planning process as a means of improving community library service must be assessed not merely in terms of the characteristics of the technique itself, but must be viewed within the context of its various local implementations.

The rationale behind the Public Library Association's attempt to develop and diffuse planning and measurement techniques among public librarians is based on several assumptions: (1) that rapid social and technological change will continue to characterize the external environment within which public libraries operate; (2) that the ability of a public library to respond creatively and appropriately to societal change is heavily dependent upon the problem solving and decision making skills of the library's administration and trustees; (3) that such skills can successfully be transferred through self-help manuals; (4) that communities are sufficiently diverse culturally and economically so as to limit the effectiveness of nationally prescribed standards and guidelines; and (5) that the design of educational and recreational services and information delivery systems by

public libraries must be planned within the context of local requirements and local constraints and, ideally, should include the active participation of local citizens.

PLA, state library agencies and associations, and the opinion leaders within the profession who have endorsed community-based long range planning have collectively begun to set a new direction for the development of public libraries nationwide. Expectations are that in the future public library services will be narrowly focused and tailored toward meeting limited, specific roles which will vary from community to community. By moving public libraries into the direction of "diversity by design" it is theorized that they will be better able to respond to the challenges of today's learning and information society.

What is theoretically plausible, however, may not be what actually happens in the real world situation. The very diversity of public libraries, which adoption of the planning and role setting process is supposed to accommodate, is as yet an unknown factor. It may well influence whether adequate planning skills can be acquired through the use of self-help manuals; and whether planning techniques that recommend heavy involvement by trustees, citizens, and library employees can be initiated and

continued as part of the library's regular operations. An important question is why an innovation such as long range planning (promising an outcome for which there is an acknowledged need and for which there is no preferable alternative) continues or does not continue beyond an initial period of adoption and implementation.

The aim of this research was to conduct field studies of selected public libraries that adopted the concept of community-based, long range planning in order to:

- (1) discover what actually happens in natural settings as public libraries implement long range planning;
- (2) document and describe differences that exist among these settings (in process, in goals, in implementation, in participant perceptions, and in outcomes);
- (3) identify probable factors that may account for differences in local implementations of planning or in planning outcomes; and
- (4) generate a set of tentative hypotheses about conditions that influence the manner in which the innovation is adopted and implemented, and whether it is

then incorporated into the library's operational routine (that is, whether the innovation continues to be used or is eventually discontinued).

The study was exploratory in nature. By looking at community-based planning within differing local contexts, the researchers hoped to discover insights that might help public library decision makers better understand the dynamics of this particular innovation (community-based, long range planning): how it functions in different settings, why it functions the way it does, its characteristics, and its outcomes with regard to changes in services, or in staff, trustee or user perceptions of the library. This understanding should be useful to library directors and trustees contemplating adoption or adaptation of the process for their particular situations.

Related Literature

Within the vast body of interdisciplinary research and theory related to organizational change, there are a number of studies that attempt to explain the process of diffusion and adoption of organizational innovations. That portion of the diffusion literature that deals with an organization's readiness to adopt an innovation and with the "durability" of innovations provides the framework for the present study.

An innovation is broadly defined as any idea, practice, or object which seems to be new to the individual or organization adopting it. The length of time that the idea may have been known to others is irrelevant so long as it is perceived as "new" by the potential adopter (Rogers and Shoemaker 1971, p. 19). Decisions about whether to adopt an innovation are not instantaneous, but are made after the organization has gone through a series of steps or phases over time. These phases are often described as constituting the "adoption process." Rogers (1983) theorized a five stage process: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. At the awareness stage, the potential adopter is aware of the existence of the innovation, but possesses little or no information about it.

During the second stage, there is interest in the innovation and further information about it is sought. An evaluation period then occurs during which the value and utility of the innovation are assessed. This stage results in a conscious decision either to try the innovation or to reject its use. If the decision favors the innovation, it may be implemented on a trial basis, or possibly on a small scale.

The final stage consists of full-scale adoption in which the decision is made to use the innovation on a continuous basis. Alternative deci-

sions could also occur during this stage: to reject full implementation of the innovation after the trial period; or to implement the innovation, but at some future time to discontinue its use. This alternative model of the adoption process adds a sixth phase—the decision to continue or discontinue the innovation. The continued use of the innovation until it becomes routine and is no longer considered “new” characterizes its “durability,” that is, its ability to survive within the organization.

In discussing planned or deliberate change, Lippitt and others (1958) noted that “many an innovation brought in with great fanfare is superficially accepted, and months or years later, things have drifted back to the way they were before.” Among the reasons suggested for the durability or lack of durability of an innovation are several that relate to characteristics of the innovation itself. Other explanations focus on the nature of the organization and on the process used to implement the innovation.

Glaser (1981, p.170) identified a number of the variables from the literature that are believed to be related to the durability of an innovation:

(1) **Integration.** Innovations that conveniently fit into the operating procedures of the organi-

zation, without creating radical changes in procedures, are more likely to survive.

(2) **Discussion.** An organization that encourages open discussion of problems or side effects of the innovation enhances its durability.

(3) **Need.** Innovations that staff perceive as needed and of value are likelier to survive.

(4) **Feedback.** Continuous and explicit feedback given to staff about their progress and successes in implementing the innovation facilitates its durability.

(5) **Involvement.** Long term survival of the innovation is more likely if staff are involved in participative decision making about adoption and implementation of the innovation.

(6) **Reward.** Continuing positive reinforcement or rewards to staff for using the innovation facilitates durability.

(7) **Adaptability.** The capability of the innovation to be adapted or modified in response to changing circumstances helps the innovation to endure.

Another set of factors, thought to be related to the readiness of an organization to adopt a given innovation in the first place and to the particular implementation process used, may also be related to durability (Davis and Salasin 1975). These include the following:

- (1) ability of the organization to carry out the innovation with regard to staff, funds, facilities, and so forth;
- (2) values inherent in the innovation as they relate to the potential adopter's values;
- (3) adequacy of information about the innovation and what is required for its implementation;
- (4) existing circumstances that might be favorable or unfavorable to the innovation;
- (5) timing of the adoption and implementation;
- (6) commitment to or championship of the innovation by decision makers;
- (7) resistance that may exist on the organizational or individual level; and
- (8) net balance between benefits as perceived by stakeholders in

the innovation and any undesirable side effects or risks that may be involved.

The extent to which an innovation is integrated into an organization's operation has also been found to be related to factors such as whether the innovation (1) did what it purported to do, (2) could be implemented in stages, (3) was reversible, (4) resulted in an improvement in the operation, and (5) provided a cost savings (Lambright and Carroll 1977).

A final combination of organizational variables that has been found to be associated with the durability of an innovation includes a strong, locally based coalition of involved individuals or groups and a committed leader who typically creates such coalitions and holds them together throughout the stages of the adoption process (Lambright and Carroll 1977).

There are obvious similarities among these several lists of influencing factors which would have enabled the researchers to compress the lists into a smaller number of variables and to hypothesize about relationships among the variables. However, in addition to the question of the durability of the innovation, we were interested in how implementation decisions were made and in participant perceptions of the outcomes of long range planning.

We especially wanted the research to benefit from the rich descriptions that are possible when qualitative data are collected. For that reason, we determined that the case study method

was more appropriate than a quantitative methodology for our purposes. The following chapter discusses this methodology and describes how it was utilized in the study.

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METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to examine ways in which long range planning is being implemented in smaller and medium-sized public libraries. The study population was defined as public libraries in the midwest with fewer than 25 full-time equivalent employees, and with a service population of between 10,000 and 50,000. Study objectives included the following:

- (1) to discover what happens in natural settings as public librarians implement a long range planning process;
- (2) to document and describe the differences that exist among these settings in process, goals, implementation, participant perceptions, and outcomes;
- (3) to identify probable factors to account for differences in local implementations of planning or planning outcomes; and
- (4) to generate a set of tentative hypotheses concerning (a) conditions that influence the manner

in which the innovation is initiated and implemented, and (b) conditions that influence whether the innovation is then incorporated into the library's operational routine and continues to be used or whether it is discontinued.

It was assumed that public librarians would modify the Public Library Association's suggested planning process to fit their own situations. Therefore, we were primarily interested in exploring broad differences and similarities in approaches to planning and in perceptions of its value as a management tool.

In-person interviews with library directors, staff members, trustees, and community representatives who had served on planning committees were used in collecting qualitative data. Interview data were supplemented by statistical and printed information about the libraries and their communities that was provided by the libraries themselves, local Chambers of Commerce, and the *American Library Directory* (1990).

Qualitative Nature of the Study

Case studies have proven useful in the development of a number of fields: anthropology, psychology, sociology, management, social work, and education, for example. In discussing the use of qualitative research in education, Merriam (1988, p. 3) maintains that "research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied offers the greatest promise of making significant contributions to the knowledge base and practice... most case studies in education are qualitative and hypothesis-generating, rather than quantitative and hypothesis-testing, studies."

Merriam further suggests that the qualitative case study is often the best methodology for dealing with critical problems that emerge from practice, particularly when an understanding is sought in order to improve the practice. The authors of this present study have taken the position that an understanding of the factors that contribute to the successful implementation of long range planning is necessary in order to aid librarians in better accomplishing this essential management function.

The defining characteristics of qualitative case studies have been variously described in the literature. According to Lincoln and Guba

(1985), major characteristics include "thick" description, a conversation-style format grounded in the situation, and results that illuminate meaning and build on tacit knowledge.

Hoaglin and others (1982) suggest that case studies are characterized by specificity and descriptions of key issues, parties, and motives. Case studies can result in suggested solutions that can then be applied to remedy practice.

If we consolidate the definitions of case studies given in the literature, they can be said to (1) focus on a particular situation, event, or phenomenon, (2) provide a "thick" description of the phenomenon, (3) extend the reader's understanding of the phenomenon, and (4) rely on inductive, rather than deductive reasoning. A thick description is a complete, literal description of the phenomenon, including an interpretation of the meaning and the complexities of the situation.

Results of a case study are presented qualitatively, using words and quotations derived from a variety of sources; they explore reasons and background; they summarize and evaluate what happened and why. "Generalizations, concepts, or hypotheses emerge from an examination of data—data grounded in the context itself.... Discovery of new rela-

tionships, concepts, and understandings, rather than verification of predetermined hypotheses, characterize qualitative case studies." (Merriam 1988, p. 13)

We chose this method of data collection and analysis because we were interested in gaining insights into the processes and dynamics involved when long range planning is put into practice in smaller public libraries. We were concerned with questions of "how" and "why," rather than "what" and "how many" (Yin 1989). The case study method allowed us to use observation and systematic interviewing of multiple sources in addition to documentary evidence in order to describe and interpret what had occurred in specific libraries that had implemented long range planning.

Libraries in the Study

In order to identify appropriate libraries to include in the study, telephone calls were made to public library development personnel in several state libraries in the midwestern United States. We requested the names and addresses of public libraries (serving between 10,000 and 50,000 people) that were known to have developed a long range plan between 1985 and 1989. In addition, data from an earlier study of the adoption of the Public Library Planning Process (Pungitore, Wilkerson, and Yoon

1989) were used to identify other possible study sites.

The directors of eight of the sixteen libraries that emerged as possible field study sites were contacted by telephone. Three declined to participate. Two of these felt that the study would take up too much of the library's time, while the third was doubtful that the board of trustees would grant the necessary approval for the study. Five library directors agreed to approach their boards of trustees with the researchers' request. All five requests were subsequently approved. A sixth library, which also agreed to participate, was selected because a brief mention of its long range plan that appeared in the professional literature caught the interest of the research team.

In order to maintain a guarantee of anonymity, the participating libraries will not be identified by name or location anywhere in this report; however, the appendix contains brief factual summaries that describe the general characteristics of each library. The six libraries comprising the study represent four states. One of the states requires its public libraries to produce a long range plan, two promote and encourage long range planning without mandating it, while the fourth (at the time of the study) had not addressed the planning issue in a definitive way. In one of the states not

mandating a long range plan, the state library association has taken a leadership role in developing standards that address planning and that recommend annual revision of long range plans.

Library Characteristics

Two of the libraries in the sample are city libraries (Library G and Library I). Library C is a school district library. Libraries A and B serve as city-contractual district libraries. In these cases, the library boards negotiate contractual arrangements with specific outlying districts. City library support is thus supplemented by funding from the districts. In return, district residents receive full library services. The sixth library (Library H) is a county district library. As such, it serves a large area of the county. However, there are several other public libraries within the county that serve and are funded by small individual localities (which are considered to be outside the county library district). Interestingly, district boundaries do not appear to restrict citizen use of this particular library. It is located in a state which provides a significant amount of state funding to local libraries. As a consequence, any state resident may obtain a county district library card free of charge.

In terms of size, two of the libraries (C and I) serve populations of slightly under 15,000. Libraries G and

H serve over 42,000 people, and Libraries A and B serve populations of 33,000 and 22,000 respectively. A more revealing size indicator is annual income. As expected, the two libraries serving the most people also had the largest annual incomes. There was a difference between them of fewer than 300 people served, and a difference of \$140,000 in income. The library that served the smallest population had the fourth largest annual income (\$559,172). In terms of per capita support, this library ranked the highest at \$42.04 per capita (see Table 1 on page 15).

The libraries serving the largest and the smallest populations in the sample were located in what are generally termed "more affluent" communities. Despite the disparity between sizes of population served, these two libraries were the most comparable with regard to the aesthetic appeal of the physical facilities, including the buildings themselves and the surrounding landscapes.

Data Collection Methods

The director of each library was asked to arrange interviews for the researchers with one or more staff members, trustees, and community representatives who participated in the planning process. Including the director, between four and eight people from each library were inter-

TABLE 1. Comparison of Libraries in the Study

LIBRARY (TYPE)	POPULA- TION	INCOME (1989-90)	PER CAPITA INCOME	STAFF SIZE
Library A (City - Contractual District Library)	32,795	\$591,139	\$18.03	21 (8 prof.)
Library B (City- Contractual District Library)	22,000	\$240,298	\$10.92	6 (3 prof.)
Library C (School District Library)	13,300	\$559,172	\$42.02	16 (2 prof.)
Library G (City Library)	42,500	\$903,000	\$20.71	17 (6 prof.)
Library H (County District Library)	42,751	\$762,395	\$17.83	19 (4 prof.)
Library I (City Library)	14,149	\$328,200	\$23.20	9 (4 prof.)

viewed by the three member research team. Each field visit lasted from one and one-half to two days. Interviews with library directors averaged approximately two hours. Those with other participants lasted between 45 minutes and an hour. A total of 35 interviews were conducted from March through July, 1990.

Several broad questions were developed for use as guidelines in conducting the interviews. These dealt with the participant's relationship with the library, participation in the planning process, perception of how well the process functioned, and any opinions the participant held about the benefits or drawbacks associated with long range planning in general or the library's long range planning endeavors in particular. A copy of the interview guidelines is included in Appendix A.

In many cases, the participants were eager to discuss their library's planning efforts, requiring minimal probing from the interviewers. An initial concern that participants might be reluctant to speak frankly proved to be unfounded. While providing critiques of the processes that were used, directors openly discussed the nature of their relationships with their trustees, trustees pointed to strengths and weaknesses of their library managers, and staff members commented freely on the effects of their directors'

management styles. These and other potentially important factors, such as the influence of organizational structure and of local politics on library planning, were not pre-selected for study, but emerged clearly from the interviews.

Internal Validity and Consistency

The study's use of multiple sites and cross case analysis was predicated on the assumption that not only would there be local conditions and factors unique to each site, but there would also be "generic" factors. That is, certain common aspects of implementing a long range planning process would occur despite variations in the local situation. The study attempted to identify these broad similarities as well as any situational differences. The purpose was not to suggest generalizability of the findings. We obviously cannot generalize from six non-randomized, qualitative case studies. However, in identifying recurrent factors, a working hypothesis can be developed of the commonalities present in local implementations of planning.

Readers of the report who are engaged in long range planning, or who are contemplating adoption of the Public Library Association's planning process, should be able to determine the extent to which factors identified in the study may apply to their local

situations. Merriam (1988, p. 177) suggests that "reader or user generalizability," where the applicability of one case to another is determined by the consumer, is a method of viewing external validity that is particularly suited to case study research.

As a means of verifying the existence of certain common patterns that we saw emerging as we analyzed the case studies, abbreviated field visits to three additional libraries located in a single state (Library D, Library E, and Library F) were conducted. Table 2 on page 18 presents the general characteristics of the three non-study or "holdout" libraries. At one of these libraries, only the library director was interviewed. At the other two sites, the director and another staff member were interviewed jointly.

With respect to the size of the population served, two of the libraries were somewhat larger than the libraries in the study and each had considerably larger incomes. They were least comparable in terms of staff size, which in both cases was greater than the 25 FTE limit established for the study. However, we thought it would be valuable to compare the results of our study with implementations of the planning process in slightly larger libraries. The third library met the staff size criteria and was similar to the study libraries.

These field visits utilized the same interview guidelines as were applied in the study itself. It was the opinion of the researchers that, should similar broad trends appear in the data from these additional sites, added support for the categories generated in the study, and for the external validity of the study, would be provided.

All interviews were taped and later transcribed. Information that might identify the library, the name of the participant, or the community in which the library was located was deleted from the transcriptions. Member checks (taking the data and interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking whether the interpretations make sense) is recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as a means of increasing validity. This study did not use member checks in the strict sense of the term since participants were not given interpretations to review; however, each participant was sent a transcript of his or her interview and given the opportunity to change or clarify any information prior to its use in the written report. This provided a check on the validity of the data, if not the interpretations. As transcription data were analyzed, the tapes were erased.

Data Analysis

Each transcript was analyzed independently by two members of the

research team. Analysis consisted of assigning each meaningful bit of information to one of nine broad categories:

1. PLA Planning Manuals
2. Origin of the Library's Decision to Plan
3. Participants in the Library's Planning Process

4. Elements of the Library's Planning Process
5. Participant Evaluations of the Process
6. Utilization and Outcomes of Planning
7. Library Information
8. Community Information
9. Unexpected, Revealing, or "Telling" Comments

TABLE 2. Characteristics of Non-Study (Holdout) Libraries

LIBRARY (TYPE)	POPULATION	INCOME (1989-90)	PER CAPITA INCOME	STAFF SIZE
Library D (Multi-City District Library)	69,078	\$2,066,686	\$29.29	49 (17 prof.)
Library E (Village-Township District Library)	15,969	\$ 437,334	\$27.39	9 (3 prof.)
Library F (School District Library)	58,253	\$2, 152,587	\$36.95	35 (14 prof.)

A two-step process was used to verify the assignment of data into the categories: (1) the two researchers compared their analyses, negotiating any differences; and (2) a third researcher, who did not take part in the interviewing, conducted a separate independent analysis. This was then compared and reconciled with the results of the negotiated analysis.

Once category assignments were agreed upon, each discrete piece of information, with its accompanying category heading, was transferred to a card. Two researchers, working independently, then conducted a further analysis of the cards, determining sub-categories (and in some cases assigning new categories). A final round of negotiations produced 16 factors.

The following chapter presents the results of the data analysis. It is organized according to the first six categories which we have termed: Awareness of the PLA Manuals, Origin of the Library's Decision, The Planning Committee, Elements of the Process, Participant Evaluations, and Planning Outcomes.

Within each category, each library is discussed separately. Findings, including emergent factors, relative to the category are summarized and the situations existing in the non-study libraries (D, E, and F) are then discussed within the context of the study findings. The chapter concludes with an overall assessment of the factors identified in the study as having a probable influence on planning.

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FINDINGS

The primary criterion for selection of libraries was the initiation of a long range planning process by the library within the previous five years. The assumption was that those libraries completing their plan prior to the publication of the Public Library Development Program manuals in 1987 would have used the 1980 PLA planning process (or some variation of it). The specific use of PLA's manuals was not, however, a condition to library selection.

Each participant in the interviews had his or her own perspective concerning the planning process used by the library. These differing viewpoints are readily apparent through the participant's words. A number of quotes have been included as an accompaniment to the discussion of the planning experiences. When participants are quoted directly, they are identified by their relationship to the library or the role they played in the planning process. Table 3 on page 22 provides a list by title or role of those who were interviewed at each library.

This chapter addresses the broad categories explored in the study: (1) awareness of the PLA manuals, (2) origin of the library's decision to

plan, (3) composition of the planning committee, (4) specifics of the process used by the library, (5) participant evaluations of the process, and (6) outcomes of planning. Each of the categories is discussed initially with reference to Libraries A, B, C, G, H, and I.

Findings for Libraries D, E, and F are then compared with those of the study libraries. As explained in the previous chapter, only one or two individuals were interviewed in these three extra libraries. Their purpose was to serve as verification of the factors that emerged from the study.

Awareness of the PLA Manuals

In order to determine whether planning committee participants were aware of the manuals, the research team brought copies and asked whether any of the manuals looked familiar or had been used in the process. Data initially assigned to this category was subdivided into: (1) knowledge of specific editions of the manuals, (2) use of specific manuals, and (3) participant opinions of the manuals. Several participants, seeing the manuals for the first time, provided spontaneous reactions.

TABLE 3. Participants in the Interviews

PARTICIPANT *	LIBRARY					
	A	B	C	G	H	I
Director	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assistant Director			X		X	X
Reference/Adult Services Librarian	X	X		X		
Cataloger/ Tech. Services Head	X	X				
Childrens Librarian/ Child. Room Clerk	X	X	X			
Community Services/ Comm. Relations Coord.	X				X	
Circulation Head/ Volunteer Coord.		X	X			X
Bookmobile Head					X	
Library Trustee **	1	3	1	2	1	2
Citizen/ Community Representative	1				1	

* With the exception of the director, library staff are identified as "staff member" in the text, regardless of specific job title, in order to assure anonymity.

** In several instances, individuals who initially represented the community on the planning committee were later appointed to the board. They are grouped here with trustees since that was their relationship to the library when they were interviewed and that was the perspective from which they were providing information to the researchers.

LIBRARY A

At the time of our site visit, Library A had completed two earlier planning cycles and was at the beginning stages of a third. Although the original planning process manual had been published two years before the first long range plan was developed, the library was at that time unaware of its existence.

The director developed her own planning process utilizing citizen surveys as a starting point. This initial long range planning endeavor produced a set of overall goals and objectives, plus goals and objectives relating specifically to adult services, children's services, and community [extension and outreach] services.

We asked where the library had learned how to develop and conduct telephone and other surveys. The director responded that although she had completed a survey course in college, the staff had no formal training in survey construction; she basically developed the questionnaires herself.

Library A's second planning cycle was undertaken prior to the publication of the new PLA manuals, but after the state had begun to offer workshops based on the first manual and to encourage public libraries to plan. In developing its second long

"I had a survey class in college, but the first time we just used common sense. We didn't use any source."

—Library A Director

"In our second [planning cycle] we pretty much followed the book."

—Library A Staff Member 2

"We have all the manuals, but now we don't use them."

—Library A Director

"We asked a lot of questions that the planning process said we should ask, for background. But we really never used that information."

—Library A Director

"The director and the staff may be very familiar with these, but I as a board member have never laid eyes on them. It might be that one of the other board members has seen them. I'm going to guess that maybe none of us have seen them."

—Library B Trustee 3

"My goodness, this [planning manual] probably would have terrified us.... Just to read this thing would take some time."

—Library B Trustee 3

"I may have seen a copy of this [first edition] back in library school."

—Library B Staff Member 3

range plan the library "used that green and white one, *A Planning Process*." (Library A Staff Member 1) Data were collected according to suggestions and examples given in the manual and the library used many of the manual's sample demographic questions.

When asked if there were parts of the manual she intended to incorporate into the library's upcoming third planning cycle, the director answered, "I don't think that there is any part of it that I liked.... so this time we are not using the planning process book at all. We're just doing our own thing."

She was then asked if she had considered using the new edition, *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries*. She replied that the library had lent its copy of the manual to another library that had not returned it. Library A was not particularly concerned about getting the manual back as it did not intend to use it.

LIBRARY B

For Library B, the second edition of the manuals "came right in the middle of it [the library's planning cycle].... There is certainly some good information in there. I wish that they'd come earlier." (Library B Director)

Without having access to the revised manuals, the library director

had become aware of the need to plan after attending workshops on the first planning process conducted at the state level and as a result of the state's requirement that all its public libraries produce a five year plan. The first edition of the planning manual, however, was not used by the planning committee. The director observed, "There are a lot of charts... When you first get them you gasp, 'I have to read all that!' I don't know how, but this [second edition] does seem less daunting."

Although trustees from Library B as well as its director had attended workshops at which state library consultants introduced the concept of long range planning, the trustees we spoke with had no knowledge of either manual. Browsing through the copies we brought to the interview, one of the trustees indicated that, had the board seen the manuals before deciding to plan, they probably would have been so deterred by the seeming complexity that they might not have attempted a planning process at all.

LIBRARY C

Library C conducted its long range planning in 1988, making adaptive use of the second editions of both the planning manual and the output measures manual. A consultant from the state library and an outside planning consultant were retained to help

"[It was massive]...all the statistics that came to us on finance, human resources, all those categories...and all of the data...the amount of material we had to digest in each category, comparing other libraries not only in our own county, but in the state."

—Library C Trustee 1

"[Role setting] is something, without PLA, we would never have come to grips with, I don't think. Because that certainly wasn't in the state standards.... It was definitely those [manuals] that said to us, 'Hey, you've got to narrow your focus and do what you do better.' We struggle with that all the time."

—Library C Director

"We had copies of [both manuals] for everybody... We did all the output measures and had them presented [to the committee]."

—Library G Director

"We saw that we would not have to re-invent the wheel."

—Library G Trustee 1

"We did the community surveys, then we started with the planning committee in the fall of the next year, and completed it the next fall. I think it was about a 14 month process."

—Library G Director

"We tried as much as possible to stick with the work forms for doing things, mainly because they were convenient."

—Library G Trustee 1

the planning committee begin the process. The out-of-state consultant had been involved in developing PLA's planning process and in giving planning workshops nationwide. Therefore, she was able to share with the committee her enthusiasm and a number of additional planning materials she had developed independently.

The committee structure included no community representation, which was deliberate. The director had decided that the library was too small for an extensive level of effort, but thought that a minimal effort, with a smaller, more self-contained committee would be workable. The role setting process recommended by the second planning manual was used, however.

(FOR LIBRARIES D, E, F SEE PAGE 29)

LIBRARY G

In utilizing the second set of planning manuals, Library G selected an extensive level of effort for most of the steps in the process. Copies of the planning and output measures manuals were provided to each planning committee member. A facilitator was retained to help the committee begin the process and massive amounts of data, including output measures, were collected. The questionnaires used to survey citizens and library users were designed and analyzed by professionals from a nearby university.

LIBRARY H

An interesting situation existed in Library H. The final version of the library's first long range plan was completed seven months before the current director arrived. It was also begun before publication of the second edition of the manuals, so the process used (as described by the present director) appears to have closely followed the original planning manual. Data collection and analysis reportedly consumed a great deal of the time of the planning committee and of the library staff.

