

AGENDA

Catawba County Board of Commissioners Meeting
Monday, June 15, 2015, 7:00 p.m.
Robert E. Hibbitts Meeting Room, 1924 Courthouse
30 North College Avenue, Newton, NC

1. Call to Order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Invocation.
4. [Approval of the Minutes from the Board's Budget Hearings with Departments and Outside Agendas of May 26, 2015, the Board's Budget Public Hearing and Wrap-Up of May 28, 2015 and the Regular Meeting of June 1, 2015.](#)
5. Recognition of Special Guests.
6. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda.
7. Public Hearing:
[Community Development Block Grant Application for Commerce Fellows Professional Development Program. Presented by Megan Dale, ICMA Fellow, Catawba County Manager's Office.](#)
8. [Appointments.](#)
9. Departmental Reports:
Library:
[Adoption of the Catawba County Library Strategic Plan, 2016-2019 and Request for Funding for one Digital Services Librarian Position. Presented by Library Director Suzanne White.](#)
10. Other Items of Business.
11. Attorneys' Report.
12. Manager's Report.
13. Adjournment.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: Individuals needing assistance should contact the County Clerk at 828-465-8990 within a reasonable time prior to the meeting. Access to the 1924 Courthouse for individuals with disabilities is at the south side ("A" Street). The elevator is located at the north end of the building. Participation in public meetings is without regard to race, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, color, or disability.

INFOTALK/INTERNET: The Catawba County Telephone Information System will allow you to use your touch tone telephone to obtain current information on Catawba County 24 hours a day. Information is updated on a regular basis. Dial 465-8468 and INFOTALK will direct your questions with easy to understand instructions. Reach Catawba County on the Internet at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov>.

CALENDAR: There is only one Board of Commissioners in July. This meeting will take place on Monday, July 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the 1924 Courthouse in Newton.

MEMORANDUM

To: Catawba County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Megan Dale, ICMA Fellow, Catawba County Manager's Office

DATE: June 15, 2015

RE: Community Development Block Grant Application for Commerce Fellows Professional Development Program

REQUEST

It is requested the Board of Commissioners hold a public hearing in consideration of the submission of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division, for the Commerce Fellows "Building Community Through Capacity and Knowledge" program.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Commerce Fellows program is to provide technical assistance, capacity building, and training to North Carolina local governments. The State is partnering with North Carolina universities to provide high-quality professional development to local government staff with a focus on community development and improving opportunities for low and moderate income individuals.

Catawba County plans to apply for the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill School of Government training program. Unlike other participating universities, the School of Government will allow the County to send multiple employees to in-person courses, provide access to four online training series, and authorize the County to send municipal staff along with County staff to courses to increase community-wide benefit. Five County employees, the City Manager of Claremont, and the City of Newton Planning Director will benefit from attending the School of Government in-person courses. Numerous other staff will benefit from attending the online courses.

A total of \$25,000 will be requested for course tuition, lodging, and travel expenses for program participants. The grant requires no local match. Staff will work with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to meet all grant reporting requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board of Commissioners:

- a) Conduct a public hearing in consideration of submitting a CDBG application to the NC Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division. The grant will be used to provide high-quality professional development with an emphasis on community development to Catawba County and its non-entitlement local governments.

- b) Authorize the submission of the grant application.
- c) Authorize Megan Dale, ICMA Fellow, to submit the grant application as outlined in the Resolution.



North Carolina Department of Commerce
Rural Economic Development Division
CDBG Program

**2014-2015 Commerce Fellows
Building Community through Capacity and Knowledge**

PROGRAM STATEMENT

The **Commerce Fellows / *Building Community through Capacity and Knowledge*** is offered through funding available from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding program. CDBG funds are available to assist local governments with projects that enhance the vitality of communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments and expanding economic opportunities. These grants primarily serve persons of low- and moderate- incomes. All CDBG-funded activities must meet one of the three national objectives of the program: 1) benefiting low-and moderate-income persons, 2) preventing or eliminating blight, or 3) meeting other community development needs having a particular urgency. Grantees must be prepared to carryout activities as a result of the **Commerce Fellows** program that will benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) individuals and families.

The State recognizes that strong leadership at the local level can enhance the opportunities available to LMI people and the **Commerce Fellows** program has a special emphasis in that area. As a result, the State, as a part of its consolidated planning process, identified the expansion of its partnership with North Carolina universities to expand the capacity building program. The **Commerce Fellows / *Building Community through Capacity and Knowledge*** program is a collaboration among the NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division CDBG program, Appalachian State University (ASU), East Carolina University (ECU) and UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government (UNC SOG). The Department of Commerce will offer grants to local governments to enable local governments to engage in high-quality professional development and training with an eye toward improving opportunities for LMI individuals. These grants are designed to facilitate capacity-building and professional development for local governments and will enable local administrators to participate in professional development courses/seminars at one of the above-named Universities.

Community development is a strong focus of the **Commerce Fellows** program. While each University will structure their own course offerings for this grant program, all programs will offer content on grant writing and administration, budget and finance, planning and economic development. There will be special emphasis on CDBG grant writing and administration. Grantees will be required in a final product due at the end of the grant term,

The Commerce Fellows partnership will provide holistic community development training opportunities for local government administrators. **Local governments may select to participate in one program at either Appalachian State University, East Carolina University, or UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government.**

APPLICATION DEADLINES AND SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

The Application materials are available on the NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division website at www.nccommerce.com/rd and each University program website:

Appalachian State University: <http://mpa.appstate.edu/commerce-fellows>

East Carolina University: <http://www.ecuinnovate.org/>

UNC School of Government: http://www.sog.unc.edu/training_package

All applications will be submitted to the NC Department of Commerce. Applications must be **received by 5:00 p.m. on June 15, 2015**. No application or relevant submission materials will be accepted after the deadline date and time; all relevant signatures must be in place when application is submitted.