The director told us that the first plan was never implemented, but was used as the basis for writing a set of more realistic goals and objectives. These constituted the library's "new" plan. Although the director knew of the PLA manuals, neither edition was consulted when the new plan was developed.

LIBRARY I

With regard to its operating budget and population service area, Library I was one of the smaller libraries in the study. From our interviews and from an examination of the library's planning documents, it was apparent that the director used exceptional organizational skills in guiding the planning that began in late 1987. She was able to provide a detailed record docu-

"The first [manual] was so complicated, it just overwhelmed you.... it called for this huge committee, and it called for these mammoth surveys, and all that."

—Library I Director

"If I remember correctly, [the second planning manual says, 'level one, level two, level three' --you can do it as a board, if that's what you need the first time around, and it's OK to do it that way."

—Library I Director

"I think, if I remember correctly, we had photocopies [of the manual]. We didn't have the whole thing, but I think [the director] made photocopies of the pertinent sections that we used."

—Library I Staff Member 1

menting each phase of the library's planning process. Prior to our site visit, she and other people we were scheduled to interview had reviewed the files in order to refresh their memories.

Although Library I participants were aware of the first planning manual and the director believed that long range planning was something they should be doing, the library did not attempt a formal process until publication of the second edition. The director felt that the process as originally outlined "was too cumbersome" for a small library with a small staff and was therefore "not feasible."

This impression changed when the director saw the second edition with its suggestion that smaller libraries could determine a basic or minimal level of effort for each step in the process. As a result, the director felt more confident about implementing each of the steps, and the manual was carefully followed.

When we visited Library I, it was about to undertake what the director called a "mini-planning process." Although the original plan had only been in effect for two years, the director felt that it was appropriate to look at the goals and objectives in order to see if any should be revised. The manual refers to this activity as "updating the goals and objectives."

SUMMARY

The directors of all six libraries were aware of both editions of the planning manuals, although they were obviously more familiar with the particular manual used by the library. Other members of the planning committees that we spoke with, however, varied in their knowledge of the existence of the manuals. In those instances in which each member was given a copy of the manual or relevant pages, most of those we interviewed indicated that they knew that the library's planning process had been adapted from a recommended instruction manual. In other cases, where the manuals were not utilized or where the director adopted only a few of the recommendations of a given manual, committee members voiced surprise that a manual was available.

Two libraries in the study seem to have accepted the idea of planning as a continuous process which should be integrated into the library's method of operation. Both Library A and Library I are following the recommendation of the planning manual in that they are revising and updating objectives while the current plan is still in effect. Library I is deliberately following the manual in this practice, while Library A has been doing so because its director set up the process in that way, without specific reference to the manuals. In both in-

stances, the directors are firmly committed to planning.

Library H (using the first planning manual) and Library G (using the second edition) employed equally extensive levels of effort with regard to citizen participation and data collection. However, neither endeavor resulted in the board's adoption of a long range plan. This and other outcomes of planning are discussed later in this chapter.

Upon completion of their initial planning cycles, these two libraries faced the decision of whether to shelve their plans and return to business as usual, begin an immediate revision of mission, goals and objectives, or start planning all over again, this time using a different process. In both cases the plans were shelved, at least temporarily. When a new director arrived at Library H, she undertook, with the aid of a trustee, a major revision of the library's goals and objectives in order to develop a new plan that the library would be able to implement without depending upon receipt of additional funding.

The output measures manual was used by four of the libraries (C, G, H, and I). Library H used the first edition. The two larger libraries collected all of the measures, while Library C and Library I used only those that they felt would be the easiest to collect and

the most useful so far as the library's needs were concerned.

Libraries D, E, and F

A comparison of the findings with the three libraries not included in the study (D, E, and F) indicates that the directors of these libraries were also familiar with both editions of the manuals. Library D (the largest of the three) used the first edition of the output measures manual extensively and its planning process was accomplished using the first edition of the planning manual.

Although we only interviewed the director and a staff member from this library, our assumption is that the planning process manual was not widely distributed at the time the first five year plan was developed. The library has subsequently purchased approximately 18 copies of the planning and role setting manual for distribution to each senior staff member, reportedly for use in updating the original plan.

Library E intended to use the second edition of the planning manual, and each committee member was provided with a copy. It can be assumed that the committee members were therefore aware of the manuals.

Although it had been more than six months since the process was first

instituted, attendance at committee meetings had declined so much that all formal planning had come to a temporary halt at the time of our visit. Library E did not therefore have a completed long range plan.

Library F had commissioned a series of space studies dating back to the late 1960s, with no tangible results. After the current director arrived in 1985, two more studies were conducted by outside consultants. The consultant for the most recent study, in 1989, led the staff in a role setting process.

Although the library did not depend upon either planning manual, the director indicated that citizen surveys and user surveys were conducted and a master plan for development had evolved. "This established goals and objectives, not only for services, but for facilities, for automation and technology, for resource management, for staffing and linkage, and public awareness." (Library F Director)

Library F differs somewhat from the study libraries in that it has a history of conducting needs assessments and strategic planning that predates the publication of PLA's manuals. Also, the present director was accustomed to and comfortable with the concept of long range planning. Therefore he was able to utilize a general planning process without

having to pay close attention to the manual. "We certainly were aware of what we needed to do, and we may not have done it according to the book, so to speak, but we have done the process." (Library F Director)

Origin of the Library's Decision

There are any number of circumstances that might give rise to a decision to initiate a long range planning process. Although we believed that a common impetus to planning among the study libraries was unlikely, we felt that the director, rather than the board of trustees, was more probably the guiding force behind the decision (if, indeed, it was a "free will" decision on the part of the library and was not mandated by a higher authority). In our interviews we attempted to see whether this was so. We asked trustees and staff members as well as the directors for their impressions of how the original decision to plan had been made and how the staff and trustees had reacted initially to the decision to engage in long range planning.

LIBRARY A

Library A conducted its first long range plan in 1982. At that time, there was neither information about planning nor encouragement to plan coming from the state library. The impetus to plan came from the director, who was then relatively new to the library

and felt that she needed to know more about what the community wanted in order to ensure that the library was providing the appropriate services.

When she approached the trustees initially concerning a community survey, they were amenable to the idea, but apparently assumed that the director and staff would carry out the project. Although the professional staff accepted the concept of asking potential users about what they wanted from the library, the support staff was skeptical of the process.

LIBRARY B

Library B's decision to develop a long range plan came as the result of external pressure. The state library had begun to conduct planning workshops and informational meetings aimed at directors, staff, and trustees, and had included a requirement in the state standards that public libraries have a five year plan of service. Members of Library B's board of trustees attended these statewide meetings, and the board itself initiated the decision to develop a plan.

This is supported by a comment from the director, "From the couple board members we talked to, we kind of got the impression that going into planning was a result of what the state has been promoting." He went on to say that "The first thing we did after

"I was fairly new to the community [in 1982] It turned out that really our staff didn't know [the city] that well. We had a fairly new staff, all the professional staff was hired within about two years of each other, and have all stayed. So we have a real stable staff now. But we were all new then and we felt we needed to know what was going on in the community."

—Library A Director

"The Board didn't want to do it. I mean they didn't want to do it themselves. But if I wanted to do it, fine. I think they understood the need for knowledge of the community and really thought of it as a staff function. They really didn't want to participate that much initially. Then in time they participated more."

—Library A Director

"We did the first one actually just because we wanted to. There certainly wasn't any pressure at that point [in 1982]. And certainly no pressure from the state library."

—Library A Director

"We did this more because it was mandated than because there was really a pressing need to sit down and do it."

—Library B Trustee 3

"Should we do some Mickey Mouse thing just to say we did it, or should we do something real?"

—Library B Director

"I suspect that the real genesis for this document was probably prompted by a request from the state. I would like to say we were really involved in this sort of thing, but I believe this was a requirement that we had to submit to the state. But I think that's fine. It made us sit down and think about these things."

— Library B Trustee 3

"The state [library association] standards said early on, 'Does your library have a board approved long range plan?' That's one of the few things we had to say 'no' about, so we decided to do something about it."

—Library C Director

"A lot of material was given to trustees and library staffs hoping they would get into the planning process.... When our new director came in, she insisted on it."

—Library C Trustee 1

we talked with the board and decided that, indeed, we needed to do a long range plan, that the state said we should, was [to ask ourselves] 'how should we do it?' ... We decided we really ought to make some real effort to do a plan we could use for the next five years, and we did."

LIBRARY C

Library C's decision to plan apparently came about through trustee attendance at state level planning workshops. "There used to be planning sessions at the state meetings that we would go to...the director and I went, not the present one, the one before." (Library C Trustee 1) Although it was under no direct mandate from the state, this exposure nonetheless put the board in a frame of mind to consider the merits of planning. This was coupled with the arrival of a new library director who advocated the need for strategic planning.

(FOR LIBRARIES D, E, F SEE PAGE 38)

LIBRARY G

For Library G, the initial awareness of and interest in PLA's planning process occurred when the director attended a national conference at which the PLDP manuals were presented and discussed. Subsequently, he and other staff and board members attended state library association

meetings devoted to planning and role setting. Because the library was already struggling with the prospect of a physical expansion and had recognized the need for guidance with regard to the resources and services that would be needed in the enlarged facility, the concept of planning and role setting had an instant appeal.

One of the library trustees that we interviewed explained the genesis of Library G's planning process in this way:

A couple of years ago we started thinking about the fact that the library was looking toward some kind of expansion. And in order to expand, we felt we needed to do some long range planning. We also put some money into our budget to do a survey. Then at the same time as we had the money in the budget to do the survey, was a training program through the state library association on planning and role setting.

I went over to that training session; two staff members went as well. We spent the day there doing that, and then we came back, saying basically, "We need to go into this formal role planning." (Library G Trustee 1)

The director of Library G indicated that the planning decision came about at his urging: "The process itself started in my mind in 1987-88, because then I proposed to the library board that we include money for both a community and a patron survey in the 1988-89 budget year.... So there

"We needed to have something in place to give us direction in terms of which way the library was going to be heading. You can't keep meeting these demands on a regular basis without some changes either in the way we're doing business, or eliminating some services, or focusing some more on some other services. So I think we needed to get a handle on the way we were doing things as a library."

—Library G Trustee 2

"[Our planning experience] is quite different from the examples we saw from ALA, and had heard about. Just before we started the whole process we went to the state library convention, and one of the reports there at a group session was where three or four librarians who had been through this procedure gave their ideas of overall aspects of it."

—Library G Staff Member 1

"We looked at it as a method that we could say, 'OK, we want to do long range planning; we don't have to invent a way to do it. We have this set in front of us.' We were glad to see it. I think the workshop was in October, and by December we had a committee up and running."

—Library G Trustee 1

"I went to the first meeting, I don't know if it was PLA or ALA, where they really said, 'Here, Library World, here is the planning process and output measures'."

—Library G Director

"There was always this idea when this [first plan] was developed that we needed a bond issue, although they were talking about money more than a bond issue, but some kind of voted funding. So that's always been a part of the plan."

—Library H Director

"So I looked at this [first plan] after I had been here a year or so, and said, 'This is slightly ridiculous. We have a long range plan and we're not using it.' So, with a board committee, I sat down and rewrote it to where it is now, I feel, a good workable plan."

—Library H Director

"When I saw how they did it, I said, 'Hey, we can do that.' When you're looking at the book, and they're saying you ought to do this mammoth committee and all these surveys, you say, 'Oh, we're short-staffed.' But they did it with a more self-contained committee, and we said, 'We can do this.' So knowing we could do this, and knowing we had to do it, we did the long range planning process."

—Library I Director

was actually three years that it had been on my mind to do it; from the very first PLA seminar on the planning process."

LIBRARY H

The first long range planning process at Library H was conducted and completed prior to the arrival of the current library director. The reason for developing the plan was apparently two-fold: It was to serve as a vehicle for requesting additional funding on the local level; and as a document that could stand as proof that the library was engaged in long range planning.

According to a staff member, "It wasn't a requirement, but I think it would help in going for a library bond issue if you had a plan." The state was encouraging planning and was using workshops to promote it. Staff and trustees attended the workshops and concluded that a long range plan would improve their bond issue prospects.

The document that the Library H planning committee developed was not accepted by the library board as its long range plan. "It had something to do with the timetable. They did not want to be locked into a timeframe to work with at that point, because they themselves did not know when they would be going for a bond issue." (Library H Director)

When the current director decided to rewrite the plan, it became a revised or "new" plan which was then implemented. According to the director, "It is pretty safe to say that the old plan was the beginning of the new plan. [The old plan] was done, as I am understanding it now (this is second-hand), with the intent of increasing funding. I don't think it was ever meant to be a long range plan as such."

Prior to the revision, Library H had "a plan which we could send in with our report to the state every year, indicating, 'yes, we have a long range plan. Just like you're supposed to'—that we didn't [implement]. It was never a thing that was effective or useful for us at all." (Library H Director)

LIBRARY I

"In November of 1987...we were experiencing some difficulty with the budget, so I went to the board and I just said, 'Would you agree to plan?' They had heard about it before, we had talked about it, but that is the meeting at which they said, 'Yes, we will make a commitment, and we will do it.'" (Library I Director)

According to the director, there were two impetuses to planning. The first was the budget—"doesn't that always make you look at what you're

doing?" (Library I Director) The second factor was that the director was a member of a committee that was developing state standards. The standards committee was giving a presentation at the same meeting at which a library was presenting information about how it had conducted a long range planning process.

Upon hearing the presentation, the director of Library I decided that the process as described was entirely feasible for her small library as well. The perceived need to engage in planning, coupled with the knowledge that it was feasible and with access to the manuals that told how to do it, resulted in Library I's decision to implement planning and role setting.

SUMMARY

The study libraries provided an interesting mix with regard to the timing of the decision to undertake a first or a subsequent cycle of long range planning and the publication of the two editions of the planning manuals. Two of the libraries that did not yet have access to the less complex second edition, but had a "local" reason for developing a plan, dutifully collected all of the data recommended by the first manual, and in one case even adopted the manual's sample questionnaires with little modification. The attraction of the manual may have been its emphasis on the concept of

assessing the characteristics and the needs of the local community.

In one case (Library A), knowing what the community wanted assumed special importance because the library had begun plans for a new building and was eager to provide maximum service in its new facility. It had completed an earlier plan based almost solely on citizen surveys designed in-house which indicated a need for additional space for quiet study and a community meeting room. Because neither of these items had been on the library's own list of priorities, the director became convinced of the importance of asking the public what it wanted. The planning manual promised to improve on the method the library had used to gather its data and therefore it was adapted for use in the second planning cycle.

In the other case (Library H), the library was determined to develop a strong justification for improved funding which it could bring to the local voters. Because it intended to use the community analysis information for that purpose, it was amenable to collecting many different kinds of data, as suggested by the planning process manual.

The third library that conducted its planning process before the second edition appeared (Library B) did not have a pressing local need to plan, but

was reacting to urging from the state level. In this case, the library was less methodical and comprehensive in the type of data it collected and was less concerned with process than with product. The board used the information about planning disseminated at workshops conducted by the state library, but was seemingly unaware that there was a published instruction manual that it might follow. The director, although aware of the manual, apparently felt that it was too "daunting" and complex a document for the library to attempt to use.

Although the decision to plan was not a voluntary one on the part of the library, it was nonetheless determined to capitalize on the state's mandate by producing a realistic and workable plan, rather than simply going through the motions of planning. It was not, however, sufficiently motivated by any particular local reason to reexamine its existing assumptions about the community and its library needs. It was not, therefore, overly concerned about such things as having diverse groups represented on the planning committee or utilizing a formal, systematic planning process.

Two of the three libraries that conducted an initial planning cycle after the second edition of the manual was available (Library G and Library I) were motivated by the demands of their local situations. Library G was

facing the need to expand its facilities and wanted to assure that the expansion took place within the context of a planned future direction for the library.

Coincidentally, PLA was at that time introducing its planning and role setting manual and the second edition of its output measures manual to the library community. The director of Library G attended an informational meeting and was immediately convinced that there was no need to "reinvent the wheel," that this was the process that the library was seeking in order to accomplish its strategic planning.

At his urging, the board established a broadly representative planning committee which was allowed to function autonomously and which conscientiously followed the process outlined in the planning and role setting manual. The director appointed a staff member to collect data based on the output measures manual. Although the committee had a chairperson and its work was initially facilitated by a state consultant, the manual (rather than the library director or the board) appears to have provided guidance and direction to the planning committee.

Library I gave initial consideration to planning as a result of budgetary problems. In 1987 salaries were frozen

and in 1988, although the salary freeze was lifted, the budget remained substantially the same as the previous year. The library was looking "long and hard at, 'do you do materials, or do you do personnel?'" (Library I Director) The answer to prioritizing within budgetary constraints, as well as the answer to easing those constraints by getting the budget increased, seemed to lie in long range planning.

When the director had an opportunity to hear about the experiences of several other libraries that had successfully adapted the planning and role setting process to fit their own situations, she decided that the process would be feasible for Library I despite its small size. Once again, the director was the influencing factor in the board's decision to plan and to use the process outlined in the manual. In this case, however, the director (with initial assistance from a state library consultant) organized, facilitated, and directed the work of the planning committee.

The third library that decided to use the second edition of the planning process manual (Library C) also appears to have made the decision at the urging of its then new director. Although trustees and the previous director had attended planning workshops throughout the state, there was no state requirement, nor was there a

specific local urgency compelling the library to develop a long range plan. The community that the library serves contains "the most educated, the wealthiest population in the county" (Library C Director). Operating within a relatively comfortable budget, the library had for years been able to provide a more than adequate level of service without engaging in a formal planning process.

As the new director began assessing the situation, and began developing her own goals for improving library services, she checked the library against a newly issued set of state library association standards and used various other methods of comparison and evaluation. Using only a checklist method of determining areas in which the library might be improved did not seem sufficient to the director. This seemed especially so in light of the fact that the library did not meet an initial recommendation in the state association standards: the existence of a long range plan, with a mission statement, goals, and specific objectives. It was then that the director brought the planning recommendation to the board, or as one of the trustees characterized it, "she insisted on it."

Data from the case studies suggest that several factors, probably working in combination, have an influence on the decision to implement a long

range planning process. These can be characterized as:

- (1) the existence of a state requirement,
- (2) a problematic situation at the local level,
- (3) exposure to information and workshops on long range planning,
- (4) the philosophy or inclination of the library director,
- (5) the perceived complexity or adaptability of the planning process under consideration,
- (6) concrete examples of successful experiences by other, similar libraries that have undertaken long range planning.

Libraries D, E, and F

Library D is a district library that serves two cities. The library began a planning process in 1984. This seems to have been a result of staff exposure to informational meetings and workshops on state and national levels. After completing a staff survey, the process was discontinued because of changes that were occurring in the library, particularly in the post of library director.

In 1985, when the library was having its annual budget meeting with the council members of the two cities it serves, it was asked to develop a long

range plan. Because the library had access to PLA's planning process, it was in a position to follow through on the request. It was the first department of either city to produce a long range plan. The director told us, "I think they were pleased with how we interpreted their charge, and consequently expanded the charge to other departments—the police and fire departments."

This was a unique situation, in that the external mandate to produce a plan came from local government rather than the state library development agency. It is also interesting that as a result of its plan, the library was seen as setting an example for other city departments.

Library D's board of trustees took a stance toward long range planning similar to that taken by the trustees of Library A. "I think our board tends to perceive this kind of process as one of allowing the professionals to do the planning, and then they will do the endorsing, or evaluating, or refining." (Library D Director)

Library E is also a district library, comprised of a village and two townships. The director indicated that she wanted to do the planning process. "The impetus came from me. About the time I wanted to do it, the state association and the state library were jointly doing seminars around the

state." Several trustees and staff members as well as the director attended these seminars. The director felt that planning would help the library in terms of its accountability to its constituents. "We have critical issues facing us, and I really think you need a document to back the things you want to do, or how you want to proceed." (Library E Director)

In addition to having a director who was convinced of the value of planning and having exposure to information about the planning process, Library F exhibited another of the factors identified in our study: a problematic situation at the local level. The library had been trying for a number of years to expand its physical facility and had attempted several times to pass a bond issue. Each time, the library had prepared supporting documentation and had used professional space planning consultants; each time the bond issue was voted down. The planning process conducted by the library in 1989 was a continuation of this ongoing effort. As the director explained, "the real impetus behind this was we felt the need for either a new library building or an expanded library. So that's why we went through many of these processes along the way."

Library F differs from the libraries in the study in that it is a combined school district/public library and is

governed by an elected Board of Education. This board meets only as a school board, and does not meet separately as part of its function as a library board. The public library is part of the school system and, as such, participates in the strategic planning of the school district. The school district library in the study (Library C) has a library board whose members are appointed by the school board.

The Library F director has also been serving as the director of school libraries. "Fortunately, in July, I will be full time public library director. I think I've convinced them that, after five years of doing it, that this is too big a job being a public library director to expect that you can also run 14 school libraries." (Library F Director) The director also told us that an Advisory Library Commission had been created six months before. Although this group was not intended as a governing body, he expected that it would increasingly become more involved in library planning.

The Planning Committee

According to the second edition of PLA's planning and role setting manual,

Virtually all libraries form a planning committee. Seldom is successful organizational planning the work of one individual. Some libraries

seek citizen representation on the planning committee; others do not. Planning committees may include any combination of the following: the director, key staff, board members, and citizens.

The larger the planning committee and the more groups represented, the higher the library's level of effort for planning. Generally, 7 to 8 individuals is a workable number. If citizens are not represented on the planning committee, the library can still seek citizen input by having individuals serve as informal reactors or advisors or by holding hearings.

The planning committee may assume a variety of responsibilities such as representing constituents, reviewing planning documents, completing specific tasks, recommending policies, etc. No committee is likely to undertake all roles, and each library defines the committee role differently. Determine what responsibilities your planning committee will undertake and how the planning committee relates to your board of trustees (McClure and others 1987, p. 10).

This description of the composition and role of the planning committee differs considerably from that found in the first planning manual. At that time, PLA was insisting that public libraries *must* select a broad-based planning committee, representing major groups in the community as well as library interest groups (Palmour and others 1980, p. 17).

With this difference in mind, the researchers looked at the make-up of the planning committees utilized by the libraries with respect to the following: size of the committee, the groups represented, the overall task of the committee, and the general type of work assignments given to committee members. We asked those committee members that we interviewed about the commitment that was expected of them in terms of time and effort.

We also inquired as to how and why they thought they had been selected. In addition, we were interested in the extent to which the library staff was involved in collecting or providing planning information and statistical data to the committee.

LIBRARY A

The first plan, completed in 1982, was done with a small planning committee. "It had one board person on it and no community people... It was basically just the staff." (Library A Director)

Although there was some uncertainty with regard to exact make-up, the people we interviewed were agreed that various segments of the community were included in the library's second planning cycle. The library used the earlier manual that stressed

"If I remember correctly, we met once a week or so, with other members of the community and staff members, and a couple board members, to discuss possible goals."

—Library A Staff Member 4

"We all sort of jumped in there without any regard about whether or not this was a department head, or this was a board member or president. We tried to include the community people... you know, sometimes the community feels that, 'Oh, I don't know as much,' and they kind of hang back. I don't think we had that feeling at all."

—Library A Staff Member 2

"There were about six or seven of us each time, which if it had been much bigger, the brainstorming would have probably gotten out of hand. I thought it was a pretty good cross section."

—Library A Community
Rep. Representative 1

"It might have been advantageous to have someone from the Chamber of Commerce or the business element...so as to encourage monetary support."

—Library A Community Representative 1

"I set up a subcommittee to do the thing. I was not on the subcommittee. I had a chance to review the thing, all the board had a chance to review it, give our input. As I recall we discussed it over a fairly lengthy period of time, and it would be brought up at board meetings, and we could discuss it a little bit. You could go home and scratch on the rough draft, and have some input on it. But it was basically prepared by a [board] subcommittee, with the librarian's input on it, of course."

—Library B Trustee 3

"I know we brought the Friends of the Library in at some point and asked them for their suggestions.... It strikes me that [the reference librarian] was the staff representative on all of this."

—Library B Director

service to the total community and urged representation by various citizen groups in order to shift the locus of power to the community.

One staff member from Library A recalled that the objective in including community representatives was "to get their impression of what they wanted from the library." (Library A Staff Member 4) Another staff person suggested that it was important that citizen participants be library users. The citizen component was seen as a means of supplementing the information obtained through the community surveys. Friends of the Library were also represented and each department head participated. "Basically, [we] wanted information from the community, and then we wanted actual people who were vested in the library, who were part of the library, and that included trustees, Friends of the Library, different segments of the population. We had someone on there representing senior citizens, someone representing the religious community, things like that, and a story time parent." (Library A Staff Member 3)

The role of the citizens on the committee was also that of a reactor panel. "Their biggest thing was to read the results of the community survey, and then add their own input into it...using their own background." (Library A Director)

LIBRARY B

The Planning committee established for Library B consisted of the director and two trustees: "Essentially, the basic plan was built by the director and the two person board committee." (Library B Trustee 2) According to the director's recollection, "the board set up a two person committee to work with me. As it turned out, the two person committee took two different aspects. One worked on personnel because our personnel manual badly needed updating. The other person worked on the long range plan as such with me....But that worked out well, and that way, obviously, I wasn't just out there alone working on something. The board had a representative as well." (Library B Director)

LIBRARY C

From our interviews, we determined that the board and the director served as the planning committee for Library C. After an initial meeting at which a state library consultant served as facilitator, the director provided the timetable for completion of the process, the meeting agendas, the necessary decision-making information, and, in general, guided the work of the committee.

Planning meetings were separate from board meetings and the board worked as a committee of the whole,

" [The two trustees] were appointed by the president of the board. One of them was an obvious 'I want to work on this' kind of person, and the other was not negative to the idea.... There was staff involvement, yes. "

—Library B Trustee 2

"The president of the board presided [at the planning sessions], and he is a person who is skilled in that sort of thing. He works for a law firm.... Most of us on the board have masters' degrees and are perfectly capable of dealing with [large amounts of planning data]. We have a lawyer, a dentist, a man who's in charge of all the public utilities of the city, an English teacher. I've been an editor, a religious education director..."

—Library C Trustee 1

"I did all the preliminary work, but very definitely, [the board] took the lead in the planning process."

—Library C Director

"Oh, my, no, no-- we'd never feel that [citizen input was not wanted]. All the surveys show you that we are trying to keep up with the pulse of the community."

—Library C Trustee 1

There wasn't a lot of homework for members of the committee—I personally spent a lot of time, primarily because I wound up drafting the final document, and that took— I would say, a solid week of eight hour days to do that. But no, there wasn't a whole lot of homework, the time commitment was not extraordinary. The staff spent a lot of time putting together a report for us. Now I don't know how they would see the time."

—Library G Trustee 1

"[The Board] decided what the committee membership should look like, and that plan was then implemented. Then, following that, we would receive periodic updates of what the planning committee was actually doing. Now, we had board representation. There were two board members who served on the committee."

—Library G Trustee 2

rather than assigning specific tasks to subcommittees. There was no indication that the trustee members of the planning committee were given work assignments to be accomplished outside of committee meetings. The director, with the aid of the state library consultant and the staff, conducted surveys and otherwise collected the data necessary for the planning committee's deliberations.

When asked whether the trustees were equal partners in terms of developing the mission, goals, objectives, and other plan components, the director responded that although she had provided the ground work, the trustees "took the lead in the process."

With regard to the lack of citizen participation on the planning committee, we were told that this was something that simply did not occur to the board, that citizens were not excluded from the committee deliberately. As with Library B, the Library C trustees saw long range planning as a board responsibility. Citizen input into the process was achieved through the use of surveys.

(FOR LIBRARIES D, E, F SEE PAGE 50)

LIBRARY G

The ten members of the planning committee for library G included representatives from a number of differ-

ent groups, ranging from the city planning commission and the city council to the public schools and citizens at large. In setting up its planning committee, the board appears to have given due deliberation to which constituencies it wanted to include.

Although the local organizations that were involved in the planning committee were asked to name their own representatives, the board chose the two citizens at large, based on the expertise they could bring to the process. One of the citizen members was chosen because he was an active library user as well as being an expert in survey construction. The director chose the staff representatives.

With regard to the time commitment involved, the staff representative told us, "Once we were starting to meet and I knew what I was responsible for—the output measures and things like that—it was about what I expected. Before I started, I didn't have any idea what the role of each committee member would be, so I didn't even think about how much time it would take." (Library G Staff Member 1)

Although the planning committee produced what it assumed was to be the library's long range plan, the board was reluctant to endorse the total plan. This was because they were uncomfortable with some of the specifics.

"It was determined first of all that there would be two library board members, one of whom would chair it, for ease of communication. We wanted a representative from the city council, and from the school board, and two citizens at large, and two staff members, and the director. Oh, and the planning commission as well—I forgot that. I shouldn't have; it is very important. The three organizations that we wanted represented, we sent them a letter and asked that they appoint someone, one of their members, to sit with us."

—Library G Trustee 1

"The planning process hit all the relevant community groups--the planning commission, the city council, the school board, citizens. Just two citizens, and two staff, plus myself, and two library board members. The one thing we forgot was city administration."

—Library G Director

"I think I was put on it because I do most of the statistics in the library.... With all the output measures, the director didn't want to sit there with a calculator. He wanted somebody else to do it. That's my own speculation, though. I really don't know."

—Library G Staff Member 1

"Before I started [on the committee], I didn't have any idea what the role of each committee member would be, so I didn't even think about how much time it would take.... Basically, I knew when I was on the committee that was really the second most important thing...the first thing was the [service to the public]"

—Library G Staff Member 1

The director is the one who pretty much appointed people to be on the committee. I don't think he knew everybody on the committee. Some of the people were recommended by the board because of their positions in the community."

—Library H Staff Member 2

As a result, the planning document was accepted by the board of trustees as the "report" of the planning committee, but it was not adopted as the library's long range plan.

LIBRARY H

This library had one of the larger planning committees, consisting of 17 people. "When we sat at a table, it would be in a horse shoe fashion, and there were a lot of us" (Community Representative 1).

The initial planning process conducted by Library H resulted in a situation similar to that of Library G. Its plan was accepted with thanks to the committee, but it was not adopted and implemented by the board. In both cases, members of the planning committees were carefully selected to include representative community groups. Both committees carried out the process in accordance with the steps outlined in the edition of the planning manual being used. Yet neither produced the outcome anticipated by the developers of the process.

LIBRARY I

The composition of Library I's planning committee was similar to that of Library C in that it was made up of the entire board of trustees and the director. The board retained a consultant from the state library to facili-

tate its first meeting, utilized information and data gathered and presented by the director and her staff, and in bimonthly meetings completed the plan within seven months.

The director told us that she and the board had made a deliberate decision to operate at a basic level of effort with regard to the composition of the planning committee. Since it was to be the library's first experience with formal planning, they wanted to use it as opportunity to become familiar with how the process would work. To that end, they felt that it was important for all board members to participate actively in the process.

SUMMARY

It is interesting to note that Library B's long range plan was the result of the work of a board sub-committee consisting of one trustee and the director, with added input from a staff member and the Friends of the library. This seems to imply that the board saw long range planning as one of its functions, similar to the function of setting personnel and other library policies, and followed substantially the same process it would use under those circumstances: A trustee subcommittee was formed to gather information, come up with a recommendation, and submit the recommendation for the approval of the entire board.

"I belong to the [local] Business Association. There had been some discussion of a library branch...in our town. The Business Association designated me to keep in touch with the library and what was happening to see if there was any way the Business Association could help. Anyway, in staying in touch with the library about that, and in offering them information about possible future sites for the library, then that connected me, and someone said, 'Would you like to be on our long range planning committee.' And I said, 'Yes.'"

—Library H Community Representative 1

"Partly I think that I was asked because I was part time, which gave me the ability time-wise to take a commitment. It was a very long commitment. Partly because I've been in the community for about 20 years. I have kids in the school system. I was involved at the community level as well as the library level. I think that was probably the two biggest reasons I was chosen."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"We felt that it was more important at that time that the board become familiar with the process, that the board give direction, that the board commit their time, and that the board do it, and that they would do it as a committee of the whole."

—Library I Director

This perception of the board's role in planning is in contrast to the way that Library A's board initially responded to the director's decision to undertake a planning process. It will be recalled that the trustees saw this as a staff function and did not see the need for direct board involvement.

There are local or situational differences that might account for this difference in the boards' perceptions. When the director of Library A first brought the idea to the board's attention, neither she nor the trustees had been exposed to the planning manuals or to state workshops. There was no external pressure on the library to produce a long range plan. Instead, the director identified the need for a community survey as a means of helping her to get to know the community better.

Library B trustees, on the other hand, had been to state level workshops where their responsibility for seeing to it that their library had a long range plan in compliance with the state's mandate was clearly pointed out to them. The *fact* of having a long range plan with stated goals and objectives was the basic message that the trustees received from the state workshops. Obviously, a process based on the first planning manual was also introduced at these workshops. The trustees of Library B, however, were more concerned with

fulfilling their responsibility and having a plan than with the composition of the committee that would produce the plan.

Library G provided an interesting case with regard to the responsibility given to its planning committee and the relationship between the committee and the library board. Although there were two trustees on the committee who regularly reported to the board on the committee's progress, neither the board nor the library director actually guided the work of the committee.

The planning committee assumed that its charge was to produce a complete, written plan that included specific objectives and activities with timelines for accomplishing the objectives. But, unlike the libraries whose planning committees were composed of the entire board, or of a subcommittee of the board, Library G's board was not actively involved in developing the plan. Yet the responsibility for the policy decisions that are necessary in implementing a long range plan belongs to the library board. The board and director are in the best position to understand the budgetary and other ramifications of setting objectives that include specific activities and completion dates. They would know, for example, whether the financial resources and personnel necessary to accomplish a

particular objective are going to be available in the time period specified in the plan.

The board seems to have neglected to establish and to communicate an exact charge for the planning committee and to specify the appropriate point at which responsibility for the planning process would shift to the board (for finalization and approval) and to the administration and staff (for determining specific activities, for assigning responsibilities, and for implementation). Although the director was a member of the planning committee, he had decided early in the process not to lead the committee in any way. He left that responsibility to the committee chairperson.

Implicit in the director's comments during our interviews was the suggestion that he wanted the library's long range plan indeed to be the result of committee deliberations, rather than the reflection of his own opinions about the direction in which the library should be going. He and his staff provided ample planning data and information to the committee according to the recommendations in the planning process manual. The translation of the data into a plan of action was then left to the discretion of the committee.

The committee, having access to the planning and role setting manual,

completed the process in the manner described. What was not understood, apparently, was that the plan itself—the written document that would guide the library's operation for the next several years—could not be finalized by any group except the library's policy making board. Had the planning committee sought the director's advice and obtained the board's approval for the specifics to be contained in the plan prior to writing the final document, the outcome might have been different.

In the case of Library H, it does not appear as though the committee misread its charge. It seems likely that the board established its planning committee for a given purpose: to develop a rationale that could be used to seek additional voter funding for the library. Such attempts had failed in the past; this time the library hoped to develop a stronger justification through the use of the planning process.

The committee did what it was asked to do. It prepared a plan centering on the need for increased funding in order for the library to meet identified community needs. In developing its plan, however, the committee carefully followed the process set forth in the first planning manual, a process designed to lead to the development of specific, *achievable* short-range objectives.

Unfortunately, the objectives included target dates which could not be met within the library's existing budget. The board then found itself with a set of objectives that would only be "doable" if and when the library passed a bond issue or otherwise obtained additional funding. At that point in time the library board had not laid the proper groundwork and was not yet ready to go to the voters.

As a further complicating factor, the board was in the midst of replacing the director who had guided the planning process. The board, realizing that it could not commit the library to a plan dependent on "pretend money," opted to acknowledge the work of the committee and shelve the plan.

Libraries B, C, and I employed small planning committees with no community representatives, which made it easier for the boards of trustees to maintain control of the process. Although Library A's planning committee included representatives from a number of community groups, the director assumed responsibility for guiding the work of the committee. For these four libraries, there were no obstacles to board adoption of the final written document.

Several factors relating to the planning committee were identified

as being potentially important to the outcome of the planning process. These involve the composition and responsibilities given to the committee and can be summarized as follows:

- (1) the extent to which the reasons for undertaking the planning process are understood by the library board and director and are conveyed to the planning committee,
- (2) the "fit" between the composition of the planning committee and the board's reasons for planning (i.e., the expected outcome),
- (3) the extent to which the board or library director guides and monitors the work of the planning committee, and
- (4) the relationship between the committee's size and the extent to which it is expected to be a working committee as opposed to a reactor committee.

Libraries D, E, and F

Library D's planning committee included staff, trustees, community representatives, and a member of the Friends group. "The president of the Friends was on the committee. We had several people representing John Q. Public. They also, at the same time, were representative of group

interests. One woman was active in a pre-school, so she was there as a library patron. But she was coming with the orientation of children's services. We had a gentleman who was a senior citizen. He was representing the public in that he uses the library daily." (Library D Director)

The library used a different approach, however, in keeping the entire board informed and in directing the work of the committee. Certain groups came into the process at different points.

"The five year plan was primarily developed by the senior staff and with a couple board members. The board was brought in at the completion of different aspects of it. Certainly they were presented the demographics. They were presented the analysis of services that we provide to date, which really came from the output measures. They analyzed the roles and the long range goals.... parcels of [the plan] came to them at each time, so they had opportunity to bless what was done." (Library D Director)

After the board reviewed the work done by the planning committee, refinements were made to the goals that had emerged. In a manner similar to that adopted by Library A, citizens were used as reactors to the plan. "The Citizen's Review Committee was brought in during the last three

months, and they met every two weeks and looked at portions of it... and closely analyzed the final document to see if it was an item they wanted their names associated with, and see if they endorsed all the concepts in it. Then it went back to the library board for their approval, and then on to the city council." (Library D Director)

With regard to the composition of the planning committee, Library E "decided that we wanted to go the most in-depth route you could go... Since we are a district library, we wrote letters to the two township boards, and to the village council, explaining what it was we wanted to do, and asking them if they would please designate one of their board members to be a part of the planning committee. They did. We also thought it would be good to have a representative from the Friends, and to have a representative from our school district. So we wrote and asked them. As it turned out, the school assigned two members. And, of course, we wanted a staff member other than myself." (Library E Director)

Library E ran into difficulties with its committee because the director expected it to be a working committee, while certain members apparently did not see their participation in that way. "We would meet monthly, we would assign tasks, and we would

come back to the next monthly meeting, and the only people who would have done their work would be myself and the staff representative." (Library E Director) Although the work of the committee had been temporarily suspended at the time of our visit, the director indicated that she intended to prepare a mission statement, goals, roles, and objectives, and then reconvene the committee. At that point, the committee would function as a reactor panel.

The director of Library F reported having "a library planning committee which consisted of 54 members. A large committee, a very large committee." It was the impression of the researchers that the non-library staff members of this committee, although they participated in the role setting exercise, were not given individual assignments. Instead, their input into the process was in the form of their reactions to the information presented.

The composition of the planning committees utilized by Libraries D, E, and F reflects an attempt to include the sort of broad-based community representation that was urged in the first planning manual. This characteristic was also found in several of the study libraries. While the size of the committee may not necessarily be inversely related to a successful outcome, it does appear as though a large committee works better if the citizen

component serves mainly as a reactor panel and is not expected to be a working group. Or, as an alternative, group members could be assigned to smaller, working subcommittees. With a smaller committee, composed primarily of library staff and trustees, individual assignments are more likely to be carried out in a timely fashion. The director of Library D made the observation that the process requires a lengthy time commitment and it is not realistic to expect busy community leaders to give more than three months of their time. She felt that bringing representatives of community groups into the process during the last few months, when a "finessing" process was going on, was a more constructive use of their time.

Elements of the Process

The researchers examined the process used by each library in order to determine (a) what was done and how it was done, (b) how closely the process matched the steps recommended by either of PLA's planning manuals, and (c) whether the library included in its process any of the following activities:

- (1) pre-planning
- (2) community analysis (surveys, census, and other data)
- (3) brainstorming
- (4) role setting
- (5) output measures

LIBRARY A

At the time of our visit, Library A had conducted two planning cycles and was just beginning a third. The process used in its first cycle, conducted in 1982, was developed by the director without specific reference to PLA's 1980 publication, *A Planning Process for Public Libraries*. The director described the process as an effort by herself and the library staff to obtain information from both users and non-users through the use of a questionnaire:

We tried to get people to fill it out that weren't library users. We had a group at the mall and we had a table at the bank, and some other things.... This was our first experience in finding out that people really don't want to tell you what they think. And so we had this eight page survey and they said, "We aren't going to do eight pages."

After we did [the citizen survey] we came up with a set of goals and objectives...we said we would institute them in 1982 and would review them for the first time in 1984. And we did that. (Library A Director)

The 1980 planning manual was used in Library A's second cycle (1984) primarily as a guide to data collection. In addition to a written questionnaire, a telephone survey was also conducted. People from the community were employed to conduct the telephone survey. As part of the process, the library did a staff survey and en-

"I think we understood the process. We followed the process, but we should have surveyed first."

—Library A Director

"We didn't have to go out of our way to come at some weird hour, and that made me want to keep participating in the group."

—Library A Community Representative 1

"We're going to call 4000 people this time which we didn't do the last time. It's every third person and we'll call them three times and if we don't get an answer in three tries we're going to go on. But 4000 is a fairly large amount. So surely we should end up with 3000 or more. We're calling nights and days both."

—Library A Director

"My clearest memory of the planning process was a lot of meetings. These weren't long, long meetings, but it was every week, an hour, an hour and a half or so. A lot of bringing out ideas, and then dashing and bringing them down, and then going back, and going over..."

—Library A Staff Member 3

"This time we are not using the planning process book at all. We are just doing our own thing."

—Library A Director

"Oh yes, brainstorming! The sky was the limit, and we would sort of write furiously, and they would take it all, sift it out, put it into categories so that we weren't saying the same thing three times... and they'd come back at the next session and have it all listed for us—one, two, three."

—Library A Community Representative 1

gaged in brainstorming sessions. A citizen member of the planning committee told us, "There were usually about six or seven of us each time. Had [attendance] been much bigger, the brainstorming would have probably gotten out of hand."

The committee met "once a week or so... to discuss possible goals." (Library A Staff Member 4) "It was for a period of two or three months, I believe. We'd try to make it so that 80 to 90 percent could come to the next meeting. We'd set it that way and we would do our best to be here. [We met] at convenient times so everybody could be here, and not have to jeopardize their family life or their own work positions." (Library A Community Representative 1)

In comparing the first planning cycle (in which neither manual was used) with the second cycle, the director told us, "The first time we probably had it done in three months. The second time we took six months.... We just beat ourselves to death.... [The committee was] real hard working and actually most of them came every time. We did a lot of brainstorming up front. We brainstormed for about three months."

The director explained that the process she planned to use for the third cycle would be much simpler and would be aimed at establishing

short term objectives "...my goal this time is be basically quick and dirty. Something [citizens] can respond to quickly, and that we can respond to quickly. They will see changes in six months. Definitely. We will probably have some of these changes in effect by July 1st."(Library A Director)

The intent of the third cycle is to ask about things the library has been thinking about changing in order to get some idea of what the public's response might be. The library will then set a limited number of short term objectives which can be implemented immediately.

The director told us that Library A intended to repeat its telephone survey during the third planning cycle. "This time we have two staff members who only work in one department and do not work full-time. And they haven't as yet got a full picture... of the whole library, I don't think. So they are doing it." (Library A Director)

"I don't want someone to do the calling that knows the library well, because I don't want the patrons to feel that they are talking to someone they would see at the desk. Because it's hard for them to say, 'No, I don't get the help that I need at the library. No, I don't find the information I want.' You know it's real difficult if you recognize the voice."(Library A Director)

"From time to time the library director would talk about the plan, and solicit input from the staff to the plan, but it basically was the library board committee that came up with the plan, and the revisions done through the library director and the rest of the board."

—Library B Staff Member 3

"We did fill out staff surveys."

—Library B Staff Member 3

"I didn't remember that we had any process, really, for staff input. But [the director] reminded me that we had been given a copy of the projected goals at a staff meeting. So essentially that's all that I am aware of that any of the staff has had."

—Library B Staff Member 2

"We brought it up at staff meetings regularly. As we were developing it, I remember very early on asking them to fill out one of these forms, and then talking about in staff meetings what we ought to emphasize, what we ought not to emphasize in the draft form. We did four or five drafts of this thing. The draft was presented to [staff] to get their reactions to what was going on."

—Library B Director

"I don't think there was a general survey outside; it was strictly in the library."

—Library B Trustee 1

"There is a problem in reporting to boards. You are essentially asking, 'What do you think of it?' And boards will tell you what they think of it, even if it is only a rough draft...the board—we—will take a look and say, 'OK, that's your document to date, and we don't like this, or you've forgotten that,' and spend great amounts of time doing what managerial groups always do—giving input. So [the sub-committee] didn't report in great detail until they had details to give us."

—Library B Trustee 2

Library A did not use the second edition of the planning manual, therefore it did not do the role setting exercise. Nor did the library use the output measures in assessing its current level of service.

LIBRARY B

The process used by Library B was simplified because of the size and nature of the planning committee. This function was carried out essentially by the director and one or two board members. The library conducted user and staff surveys. Brief questionnaires were also completed by trustees, volunteers, and Friends of the Library. According to the director, survey questions were open-ended, patterned after a long range plan completed earlier by the library's regional network. "You give people a leading question to comment on, rather than giving them a form with yes/no ...and a,b,c type of stuff.... We did different colors for different people. I know the staff had a certain color. I think the volunteers had a different color... we gave these out and asked people to fill them out if they would." (Library Director)

Library B's pre-planning timetable called for the final document to be completed within nine or ten months. "The plan we came up with said that in March we would distribute question forms to the library board, staff

members, the public, and the Friends of the Library. By September to December, draft a long range plan and resubmit it to the library board, and have a final version to the library board by December. We certainly did it by December, and we may have done it a month earlier." (Library B Director)

When asked who wrote the goals and objectives, the director told us, "I came up with the first draft and it was circulated. Then I changed the wording based on what they had all been telling me should be changed."

One of the trustees explained the process in this way, "The board added or deleted things. Then it was redone by the director and the committee and we went over it again, until we could reach a consensus, if not enthusiastic agreement, that the basic objectives all made sense, that they were essentially attainable, and that the subpoints under each objective also made sense and were attainable, and were necessary to do before the prime objective in each case was reached." (Library B Trustee 2)

Much of the director's time from March through November seems to have been spent writing and rewriting the plan. Those trustees who were not appointed to the planning committee, and perhaps were unsure of what the final product would look like, were

"I told the director if I would have had more input into this, I would have tried to put what's a goal, and what's an objective. In fact, to be truthful, I had sat down and put a fair amount of time, and had gone through and changed a whole bunch of words in this, and then I thought, 'Well, I don't want to upset the committee'..."

—Library B Trustee 3

"They came up with some basic objectives, and basic steps within those objectives. Then the board went over that and nit-picked, as boards will; and some nit-picking was very worthwhile."

—Library B Trustee 2

"There was a questionnaire. It started with role selection. We did a survey from one of those PLA books. This is a summary. We had board members and staff people do that...OK, the mission statement—we started with a draft of that, but we didn't really complete it until we had finished the long range plan."

—Library C Director

"The process started with the surveys and looking at the [state association] standards. The board got together with three staff people for a six hour session, and there were a lot of statistics and other things that had been gathered together that they had all seen before, but they hadn't seen it all in the same place and in the same order."

—Library C Director

"The board president (who does this kind of thing in his other occupation) suggested the format [which] consisted of finances, human resources, buildings, equipment, collection, circulation, and administration and services. So it was helpful for us to break it down in that way, and he's the one who suggested that."

—Library C Director

"What I like about this is that there's provision for expediting [the plan]. You've got the plan, but if you don't have people stipulated to expedite it or some time limits set, which this does, you've just talked. You've just bandied about a bunch of nice words."

—Library C Trustee 1

nonetheless aware of the time and effort involved. "I think a fair amount of time was put into this. I don't know what other long range plans from libraries look like. I've never seen one from another library." (Library B Trustee 3)

The library did not do any brainstorming; and, since it completed its plan before having access to the PLDP manuals, it did not engage in the role setting exercise. Nor did the library use any of the output measures in developing its long range plan.

LIBRARY C

It might be said that long range planning began in Library C with the arrival of its current director. One of the first things she did was to start making a list of the things she planned to do during the year. In addition, she began comparing the library with a set of state library association standards and a measurement manual provided by the state association. The manual "was very practical and very specific about 'you can be said to have achieved this standard if you have this or that.' They also put out this [checklist], and I went through and checked and said, 'Well, we do this, we don't do that.' and so on." (Library C Director) Feeling that the library should have a written long range plan, the director and board then began a formal planning process.

The director did most of the preliminary (pre-planning) work. The process started with an all-day session presided over by a planning consultant from the state library and attended by the board, the library director and three staff members. The participants were given materials comparing their library with other libraries in the county and the state. Information was presented in several categories: finances, human resources, facilities and equipment, collection and circulation, organization and administration, and library services. After a brainstorming session, a set of goals and objectives was developed within each category. The staff and the trustees individually completed the role setting exercise.

Library C is part of a consortium consisting of the seven public libraries located in the county. Within the time period that Library C was developing its long range plan, the library director and two of the library's trustees served on a committee that was developing a long range plan for the consortium. This enabled the library to consider its operation within the context of county-wide public library service.

The library gathered a number of output measures for use in planning. Therefore, a number of survey forms were completed by library users. Along with community analysis and

"We meet as a staff for an hour, or an hour and a half a month, and we did [the role setting exercise] in one of those sessions. [Staff] had received things ahead of time. Maybe it could be fancier if you had more time, but I thought that was plenty of time."

—Library C Director

"[Working as a committee of the whole] was so much more thorough than [smaller] committees or something of that sort, to have that much data and concentrate on it for that many hours. Maybe some people can do things piecemeal, but I find I do better when I concentrate at one time."

—Library C Trustee 1

"As a library staff we were more reluctant to come to the conclusion that [our primary role was] to serve popular interests. The board was very clear on that, and we, as a staff were forced to say, 'hey, we know that's true'."

—Library C Director

"So, in 1988-89, we did the community survey, which said 'the library is absolutely wonderful, and we'll vote any amount of millage that you want...and we love the staff.' We hit 70% of the households and registered 60% of the population. And we did the patron survey that said, 'This library is fantastic. It is the best library we've been in'."

—Library G Director

"We took all the roles, and we did a forced ranking.... We had the staff do it; we had the library board do it; all independently. After we gathered all of our information, we had the committee do it. Again, the same way.... Remarkably, all three groups chose the same top three priorities. So, we obviously were going in the same direction, no major shocks."

—Library G Trustee 1

"We hired [the university research center]. They do a lot of surveys in the metropolitan area."

—Library G Director

library performance data, responses from a telephone survey were also utilized in the process.

(FOR LIBRARIES D, E, F SEE PAGE 59)

LIBRARY G

Library G's initial action with regard to planning was to employ the research center of a nearby university to conduct a user survey and a community survey in the form of telephone calls to randomly selected households. The surveys were begun prior to the establishment of the planning committee.

Pre-planning also occurred in the form of setting a planning timetable. "When we initially began, we were looking at a six month process. What actually happened was it took us about nine months to actually finalize the document." (Library G Trustee 1)

There is no indication in the committee's report that it utilized demographic or other community data. Nor did our interviews reveal that such data were provided to the committee. Although staff surveys were not included in the process, each department provided the committee with oral presentations and written reports. Included in the staff reports were "excellent, well-thought out goals for the future. These reports can be used to plan future services to patrons as funds

and space become available." (Library G, written report of the Long Range Planning Committee)

In addition to statistical and other information about the library, output measures were also provided to the committee. "The only two [measures] we did not collect [were] interlibrary loan requests and program attendance rates. We had them, but we did not use them for the report." (Library G Staff Member 1)

According to one of the people we interviewed, the committee "did a little bit of committee building at the beginning.... It was basically a little game that we played as two teams, but it built the feeling of working together, and the object was to show that you can't do any of this alone, and we all need to work together. It was an icebreaker, because many of these people, although they knew the other people by name, didn't know them as individuals." (Library G Trustee 1)

A modified form of brainstorming was done by the committee in connection with the manual's work forms on evaluating the survey results. "In the area of services and opportunities and possible responses, we had a lot of, 'What are your ideas? What do you think?' It wasn't exactly a brainstorming session. That's as close as we came." (Library G Trustee 1)

"We did a great deal of our information gathering about library statistics, and survey results, and so forth before we did the role setting. After the role setting, we had the adult services report, and the children's services report, and several other reports, which we did not have before the role setting. Because we did not wish to influence the role setting by a sales pitch from 'my section of the library'."

—Library G Trustee 1

"In the beginning, we met for the first three months, I believe, about three times a month, once every two weeks. The chair of the committee would give us an agenda before the meetings, things to think about, things to pull together. Then we presented the materials at the meeting to discuss them. After that, we set up the agenda for the next meeting."

—Library G Staff Member 1

"We met at 3:30 in the afternoon, hoping to catch people...take an hour and a half off from their day, rather than a whole lot of time. We did that deliberately, and we told people up front, in fact, when we sent the letter, we had already determined when the meetings would be, so that people could make adjustments."

—Library G Trustee 1

"There was direction given at the beginning. There was a woman who came in and explained the process. She was very organized, she was very clear, she told us what to expect, and what would be expected of us. But the whole way along, it was very free. We processed a lot of information, and it was very clear that they were always interested in our ideas, and they could be completely off the top of our heads. Nobody would find any fault or blame. At any time we could stop and ask questions, clarify something. She laid out a schedule of what months which information we would be getting. Generally, that was pretty much stuck to."

—Library H Trustee 1

LIBRARY H

The first plan developed by Library H was completed under the guidance of the former director. He included most of the elements specified in the planning manual. The process began with a facilitator, who outlined the planning timetable which had been established through pre-planning activities. The facilitator was one of the PLA members who had taken part in development of the planning process and who had been presenting planning workshops throughout the country. A large citizen telephone survey and in-house user surveys were conducted by the staff.

The planning committee met once a month. According to one of the members, there was

a very high rate of attendance.... We would get a packet before the meeting, and we were given notebooks at the very beginning. We were always provided with fresh pencils [and] note paper. And all of the sections that we received were hole punched, so we could put them into our notebooks. It ended up taking two notebooks. Then we would receive summaries of the meeting, after the meeting was over. So first we received agendas, and then background information for our review, and then the meeting and then the summary." (Library H Trustee 1)

The recollection of a staff member who served on the committee differed with regard to attendance: "I don't think they were very committed to the project. There were a couple of members who were here at every meeting, but for the most part they came sporadically.... I think only about four of them were consistently here." (Library H Staff Member 3)

It was the impression of the present director that "the two staff people on the committee and the director got together, wrote the plan, and presented it to the committee. The three of them had brainstormed, and the committee more or less rubber stamped it." (Library H Director).

The close control maintained by the director was partially confirmed by one of the committee members who told us, "I must say that I don't think that the committee was as functional as it could have been. I think it was mostly the director who led us in the direction that he wished us to go." (Library H Staff Member 3)

In several instances, the committee worked in small groups to brainstorm and draft the mission, goals, and objectives. "We broke into small groups and each came up with our own version. It was like shuffling cards, of course, and we all got together and said, 'I think that that is really important,' or 'Yes, I can bend

"We did a big survey, and we hadn't done a patron survey in years. Of course, that's very useful, and I know we should do surveys more frequently. That, in itself was a tremendous amount of work. And the whole staff took part in that."

—Library H Staff Member 1

"[The staff] did a lot of gathering of demographics, and studies, and reports to the committee; plus the surveying was done by library staff."

—Library H Director

"[The exchange of ideas] continued throughout. I loved the free expression of ideas, and I was always very comfortable in the meetings."

—Library H Trustee 1

"Because we were part of the group, the director, [another staff member] and myself, we didn't feel that anything got left out, because we made sure that if somebody on the committee didn't say what we wanted, then we made sure it was said. It wasn't like some sort of a conspiracy...but there were certain important things that we knew had to be in the long range plan."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"I think much of [the telephone survey] was done on the staff's own time. I'm not sure if it was supposed to have been... I don't think it was very well organized. The staff was given so many names to contact. It had to be done by this much time. Perhaps it was just that if you could work it into your working day, fine. If you can't, then do it as best you can."

—Library H Staff Member 1

"The former director assembled (I don't know who did it, but somebody in this building assembled) reams of raw data. All I did was say, 'Hey, lookit, I'm very comfortable with working with numbers. I can take all this data and give you any kind of projection you want.' We had a meeting, and talked for about an hour. I wrote it up, and gave [the director] my projections and an analysis of what the county looks like."

—Library H Community Representative 1

"We were mailed [the role setting work sheet] at home, so we could fill it out and then hand it in."

—Library H Trustee 1

here if you word it that way.' We kind of melded all of them. In the mission statement, there is a phrase about literacy that was absolutely one committee's—they wouldn't quit until it was in, so it's there." (Library H Trustee 1)

A community representative that we interviewed had a similar perception of the ability of committee members to get their ideas incorporated into the planning document:

I kept on saying when we'd have these brainstorming sessions about priorities, 'we've got to have more easy reading books!' And someone would try to lump it in, and I would say, 'No, I think that has to be separate.' I think the superintendent of schools felt very strongly about literacy, and various other people wanted self-help books, and certain types of magazines, whatever. So you could kind of make sure that your little thing got put in as a goal, but it wasn't really that bad. You'd talk to your neighbor and say, 'Hey, I'm on this committee. What do you think we really need?' (Library H Community Representative 1)

One of the staff members explained the director's method of dealing with suggestions from the committee with which he did not agree, "I felt it was pretty much guided the way he wanted it, and there were a few things that when we got to the actual goals and objectives that I don't think that he

necessarily agreed with. But it was also easier to give in than it was to fight every little point. But he got the major ones he wanted." (Library H Staff Member 3)

Reports to the committee by department heads was also part of the process. "These were just little talks to the whole committee, 17 people I think it was. Just to give each person an understanding of what the library had been involved with over the years, how things had developed." (Library H Staff Member 2)

Despite the director's guidance of the work of the planning committee and the comprehensive level of effort that was employed in the process, the long range plan was not adopted by the board. When the present director arrived, she revised the plan into one that was acceptable. The process this second time was much simpler. The director prepared draft goals and objectives with the help of a trustee and with input from the staff. These were refined and became the library's long range plan. One of the staff members we interviewed told us that the process the new director used was "a more acceptable model. I think [staff] have more of a feeling that they can have a little input." (Library H Staff Member 1) This staff member also explained how the director obtained reaction and input from the staff to her rough drafts of the revised plan: "most of it

"Everybody had their own opinions. Either you had your own opinions, or you'd talk to people and you'd form opinions. Then you'd lobby for certain things."

—Library H Community Representative 1

"We had statistics. Myself and the other staff member [on the committee] and the director, we gathered statistics from Federal sources and down at the state department of development. We were able to get some statistics that way. The other committee member did some statistical gathering around town. I think she would call on different agencies and maybe businesses, too. Now that was done early. We started working on the statistics right away."

—Library H Staff Member 2

"I never felt that anything was truly a committee decision. I felt like there was a lot of input from the committee, and that the director had already decided more or less how he wanted this plan to be written, and then guided all the thinking about it."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"So, at the January meeting, the board approved the outline, the board established their monthly meeting dates. They started getting their background material to review, and they approved the facilitator. We were ready to roll after our January 1988 meeting."

—Library I Director

"I was the person from the staff that was at the planning meetings. But [the staff] filled out the standards, whether we met them or not, filled out that document that went to the board at the first meeting. When we started drafting goals and objectives and roles, the library staff had a staff meeting, and got to rank what roles we thought the library should fill, the library board at the planning meeting got to rank them then. The library board started to develop goals and objectives, at a staff meeting, the staff would look at them and make comments. It was sort of a back and forth process at that time."

—Library I Director

"We used census information to look at the community. We are a smaller community. In a smaller library, you should have some handle on your community...or you're not doing a very good job."

—Library I Director

was hand written with her ideas about what she wanted to do with different portions of the original long range plan. We were pretty much in agreement, but there were places where I disagreed with what she had put down, and I wrote that up, explained why, talked to the staff about it. They agreed and it was implemented as I suggested, rather than what she had written." (Library H Staff Member 1)

LIBRARY I

The process used by Library I began with a "planning to plan" phase. A facilitator was hired to help with the pre-planning and a state consultant helped with the role selection. The staff was introduced to the planning process shortly after the board made its decision to implement long range planning. The staff provided the board with planning data, including community information, library statistics and output measures, and other materials.

As a committee of the whole, the board met monthly and completed the following in nine months: selecting roles, drafting the mission statement, reviewing selected roles and proposed mission statement, adoption of the mission statement, brainstorming goals and objectives, reviewing and revising first drafts of goals and objectives, and formal approval of the final draft of the long range plan.

SUMMARY

Although some pre-planning obviously occurred in Library A, the individuals that we interviewed did not indicate that they undertook such activity as a deliberate phase in the process. The remaining libraries indicated that a timeline for completion of various planning stages had been pre-determined, therefore we can assume a formal pre-planning phase.

Libraries A and H, which used the original edition of the planning manual, conducted a number of surveys and obtained demographic data for use in analyzing their communities. Both libraries used brainstorming. Library A, with a smaller committee, spent much more time on this part of the process than did Library H.

Libraries C, G, and I used the second version of the PLA planning manual. Although the two smaller libraries (C and I) employed a more basic level of effort than did Library G, all three libraries included most of the elements suggested in the planning manual.

Library B did not follow the process specified by either manual. Therefore, it is not surprising that it employed the fewest number of elements. Library H used the highest number of planning elements. Table 4 on page 68 presents the elements we

identified as having been used by each of the libraries.

The table data for Library A relates to its use of the original planning manual in developing its second long range plan. Library H table data concerns its use of this same manual to develop the initial plan that was not adopted by the library board.

Each of the libraries conducted in-house user surveys as part of their data collection effort. Four of the libraries used telephone surveys to reach non-users. Library H conducted student surveys and Library A distributed questionnaires outside the library in order to record citizen opinion.

Staff input into the process was obtained through staff surveys in four libraries. Library G, which did not use a staff questionnaire, asked each staff member to give an oral presentation to the planning committee which included suggestions for the future direction of his or her area of responsibility. Library H was the only other library to utilize staff reports to the committee. Staff size probably influences the use of such reports.

Although each library used a different combination of planning elements, the major concern of each was the need to collect sufficient information for the planning committee's deliberations. The one type of infor-

TABLE 4. Planning Elements Used by the Study Libraries

Planning Element	Library					
	A	B	C	G	H	I
Pre-planning		X	X	X	X	X
Consultant or Facilitator			X	X	X	X
Demographic data	X		X		X	X
Library Statistics	X		X	X	X	X
Citizen Surveys: Written	X				X	
Citizen Surveys: Telephone	X		X	X	X	
User Surveys	X	X	X	X	X	X
Staff Surveys	X	X	X		X	
Staff Reports				X	X	
Brainstorming	X		X	X	X	X
Role Setting			X	X	X ¹	X
Output Measures			X	X	X	X

1 Although Library H did not use the manual containing the role selection exercise, its planning committee was led through a role prioritizing exercise by a facilitator who had helped PLA develop the role selection concept.

mation each library tried to gather was user satisfaction with what the library currently offers. Four libraries asked both users and nonusers for their opinions about what the library should provide.

This suggests that all of the study libraries have subscribed to the central premise of PLA's concept of long range planning—that such planning should be based on the identified characteristics and expressed needs of the local community. Whether local needs were identified through an in-depth community analysis or through user and/or citizen surveys alone depended on the resources that each of the libraries felt able to commit to the planning process. The indication here is that the libraries accepted the notion, spelled out in the second edition of the planning manual, that such factors as the existence of a previous plan or the extent of available resources should dictate the level of effort expended on each part of the process.

Larger libraries in the study with available staff and/or the money to contract for the information saw no barrier to collecting data at a comprehensive level of effort. Smaller libraries that used the edition of the planning manual which stressed optional levels of effort chose the basic level for most aspects of their planning process. With regard to demo-

graphic data, however, Libraries C and I were able to select at least an intermediate level of effort by having access to such data that had been collected for county-wide library planning. This advantage was possible because the directors of these smaller libraries were actively involved in networking with other public libraries in their vicinity.

The consultant services provided by their state libraries were also a factor in data collection efforts, especially by the smaller libraries. The consultants were able to provide comparative information on similar libraries in the state and to guide the library planners in the use of state standards for evaluating their existing services.

Libraries D, E, and F

According to the director of Library D, "We did not exactly follow every prescribed step in the planning process. We did not do a student survey. We certainly did the staff and library user survey, and we contracted with [a local research firm] to do the nonuser survey. They conducted telephone interviews with residents of the cities—300 interviews with heads of households.... The actual document itself certainly included a lot of background data....once we began working on the questions for the nonuser survey, they were not nec-

essarily the questions identified in the planning manual." (Library D Director)

Library D was experiencing space problems at the time of our visit. A recent bond issue for a new building had been defeated by a small margin, so the library intended to try again in the near future. The director indicated that she had "no intention of doing another five year plan until I know whether or not I'm going to be in a new building. The kinds of strategies that we will have to incorporate within the plan will differ substantially—if we're in massive collection development versus more stringent collection maintenance for this size facility.... In the meantime, we do recognize the fact that we are coming to the end of the usability of this particular document. So instead, we are looking at the prescribed roles that PLA has identified in the role setting. The role setting document had not been published at the time we did this plan, so we could not have incorporated it." (Library D Director)

The staff, including part time employees, was at the time of our visit going through a series of exercises "to identify roles prescribed for each branch. I anticipate that these roles will not be synonymous. Each branch will have a different identified function, and what we're telling them is that they need to identify overall two

primary roles—not to exceed two primary and two secondary roles for each branch." (Library D Director)

Library E also included surveys in its planning process. "We did a survey in each branch, and then we did a staff survey. [The trustees] also filled out the staff survey.... We were going to do a phone survey that was going to be geared to the nonuser. If after the second question they said they used the library, that was the end of the survey. If they didn't, then we had some other questions. This survey has never been done." (Library E Director) The director had planned to have the Friends of the Library conduct the telephone survey. Before that could be accomplished, however, the planning process was temporarily halted.

Library E had also attempted brainstorming, but the experience was not successful. "Sometimes the discussion would wander. They would start discussing, 'Let's build a new building,' and it would go off. They were talking about the results of the process, and what would be the outcome, but they wouldn't want to go through the steps to get [to the outcome]." (Library E Director)

Library E did not use an outside consultant. The director felt, in hindsight, that such a person would have helped to keep the committee work-

ing by being able to "chastise" them. "That person could have very easily said, 'Hey, listen, you've got to do your part'.... I think our board would have been hesitant [to hire a consultant], but maybe after this experience, maybe they would be willing to do that." (Library E Director)

The third non-study library, Library F, gathered data as well, but did not use surveys. "From time to time, we have done informal meetings.... A meeting I call a 'breakfast meeting' in which [school librarians, Friends, and others] are asked to talk about trends in libraries and trends in society.... It is sort of a way of gathering information about people's reactions to libraries, and how they see things evolving and changing in terms of libraries. That in itself is part of a planning process in which you get input from people as to what ... their perceptions are." (Library F Director)

As described, such focus group meetings can be seen as a form of brainstorming as well as information gathering. The director went on to state, "our planning process involved planning for documentation to justify a library building program, so that in a real sense, our entire approach was to gather data which might permit us to do that. (Library F Director)

Data from the non-study libraries supports the finding that public li-

brary administrations and boards are accepting the PLA premise that long range planning requires information that goes beyond staff perceptions of what the community wants.

In the study libraries, a consequence of the Public Library Development Program—whether every element in PLA's recommended process is used or not—is the heightened awareness of the value of asking citizens for their opinions of existing library resources and services. Library directors and boards are also becoming aware of another important planning question to ask taxpayers: would they use and financially support specific new services if they were offered by the library?

Participant Evaluations

As the people we interviewed described the specifics of the process used in their libraries, they were asked to comment on whether certain elements worked or did not work. We also requested that they evaluate the advantages and/or disadvantages of having utilized a planning process. Finally, we asked for their opinions about the concept of formalized, long range planning in general. The responses were initially grouped into five categories:

- (1) what worked and why,
- (2) what did not work and why,

- (3) positive comments about the library's planning process,
- (4) negative comments about the process, and
- (5) general reactions to the concept of long range planning.

Table 5, beginning on page 97, summarizes the comments we received on what worked and what did not work. Table 6, beginning on page 101, presents participant perceptions of positive and negative aspects of planning. Below is a brief discussion of the findings in this area for each of the study libraries. We have not attempted to include all of the opinions expressed in each library as there was some redundancy. Instead, we have tried to provide a synthesis of the participants' reactions to the way planning was implemented in their particular libraries.

LIBRARY A

Library A had been involved in long range planning over a period of seven or eight years. The director implemented the first planning cycle without reference to the PLA manuals, conducted a second cycle using the 1980 planning manual, and then decided to abandon PLA's process and "do our own thing." (Library A Director)

The problems that the library encountered in using the 1980 manual

were along the same lines as those which early users had reported to PLA and which had caused the association to make refinements in its second edition. These included (1) the length of time it took to brainstorm and collect data, (2) the encouragement to develop lengthy questionnaires which asked everyone about everything, (3) the difficulty in getting the public to respond to the survey, (4) problems in translating a large amount of data into a limited number of feasible goals, and (5) the difficulty in learning how to set priorities and establish achievable, measurable objectives.

"That was our first experience in finding out that people really don't want to tell you what they think. And so we had this eight page survey and they said, 'We aren't going to do eight pages'.... Another thing that we did both times before was that we asked everybody what they felt about everything. And we aren't doing that this time either. Because we found that we had 18 year olds telling us about senior citizen's programs." (Library A Director)

The citizen survey conducted by Library A drew the following staff comment: "All I remember from that survey was Friday night I was out at the mall handing out these surveys, trying to talk people into filling them out. A Friday night out at the mall—Just what we all want to do, don't we?"

And they say, 'no, I've already done it'." (Library A Staff Member 3)

Another staff member recalled the process as being "laborious.... It just went on and on and on; and I was just sick to death of it. After we finished the document it was a couple months before I could bring myself to look at it again.... We just beat it to death for one thing. We dragged it out too much."(Library A Staff Member 1)

One person we interviewed stated, "We were newer at it before, and we wanted to be so great to everybody; and do something for everybody; make sure nobody was left out—the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, the preschool—all these areas, and maybe we spread ourselves too thin." (Library A Staff Member 3)

The difficulty that the library staff encountered in relinquishing its preconceptions of the community's needs is illustrated by this comment from the director, "We brainstormed for about three months and I think that was a mistake because we had all these wonderful ideas about services that we knew people would just be dying to have. And then we did the survey—and they weren't. But nonetheless, we went right ahead and we provided those services anyway."

Some of the unwanted services that the library attempted to provide

"We had wonderful ideas, and we wanted to do all these things. But the need wasn't there."

—Library A Staff Member 3

"In the planning process you see where things are needed. I liked learning what the library needs. I really enjoyed this."

—Library A Trustee 1

"It was a really caring attitude that the library personnel took toward what they were doing. It wasn't, this is a study, and we've got to do this. It was, we want to do it because we want to be a benefit to the community."

—Library A Community Representative 1

"[The planning manual] says that people will fill out [questionnaires]. But they will not. They won't. They just take one look at it and they say, 'I don't have time to do that today.'"

—Library A Director

"You have to bribe them, you really do.we were giving out helium balloons, five free copies on the copy machine (we're still getting those coupons in, and it's been four years ago)....They earned them for filling out that survey."

—Library A Staff Member 3

"The advantages far outweigh [the disadvantages] because you know where you're going. I think anybody or any organization that has specific goals to point toward, they're going to perform better, and they're going to feel better when they reach those goals, because they can say, 'Look what I did.' And even if it's a modest goal, at least you've accomplished it."

—Library A Trustee 1

were in the area of outreach to senior citizens. Demographic data had indicated that senior citizens composed a significant proportion of the population and that there were a number of hospitals, nursing homes and senior citizen centers that the library should perhaps be serving more directly.

"We said that we would provide service to senior citizen centers, which seemed like a great idea—and it still does to me. But when I talked to them, they said, ' We really don't want you to come. We come here to eat and play cards, and we really don't want anybody else to come, and we don't want to hear about your slides and your films and discussion'." (Library A Staff Member 1)

Its senior citizen population was also seen by the library as a source to tap for information about the history of the community. "We said we were going to provide training for volunteers on video cameras and that kind of thing. Well, nobody volunteered to be trained. And we were going to use those volunteers to prepare oral history videos and audio cassettes. Well, we didn't train anybody and we didn't have anybody to do it; so, of course, we didn't [accomplish that objective]." (Library A Director)

The director made the following observation about staff "blue sky"

brainstorming, as opposed to what the community is willing to fund:

Staff want expensive changes, communities don't. I think there are two reasons. One is that staff have some expectations, they've seen other libraries and they know things that are possible, but communities generally don't. The other thing is that the community is paying for it... in general they're going to think about money first, services second. But staff is going to think about—as we should—service first, money second. (Library A Director)

The solution to these problems that the library arrived at on its own is to some extent reflected in the newer planning manual's option of selecting a basic level of effort for each step in the process. The telephone and written surveys for the library's third planning cycle (just getting underway at the time of our visit) were to be limited to ten questions and two pages; there would be no citizen participation on the planning committee; and the objectives would be achievable in a relatively short time.

For the third cycle, it was the intention of the director "to come up with a plan that is much more short term, that doesn't sabotage the process. Because our department heads are basically our reference people, so

"It was a positive experience. I enjoyed it. I looked forward to it."

—Library A Community Representative 1

"[Planning] will give us some structure ... some guidelines ... in what direction to go. If you don't have guidelines you just go 'll over the place,' I think I'll try this, and I think I'll try that.' With this survey, it should give us a good idea of what we're doing right, or what we're lacking in."

—Library A Staff Member 3

"I think the most important part, aside from the information you get from the community, is that you have a direction, and that you're defining what this particular public library is going to do, because there are so many ways that you can go."

—Library A Staff Member 4

"I probably got the most out of the planning process in that my department had more at stake in it, and it changed the focus of my department."

—Library A Staff Member 1

"We can look within our own institution and see maybe what we're doing wrong or how we can improve."

—Library A Staff Member 3

"If we involve members of the community, there is better communication between the library people and the community people of what it is we're trying to do."

—Library A Staff Member 4

"It's important to know where you're going rather than just come in and get lost in the day-to-day details. There is a path you are following, and you can apply that to any part of your life, not just your professional life, your personal life. I think it's useful in that respect. Also, you can plan within your own department, not just the library as a whole, but with your own [departmental] staff and resources."

—Library A Staff Member 4

when you have all your department heads in a meeting, you have one reference person available in the library, and that's real hard. It's also very hard to get all those department heads here at the same time." (Library A Director)

Library A has decided that planning is a worthy endeavor and should be carried out on a continuous basis. The director seems to have made a major modification in the process adopted by the library, however. Instead of producing a long range plan every five years or so, for the time being at least, the library has opted for more frequent short range plans. The process will begin with the library staff and trustees identifying areas for change. Proposed changes will then be presented to the community in the form of a brief survey. Assuming a favorable citizen reaction, the changes will be translated into short term objectives and implemented within a six month time frame.

Even though they indicated that there were problems with the way the library had implemented the PLA planning process, the people we spoke with in Library A assured us that the benefits of planning far outweighed the drawbacks and that they saw the value in undertaking another planning cycle. They spoke of such benefits as acquiring a vision of what the library should be and a focus on what

it should be doing. They told us that going through a formal planning process was a learning experience, not only with regard to how the process itself might be improved, but also in terms of learning "a lot more about how the library operates." (Library A Trustee 1)

It was also a learning experience for the person who told us, "Up until that time it had been kind of difficult for me to plan a year ahead and now I find myself doing that quite a bit. 'Where do I want to be in a year with this, or what's the potential for this two years from now?'" (Library A Staff Member 1)

One person indicated that a side benefit of having gone through the process was that everyone found themselves thinking and talking in terms of the library's mission statement and goals. (Library A Community Representative 1) Another person suggested that "it certainly has helped bring the different departments together." (Library A Staff Member 4)

LIBRARY B

The director and trustees that we interviewed at Library B seemed generally pleased with having completed a long range plan. None of the staff had served on the planning committee and those we spoke with appeared ambivalent toward their

"I get [trustees] involved in the planning process and they see what it is that they're serving on as a board member."

—Library A Trustee 1

"The part of it that I think I believe in the most is getting the information from the community. Because we sit here and we see those people every day and we think we know what they want but oftentimes we don't have the slightest idea what they want."

—Library A Director

"This community doesn't care that maybe another county or public library has art prints. They know what they want for here and we are going to try and provide."

—Library A Staff Member 3

"From what I've seen of the goals, I think [the library's long range plan] probably isn't terribly revolutionary. I think it's probably OK."

—Library B Staff Member 2

"I felt as the plan was developed that a lot of things looked good on paper, but in a practical sense five years down the road, I see that we're going to be doing the same things that we're doing now that should be changed, and I don't see that the long range plan is going to do that."

—Library B Staff Member 3

"I believe in long range plans. I believe in planning things out and then implementing them along those lines. But I'm not sure if sometimes long range plans tend to lose sight of everyday operations."

—Library B Staff Member 3

library's plan, but were generally favorable to the concept of long range planning. A staff member indicated that even before the board approved formal goals and objectives for the library, she was accustomed to planning as a part of her professional responsibilities. "I have a strong background in the philosophy of education. I know if I have to write down goals and objectives I can, because I know what I'm trying to achieve." (Library B Staff Member 2)

[It is] the way we go about things here anyway in developing and building our program, and always looking long term in anything we do.... But not directly with any set format.... I don't make a practice of checklisting. Yes, I'm involved with goals and objectives, but I think I was even before then. [The goals and objectives in the long range plan] did not seem out of line with what we had discussed through time anyway....I don't want to say it's static, but what we do is appropriate and has not needed to change that much."(Library B Staff Member 2)

Another staff member expressed some disappointment at not being involved in the process. "From the original thought of doing the plan, to when it got implemented, I feel that I was left out of the process.... They really didn't ask me any questions concerning any aspect of it." (Library B Staff Member 3)

This individual also expressed reservations about the plan. "I haven't studied the plan recently, so I can't go into great details. I can't even tell you exactly what's in there right now. At the time, from what I recall, I felt that they were not addressing certain aspects of the everyday existence of the library." (Library B Staff Member 3)

The director, however, was pleased "in large part, because of the board's support of the plan...I think the staff is coming around to thinking that it's a good idea, too. So [long range planning] was worthwhile.... Just the process itself of sitting down and trying to think out what [the trustees] want to commit to for the next five years was very good for them and for me. I think for the staff as well. It was a very good learning process." (Library B Director)

A major frustration expressed by the director was the failure of the questionnaires to provide

responses that one could do something with from the public.... Because I realize that most people come in the library maybe once a week or once a month.... They're really not all that concerned about library philosophy and the grand things that we should be doing, because that's not their thing. If we do it, wonderful, and they'll use it, and they'll think it's wonderful, but they don't sit at home

"I think in general [long range planning] is probably a good idea. How actively we'll do it I don't know. Here we're so close to [the library] in terms of [trustees] being so involved and so forth, that if things are needed, or problems are detected, somehow I think we respond without a fairly formal long range plan, something down on paper. We sit down and devote some time to [problem solving]."

—Library B Trustee 3

"If we had done this five years ago, we probably would have automated five years ago rather than waiting this long. I think a long range plan [then] would have really focused in on that need, and we would have done all this earlier."

—Library B Director

"The board would like to see more action steps the next time.... As they point out, this is all very nice, but it doesn't say what we are going to do to achieve all these things."

—Library B Director

"One good thing this has done is shown the staff and shown the board that it's really a long range plan, and not just sort of buying things randomly."

—Library B Director

"I think going through a process like that always makes you think of 'what should we be doing? Maybe we should be doing some things better'."

—Library B Trustee 3

"Having done it, I think it is kind of useful to go and look, and say, 'Well, what are we doing in this area?' But then, when you sit down and talk about it, 'Oh yes, we're doing this, this, and this.' Maybe it does lead you to evaluate a little bit on a more regular basis even. It might not be a textbook way to do it, but it does give you an outline of things to look at, and you can say, 'We're doing pretty well there... maybe we need to improve this a little bit' It is a good reminder list in that sense."

—Library B Trustee 3

thinking, 'Oh, my God, the library should be doing such and such.' (Library B Director)

The director told us that when he goes through the process again he intends to spend more time trying to develop questions that will get information from the public regarding not only what they want, but what they would be willing to fund. "I would be inclined to do the survey form along with some kind of focus groups, several focus groups, or do some more in-depth talking with certain patrons, which we didn't do." (Library B Director)

One of the trustees that we interviewed provided a rationale for not including staff representation on the planning committee. "You cannot involve staff in items that are not linked to their job. Remember, these people are not managers who are broad-viewed kind of people. They are very narrow folks. 'I work here, other people work there and there.' I don't think we dare, as a matter of course, give people major responsibility that is not part of their job, because they are not geared to work that way." (Library B Trustee 2)

LIBRARY C

The director of Library C found the role selection process particularly beneficial. "It helped all of us to im-

... pact every weeding decision. Use of staff decisions are based on this. We can now say more comfortably that we cannot do all those things. We certainly cannot be a research center. We are not even a reference library. Much as we would like to be involved in supporting home schooling in a very formal and detailed way, we can't afford to do that right now." (Library C Director)

With regard to the level of effort chosen by the library, the director seemed satisfied with that approach as well. "I think I would still find [a comprehensive level of effort] a little overwhelming. I find it much easier to take one little piece that seems useful and build on that. Because, for instance, taking the survey out of the book was a starting place, and got most people thinking about what we do and what we should be doing." (Library C Director)

The board member from Library C that we interviewed was also convinced of the benefits of planning. She indicated that, prior to adopting PLA's planning process, the library board had routinely engaged in informal planning: "It's the way we are." (Library C Trustee 1)

The technique of beginning the process with an all day, intensive session led by a facilitator worked well, according to one of the trustees.

"It certainly does help organize your thoughts. It helps you look at where you might start working on things."

—Library B Trustee 1

"The amount that the staff has been involved in planning is growing... The staff previous to my coming were not allowed to do anything independently, and so they've been gradually taking on additional tasks. I think that's one of my greatest satisfactions... —the fact that initiative is on the rise, and, therefore, participation."

—Library C Director

"The library has to grow with the people here... We're thinking of the future.... But you can't do it all at once."

—Library C Trustee 1

"I would have taken a dim view of it had I not been directly involved, but it was very productive."

—Library C Staff Member 1

"We just have to keep working at [improving]. There's nothing in the world that's static. If it is, it's not performing as it should."

—Library C Trustee 1

She was also content with having the planning committee consist only of the board and the director, so long as planning meetings were held separately from regular board meetings. She did not see any problem with the willingness of the trustees to add a planning meeting to their monthly meeting time commitment. She suggested that future strategic planning sessions would center on facility and space needs and on the installation of newer technologies. Since the PLA process worked so well, the same process would probably be utilized in these instances. (Library C Trustee 1)

We spoke with a staff member who was not directly involved in the planning process, but who was nonetheless well-informed concerning the library's long range plan. She stated that staff have "every opportunity if we want to have input into [planning]when they have a board meeting, we're invited to come." (Library C Staff Member 2) When asked if the staff feels aware of and involved in what goes on in the library, she concurred, stating, "I think [the director] tries to pull ideas [from the staff] and maybe keys in on the [staff's ideas]." (Library C Staff Member 2)

This same individual provided us with another indication that Library C is committed to the concept of organization-wide planning when she volunteered the statement that personnel

are evaluated on the goals and objectives that they set for themselves each year.

(FOR LIBRARIES D, E, F SEE PAGE 100)

LIBRARY G

The Library G board of trustees "purposefully took a kind of hands-off approach, and listened to what [the planning committee] had to say in terms of how they were gathering information from staff, and the kinds of things they were looking at, and then really didn't see much of the document until it was actually produced." (Library G Trustee 2) Neither of the trustees we interviewed indicated that they would change this method of implementing a planning process despite the fact that the board ultimately chose not to adopt the planning committee report as the library's long range plan.

They were strong advocates of the process, deeming it a worthwhile activity. One of the trustees listed a number of ways in which the process was beneficial to the library:

I think it has given us a better understanding of what the library's needs are, a better understanding of what expectations the staff has, what they see on the horizon. It's given them the latitude to look at those issues, and given them a forum to comment on, which I think has been very help-

"I would say that what's happened is that the library board has looked at all these things and is, indeed, using [the planning committee report] as a guideline. To that extent, I think it has a great deal of value. So, I don't think the time was wasted."

—Library G Staff Member 2

"We really took, I think, from a policy-making standpoint, a hands-off attitude, and let this group decide what things they thought were important. That was what we were looking for, and that's one of the strengths of this document. We were able to get some outside input for board decisions in the future."

—Library G Trustee 2

"I think the benefit is that we've done it once. Next time around it will be easier. It will be less painful because we will all know what to expect."

—Library G Staff Member 1

"We started out with a real good community survey and patron survey base to work from. That told us a lot about the library and about the way people perceive us."

—Library G Director

"There were some real frustrations with the process, but on the whole I am real glad that I worked on it. I think that it was ultimately very valuable. No matter how it is used, it was a very valuable kind of process to go through. Even if it never gets out of the library itself."

—Library G Trustee 1

"I think, speaking for the three other adult [services] librarians and myself, the four of us always had a need and the knowledge that we should be planning more than the year in advance we were doing. We were frustrated because we didn't know where the library was going. This whole process, I think, heightened our awareness and led us to the idea that 'yes, [long range planning] is as important as we thought it was'."

—Library G Staff Member 1

ful. It's given us some good information just from patrons, through our survey work, to find out what they really think of the library It's given us a great deal of additional information that I don't think we would have gotten had we not been part of the process. (Library G Trustee 2)

The director told us that "the only thing adopted from [the report] was the mission statement, which is an extremely good one. Many of the goals and objectives are very good." (Library G Director) In response to our questions concerning which aspects of the process worked and which did not work, the director indicated that the process itself was a good one—he could find no fault with the phases as set forth in the manual, nor with the way they were implemented by the library. He did, however, feel that he had made a mistake in not assuming responsibility for the work of the committee. He had instead turned that leadership position over to the committee chair, who was a library trustee.

"A lot of this has to fall upon me—that I was not more assertive. One of the things that I kept saying was, 'Don't put these specific dates in there. Have some idea that these things are a budgeting function. You can't do it without having the money.' Or 'We don't have enough staff to do it' Somehow or another we got things I could no more live with, nor could the

staff live with, than the man in the moon.... For one thing, the dates are all screwed up as far as I am concerned, because they have no relationship to the budgeting cycle." (Library G Director)

In addition to what he felt were inappropriate completion dates, the director also objected to several of the "action items" in the report because they were decided upon without reference to his recommendations. The committee, by not heeding the advice of the director concerning the feasible implementation of certain objectives, had effectively removed him from the process precisely at the time when the library administration's guidance in determining details of how the plan might be implemented is necessary.

One of the staff representatives on the planning committee told us that "what was good" about the library's having gone through the planning process "was that it basically piqued everybody's interest, and [gave us] the knowledge that it was really necessary to do this instead of a one-year-by-one-year overhaul." (Library G Staff Member 1)

This staff member also said, "we pretty much had these general ideas kicking around in our minds for the last couple of years, and that report—with a couple of exceptions—I don't think there were very large surprises

The survey was conducted first—which is completely the wrong way around."

—Library G Trustee 1

"As a board member, I don't fully support everything that they recommended in the document, but I still think it's extremely valuable. It pays big dividends to us as we use that tool while we're talking about the issues that are facing the library."

—Library G Trustee 2

"Knowing what I know now, I would do things differently. Even with the frustration I feel, and the fact that the document is but it isn't, I still think it was a real valuable thing to have done."

—Library G Trustee 1

"I think it has been very worthwhile, and I think that it's very helpful to have the perspective of this group, which is made up of a lot of different constituencies that are involved with the library. So it's been very helpful, and I think it will continue to be helpful, regardless of what ultimately happens. But I think it's an excellent reference document for the board."

—Library G Trustee 2

"It was a very valuable process. I think what we learned from it is useful, and maybe what we learned by not having it adopted is useful as well."

—Library G Trustee 1

"When you appoint a panel like this, you're going to hear from other segments of the community. I think that is something that is going to be different from what the trustees could come up with."

—Library H Community Representative 1

"I really do feel that what we got out of this [revised document] was a workable long range plan for us."

—Library H Director

in it. It was what we thought we wanted to do, a reinforcement of that." (Library G Staff Member 1)

LIBRARY H

The planning committee for Library H included a broad cross-section of the community. The community representative that we interviewed indicated that citizen members were pleased to have been asked to participate, that they felt the time spent on the process was worthwhile and their ideas were incorporated into the final report. The trustee representative also felt that community opinion was valuable to the process.

Our interviews indicated that staff evaluations of the process were not unanimous. "Maybe I found it more helpful and more interesting because I was new to my position, and it looked to me like a tool that would be useful to me. I'm new to management, and I'm looking for whatever guidelines I can find that will help me do the job better. So I wasn't, I don't think so antagonistic to the whole procedure, or the to the plan when it was finished." (Library H Staff Member 1)

Much of the information that the planning committee received was provided by the staff of Library H. Some staff members could not conduct all the telephone surveys for which they were responsible during

working hours; therefore, they had to collect such data on their own time. This resulted in some feelings of resentment.

The staff's perception of the work of the planning committee was described to us in this way, "I think there was a general feeling on the staff level that this bunch of people that don't really understand how it works in here from day to day and what we really do, got together and drew up this plan for us. It doesn't necessarily have anything to do with reality." (Library H Staff Member 1)

Staff resentment may not have been directed so much toward the committee as toward the process that did not allow for staff involvement from the beginning. "I think quite a bit of the planning process went on before the staff was made aware of it ...It was already well underway. People were chosen for the committee, they were trained, whatever training they got through this whole thing. They had a workshop. Someone came in and presented this long before the general staff was made aware of what was going on. I think that did cause some resentment." (Library H Staff Member 1)

Awareness that something was going on "just trickled down gradually, and there came a point where enough people were asking questions

"I am not sure that a community needs to be involved in the planning of a library any more than it would need to be in the planning of a fire department. I don't know that they have enough knowledge to give any valuable input."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"Some of the things I learned from [the telephone survey] were very helpful to me. I talked to a lot of bookmobile patrons when I did mine. A lot of the people never use the bookmobile, and they told me why, so it was an educational process."

—Library H Staff Member 1

"I wouldn't still keep the notebooks if I didn't value the experience!"

—Library H Trustee 1

"I don't think I missed one of those meeting. So I didn't think my time was being wasted."

—Library H Community Representative 1

"Since everyone on the staff was expected to do their part in the survey taking...I think that helped cause a little bit of the bad feeling about the planning process.... There was the feeling that this committee, of whoever they are, decides that we have to do [the telephone survey]. We're too busy, we don't have time, but we have to do it."

—Library H Staff Member 1

"[The process] was obviously carefully thought out. It was followed, and I felt that we got a lot of feedback from the results."

—Library H Trustee 1

about what was going on." (Library H Staff Member 1) Eventually a staff meeting was held at which the process was explained. This did not eliminate the resentment, however. Staff who were not on the committee continued to be kept out of the process. Department heads, who supplied the committee with reports, had a small additional role in the process. They were asked for their reactions after the committee had decided on tentative goals for each department.

"I think the committee had already drawn up what they considered the long range goals should be for [my department], and then their guesses at that were submitted to me to see what I thought, and to see if I had anything to contribute. So I got a little list of their goals and objectives in rough form." (Library H Staff Member 1)

Staff members who served on the committee may not have been completely satisfied with the process either. One of those we spoke with expressed these ambivalent feelings:

It was a very valuable educational experience for me. I think it might have been for a lot of the committee members as well. But to be very frank, as far as the library, the manner in which it was done was really a waste of time. A lot of that was because the committee members felt that they were just token members. I really do feel

that was a big part of their being there, just a token to show that we involved the community. I think that they felt their time was being wasted, which is why I think so many of them stopped coming." (Library H Staff Member 3)

This same individual also commented on the size of the committee, "I thought we did a good job of trying to get a good cross section representative of the county, the schools, mothers and fathers, and so on and so forth. As it turned out, we may have had such a representative committee it ended up being nonfunctional because it was so big. I think that was the biggest problem." (Library H Staff Member 3)

In contrast to the mixed feelings expressed by the staff representative, the trustee that we interviewed saw the experience as definitely a positive one, stating, "we felt that our opinions were truly valued, that it wasn't just lip service." The brainstorming part of the process was seen as especially valuable.

I felt absolutely vitalized, particularly after that session. Every time I went to the meetings I came away excited about what was going on. But that one in particular... [brainstorming is] an integral part of getting lots of ideas, and of getting the new ideas, the ones that are just a little whisper in the back of someone's brain. That's where an intentional future comes from. That was exciting. (Library H Trustee 1)

"My awareness of the library services was heightened. I came away from the whole process with an 'I didn't know we offered that!' attitude. Part of that was that there should be more (if you will allow me the term) marketing of the library; there should be more community public relations. I was very, very firmly in that corner ... of saying as loudly, as matter-of-factly as I could, that this is important, that it is not enough just to have the services, that the people have to know about the services so that they can come in and use them."

—Library H Trustee 1

"The one thing I keep coming back to is that it gave us an awful good perspective that we didn't have."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"I think a lot of the community members felt that we had worked an awful long time on this, and put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears in it, and the board looked at it and said, 'Well, that's very nice, thank you,' in effect."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"Some people on the committee decided that it should be one of our goals to have the bookmobile visit the high school on a regularly scheduled basis as part of our service. When we saw that, we said, 'Oh, that's very nice—we have no idea how in the world we're going to do that unless we have another bookmobile and another staff."

—Library H Staff Member 1

"I think it was very valid to have those opinions and those ideas and the... different perspectives... kind of a common pool of knowledge for the central committee to draw on."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"The idea of what do we do after we've gathered these statistics was never really thought through... 'Well, let's do a survey and find out what people really want.' Well, you've got hash marks across your page, and now what? Nobody did the 'Now What?' step."

—Library H Director

The citizen member of the committee did not seem particularly concerned that the report was not immediately accepted as the library's long range plan. "The point is, the report was issued, the former director moved on, the current director came on board. She got her act together as quick as it was politically possible, and the levies were passed. You can't just walk in and say, "I want to raise your taxes." That's not a good idea.... I don't see how they could have done it any quicker." (Library H Community Representative 1)

The current director of Library H expressed skepticism that much would be gained by citizen participation in the planning process. "My feeling is that if we don't know where libraries should be going, and what we should be doing, we have no business being in this business.... We have more than books in a library— [communities] don't know what a library is capable of doing, and we of all people should [know]." (Library H Director)

The director was also not convinced of the value of conducting citizen surveys. She felt that the information obtained through the surveys done for the library's first planning process was not especially enlightening. "They did surveys of the high school. I think they surveyed all of the government classes, or all the English classes or something, and the finding

was that high school students wanted to be able to find books in the library. Really! That was the conclusion they reached from all this surveying! This was a waste of library staff time, a waste of kid's time, a waste of teaching time!" (Library H Director)

The director also made these comments regarding the first planning committee's report, "A lot what came out of the long range plan was really too specific to be particularly useful. For instance, 'have x number of volumes of health science reference materials.' Very, very specific. I wasn't comfortable with that, and it was just totally ignored by anybody who was buying material. It just wasn't workable." (Library H Director)

When she decided to revise the committee's report into a workable plan, the director used a process that called for participation from the staff. As a result, "it's a more acceptable model. I think people have more of a feeling that they can have a little input. I think it's better in general now. The staff in general feels that she gives them more of an opportunity to say something." (Library H Staff Member 1)

LIBRARY I

The director was enthusiastic about how well the planning and role setting process worked in Library I. She was

If you were going to do it properly, you would include staff right from the beginning. Ask each one to write something up about his or her job in the next five years or whatever. Maybe that would be lots of paperwork that no one wants to mess with. But it surely would have given staff more of a feeling of having something to do with it."

—Library H Staff Member 1

"I think it was a monumental waste of time. There were people making phone surveys, and doing all of this, and they gathered huge amounts of data, and put together an unworkable plan."

—Library H Director

"We worked an awful lot on the mission statement. As it turned out, the mission statement turned out to be so all encompassing it said nothing. It was one of those. We tried to please everybody and so in effect we pleased everybody and didn't say anything."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"I think that once people start realizing that it is an adaptable document, it will be used more."

—Library I Director

"None of it was as bad as we thought, and staff meetings helped, because we'd have a long range planning meeting, and you'd always get rid of staff things first.... I think it helps you work as a group."

—Library I Staff Member 3

"This puts us in a position to look ahead. Budget-wise, yes, and that's important in capital items, when you look at the purchase of property, when you're looking at automation. You can't do those kinds of things without looking ahead. Even smaller things, also... services."

—Library I Director

"All of our planning came to a final conclusion that satisfies all of us. I will credit the director...I think she had a way of making us all understand what's needed for our library. I think that's what makes us have the realization that something's very important, because she is able to impress it upon us."

—Library I Trustee 2

especially pleased with the flexibility built into the process. "Once you saw that it's a very adaptable process, and you could adapt it to your situation, I think it worked wonderfully. It really did. I just can't say enough because I do think until then you can just go along from year to year...'OK, what are we going to budget for capital and things this year? What are we going to do this year?'... that kind of thing."
(Library I Director)

The director then elaborated on the guidance provided by the long range plan. "I can look and say, 'OK, this year we're going to push that,' and I can schedule when in the year we're going to do it, and so on. And it's just been a really wonderful thing not to be waking up and saying, 'Well, what are we going to be doing this year, this month, or this day?' like that—it gives you a lot of direction." (Library A Director)

One of the staff people we interviewed told us that everyone expected that going through the process, especially the part that required gathering output measures, was "going to be terrible...Then we did the one on the amount of in-library use of materials, and I thought that was going to be just the pits. None of it was as bad as we thought it was going to be. None of it was half as bad as we thought it was going to be.... I think the anticipation was the worse part of it. It really was.

You thought, 'Oh Lord, this is going to be awful'." (Library I Staff Member 2)

The library director was credited with making the process easier. "She's very efficient, and very organized, and she's willing to listen to other people if they say, 'This looks great, but wouldn't it be better if we did it this way? Can't we reorganize it?' Even after the first day...we shifted things around a little bit, and made adjustments all the way through the week, so [collecting output measures] was easier and easier, and then it was nothing." (Library I Staff Member 2)

The director seems to have gained staff support of the planning process by keeping staff involved and by presenting the plan as a means of increasing the library's accountability to the taxpayers. "I think people like the idea, if you're a public unit and they're paying you, that occasionally you stop and you assess what you're doing, and you justify what you are doing, you don't just slide along. I think people appreciate that, the fact that you are taking care of the way the money is spent." (Library I Staff Member 2)

A trustee explained that in the board's view planning was necessary. "We gave of our time, and we all got together and did this, and got this program together for the future of our library, and we weren't coming at [the

"Since we have done this long range planning.... I think it really helped our City Council to know that we were serious, that we really meant to provide this service for the people.... I think they take us more seriously because they see that we have taken our time."

—Library I Trustee 2

"It started out sounding like a lot of work and a pipe dream.... But none of it was as bad as people thought it was going to be. It was almost kind of fun. It was interesting doing all those output measures and doing all the research questions."

—Library I Staff Member 3

"It's wonderful that it is that adaptable, and that you can have some guidance, and that it works that well. I think I would recommend it, because I think in a smaller library where you have limited staffing...you have to have something that you can adapt to your own situation."

—Library I Director

"For the first level of planning that we did, we did have an outside facilitator, which was very helpful. I think you do need that periodically, you need somebody from the outside to ask how you are doing things. You need somebody else's perspective to see how you are getting things done."

—Library I Trustee 1

"[The first time] the goals and objectives originated more from the board going to the staff... This time around we found that the goals and objectives started more with brainstorming with the staff and making proposals to the board, to sort of turn that around a little bit. But that time around it worked pretty well, I think."

—Library I Director

"I think approaching the city with our needs for personnel (and those are ever growing) to have a plan to show them how it fits in, and we can give them copies of the plan in advance, saying 'This is what we had intended to do all along,' so it's not a surprise to them. I think it is well received."

—Library I Trustee 1

City Council] all of a sudden and saying, 'We need this, this, this, and this.' In the plan, we gave them this for, say, 1989, this for 1990, this for 1991, that we were looking toward.... definitely very beneficial as far as our being able to work with the City Council ... probably even our own staff. If you start from right within, they too, saw that we were working to help them. I think they need that too."
(Library I Trustee 2)

This same individual spoke of the value of leaving the development of the mission statement as the final part of the process, so that the mission statement pulled everything together into a statement of purpose. "We did basically everything first, and then worked on the mission statement in the introductory area of our [planning document].... And I think maybe that would be the way to go when you are first starting out, because you really don't know what your mission is."
(Library I Trustee 2)

The other board member that we spoke with agreed that planning was necessary in order to justify the need for additional funding,

just to keep pace with inflation as far as books etc. are concerned. With the new building we have statistics that show that readership has grown tremendously.... we needed to show the Council that controls the purse strings that

we're going to need more money for this, that, and the other thing. What better way to do it than to say, 'Here's a plan,' rather than just come in and do what we had to do in the past, and that was address emergency needs. (Library I Trustee 1)

This individual also noted that the smooth implementation of the planning process was due in large part to the administrative and organizational abilities of the director. "She led us through all these processes. Whether it was planning, or when we built the facility—she's really been a rock.... I've served on various boards, and you follow the lead of your administrator ...if you've got a good administrator, generally you're going to have a good program no matter what it is. We have an excellent leader." (Library I Trustee 1)

SUMMARY

That there were different perspectives within individual libraries among the administration, trustees, staff, and community representatives was most apparent with respect to participant evaluations of how well the specific process used by the library worked.

Libraries G and H, where the outcome was a committee report rather than an implemented plan, provide an interesting contrast. Trustees and community representatives from both libraries praised the process and felt

that citizen participation in decision making by the planning committee was extremely valuable. The director of Library G, although discouraged by the outcome, felt that the process itself was a good one. (We were not able to interview the individual who served as director of Library H during its first planning cycle.)

Staff members we interviewed in Library G seemed to follow the lead of the director in believing that the process, although it did not lead to the expected outcome, provided a valuable experience. Staff from Library H, on the other hand, were divided concerning their perceptions of the process. One of the people who served on the committee had the perception that the director manipulated the outcome, consequently the concept of community representation was subverted. Staff who were not on the committee saw themselves as being left out of the decision making, but being expected to collect data for the committee on their own time. This led to feelings of "antagonism" and "resentment" toward both the process and its outcome.

That a relationship exists between staff perceptions of the value of the process and their perceptions of having some degree of input into the process is clear from the interviews. At Library A, where staff were also asked to collect data (by distributing

citizen surveys at the local shopping mall), there was no indication that they reacted negatively to the idea of seeking community input. Staff in this library were involved in developing the questions for the survey and the library's objectives in conducting the planning process were clearly communicated to them.

Although they felt that the process as adapted from the first planning manual was "laborious," they were comfortable with the fact that the director had taken steps to simplify the process for the next planning cycle. A similar perception of being involved and kept informed existed in Libraries C and I, where staff perceptions of the process were also generally positive.

The positive staff opinions in these libraries were not found in Library B. In this case, staff perceived an isolation from the process, both in terms of being asked for their ideas and in being kept informed. Although they saw nothing wrong with the concept of long range planning, they were not enthusiastic about the results of the planning conducted by their library.

One Library B staff member felt that the plan encouraged the status quo instead of leading to needed changes. Another, although she felt that the plan's goals and objectives merely restated what the library had

been doing and probably would have continued doing without the plan, also felt that the plan was of little value because the library "has not needed to change that much."

Table 5, on pages 97-98, summarizes the study's findings for each library with respect to general perceptions of what worked and what did not work. It should be noted that, although an aspect that worked or did not work may be referred to in the same terms as are used for an element of the PLA planning process, it does not necessarily follow that the two are identical. Much depends on the individual library's interpretation of the activities involved in carrying out a particular step in the planning process.

For instance, although examples of citizen and user surveys are given in the manuals, libraries are expected to use them only as guides. If a library adopts the manual's surveys "as is," and those surveys provide too much of the wrong information, study participants may report that surveying did not work. It should not be assumed, however, that this element of the process does not work, only that the way in which the element was implemented did not work for a particular library. The built-in flexibility that allows for different levels of effort, may also lead to various interpretations of the process elements.

TABLE 5. Participant Perceptions of What Worked and What Did Not Work

Library	What Worked	What Did Not Work
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *telephone surveys *very short-term objectives *"thank you" gifts to survey respondents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *brainstorming before surveys *asking the same questions of everybody *getting people to fill out the questionnaires *taking too much time to complete the process *setting objectives dependent upon locating and using volunteers *including staff in planning meetings without leaving the library short-handed
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *having the director set the goals and objectives with the aid of a trustee subcommittee (basic level of effort) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *including too few specific actions to accomplish the objectives *finding out what the users are willing to fund, not only what they say they want
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * all-day first session with a facilitator * a basic level of effort * role selection 	
G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * citizen and user surveys * citizen input into the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *starting with surveys before establishing a committee *taking too long to gather data *establishing specific objective dates without reference to the budget year *director taking a passive role

TABLE 5. Participant Perceptions of What Worked and What Did Not Work (continued)

Library	What Worked	What Did Not Work
<p>H (1987 plan)</p> <p>(1990 Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * a timetable * well-organized meetings * a diverse committee * one person to draft goals and objectives *staff reports *brainstorming *letting staff feel they have a role in the decisions *limiting participation to staff and trustees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *taking too long to complete the process *too large a committee *not providing for staff input into the process *very specific objectives
<p>I</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *role selection *adaptability of the process *communicating planning rationale to the staff *board commitment to planning * writing the mission statement last *outside facilitator 	

Table 6, on pages 101-103, provides a summary of the participants' views on the concept of long range planning. As expected, their opinions of the positive and negative aspects of planning reflect their individual perspectives on the way the process was implemented in their libraries.

In Libraries A, C, and I, the directors made deliberate attempts to keep their staffs informed about planning goals and committee activities. They encouraged their staffs to feel involved in the process by asking for their input as well as their feedback. In these libraries, positive comments by staff members were far more numerous than negative ones. Individual staff members expressed opinions of the benefits of planning that were similar to those expressed by their directors and trustees.

The study suggests that first-time use of the manuals, especially in a smaller library, is more effective with the help of an outside facilitator or consultant. Library A followed the original manual with no outside guidance and the result was a laborious, drawn-out process. Because of the director's philosophical view that the library should be guided by what the community says it will use and support, this experience did not cause the library to discontinue community surveys. It did, however, result in a negative decision with regard to adoption

of the revised manual: The library decided to opt for developing its own more manageable process that would lead to short-term objectives rather than a long range plan.

In contrast, Libraries C and I utilized the services of consultants and were able to implement the process in the revised manual with much less effort. It is difficult to determine whether Library A would have had a more satisfactory experience had it implemented the process on its own using the second edition of the manual (which is generally considered easier for smaller libraries because of its optional levels of effort). However, the perceptions of people we interviewed in libraries that used the second edition and began the process with a facilitator, suggest that the employment of an outside facilitator or consultant may well be a contributing factor to the library's satisfaction with the process.

Several other factors emerged as having a possible influence on participant perceptions of long range planning. One factor, however, which it seemed reasonable to assume would have a direct, positive relationship, did not emerge with any clarity in the study. This is the question of whether the process resulted in the adoption and implementation of a planning document. Libraries G and H did not end up with plans adopted by their

respective boards. Yet participants from Library G had generally positive reactions to the process, while those from Library H had mixed reactions. This would indicate that knowing whether or not the outcome of the process was an adopted plan may not be a particularly promising variable to investigate as a predictor of participant evaluations of the process. Other factors, such as director/staff communication, apparently intervene in the relationship between the outcome of planning and participants' evaluations of the process.

In addition to communication, staff involvement and the initial use of a facilitator, three other major factors that were identified as probable predictors of participant evaluations. These can be recommended for further study and can be summarized as follows:

(1) the perception that the process is flexible, adaptable, and feasible for the library to implement,

(2) the acceptance by the board and director, prior to the selection of a process, that planning is a useful tool and will lead to improved service,

(3) the acceptance of the idea that the opinions of people in the community should be solicited in determining the library's service priorities.

Libraries D, E, and F

The limited number of people we interviewed in the three non-study libraries did not provide a representative cross section of planning participants. Therefore, perceptions of the planning processes used and of long range planning in general are from directors and middle managers only. This makes it difficult to look for the presence of the specific factors that emerged from the study, but it does allow us to compare management opinions to those expressed by the directors of the six study libraries.

The director of Library D suggested that the planning and role setting process is "very valuable because a lot of the staff have never thought in these terms... [the process forces] them to examine what they're doing, what the situation is, where we want to be, how we are going to get there." She went on to say, "It has been extremely good for the younger, or less experienced professional, as well as the nonprofessional who may not have previously had the opportunity to have a voice, therefore a 'buy-in' to the planning, and then, therefore, to the results." (Library D Director)

These comments suggest that the director of this larger library has a perception which is similar to that expressed by the director of Library C. Both view the planning process as

TABLE 6. Participant Perceptions of Positive and Negative Aspects of Long Range Planning

Library	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *provides direction (structure, guidelines, focus) *defines the library (for staff, trustees, users) *positive experience; gives a sense of accomplishment when goals are reached *teaches how to plan ahead in other areas of one's job/life *provides information about what the community wants *improves communication with the community *brings different parts of the library together *teaches a lot about how the library operates *provides a vision of what the library should be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *can become a laborious process *maintaining services while involving staff in planning meetings
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *probably a good idea *a learning process *makes you think of what you should be doing, or doing better *leads you to evaluate more on a regular basis *helps to organize thoughts about where to begin *provides an outline (reminder list) of areas to review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *unnecessary; library doesn't change much *looks good on paper, but produces few changes *tends to lose sight of everyday operations *can give staff the feeling of being left out of the process *an involved board can respond to library needs without a formal process

TABLE 6. Participant Perceptions of Positive and Negative Aspects of Long Range Planning (continued)

Library	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *guide to decision making *organizes thoughts about where to begin * encourages staff participation in decision making * can be used for planning in specific areas (space, technology, etc.) *very productive 	
G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *provides a better understanding of library needs *gives board an understanding of staff expectations *provides an opportunity for staff to address issues *provides a forum for staff comments *provides good information from library patrons *lets the staff know where the library is heading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *frustrating if the process does not result in an accepted plan *can result in unrealistic objectives *committee can take over and ignore the director's guidance *doesn't work if budget cycle is not considered in setting objectives

TABLE 6. Participant Perceptions of Positive and Negative Aspects of Long Range Planning (continued)

Library	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *provides input from community *useful as a management tool *provides guidelines for doing one's job better *educational experience *heightens awareness of library services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *objectives can be perceived by staff as being forced on them by the committee *staff can resent not being involved *community participation can become "token" involvement *library staffs know what libraries should be, citizens do not, so their input is not really necessary
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *impresses city council *adaptable to local conditions/needs *provides direction *eliminates emergency (crisis) management *provides justification for funding needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *anticipating the process can cause anxiety among staff

a way to develop staff to be able to participate in decision making and therefore be more committed to implementing the long range plan. The director of Library D clearly appreciates the connection between staff involvement in the process and their willingness to 'buy into' the resulting plan.

With regard to weaknesses in the process, we were told, "We'd like to see more flexibility encouraged up front. I realize when you get a new process like this, you try to get people to buy into it and adopt it, so it has to be fairly structured. People are intimidated by it. They say, 'a lot of thinking went into this.' I think a major hole in it, and it's not a negative thing, is that they don't do a whole lot of talking about the inductive analysis of things, and the political process.... It's a very good document, I think, and is certainly the wisest approach on a nationwide basis, and an inevitable cry for standards." (Library D Staff Member 1)

The two people we interviewed then addressed the standards issue at some length. This topic had only been discussed by people in the study libraries with regard to the standards that were available to them on the state level. The lack of national standards was apparently more troublesome to this larger library. We were told that planning tools and guidance

are something "we would expect a national organization to provide. This is badly needed, but I think the standards are needed too, at least benchmarks, guidelines, call them what you want." (Library D Staff Member 1)

The last [PLA] standards were done in 1966. When we really began looking at what was required in a new library building—there are standards within every other profession, and I fully understand why ALA took the position that it did; that it would not develop national standards, it would instead go to community standards—but again, from a political viewpoint, you never have the police department telling you that they don't know how many policemen are recommended for their size community, for their size crime rate, or different types of crimes.

We included the quantitative measures that we incorporated into our planning. We did a composite of these.... If I don't have God on High and ALA telling me what they're going to be, then I'll use whatever [standards] I want to. I threw in the 1966 standards, because actually, if you look at them, they didn't dramatically change from the 1983 Urban Library Council Statistics, or from the 1985 National Inventory of Library Needs. I threw in [another state's] standards because... their standards ... gave three levels of service, the minimum, the better, and the ideal. For this community, that are highly demanding of library service, I think we should have been moving toward not minimum, but optimum. " (Library D Director)

The staff member from Library D suggested that although the state had not yet developed standards, "You really look at what's happening in this state, and this state will go to standards. Ultimate compliance with those standards, at least at a minimum level, if not at an optimal level, will be eventually tied into federal and state funding.... I think we have a problem in this state, much as we have a problem of a similar nature in other states—whether it's New York with its large metropolitan area and then the outside, or Illinois with Chicago and the rest of the state—the rest of this state delivers a significantly different quality of library service than the metropolitan area does." (Library D Staff Member 1)

The director also gave her opinions of the potential usefulness of the output measures as a basis for standards, "I would hope that from the kind of documentation created from the output measures, that ultimately we'll be able to again have some standard of measurement."

The importance of the library operating within the local political process and utilizing its planning documents to justify its funding needs was referred to by both people from Library D. "I think it is a hope, a real hope, that people should be able to employ the kinds of standards, whether minimal or optimal to political ad-

vantage. The library community, through their association, or through their lack of leadership, has been let down." (Library D Director)

The perception that long range planning is essential to public libraries, but that too few of the smaller libraries engage in planning because it is not required of them, was voiced by the director. "If you're a one person library, you don't establish policies and procedures necessarily.... but there should be a set of criteria applicable to libraries of all sizes.... Long range planning in whatever guidelines... needs to be part of the requirements for public libraries. We need a definition of what constitutes a public library. How many libraries in this country are...really offering a sub-standard concept of what information services really are?" (Library D Director)

The interviews conducted in Library D suggested that the role selection aspect of the planning process held as high an appeal for this library as it did for the two smaller libraries in the study. "I'm asked upon occasion what our role is, and if someone doesn't ask me, then I tell them. I really believe 'nat public libraries today, and ours in particular, must be defined in terms larger than best sellers and story hours. [They] must be defined in terms of information, and provision of information at all levels.

So that's why we are directing our service structure not only to the adults within the community to have needs beyond best sellers, but to the business community itself. The reason behind that is that we will always have children's services, and we'll always have casual reading, but unless we provide, and set ourselves up as the providers and purveyors of information, then we're not going to have funding." (Library D Director)

It will be recalled that Library E's planning activities had been temporarily suspended at the time of our visit. The major problem with the process used by this library occurred because the director expected trustees and citizen representatives to be working members of the planning committee. These individuals, however, were not prepared to accept responsibility for completing their assigned tasks. The director intended to modify the process by working with staff members to determine roles, goals, and objectives and then using the rest of the committee members as a reactor panel.

She made the following observation about PLA's process, "I just think all this stuff is so wonderful, but I don't think that they take into account how busy people are. In most families both people are working, they have children, they have to spend time with them. Even myself, it wasn't

easy to give up another night a month. In the end, because of this facility, there wasn't anything you could do during your own work time, because of the normal working hours. You really have to have dedicated people. It's not even that people aren't dedicated, but there is only so much time. You just have to pick and choose." (Library E Director)

The other person we interviewed agreed with this assessment, stating, "I think somehow being on that committee became less of a priority to some people. Once conflicts arose they would go with whatever else had to be done." (Library E Staff Member 1)

An interesting topic emerged during our interviews at Library E. This was in connection with a statewide planning process completed prior to our visit. Representatives from libraries and library cooperatives in the state were assembled at a series of regional consensus building workshops in order to develop an RFP for a plan that would aid in the development of the state's public libraries. The participants were asked to react to a set of position papers. "They were nice documents. As you read the position papers, there were questions along the way that you'd have to respond to. Well, after a while, you felt like, if you said, 'no,' you were saying 'no' to motherhood and apple pie. It

was all very idealistic, money was no object—of course you'd say 'yes' to everything." (Library E Director)

A proposal from a library research firm was subsequently funded and the project conducted. "Nowhere in the report does it say the number one concern is money. It's not even mentioned. 'Oh,' the investigator said, 'that's understood.' Well, when you're presenting something to the politicians, that's not understood! So they've got this wonderful plan. In theory, I can't disagree with a lot of what it says, but it is totally unrealistic, I think." (Library E Director)

If the plan is adopted by the state, the director of Library E believes that it will lead to state mandated long range planning by local libraries. Although she was commenting on a statewide long range plan, there is clearly a recognition that availability of resources must be taken into account when developing goals and objectives. The futility of setting unrealistic objectives was also discussed during our interviews at Libraries G and H.

The director of Library E expressed the notion that the planning process might have been more satisfactory if the library had employed a facilitator or a consultant. This was one of the factors that emerged from the study as potentially important in

predicting the library's evaluation of the process it used and of planning in general.

Library F, as a school district library, was accustomed to conducting its long range planning in conjunction with the Board of Education's planning activities. "The school system has what is...called 'strategic planning,' and I have the Strategic Planning Manual for libraries. We are a part of that... I think we fit into [the Board of Education's] master plan very, very easily." (Library F Director)

The director indicated that, although he was not using the PLA manuals, "Indeed, those eight library roles, we've gone through those; we've done the role setting process ...[the rest of the process] didn't do what we wanted it to do. [By using the entire manual] it would have taken us much longer to have done what we wanted to do. In our case, we decided that there were certain things we needed, certain measures that we wanted. The fill rate, for example. That didn't seem to answer the question. Did that have any relationship to what we wanted—would a new library building increase the fill rate? Would it make it better? I'm not sure. That's something you might do after you build a new library, but I'm not sure it's something you do before." (Library F Director)

Planning Outcomes

The expected outcome of using the planning process is generally supposed to be a five-year plan of service that has been adopted by the library board of trustees and implemented by the library administration and staff. In addition to this obvious outcome, we were also looking for specific examples of organizational and other changes as a consequence of having implemented long range planning.

Since PLA suggests that planning documents can be utilized in public relations and to document the library's budget requests, we were interested in the various ways that the libraries' plans had been used. We also tried to determine whether staff routinely utilized the plans as guides to daily operations. Finally, we wondered if follow-up information had been provided to the citizen members of the planning committees concerning whether the libraries were accomplishing their objectives.

LIBRARY A

Library A, having been through two previous planning cycles and at the start of a third cycle at the time of our visit, was more experienced with planning than most of the other study libraries. When the director led the staff through the first cycle, some

support staff doubted that changes would actually be made.

In fact, one minor change in the library's hours occurred and, as an indirect consequence, plans for a new building were begun. The library conducted its planning process in 1982 "and in 1983 we started the plans for a new building, which we hadn't even anticipated... when we did the survey, but people told us what they thought. And what they told us was that they wanted a place where they could study quietly...and that they needed a community meeting room.... And then we incorporated that right into our building plan the following year." (Library A Director)

Perhaps as a result of the library's use of the first planning process manual, during which more data collection and brainstorming occurred than was necessary, the director and trustees are more sensitive to the need for realistic objectives so that the community can see tangible outcomes of the library's planning efforts. "If you're overly ambitious, you're going to be disappointed and say, 'Look at this plan. We didn't do anything we set out to accomplish.' I think first of all, your goals have to be realistic, if you're going to plan, or else there's no sense planning." (Library A Trustee 1)

The library had made the mistake in an earlier planning cycle of trying

to implement objectives that the planning committee felt were important, but that the targeted clientele didn't really want. They also gauged their objectives on what survey respondents said the library should have, rather than on what the respondents would actually use. As a result, the director told us, "we want to tailor our services to [people's] behavior, not to their beliefs. So if you tell us that you'll come then, we will try to offer the service or be open or whatever, at that time." (Library A Director)

The director believes that it is important to ask questions only about services or programs which the library has some intention of changing. If the library tells survey respondents, "absolutely, we're going to use this information. It's going to change our services, then I think they care more about answering it, and what we've tried to do ... is show them changes fairly quickly. If they say that 'you need to be open a certain time' or something, then within two or three months, they see that happen." (Library A Director)

We asked staff members whether the library's operation or their jobs had changed as a result of planning. One person told us, "it changed the focus of my department in that we went into different areas that we really hadn't been in before." (Library A Staff Member 1) Another saw changes

"Professionally, what it says to me is....if someone comes to me with a whole new service, or a whole new idea or something like that, we need to evaluate it against that planning document, to see whether it meets the goals and objectives. In some cases we have to say, 'No, We aren't going to do that,' or 'No, I cannot do that'."

—Library A Staff Member 2

"We acquired several new populations as a result of the planning process. We had set a goal to implement a literacy program. That's a whole new population who now use the library on a regular basis."

—Library A Staff Member 2

"It kind of gave me the license to go ahead and do those things that personally I had wanted to do. Yes, I do have quite a bit of independence to plan how I do things."

—Library A Staff Member 1

"One thing that the surveys said we should do is [increase bookmobile service]. So we tried stops at parks and ball parks. It is real popular. We [added stops] in some housing additions also."

—Library A Director

"Going back to the staff survey...the point was to find out what they knew about the library.... the thing I will always remember is the person who said, 'I think we need more circulating art prints.' We don't have circulating art prints! I thought, 'Oh, I wish I knew who this person was,' because we don't do that."

—Library A Director

"There is better communication between the library people and the community people of what it is we're trying to do."

—Library A Staff Member 4

"predominately in the allocation of resources, and by that I mean both myself as a professional resource, as well as collection development." (Library A Staff Member 2)

There were organizational changes as a result of decisions about service priorities. "My job started to take in more, like literacy and senior citizens." (Library A Staff Member 1) It took some of our [department's] services. I did more homebound in the past, and now I don't. It has moved over to Community Services." (Library A Staff Member 3)

The director indicated that the current planning cycle was geared toward short-term objectives and smaller changes. "We found that we exceeded some of our goals greatly. We were going to establish a literacy coalition. We now have one of the most successful literacy coalitions in the state, and the best funded. It is entirely locally funded, and we have raised over \$10,000 in local funds in the last couple months." (Library A Director)

One staff member saw changes with regard to service to the disabled. "I think we see more special populations using [the library]. The deaf, those in wheelchairs, like that.... We look at our brochures now, we look at all the publicity we give out, watch the word usage, and things like that.

That sensitivity partly comes from the first goal." (Library A Staff Member 2)

The library is using its plan as a working document to keep the library within established priorities . "I have not increased programming on demand. My natural tendency would be, when asked to do something is say, 'Sure, yes, we'll do it.' By both a board decision and a planning committee decision, I am held to the certain programs we have committed ourselves to. We don't do more...because we can't all just keep adding." (Library A Staff Member 2)

Those we interviewed indicated that better communication with the staff as well as with the library's public has resulted from the planning effort. When a staff survey was conducted, the director discovered that "there were some responses that told us that we were not communicating very well with our staff because they didn't know [certain things about the library]." (Library A Director) As a result, more effort has gone into improving internal communications.

A citizen member of the planning committee indicated that, since the planning took place, "I have seen a lot of library publicity." (Library A Community Representative 1) A staff member told us that the plan was utilized as a public relations tool.

"There were some things that we just let drop, because we knew the community did not want them."

—Library A Staff Member 3

"They have used the planning document (the second one) as a means of evaluation, both for us as department heads, and for the director.... We're evaluated against the document."

—Library A Staff Member 2

"They have added to [the inspirational reading materials]. That's one thing that [the committee] talked about."

—Library A Community Representative 1

"This was for a five year plan, of course, and that's what we're working on, so it's not been five years, even though it's getting close. It would be interesting to me to come back and see how much of this was done."

—Library A Community Representative 1

"If you're saying, 'has it changed anything in the day-to-day existence here,' I don't think the plan has done that, unless it has provided me with a part-time assistant. If the plan is responsible for that—which I don't think it is, but perhaps the board agreed to that part-time assistant due to the fact that they were developing a plan."

—Library B Staff Member 1

"Some of these are so general, how do you evaluate how you are doing on them?"

—Library B Trustee 3

"When we go and speak to the community, certainly in the beginning of the process, whenever the director or any of us would speak to a community group, we would bring our goals and objectives with us." (Library A Staff Member 2)

When the citizen member of the planning committee was asked if the library had kept the committee members informed of its progress in implementing the plan, the response was, "I don't remember having any contact for a follow up meeting, because I think I would have been here, just like I am today....I've often wondered if they're going to call us back. I keep this library goals and objectives document in my desk, and I keep thinking I will throw it away because it's taking up space, and I think, 'No, I might need it'." (Library A Community Representative 1)

LIBRARY B

In discussing planning outcomes with one of the Trustees of Library B, we discovered that not all of the board were equally convinced of the value of planning, nor did all of the board feel that the resulting document would be used. "I do not think that every board member feels [planning] is as good as some board members do. There is a range of feeling about this. There is the opinion expressed originally, 'Oh, just something more to do

and then put in the file.' That's why we said when it was over, 'Now, let's not just let it rot. Since we've gone through all this work, let's try to do something with it.'" (Library B Trustee 1)

This same trustee indicated that, although it was the board's intention to implement the objectives in the planning document, other matters had taken precedence. "The [board] president said that we weren't just going to put this in the file and forget about it. It was something we were going to work on. Of course, it's not something that's pressing. If it does not get done, it is something that just gets put in the back. We are having a report as to what has been accomplished so far. I know that the director reported that he and the staff sat down and discussed some goals for next year that they are going to implement. Of course, the main thing we're working on now is computerization, which is taking up a lot of time. It is probably over shadowing our doing other sorts of things." (Library B Trustee 1)

As noted in an earlier section of this report, Library B did not include specific actions or timelines with the objectives in its long range plan. This was apparently deliberate in order to allow priorities to be set later and to allow the director latitude in carrying out the plan. But without such specifics, there may not have been anything concrete enough to implement.

"In fact, we were just going to have a report a meeting or two ago about how we've been doing, or what goals we're doing for the next year. I think we should continue to do that. I don't know that we've really gotten into saying, 'This year, we're going to do this, this, and this.' Now, I think perhaps we should."

—Library B Trustee 3

"I would say at this time, we have an overall plan, but we don't have anything very specific. I think we need to become more specific in our objectives when we go about these things."

—Library B Trustee 1

"Indeed, things are being done based on this plan."

—Library B Director

"It could be part of an evaluation tool, yes."

—Library B Trustee 2

"As a board member, I would be vigorously opposed [to funding more staff as a result of the plan], until we have proved to ourselves that we cannot accomplish the job with volunteers."

—Library B Trustee 1

"When three of the five years have gone by, we're either going to be tremendously disappointed that it doesn't work, or we're going to get into some kind of panic that we have to get all of these [objectives] done in the next year or year and a half."

—Library B Trustee 2

"I'm not using the copy of the plan [that we have in the department] with my job in any way."

—Library B Staff Member 4

We also asked if the library had publicized its plan in any way or had let the community know that a long range plan existed for the library. We were told that the library had not publicized the fact that it had done a long range plan, "but there was also another community planning group that we are not a part of...we were not specifically asked to join, nor did we volunteer to join, there was no fault on either side. But the topic had come up that we should probably be participating more in community things because we have long range plans, and as a part of the community, they should be aware of our plans as we are of theirs." (Library B Trustee 1)

We asked staff members if the plan had changed their jobs in any way. One individual responded,

"Not really. I did look at the [plan] and I was kind of looking for something that would flag out, and catch me unawares, and there really wasn't anything. I haven't looked at it for a while, but I think there is something about outreach, which always looks really good in theory, but I'm not sure in this community that it's going to be as easy. Partially by virtue of the fact that the staff is small and we're so busy here, and also by virtue of the fact that there is some resistance in the community. The schools especially feel that they are doing a good enough job, and they don't have time in the day for outside people to come in, and they feel there's probably not

a need. And in a way, I think they're probably right." (Library B Staff Member 2)

LIBRARY C

The director of Library C indicated that the document that resulted from the library's planning process was being used for every day decision making. Weeding decisions were being made based on the plan; and decisions to not provide such services as support for home schooling were based on the limited number of roles that the library had identified for itself.

The library was considering placing a levy for additional library funding on the ballot, and one of the trustees believed that the plan would be helpful in that effort. "It's going to take all summer, it will probably be on the November ballot. In the past, trustees have fanned out to all the clubs in town, churches, any place they had influence, where they were welcome to give a levy pep-talk, and all that kind of thing. It will take all our effort." (Library C Trustee 1)

Although no specifics were given, this same board member mentioned that, as a result of the plan, the library was able to correct "things that we found that were wrong, such as the time it took to get interlibrary loans, and that kind of thing." (Library C Trustee 1)

"In response to community demand we're adding more and more talking books to our collection."

—Library C Staff Member 1

"Until we did this long range planning process, the board had always assumed I was supervising the treasurer, and I had assumed the board was! So that was new information to me when we did the long range plan, which is rather critical."

—Library C Director

"In a column in the paper I talked about the prospects [in the long range plan] for an integrated system, and invited [the public] for a demonstration."

—Library C Director

"I think that the intent of the board... is to use this as a guide as we make decisions that affect the library. We've already done that. We've implemented some of the recommendations that have been made."

—Library G Trustee 2

"The general public hasn't seen that report."

—Library G Trustee 1

"Now we are moving forward on a lot of things. It was very obvious to us that the citizens wanted more. More books, more programs, more videotapes, more of everything. In order to do 'more' we've got to get bigger. There's no question that we can supply more in this space. So we have put into our next year's budget, money for an architect to look at the building plans, we have put money into the budget two or three years down the line for major renovation to the library. Lots of money."

—Library G Trustee 1

"As far as long range, I'm not sure what's going on."

—Library G Staff Member 1

FOR LIBRARIES D, E, F SEE PAGE 126

LIBRARY G

Although the board of Library G did not adopt the report of its planning committee as a long range plan, the board did instruct the director to implement several of the objectives contained in the report. One of these the director identified as "the computer familiarization program." The director told us that the board "said, 'establish by December 1. Have [a specific staff member] do it.' Not me. 'To provide additional work space at the PAC terminals.' Yeah, it's crowded there. It's crowded there by design, because those are the only terminals we have. We don't want them being tied up. We want people to stand up there and do their work, and get tired and move on! So we put more space there, put printers—yes, its wonderful—but we have it being tied up. But I have to do that. We will do that. It's going to be a handicapped terminal, that's where the expansion will be. So I'm going to do it, but not the way [the board] wants me to." (Library G Director)

Among the other objectives in the report that the board instructed the director to carry out concerned the provision of "a quiet area for patrons by June 1990." The director told us, "I moved ahead on [that] because we did have money in the capital im-

provement budget for library furnishings to do that. It was going to cost \$11,000. In my mind, my reservation about that is, 'Why spend \$11,000 now, when within a year we are having an architect studying the building, who might say, 'Let's go down to the basement. Let's expand the building'. And I spent \$11,000 over here to put in a quiet area, when we are going to expand the building—OK. I could say the first floor is a quiet area.'" (Library G Director)

One of the staff members, in discussing the outcome of the process, told us, "We were expecting, I think, a report or a plan that would be accepted by everybody and put into implementation and started right away. I don't understand, really, to this day, why it did not happen. I'm not sure if anybody does." (Library G Staff Member 1)

A trustee explained the planning outcome in this way, "Currently the library board has said to the director, 'Well, take this document and come up with what you think are goals and objectives here.' Now, whether they are going to be any happier with his than they were with this document, I don't know." (Library G Trustee 1)

The director had told us that the library would be receiving an increase in its local funding. We asked whether the planning had anything to

"The staff, I think, is in a state of flux—we're not sure where we're going. I think we were expecting to have a good, clear, five year planning process, but we did not come up with that."

—Library G Staff Member 1

"Although it wasn't adopted whole heartedly, many of the things that are here are being done, but it is being done piecemeal, without a conscious effort to do the whole thing. I think probably most everything here is going to be done within the five year period, but rather than having a cohesive, coherent plan, we're sort of doing this, then this, then this."

—Library G Trustee 1

"This is exactly what the board is doing. They are saying, 'We're not going to adopt this, but we're going to do these things when we get around to it.'"

—Library G Trustee 1

"There were a couple of little things—computer familiarization, or more space for computer terminals—a couple of little things like that that we felt were matters where we could satisfy the public at a very small cost, and the sooner we got to work on those the better. So those kinds of things are being implemented. As far as the library board saying, 'This document is what we will adopt,' no, it has not happened, it isn't going to happen. They've adopted the roles, they formally adopted the mission statement, they've sent the document out to God and country—it's out in the community."

—Library G Trustee 1

"According to the manual, we would be having another meeting this fall to see how things were going, to push things along. I think that would serve to make everyone feel frustrated... we said that we would keep [the committee] in touch with what was going on. I honestly can't remember when the last time was we sent anything to them."

—Library G Trustee 1

do with do the increase. The director said, "The tenth of a mil [increase] was really done by the city administrative staff with little input or agreement from us." (Library G Director)

We spoke with trustees about the outcomes of the process. One told us, "I think what they were expecting was a document that we could use as a tool to help us make the right decisions about the future of the library, something that would give us some additional input when we started talking about the budget, and staffing arrangements, whether or not we need to look at expanding the building or not." (Library G Trustee 2)

The other trustee told us, "It did not come together as 'OK, here is the document, and we're going to make it public, and everyone will love it.' It just didn't happen that way. In fact... we sent this out with a letter when this was published, saying, 'Here is the report of the long range planning committee, we really appreciate the work'—now this is coming from the board—'and we're going to use this as a guideline.' Now that's a lot different than 'We endorse this as a plan...as for us saying, 'OK, we're going to do it,' that has not happened." (Library G Trustee 1)

The library trustees gave a presentation on the report to the city planning commission, "and everyone

seemed quite pleased with it.... I don't think they quite understand that the commitment to the document isn't there." (Library G Trustee 1)

It would be erroneous to conclude, because the board did not adopt the report of the committee as its long range plan, that the report was not utilized. Certainly it was not being used by staff as a guide to their decisions. But the board did instruct the director to implement specific parts of the report.

One problem that the director saw with this type of selective implementation was that it did not fit in with an existing plan that the board had previously adopted. "This [plan] was drawn up in October, and submitted to the city manager in October, and it has an architectural study for this coming year, beginning July 1, and a computer upgrade and replacement for the year after that. Then in 1993-94, it says, 'implement architectural plans,' which means...what the architect says, let's go and do, and we're thinking of expansion. OK, this is submitted before [the committee's plan] is done. The capital improvement is approved by the library board, and it is the document for the library's growth for the next six years." (Library G Director)

The director seemed to imply that the planning committee was allowed

to do its work without taking into consideration that a long range facilities expansion and maintenance plan, with an approved budget, existed. Long range planning for services, collections, technology, staffing and so forth is clearly tied to the constraints or requirements imposed by the physical facility. By implementing parts of the committee report that dealt with computer expansion and a remodeling project, the director was concerned that money spent on the facility prior to the architect's recommendations might not be money spent wisely.

LIBRARY H

Library H conducted its first long range planning process in conjunction with a desire by the board and director to ask the taxpayers to pass a levy that would provide expansion funds for the library. We were told that the report of the planning committee was not accepted as the library's long range plan, and that it did not directly lead to the levy that was eventually passed. However, in a political sense, the planning committee's report provided the board and the current director with information about community demands for library service that could be used in planning a strategy for the passage of the levy.

One of the staff members told us that the levy had "an indirect result of

"It helped get the [ballot proposition] in the way that it would pass, in a good form, getting input from people. And it also gets the word out. These are people who are knowledgeable and probably would support the library anyway. They become more knowledgeable at cocktail parties. If you're going to win with 52 percent of the vote, 50 votes here, 100 votes there, somebody makes a difference if you keep them happy, it does play a role. So I would say for those two reasons it was useful."

—Library H Community
Representative 1

"I know there were some articles in the paper saying we were working on [the first plan]. I think all of the good intentions fell apart when the board did not accept it, and therefore it became a moot point."

—Library H Staff Member 3

leading [the board's] thinking.... everybody in the library knew since 1982 that we would be going on the ballot sometime. I think that the long range plan more or less made it specific. If you pass the bond issue, we can do this, and this, and this." (Library H Staff Member 3)

The specifics of what the library should promise the taxpayers were partly determined by identifying a geographic area that was not being served adequately. Knowing that the population in that area was growing and that people would be supportive of the library's locating a branch there, enabled the board to focus the message of its public appeal.

A citizen who participated on the planning committee told us, "The reason the levy passed, just in May... was plans for a [branch] library in the largest town in the southern part of the county. There is no library there now, [but] they have the bookmobile The director has met with architects and they're trying to find a place to put a branch in.... I think [the planning committee report] just reemphasized the fact that there had to be a commitment to the southern part of our library district. Politically, if we didn't put services in down there, we would have been very hard pressed to get the levy passed this last time." (Library H Community Representative 1)

The report of the planning committee was not used by staff for any purpose, apparently, and many did not have access to it. It was, however, used by the current director to generate a revised plan that was eventually adopted as the library's long range plan.

According to one of the staff members, the director "took a lot of the objectives and goals from the [original plan], and put them into more tangible, more measurable, more functional goals... more workable goals. I also know that everybody on the staff, at least department heads, all got a hold of this, we all had input into it. We were all asked to write the goals and objectives for our particular department, and we worked with her one on one to come up with this. Now we have copies of this that we work from. I sit on two book selection committees, and we have copies of this [new plan] to do our purchasing of books." (Library H Staff Member 3)

Although the outcome of Library H's first long range plan was not the expected outcome, it can nonetheless be perceived—as apparently the trustees perceive it—as a successful outcome. The long range plan did enable the library to devise a strategy that got their tax levy passed. It also formed the basis for a revised, working document that is used by the staff.

"The only time I ever looked at the long range plan was to give it to a new board member, or to send in to the state because we had one!"

—Library H Director

"Do I think that someone would walk into the library and say, 'Oh, that's there because of the long range plan'? No. But do I think that the library is better focused to the people's needs because of the long range plan? Yes. I don't think it is something that they can perceive, but it doesn't really have to be to be an effective plan."

—Library H Trustee 1

"I hear [the new plan] cited every now and then and when we are talking about different things. The adult book selection committee, for example, at the beginning of the year referred to that document to set some priorities for selection in different areas that we felt needed to be punched up. Then we set our own long range plan in purchasing/collection development that would sort of fit with the long range plan."

—Library H Staff Member 3

"Little things that people want, we just relay them, and if we can't do it now, it goes into the long range plan. Which is nice."

—Library I Staff Member 2

"Automation...is still probably a few years down the road, but they are planning—the City Council is putting aside money. That kind of thing helps. We have our [theft detection] system. That's in, that's going. I don't think that would have been.... I think [planning] was because of the situation that we had with our Council. It was so difficult to get anything—we would be knocked down, that kind of thing. To see it suddenly happen because we had done this plan has made me a believer in planning!"

—Library I Trustee 2

"[The plan] was posted, and it was talked about, and there were articles in the paper, and [the Director] talked at council meetings, it was mentioned that the process was going on."

—Library I Staff Member 2

LIBRARY I

The director of Library I told us that although a number of objectives from the long range plan had been met within the specified time periods, some items had been carried over. "Service-wise, I think we met all of them, and we're completing some yet. Staff-wise, we did meet all of them. We got two part-time, part of it in one year and part in another. We got a full-time custodian starting this year. So some of the things got shifted back a little a year or so, but they were all met, other than the [purchase of another property]." (Library I Director)

One of the staff members told us that information about the library's planning had been publicized in the local paper. This person went on to say, "if anything came out of a meeting, it was always right on the front desk, so people could take it if they wanted it. If they had any questions, or they wanted to know what was going on." (Library I Staff Member 2)

We also discussed with the director whether the written plan was widely distributed. She indicated that "We didn't get to distribute it as much as we would have liked. We went to our library system which does our printing.... It did look more professional... While we distributed it, because of the printing at the system level, it took longer than it ought to

have. We didn't get it back until September of 1988 from our system printer. Our budget was due at City Council, so what we did was distribute the plan with the budget, which actually flowed rather nicely, because many of the items we asked for were budget items. They got both at the same time." (Library I Director)

Library I also used the planning document in another interesting way. The library had not been treated well with regard to its budget by the previous City Council. Although there were now some new council members, there was no guarantee that the same problems would not recur. The library looked at its "donors board," that lists 200 past donors.

We sent out over 200 [copies of the plan] to whoever is on the donor board. We just wrote them a letter...saying, that with budget restrictions, and so on, we had decided to plan. We told them we weren't asking for money again, it was not a request for money, but because of your generosity in the past, we want to keep you informed of what the library is doing. Then we sent them the plan, hoping these were influential people that if things did come up at budget time this year, we would have people who knew what we were trying to do and would know what was before the library. We didn't have to do that, but we did send it out to those 200 people. (Library I Director)

Another outcome of Library I's long range planning process was suggested to us. "I think there were changes—changes in attitude. Not that everybody had a bad attitude, but more pride involved." (Library I Staff Member 2)

SUMMARY

A variety of planning outcomes occurred in the study libraries. Libraries A, B, C, and I concluded their planning cycles with documents that were adopted as the respective libraries' long range plans. Library G did not adopt its committee's recommendation, but it did implement several of the suggested objectives and instructed the director to "take this document and come up with what you think are goals and objectives here." (Library G Trustee 1) Library H did nothing with its committee's report for a number of months. It was the current director who initiated the revision of the report into what became "a workable plan." (Library H Director)

More interesting than whether written planning documents actually emerged from the processes are the uses made of these documents or their successors. After an initial inability to meet certain of its long range objectives, Library A now makes a concerted effort to keep its objectives realistic and short term. Its planning

centers on surveys of citizen response to specific changes that it intends to implement. Participants in this library mentioned service, job description or other organizational changes that were a direct result of planning cycles. It was more evident in Library A than in the other libraries that planning had led to observable, tangible consequences.

Interviews conducted in Library B suggested that, among those libraries with adopted long range plans, it realized the least noticeable changes. Two additional employees were hired, but it was the perception of a staff member that there was no connection between the expanded staff and the long range plan.

Library B was the least specific in writing its objectives. Our interviews indicated that this was by design and that the board did not intend that the document be used as an immediate guide to definite actions. Instead, the intention was that the board would look at the objectives when time from more pressing matters permitted and would then decide if and how any should be implemented. It should be noted that the director differed in saying that the plan was indeed being used as a guide to the library's decision making. Staff members, on the other hand, indicated that they were not familiar with the plan and were not using it.

Library C indicated that its plan is being used to keep the library's services within the limits of the roles established in the planning process. Collection development is also being guided by the goals listed in the plan. The revised plan being used in Library H also seems to have primarily a collection development impact.

Those we interviewed in Library I said that their plan was being used in collection development in a similar manner. There did not appear to be any specific organizational or staff assignment changes as a result of the plan.

The ultimate outcome of the planning process in Library H was especially fascinating. Here was a situation in which the real purpose in implementing the planning process was to get a bond issue passed, not to come up with a workable plan that could take effect immediately. Bond issues had been defeated in the past, but this was the first time that the board responded with community-based planning. Staff, although they were aware of the purpose, were disturbed at the fact that the committee's report was not immediately adopted as the library's plan.

The presumption, by the current director and some of the staff, was that the process had resulted in failure. In addition, the previous director's

practice of "leading" the deliberations of the committee was perceived as subverting the process.

Yet, a bond issue was passed as a direct consequence of the library's having access to data that were collected and interpreted during the planning process. This gave the board exactly the right focus and message it needed when it went to the voters.

Library H is a clear example of a "fit" between the board's purpose in convening a planning committee, the composition of the committee, the charge to the committee, and the comprehensive level of effort given to the community analysis aspect of the process. Each of these factors combined to produce the desired outcome—passage of the bond issue. Library H is a phenomenal success story which, due to the nature of their experiences in the process, is perceived by the staff as a dismal failure.

The outcome at Library H is perhaps an example of using the process for the sort of political purpose alluded to by the director at one of the non-study libraries. An outcome of planning in Library I provides a nice example of what PLA suggests is one of the benefits of planning. Library I produced an attractively printed final document and then proceeded to use it as a public relations tool. They presented the document along with their

budget request to the City Council. In addition, they sent the document to people who had donated to the library's building project, with a message to the effect that they did not want money this time, they just wanted to keep the donors informed about the library. They were building the good will and support that they anticipated would be needed at some point in the future.

Several factors emerged from the study which can be grouped as planning outcomes. These include:

(1) whether a written document, adopted by the library board, resulted from the process;

(2) the extent to which the document was used as a "working" document as opposed to a "file" document;

(3) whether the ultimate outcome—whatever it was—achieved the library's purpose in implementing the planning process in the first place;

(4) whether the document was used within the library only or was distributed beyond the library; and

(5) whether outside use included public relations, operating budget justification, support for a bond issue or the like.

Libraries D, E, and F

The director of Library D indicated outcomes similar to the study libraries. "We've actually used the analysis for a number of things. When we were presenting the need for a bond issue, we went back and did statistical comparisons, but it really shows graphically the increased demand for services. That probably isn't the most telling chart... because the staff has increased in comparison with services. In our annual report, we certainly included our mission statement, and I think, revealed some of the things we were doing in terms of goals." (Library D Director)

The other two libraries were not directly comparable to the study libraries with regard to planning outcomes. Library E had not completed its planning process, therefore, we could not explore outcomes with the director. Library F used its plan internally, but did not make broader use of it as a public relations tool. This may in part be due to the library's status as a school district public library which functions under the governance of a Board of Education rather than a library board.

Emergent Factors

As discussed in this chapter, a number of factors emerged from the

case studies as being potentially useful in future investigations. These were categorized, and then summarized by category earlier. It might be useful, however, to restate them in concluding this chapter. Briefly listed, the sixteen factors that emerged from the study are:

- (1) a state requirement
- (2) a problem at the local level
- (3) exposure to workshops
- (4) the director's philosophy
- (5) the perceived complexity or adaptability of the process
- (6) shared planning experiences of other, similar libraries
- (7) the library's reasons for planning
- (8) committee's understanding of planning goals
- (9) guidance of the work of the committee
- (10) charge to the committee
- (11) size of the committee
- (12) product of the process
- (13) product with reference to planning goals
- (14) dissemination of the planning product within/outside the library
- (15) utilization of the planning product inside the library
- (16) utilization of the planning product for public relations, budget justification, and so forth.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus of this study was long range planning in small public libraries. The process described in planning manuals developed by the Public Library Association was used as the study's frame of reference on the assumption that smaller public libraries that have engaged in planning in recent years have done so primarily because of the availability of the instruction manuals.

Case studies were conducted of the planning processes used in six midwestern public libraries serving populations between 10,000 and 50,000. Data were collected through interviews with directors, trustees, staff members, and community representatives, most of whom were participants in their library's planning activities. Interview data were supplemented by statistical and printed information about the libraries and their communities. This information was obtained from the libraries, local Chambers of Commerce, and the *American Library Directory* (1980).

The research was exploratory in that its purpose was to identify factors that have a probable influence on the ways in which planning is imple-

mented on the local level. In order to assess the potential usefulness to future research of the factors that emerged from the six case studies, abbreviated field visits were made to three additional libraries. Similarities discovered between the six study libraries and the three extra libraries with respect to the emergent factors gave support to the study's findings.

Because of the qualitative nature of the study, it would be inappropriate to try to draw firm, generalized conclusions. We can, however, conclude from the findings a number of hypotheses that are suitable for further investigation and perhaps quantitative testing in the future. The study's findings with respect to probable influencing factors were discussed in the preceding chapter.

Hypotheses

This chapter suggests a number of hypotheses about relationships among the factors that emerged from the study. The hypotheses are presented as a series of clusters. The six broad categories under which the findings were discussed are used to cluster the hypotheses.

Hypothesis Cluster # 1:**Awareness of the Manuals**

A. Directors of smaller public libraries have reached the "awareness" stage in the diffusion of PLA's planning process. A substantial majority of directors of public libraries serving populations between 10,000 and 50,000 people are aware of the existence of the PLA manuals.

B. Knowledge of the existence of PLA's manuals is not sufficient motivation for small public libraries to engage in long range planning. Long range planning is more likely to be implemented in those libraries which have sent representatives to state or regional planning workshops.

C. In public libraries serving populations between 10,000 and 20,000 people, individual planning committee members are less likely to be aware of the existence of the manuals. Directors of smaller public libraries will tend to select specific elements from the manuals for use by their planning committees and distribute these (rather than the manuals themselves) to committee members at the appropriate point in the process.

D. Individual planning committee members in public libraries that serve over 20,000 people are likely to be aware of the planning manuals. The planning and role setting manual will

be perceived by directors of slightly larger public libraries as having a format and content that allows copies of the manual to be distributed for use by individual members of the planning committee.

Hypothesis Cluster # 2: Origin of the Library's Decision to Plan

A. The decision to implement a long range planning process in smaller public libraries is related to several factors external to the library itself. Among these are the existence of a requirement by the state that the library produce a long range plan, access to planning workshops on the state and regional level, and awareness that libraries of a similar size have successfully adopted the planning and role setting manual. In those states which mandate that public libraries have a long range plan and which offer informational planning workshops, libraries serving between 10,000 and 20,000 people will tend to concentrate on the product rather than the process involved in complying with the state requirement.

B. Public librarians and trustees will react more favorably to the concept of planning when it is presented as a tool that has been found workable by their peers, than when it is presented as a mandate from the state library development agency. Public libraries with fewer than five

professionals are more likely to implement a systematic long range planning process if representatives of the library have attended meetings at which successful implementations of planning in libraries of a similar size are described.

C. Decisions to engage in long range planning are also influenced by factors specific to the library, such as the existence of a problematic local situation and the philosophy of the library director with regard to the nature of planning and the role of citizen participation in planning. Small public libraries that encounter difficulties with respect to such matters as operating funds, space, physical facilities, or technology will be more likely to implement long range planning than will libraries that do not have a pressing local problem.

D. In smaller libraries the director exerts a major influence on decisions to adopt a long range planning process. If the director perceives that planning is a management responsibility, planning will tend to be conducted informally within the library by the director with limited staff involvement and without the implementation of a specific long range planning process. A similar situation will exist in the library in which the director subscribes to the philosophy that librarians, by virtue of their education and experience, know more

than the citizens at large about what the library should be offering by way of services. If the director believes that the community employs its librarians to use their professional judgments concerning the provision of services, the library will tend to decide against using a planning process that stresses direct citizen participation.

E. How the library views the characteristics of the particular planning process under consideration also influences the adoption decision. In libraries serving between 10,000 and 20,000 people, a primary consideration is whether the process can be successfully implemented in a reasonable length of time and without jeopardizing or unduly disrupting the library's current level of service. Smaller public libraries will decide to implement a planning process if it is perceived to be uncomplicated and doable within existing staff, time and budgetary constraints.

F. Another factor that influences adoption is whether the process is one that can be modified without sacrificing its utility and whether the modification or adaptation will be difficult to accomplish. Smaller public libraries will decide to implement a planning process if it is perceived to be flexible enough to be adapted easily to the library's specific requirements and constraints.

Hypothesis Cluster # 3: Role and Composition of the Planning Committee

A. Individually, factors such as the composition and size of the committee assembled by the library in order to carry out its long range planning, and the responsibilities given to the planning committee, probably do not exert a significant influence on the outcome of the planning process. There is reason to suspect, however, that the interaction of these factors with other variables does influence planning outcomes.

One such variable is the extent to which the board and director have established a clear purpose for engaging in long range planning. There are a variety of reasons for implementing a long range planning process. The library may feel the need to control costs by narrowing its focus and eliminating some of its services, and the planning process may be seen as a way to determine which services should remain and which should be eliminated. Conversely, the library may be in a position to expand its facility and services and may be looking for the most appropriate areas for expansion. Whatever the reason or reasons, these should be made clear to the planning committee. The outcome of the planning process is related to the extent to which the reasons for undertaking the process are understood by the library board and director

and are adequately conveyed to the planning committee.

B. The determination of which groups to have represented on the planning committee should be made within the context of the library's reasons for long planning. For example, if the decision to institute a planning process is made primarily in response to an external mandate and the library has no clear goals in mind beyond producing a five year "maintenance plan" for library services, a small committee is probably advisable. If the intention is to use the final document in the library's "political" process—to impress the funding authority or to garner citizen support—then a larger committee with community representation may be advisable. The outcome of the planning process is related to the fit between the composition of the planning committee and the library's reasons for planning.

C. The general way in which the committee functions, such as whether the members are expected to complete individual assignments or are only there to contribute their ideas and reactions, is also an important variable. In determining the size and composition of the committee the library should take into account whether it is intended to function as a working committee, a reactor committee, or a combination of the two. The fit be-

tween the composition of the committee and its expected function or role in the process will have an influence on planning outcomes.

D. Another aspect of how the committee functions is the extent to which the director or a board representative chairs, guides or otherwise monitors the work of the committee. One extreme would involve close direction of the committee's work by a representative of the library. The other would place a community representative as chair of the committee. How the committee functions may also be defined in terms of how much of a pre-existing agenda the library imposes on the committee's decisions. The extent to which the library board or director guides the work of the committee will influence planning outcomes.

Hypothesis Cluster # 4: Elements of the Planning Process

A. The process as originally developed by PLA involved complex data collection methods and an inflexibility with regard to community participation. The second edition of the process allows for much more flexibility in that it describes optional levels of effort for each step in the process. This is especially useful guidance for smaller libraries trying to determine how much information should be gathered for use by the

planning committee. Libraries serving between 10,000 and 20,000 people that have access to demographic and comparative data through regional networking and state library consultants will opt for an intermediate to comprehensive level of effort with regard to data collection, while using a basic level of effort for most of the other elements in the process.

B. Although the extent of data collection and the planned uses of the data should be determined in conjunction with the library's reasons for planning, this is probably not always the case. Libraries serving over 35,000 people will tend to use an intermediate to comprehensive level of effort in determining the nature of their planning committees and number and types of surveys conducted.

C. Although there is probably no specific group of planning elements that all small libraries will opt to include, the user satisfaction survey seems to be the most commonly selected. As part of their planning processes, small libraries will tend to conduct in-house user surveys more frequently than non-user or citizen surveys.

D. Libraries serving over 20,000 people will be more likely to use citizen surveys. When citizen surveys are used, they will tend to be telephone surveys rather than written surveys.

E. Libraries with at least ten full time equivalent employees will tend to use more of the elements of the planning process than will smaller libraries.

F. Libraries with at least 10 full time equivalent employees will utilize staff reports or presentations to the planning committee as a means of data gathering and providing for staff input into the process.

Hypotheses Cluster # 5:

Participant Evaluations

A. It was clear from the study that there are interrelationships between staff perceptions of their library's planning process and of long range planning in general and the management style of the director as indicated by communication patterns and the locus of decision-making within the organization. In those instances where communication with the staff concerning the goals of the planning process and the work of the committee was ongoing, staff perceptions generally mirrored those of the director and trustees. Communication with staff during all phases of planning has a strong, direct relationship to the staff's acceptance of the goals and outcomes of the process.

B. Positive staff reactions also occurred in cases in which staff perceived themselves as having input into the

process. There is a strong direct relationship between staff perceptions of the value of planning and their perceptions of their degree of participation in planning activities.

C. In those libraries in which a number of community groups were represented on the planning committee, the value of citizen participation was generally accepted by the library trustees and the citizen participants themselves. The staff in some of those instances and the director in at least one instance had mixed feelings concerning the value of citizen participation. The perception of the value of citizen participation in long range planning is a function of the individual's relationship to the library and the individual's perception of his or her own level of participation in the process.

Hypothesis Cluster # 6:

Outcomes of Planning

A. Immediately apparent outcomes of the planning processes used in the study libraries included written long range plans adopted by the library boards and reports of the planning committees that were not adopted as long range plans. In one of the latter instances the data in the report was used to develop a strategy for the successful passage of a bond issue. The library's purpose in implement-

ing a planning process in this case was not the usual one of developing a long range plan. The objective was to pass a bond issue. Therefore, although the outcome was not a long range plan, it was nonetheless a successful implementation of planning. However, participants were not united in their evaluations of the outcome. Evaluations of the outcome of planning by participants in the planning process are related to their prior expectations of what the product of the process will be.

B. The perceptions of individuals concerning their involvement in or isolation from the process emerged as a very important factor in participant evaluations in the study libraries. However, there is a strong suggestion that a number of factors interact to produce positive or negative evaluations. Participant evaluation of the outcomes of planning is a function of the relationship of the participant to the library, the participant's perception of his or her involvement in decision making during the process, and the extent to which planning goals and objectives were made clear to the participant.

Conclusions

It was noted in the introduction to this report that the diffusion literature is abundant and contains many suggestions concerning those organiza-

tional and innovation characteristics that are related to adoption, implementation, and durability of an organizational innovation. In seeking to identify factors which may influence the implementation of PLA's planning process, this study was guided by general diffusion studies in other fields and disciplines. Those factors that emerged from the present study and are also suggested by the literature are briefly noted below.

The relative recency of planning in the study libraries does not allow a close examination of the durability of the planning process in those organizations. However, Library A has the longest history of planning and it can be assumed from the interviews that planning will indeed continue to be used in that library. Among Glaser's (1981) factors are several that are similar to factors that emerged from the interviews conducted at Library A as well as the other study sites. These include:

(1) integration—the optional levels of effort in the planning and role setting manual facilitates the integration of planning into the operations of smaller libraries without the need for radical changes in procedures. Although Library A did not adopt this edition, it did accept planning as a flexible process and has integrated it into its operations..

(2) **discussion**—although identified as "communication" in the study, this factor emerged as an important influence on the way in which planning is implemented.

(3) **need**—this factor was readily observable in Library A. The director was not pleased with the library's implementation of the first edition of the planning manual. Although this influenced the negative decision concerning adoption of the second edition, it did not cause the library to discontinue its planning efforts.

The director, the staff and the trustees were unanimous in their praise of the concept of community-based planning. There was a perceived need to include in their planning process an indication of which services the community would actually use and support.

(4) **feedback**—although the Glaser definition of feedback refers to feedback given to the staff concerning their progress in implementing the innovation, this study found feedback from the staff to the planners to be important.

(5) **involvement**—this relates to staff perceptions of their degree of involvement in planning and implementation. It also emerged

as an important influencing factor in the study.

(6) **adaptability**—the capability of the process to be adapted or modified initially and over time was seen as a primary consideration in the decision to adopt in the smaller libraries in the study.

An additional factor listed by Glaser, "reward," or positive reinforcement, did not emerge as a separate variable in this study. Instead, it might be viewed as a sub-dimension of either the "feedback" or the "discussion" variable. In Glaser's description, the reward factor encompasses the notion of positive reinforcement by the manager of the staff's cooperation in the development and implementation of the innovation. If communication between the director and the staff about the implementation of long range planning was examined more specifically, positive reinforcement—as a dimension of feedback or discussion—might well emerge as an important factor.

As indicated in the findings section, the study also discovered factors that can be said to approximate several of the Davis and Salasin (1975) durability variables: (1) ability to carry out the innovation, (2) adequacy of the information about the innovation and what is required to

implement it, (3) existing circumstances at the local level, and (4) resistance.

Resistance might be a useful variable to investigate further. It could be defined in terms of the response by trustees to state mandated planning, or as the degree of resentment on the part of staff who do not feel sufficiently involved in the process.

Recommendations

A major recommendation, obviously, is that the hypotheses generated in the study be considered in future examinations of the implementation of PLA's planning process. These hypotheses should also be useful in developing studies of other managerial innovations in smaller public libraries.

There remains a need to identify those channels and methods of disseminating innovations which will be the most effective in reaching directors of smaller public libraries, particularly those serving fewer than 20,000 people. There is also a need to consider these public libraries when managerial innovations are being de-

veloped. If, as the diffusion literature and this present study suggest, the adaptability and flexibility of the innovation are important factors in its adoption and durability, more emphasis should be placed on building such characteristics into innovations that are intended for dissemination to smaller libraries.

More important, perhaps, is the recommendation that individuals from smaller libraries be involved in the development of such innovations. In addition to the innovation characteristic of adaptability, factors specific to the potential adopter such as perceived need, communication, involvement, and feedback should certainly be examined in future studies that focus on local implementations of public library innovation.

It is only through detailed, systematic studies of the adoption of innovations that we will be able to understand more fully the way the diffusion process currently works. Such understanding and insight can form the basis for devising new systems of information dissemination that will better serve the thousands of small public libraries in our midst.

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APPENDICES

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES

1. Explain purpose of project/ format of the interview
(We're interested in how the process works on the local level.
We will be asking them to describe their part in the process and their thoughts about it)
2. Ask permission to tape; be ready to take notes if the person does not want to be taped
3. Stress confidentiality
(We will not discuss what was said with the director, other staff or trustees in such a way as to identify any individual. We will not identify any particular person or any specific library in any report of the study.)
4. Give person a copy of the "informed consent" form; go over the content with the person; obtain signature and provide a signed copy.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS/PROBES

1. What is your relationship to the library: staff member, department head, other administrative position; trustee; friend; user; etc;
2. How long have you been associated with the library?

If association pre-dates use of planning process:

- A. If appropriate, probe concerning how services, objectives, etc. were determined before use of planning process (by director and trustees only; with input from dept. heads; any staff involvement? etc.)
- B. Has using the planning process made any noticeable difference in the library's day to day operation? (For example: Do you or does your department emphasize goals and objectives more than before? Has there been any change in your job description or in the way you carry out your responsibilities?)

- 3. How would you describe your participation in the planning process?**
 - A. extent of involvement; duration of involvement; specific responsibilities, time devoted to planning process—short term/ ongoing, etc.**
 - B. prior experience with planning—either individually or as part of a group process**
 - C. voluntary participation or drafted; believer/non-believer at start and now?**
- 4. From your vantage point, would you describe how the process worked?**
 - A. What was involved? Were there any pre-planning activities that you know of?**
 - B. Was brainstorming used? Were you involved in any brainstorming sessions? How well did this technique work?**
 - C. Was there much small group interaction? Was it difficult to facilitate group interaction?**
 - D. Were specific jobs assigned to group members? Did people work independently? Was most of the “leg work” (data collection) assigned to the staff?**
 - E. How was community/user data collected? By whom?**
 - F. How was input obtained from staff/trustees/citizen groups not on the planning committee?**
 - G. How were the data analyzed/interpreted? How was a consensus arrived at?**
- 5. In your opinion, what are the benefits and/or the drawbacks of having gone through the process ?**
 - A. any tangible/intangible outcomes?**
 - B. any effect on public or staff perceptions of the library?**
 - C. any noticeable changes in user satisfaction?**
 - D. any effects on your satisfaction with your job?**
 - E. did benefits outweigh drawbacks (was it worth it)?**
- 6. Would you like to comment on anything else about having gone through the process that we haven’t talked about?**

LIBRARY PROFILES

LIBRARY A

<u>Population served:</u>	32,795	<u>1989 Per capita income:</u>	\$18.03
<u>Book collection:</u>	58,720 vols.	<u>Staff:</u>	21 (8 prof., 6 non-prof., 4 clerical + students)
<u>Facilities:</u>	main library, bookmobile		
<u>Planning start dates:</u>	1982, 1986, 1990		
<u>State mandated long range plan:</u>	(1982, 1986) no (1990) yes		

Library A is a city library which, through a contractual arrangement, also serves six nearby townships. Although the contractual district has a larger population than the city, "there is no industry [in the townships].... Basically, all the tax money is being raised on homes, and from personal property. The tax money in the city is being raised primarily from industry." (Library A Director)

The city library board is composed of seven members. The contractual district library board consists of those seven members plus an additional four people. "We have two separate tax rates here. Because we have the contractual rate, we have actually two separate libraries.... City people are paying 38 cents and the township people are paying 16 cents, and they are getting exactly the same service.... The township people are using the library in greater numbers than the city people." (Library A Director)

There is another city-contractual district library that serves other small communities in the county, plus one or two communities in a neighboring

county. The two libraries provide reciprocal borrowing privileges to each other's patrons.

Soon after Library A was established as a city public library in 1898, it applied for and received a Carnegie building grant. The building was opened to the public in 1903. By 1975, the contractual district had been established, bookmobile service was being offered, and a major remodeling of the facility had been undertaken.

In 1982, the library conducted its first long range planning process, which was implemented without reference to the PLA manual. "We have a real stable staff now, but we were all new then and we felt that we needed to know what was going on in the community. Nothing like this had been done before and we did this actually before we even thought about a building project." (Library A Director)

Selected Goals from the 1982 Plan:

- o "To promote the library as an essential and integral community resource and information center."
- o "To make the library a center to facilitate informal learning by providing guidance and materials for independent learners."
- o "To improve communication between supervisors and staff."
- o "To improve reference service."
- o "To improve patron service at the circulation desk."
- o "To provide a quiet place for serious study."
- o "To increase the number and quality of programs offered by the Adult Services Department."
- o "To increase the amount of audiovisual equipment available to the public."
- o "To increase use of the Young Adult Collection."

In 1984, another renovation and expansion project was completed at a cost of 1.2 million dollars. "We completed the first survey in 1982 and in 1983 we started the plans for a new building (which we hadn't even anticipated and didn't even ask those kinds of questions, really, when we did the survey). But people told us what they thought. What they told us was that they wanted a place where they could study quietly because there was absolutely no opportunity to do that here and that they needed a community

meeting room. Those were the two main things that came out of that [first survey]. And then we incorporated that right into our building plan the next year." (Library A Director)

Information gathered from its user surveys in 1982 was used by the library during public hearings on the building bond issue. "We could say, '96 percent of the people that we surveyed said that the library was very important to them.' So, as it turned out, even not knowing what we were going to use this [information] for, it was real valuable to have." (Library A Director) The city taxpayers are carrying the entire burden for the bond issue, "because legally a contractual district cannot enter into a bond arrangement." (Library A director)

A second long range planning process was implemented in 1986. This time the library used the first PLA planning manual. "What happened to us was, we spent six months trying to put together a very elaborate plan, and we spent a lot of time away from our department. It was very hard on the support staff, and it was very hard on our services. So we came up with a plan, but it was at great cost....It was very hard for us to provide a consistent level of good service and do the planning process at the same time." (Library A Director)

Selected Goals from the 1986 Plan:

- o "Increase efforts to extend the full resources of the library to meet the unique needs of senior citizens, retarded, blind, deaf, functionally illiterate, and other special populations. Library resources include materials, personnel, programming, and facilities."
- o "Utilization of volunteers to increase and maintain library services. Develop and implement a volunteer organization including a volunteer coordinator and volunteer training."
- o "Promote and produce materials that record local history, people, places, and events."

At the time the library was visited by the research team (March 1990), the staff was about to begin its third planning cycle. "This time we are not using the planning process book at all. We're just doing our own thing.... We're going to do two pages, maybe three pages for the in-house. That will

have 10-15 questions that will be very straight forward.... I told my staff that each department should submit two questions to me, and two questions only. Those should be about services or collections that we have some intent to change." (Library A Director)

A fact sheet distributed by Library A notes that, "A full range of service is available to patrons of all ages. A ramp and elevator make the library physically accessible to the handicapped. The community room is available to nonprofit groups at no charge. Library service has grown to include an adult literacy program, computers, videocassettes and audiovisual materials as well as books. The library is an information center serving an important role in the community. Services are evaluated periodically to give the best service possible."

LIBRARY B

Population served: 22,000

Book collection: 68,202 vols.

Facilities: main library only

State mandated long range plan: Yes

1989 Per capita income: \$10.92

Staff: 6 (3 prof., 3 non-prof.,
75 volunteers)

Planning start date: 1988

Library B is a city library that also serves a nearby area through a contractual arrangement. There are seven board members who are appointed by local authorities associated with the various constituencies the library serves (e.g., the school board, the county, the city, a district judge). The city is home to a private university. In a neighboring community there is a large library serving the portion of the county not included in the contractual district.

One of the people at Library B told us, "anybody in the county can use us. They can come here and get a card and use us. So we do sort of subtly encourage people to use both libraries. We are not at all upset if they use the other library. That's a different access point. Also, we do have the university. So, in a way, that does take the pressure off of our reference collection. We're well enough used anyway." (Library B Staff Member 2)

An addition to the facility, built in 1984, doubled the library's floor space. The library has an active Friends of the Library organization that holds spring and fall book sales. Over seventy volunteers work part-time at the library. "There's a reluctance on the part of the board to add paid staff. That dates back to the early 1980s when there were financial problems in the library, and they had to let a lot of the part time staff go, and brought in a lot of volunteers. Not the way to start a volunteer program! You don't do it for negative reasons. You do it for a positive reason. It took a number of years for that to wash itself out of the system." (Library B Director)

The library completed its long range plan in 1989. The mission statement describes, as the library's purpose, "to offer educational, enrichment and recreational opportunities to the citizens served by the...library district. These purposes will be pursued, in keeping with the Library Bill of Rights, through the use of collections of print, nonprint and other audio visual materials, programs, lectures, exhibits and other worthy library services." The plan lists goals and objectives in seven major areas: personnel, library collections, library services, supporting resources, buildings and grounds, cooperation/publicity, and evaluation of the Long Range Plan.

Despite the statement of purpose included in the long range plan, one of the trustees, when asked if the library had a mission statement, replied, "Good God, no! ...When we develop a thing called a mission statement, we tend to look upon it as being sacred We don't see it as an evolving statement. I've seen people get trapped into a situation where months after their mission statement was developed, they avoid doing things because it doesn't support the mission statement." (Library B Trustee 2)

Selected Goals from the Long Range Plan, 1989-1993:

- o "Provide sufficient personnel to meet the needs for service in all areas of the Library"
- o "Continue to increase involvement of volunteers in as many areas of the Library as possible"
- o "Encourage professional development among the staff"
- o "Continue to develop collections of all types of library materials which take into account interests of our patrons and which present a multiplicity of viewpoints"

- o "Increase the use of electronic and automated library tools"
- o "Provide an automated circulation and catalog system for the Library's patrons and staff"
- o "Provide adequate public funding for the Library"
- o "Increase private funding for the Library"
- o "Work to promote cooperation with other libraries and interested agencies in our area"

The plan includes non-specific objectives, such as, "Fill the need for full time staffing (all hours the Library is open to the public) of adult services, children's services, circulation, and volunteer coordination/training; review these needs annually." The lack of specifics and timelines is explained by a concluding statement: "Action steps necessary to implement the major Goals will be developed by the appropriate members of the Board and Library Staff and will be presented periodically to the Board for discussion and implementation during the period of this Plan." (Library B *Long Range Plan, 1989-93*)

The library is included in a promotional brochure describing the agencies that contribute to "Quality of Life" in the community. This publication states that in addition to its collection of books, large print books, newspapers, and periodicals, Library B owns "phonorecords, compact discs, videotapes, books-on-tape, and slides Reference service (either in person or by telephone) and interlibrary loan are provided. An outreach program delivers library materials to residents who are homebound. The children's department offers story hours and summer reading programs."

LIBRARY C

Population served:	13,300	1989 Per capita income:	\$42.02
Book collection:	49,745 vols.	Staff:	16 (2 prof., 5 para-prof., 9 clerical)
Facilities:	main library only	Planning start date:	1988
State mandated long range plan:	no		

Library C is a school district library governed by a seven member board of trustees appointed by the Board of Education. Each trustee serves a seven year term. The library was established by the Village Council in 1930. As the result of the passage of a bond issue, the present building was constructed in 1959. An addition to the building was dedicated in 1983. Half of the library's income is from local property taxes and half is from state funds distributed through the county.

The library joined six other public libraries in developing a county-wide long range plan in 1989. At that time, a demographic summary of the library's service area in relation to the county as a whole revealed the following population characteristics: mostly white, better educated, with higher incomes; more working mothers and larger families; more managers and sales people; more manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade.

The library is an active participant in regional resource sharing and networking. Among the cooperative ventures in which the library participates are: development and maintenance of a union serials list, rotation of print and nonprint collections, consulting, and staff development programs.

According to the mission statement included in Library C's long range plan, the library "provides current high demand, high interest materials as well as accurate and basic reference materials in a variety of formats to meet the personal and educational needs of community persons of all ages. The Library emphasizes services and activities which stimulate young children to develop an interest and appreciation of reading and learning. The Library encourages individuals and groups to utilize the Library facilities for their special needs and activities."

Selected Goals from the Long Range Plan:

- o "Provide for the financial security of the Library"
- o "Improve staff performance"
- o "Explore new technologies"
- o "Increase use of collection"
- o "Improve quality of collection"
- o "Promote Library as a source of popular materials"
- o "Promote Library as a resource for preschoolers and their parents"
- o "Promote Library as source of basic reference sources"
- o "Promote Library as focal point in community"

According to one of its promotional brochures, Library C "endeavors to meet the unique educational and recreational needs of this growing suburban and business community." Included among its collections and services are: "large print books, a paperback exchange, phone books on microfiche, magazines, maps, college catalogs and mail order catalogs, business services, computer software, records, cassettes, talking books, CDs, videos, closed caption decoder, InfoTrac, meeting rooms, typewriter, computers, CD and video players, electronic encyclopedia, monthly art show, art classes, babysitting clinic, voter registration, service to the homebound, and field trips sponsored by the Friends of the Library."

LIBRARY G

<u>Population served:</u>	47,500	<u>1989 Per capita income:</u>	\$20.71
<u>Book collection:</u>	83,875 vols.	<u>Staff:</u>	17 (6 prof., 11 clerical)
<u>Facilities:</u>	main library only	<u>Planning start date:</u>	1988
<u>State mandated long range plan:</u>	no		

Library G is a relatively new library, having been established in 1962 by what was then a township. It moved to its present building on a three acre site in 1976. The building consists of two levels, with juvenile, adult, and reference services provided from the upper level. On the lower level are meeting rooms, a local history repository, storage space, and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

In 1974, the City Charter was amended to allow a one mil tax levy to be used exclusively for support of the library. In 1989, the library levy was .95 mil. According to the Planning Committee report, "A major problem to be solved is the issue of non-resident patrons, specifically those residents who live within the boundaries of the [local] school district, but not within the city limits. Currently those individuals may obtain a non-resident card for \$24 per year. However, this often causes confusion and negative feelings."

Library G's planning committee concluded that the "Library is a well managed, busy library providing the kinds of services its patrons desire. No change of emphasis is suggested." (*Report of the Long Range Planning Committee*) The committee recommended that the library commit a significant amount of its time and resources to two primary roles: "children's services" and "popular materials library." As a secondary role, the committee suggested "reference library."

Although the complete report was not adopted as Library G's long range plan, the mission statement developed for the report was adopted by the trustees. It states that "The...Library is the information hub of the community. It provides [city]residents with high demand, high interest, current materials in a variety of formats. Special emphasis is given to innovative programs, services and materials for children of all ages in order to encourage their interest in reading, learning and library usage. The Library also serves as a reference center for all residents of [the city]." (*Report of the Long Range Planning Committee, 1989*)

The Planning Committee's list of four service goals and two management goals, each accompanied by several specific objectives, constituted the five year plan it recommended to the board for adoption in September 1989. Below is the first service goal and its objectives:

All Children and Young Adults of the community will have access to high quality programs and learning opportunities.

Objective 1. to provide children's programming that reflects user demand in format, content and quantity by September 1, 1990.

Objective 2. to provide a larger children's area that can be subdivided for distinct functions or age groupings by July 1, 1993.

Objective 3. to hire additional personnel for the children's area by July 1, 1990.

Objective 4. to maintain the Young Adult fiction collection in the children's area and move the young adult non-fiction materials to the adult area where young adult reference questions will be handled by July 1, 1990.

The "transfer of the young adult nonfiction...just was a terrible situation.... To give you an idea on how that came about—it was just so ridiculous.... each of the staff members did a presentation. One of the young adult librarians had six items to bring before the planning group. But her basic point was that ... we should provide more seating, more space, more money, more materials, and more staff to oversee this area. That was her final point, and she said—she had ten words—'or pare down the collection to include only young adult fiction.' This was all she said." (Library G Director)

The director was upset that moving the young adult nonfiction was included as "part of the objectives for the current fiscal year. [The staff member's] other statements were expansionary, but this one was accepted with little thought given to the consequences. The staff was forward thinking in its comment that, if we are not to expand, then we must pare down the collection." (Library G Director)

As a result of the Director's memos to the board, objecting to some of the specifics and timelines given in the planning committee's recommendations, the board decided to "refer the long range plan report to the library administration to prepare a plan for implementing the broad goals. Which they did. It is now in my hands." (Library G Director)

"That's the status of the report at this time. It has not been adopted by the library board. The only thing adopted from it was the mission statement, which is an extremely good one. Many of the goals and the objectives are very good." (Library G Director)

According to the brochure provided by Library G, its resources include: "books on tape, magazines, old favorites, framed art, records, best sellers, videos, compact discs, cassette tapes, reference materials, vertical file, newspapers, copy machine, picture collection, coupon/pattern/puzzle exchange." The brochure also describes some of the library's services. For example, "Reference librarians, both Children's and Adult, are eager to assist you with our collection of books, periodicals, and other resources. Programs are offered throughout the year for a wide range of interests and ages. The Public Access Computer catalog helps patrons quickly and easily find resources by title, author or subject. Meeting rooms are available for government, business and non-profit organizations."

Under the heading "General Information" is found the statement, "If we don't have what you request, we can probably get it through interlibrary loan. Membership in the [regional] Library Cooperative offers access to resources throughout the state and nation." The brochure describes the children's area as having been "Created especially for younger hands and interests with climbing equipment, puzzles and a doll house. Books are arranged by reading level. Features a personal computer, videos, reference material and other resources for kids. Extensive parent-teacher collection."

LIBRARY H

Population served:	42,751	1989 Per capita income:	\$17.83
Book collection:	95,161 vols.	Staff:	19 (4 prof. , 15 clerical)
Facilities:	main library, bookmobile	Planning start dates:	1986, 1990
State mandated long range plan:	no		

Library H is a county district library. There are two other public libraries in the county that serve communities not covered by the county library district. Any resident of the state is eligible for a library card from Library H. There is no charge for non-district residents.

Library H began as a social library organized by a twenty-six member women's reading circle in 1897. When the state passed legislation a year later that enabled cities to levy a tax for the purpose of maintaining a public library, the reading circle was incorporated as a City Library Association. Soon afterwards, the women turned over their collection of 535 volumes to the city and a local banker donated a room for the library in one of the bank's buildings. The board of education donated an additional 375 volumes and levied a 3/10 of a mill tax for the public library, which satisfactorily provided for all of its expenses. By 1902, the library had received a Carnegie building grant and soon had its own facility. The population served by the library at the time was 8,000.

Despite decades of population growth and a transformation from city library to county district library, the operation was still housed in the same Carnegie building in 1979. A library building consultant, retained that year by the board, recommended a 25,000 square foot building on an 85,000 square foot site. The library was only able to obtain a 10,000 square foot existing building on a 32,000 square foot site, a gain of less than 3,000 square feet of usable space. Not surprisingly, within five years the library had once more outgrown its quarters and, in 1986, the first long range planning process was instituted.

The library board specified in writing its charge to the planning committee. The committee, chaired by the library director, was requested to "study the needs of the citizens of [the] County for library service" and to "evaluate the current performance of the library." Based on its findings, the committee was then asked to develop a long range plan including recommendations for "a mission statement for the role of the library in the community" and "goals and objectives for the library over the next five years." In its charge to the committee, the board expressed its expectation that the plan developed by the committee would be presented to the trustees "for final approval and implementation" and that the board would be "apprised of the progress of the Long Range Planning Committee at the Board's monthly meetings."
(Library H Charge to the Planning Committee)

Although the committee did not have access to the role setting exercise in the second edition of the PLA planning manual, its first meeting was facilitated by one of the developers of role setting. She led the committee through a role prioritization process that utilized 11 roles, which differed from the

roles eventually included in the manual. The major roles selected by the library were "Children's Reading and Viewing Center," "Recreational Reading and Viewing for Adults," "Young Adults Reading and Viewing Center," "Information Agency & Adult Independent Learning Center," "Student's Auxiliary," and "Community Center." Despite this attempt at setting priorities, the mission statement prepared by the committee was typically broad: [Library H] "shall provide services, programs, facilities and access to all forms of available media to help meet the educational, recreational, informational, cultural and literacy needs of the residents of the library's service area."

According to the planning committee report, a consultant from the state library, "using the nominal group technique, obtained 81 ideas from the committee for goals and objectives. The three members of library staff who were on the committee took these ideas and formulated goals and objectives for submission to the Board of Trustees." A set of broad goals covering 10 areas (finances, collection, staff, programming, branches, areas for expansion, bookmobile/outreach, public relations, use, and computers) was developed. Under each goal the number of objectives ranged from one or two to over 20. Almost all of the objectives were dependent upon the first goal and the successful accomplishment of its first accompanying objective:

Goal I - To have sufficient funding so that the library can provide appropriate services, programs, staff and facilities

Objective A - To place a multipurpose levy, for buildings and operations, on the ballot by special or general election by the end of 1988. (Library H Planning Committee Report)

The document presented to the library board as the committee's report was in excess of 30 pages. The board thanked the committee for its work and filed the report without formally implementing it as a long range plan.

With the arrival of the current director, a new long range plan was developed and implemented. According to the introduction to the new plan, "The current document builds on the foundation of the original long range plan by incorporating many of its goals and objectives for effective library service. In some areas timetables have been adjusted, accomplished objectives de-

leted and different emphases placed on certain aspects of library service."
(Library H *Long Range Plan, 1990-1994*)

The mission statement in the new plan is similar to the statement in the earlier plan, except for an additional sentence: "The library's collection will reflect the current interests and tastes of the community."

Selected Goals from the 1990-1994 Plan (Most are unchanged from 1986):

- o "To provide excellent collections of print and non-print materials with an emphasis on providing high-demand items, collections for younger readers and reference resources"
- o "To attract, develop and retain a high quality library staff and give them the necessary training and resources to provide excellent library services"
- o "To provide educational, recreational, informational and cultural programs for all ages that are designed to promote the use of library materials and services"
- o "To increase public awareness of library services and materials through an active community relations program"
- o "To provide service to county residents unable to come to the main library or a branch by means of continuing and expanded bookmobile and outreach services"
- o "To establish branches wherever needed in the service area"

With the successful passage of its building program bond issue in 1990, Library H was about to begin construction of its new main facility at the time it was visited by the research team. It was also in the planning stages for construction of its first branch library.

An informational brochure provided by the library lists a number of special services: "public meeting room, special programs and story hours for children, large print books, voter registration, talking books, interlibrary loans, audio-visual equipment, local history and genealogy materials, and adult new reader material. In addition to hardcover and paperback books, the library's collection includes pamphlets, maps, records, periodicals, 16 mm and 8 mm films, VHS/BETA tapes, audio cassettes, filmstrips, 16 mm projectors, filmstrip projectors, slide projector, overhead projectors and VHS

units, a circulating art collection, computers and software." The bookmobile provides services to the homebound and disabled. The library participates in two regional networks.

LIBRARY I

Population served: 14,149	1989 Per capita income: \$23.20
Book collection: 59,323 vols.	Staff: 9 (4 prof. , 5 clerical)
Facilities: main library only	Planning start dates: 1987, 1990
State mandated long range plan: no	

Library I is a city library with a seven member Board of Trustees appointed by the Mayor. In accordance with state library statutes, three additional individuals also attend board meetings in their role as the city's Common Council Library Liaison Committee.

The city has enjoyed public library service since 1884. "The first 'library' was one room in City Hall, containing 1,043 books, and supported by individual subscription. It was so popular—500 people immediately applied for library cards—that it quickly outgrew both space and funding. In 1885, the city took over funding and, a year later, moved the ... City Library into two larger rooms. By 1890, even these facilities became overcrowded." (Library I new building Dedication Program, 1985)

Due to the generosity of a local philanthropist, a new building was constructed in 1891 on a lot provided by the city. The library opened with a collection of 4,500 books and served a population of 4,000. According to a locally published history of the library, it was the first public library in the U.S. to feature open stacks. In 1954, a major remodeling project was completed to ease overcrowding on the building's main floor.

The current building, completed in 1985, "has been designed with flexibility a top priority. Unforeseen new services will require changes in the interior arrangement of the library over the years to come, and the flexibility

of the new design will allow these changes to be made, at little additional cost, for many years to come. Walls, stairs, and other such fixed 'elements' have been kept to a minimum, to allow for change and expansion in the future. Air conditioning, lighting, and wiring will also allow rearrangement of the interior space as needed." (Library I new building Dedication Program, 1985)

According to the "Introduction" to the Long Range Plan, "Several tight budget years convinced the Board and Staff of the ... Community Library of the need for long-range planning in order to establish service priorities and to better allocate existing resources. Seeking direction in formulating and presenting a 1989 budget, the planning process was begun in December, 1987, and the written planning document approved in July, 1988 The purpose of the planning meetings was to first look at the community the library serves and at the library and its resources as they now exist. '[State] Public Library Standards,' a document developed by the Division for Library Services, was used to assess the library and information on the community was gathered from census data." (*Long-Range Plan, 1988-1991*)

The mission statement appearing in the long range plan states that the library "serves the people of the community by providing access to materials and services which meet their informational, educational, and recreational needs. The library seeks to stimulate an interest in reading by providing leisure reading and other popular material for persons of all ages, including children. The library seeks to encourage self-development by providing access to information resources in a variety of formats and using a variety of technologies. The library seeks to help people of the community by providing answers to their information needs. For the current planning cycle, 1988-1991, the library has selected as its Primary Role that of Popular Materials Library, and as its Secondary Roles those of Independent Learning Center, Children's Door to Learning and Reference Library." (*Long-Range Plan, 1988-1991*)

The plan provides one or two goals, with accompanying objectives for each selected role, plus a set of goals and objectives categorized under the term "access." It also presents the objectives listed according to the year in which each will be accomplished.

Selected Goals from the Long Range Plan, 1988-1991:

- o "Provide and maintain a sufficient quantity of high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages."
- o "Evaluate the present collection in light of user needs."
- o "Evaluate the present collection in light of appropriateness and reliability of materials."
- o "Increase programming for children."
- o "Develop a collection which meets the needs of children, parents, and adult care-givers."
- o "Increase the availability of reference services to the community."
- o "Provide adequate staff to carry out the library's programs."
- o "Plan for library automation."

A "planning to plan" outline prepared by the director of Library I, detailing the activities, timetable, and responsibilities associated with the 1990 planning process, states that "The Library Board of Trustees as a whole will serve as the Planning Committee. The Common Council Liaison Committee, Library Director, and Staff will participate in the process. Since a full-scale planning process under the guidance of a facilitator was completed less than two years ago in the summer of 1988, an abbreviated planning process will be undertaken and completed by June, 1990. It will consist chiefly of reviewing the goals and objectives in the ... Community Library Long-Range Plan, 1988-1993, updating those goals and objectives, and drafting a ... Community Library Long-Range Plan, 1990-1993. A more complete planning process can be undertaken again in 1992 or 1993."

In addition to books, periodicals, newspapers, and pamphlets, Library I's collection consists of records, cassettes, compact discs, 16 mm films, video-cassettes, art prints, puppets, puzzles, computers, videoplayers and other AV equipment. The library's services and programming include a community meeting room, story hours and summer reading programs, reference, and interlibrary loan. The library participates in regional and county networking. The director of Library I serves on the long range planning committee of the cooperative composed of public libraries in the county.