Complete Applications Should Be Submitted To:

Ella Limehouse

North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division

For Postal Delivery: 4313 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27610

For Overnight Delivery: 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, NC 27610

919-715-0506

Ella.limehouse@nccommerce.com

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

Local government should select **one** training program at Appalachian State University, East Carolina University or University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Government. Below are the program descriptions of the programs available at each university.

COMMERCE FELLOWS AT APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY AND EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

The **Commerce Fellows** Community Capacity Building programs at ASU and ECU provide technical assistance, capacity building training and community development consultation to local governments across North Carolina. The program includes community level engagement by faculty and staff, and an on-campus training curriculum in grant administration and public management that covers a range of related topics including:

- Grant Writing
- Strategic Planning
- Budgeting
- Program Evaluation
- Policy Analysis
- Leadership Development and
- Economic Development.

The program offers specific training relative to the Community Development Block (CDBG) Program, its application process and its administrative requirements. Participants will engage with faculty, professional economic development staff and other local government practitioners to enhance their existing skill sets and build greater administrative and management capacities for their respective communities.

Eligible Applicants for Commerce Fellows at ASU and ECU

All North Carolina counties and small cities are eligible to apply for the **Commerce Fellows** at ECU and ASU except for the 24 entitlement cities that receive funds directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These directly-funded cities include: Asheville, Burlington, Cary, Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Concord, Durham, Fayetteville, Gastonia, Goldsboro, Greensboro, Greenville, Hickory, High Point, Jacksonville, Kannapolis, Lenoir, Morganton, New Bern, Raleigh, Rocky Mount, Salisbury, Wilmington, and Winston-Salem. The three HUD-designated urban counties of Wake, Mecklenburg, and Cumberland, are also not eligible to apply.

Eligible Expenses for Commerce Fellows at ASU and ECU

Grants of \$22,500 are available to local governments to enable one employee per local government to participate in the **Commerce Fellows** program at either ASU or ECU. Up to \$5,000 of the grant amount can be used for administrative costs, travel, lodging, and meal expenses associated with attending the program with no more than \$2,500.00 (10%) of the grant amount being used for grant administration including application preparation.

COMMERCE FELLOWS AT UNC-CHAPEL HILL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

The UNC SOG's **Commerce Fellows** Training Package is composed of sought-after School courses that address the breadth and depth of issues related to community development. The series will provide **Commerce Fellows** grantees with the flexibility to build the skills of the many actors involved in North Carolina's community development efforts.

Training Package

The training package includes 8 seats in 5 in-person courses (see below for details), for a combined total of 381 classroom contact hours. Overnight accommodations for the 8 seats are included in the price of the training package. The package also includes 4 online training series (composed of 21 webinars/modules); the online offerings provide another 26 hours of training. Grant recipients can send different employees or elected officials to the offerings in the package. Webinars and modules can be viewed locally in a classroom setting, allowing numerous officials from the county and its municipalities to benefit from these resources.

Courses

- Community Development Academy | March 15-17 & April 12-14, 2016 | 2 seats (42 contact hours per participant)
- Development Finance Toolbox | September 16-17, 2015 | 2 seats (14 contact hours per participant)
- Municipal and County Administration | September 2015 – May 2016 | 1 seat (175 contact hours over 8 months)
Participants must apply to this course by July 15, 2015; the course is not open to elected officials
- Basic Economic Development | July 27-30, 2015 or July 2016 | 1 seat (28 contact hours)
- Effective Supervisory Management | 2 date and location options | 2 seats (33 contact hours per participant)

On-Demand Modules and Webinars (single viewing with unlimited participants)

- Planning and Development Regulation Modules | (4.5 contact hours per participant)
- Human Capital Matters Webinar Series | (7.5 contact hours per participant)
- Open Meetings Law Webinar Series | (4.5 contact hours per participant)
- Public Records law Webinar Series | (9.5 contact hours per participant)

Eligible Applicants for Commerce Fellows at UNC SOG

The SOG training package is available to all NC county governments except for the three HUD-designated urban counties of Wake, Mecklenburg, and Cumberland; however, counties are strongly encouraged to partner with municipalities within their county, identifying municipal officials to participate in the training series. Counties that identify a mix of county and municipal officials to receive training will receive funding preference.

Eligible Expenses for Commerce Fellows at UNC SOG

Grants of \$25,000 are available to county governments to enable eight (8) seats in five (5) in-person courses. Up to \$5,000 of the grant amount can be used for administrative costs, travel and meal expenses associated with attending the trainings with no more than 10% of the grant amount being used for grant administration including application preparation (lodging is included in the UNC SOG registration cost).

**RESOLUTION FOR THE CATAWBA COUNTY
APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK
GRANT FUNDING
COMMERCE FELLOWS BUILDING COMMUNITY
CAPACITY AND KNOWLEDGE PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners has previously indicated its desire to assist low and moderate income citizens within the County; and,

WHEREAS, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing concerning the proposed application for Community Fellows Building Community Capacity and Knowledge through Community Development Block Grant funding; and,

WHEREAS, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners wishes the County to pursue a formal application for \$25,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding to build community capacity: and,

WHEREAS, Catawba County Board of Commissioners certifies it will meet all federal regulatory and statutory requirements of the State of North Carolina Community Development Block Grant Program.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners that Catawba County is authorized to submit a formal application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce for approval of a Community Development Block Grant for Commerce Fellows Building Community Capacity and Knowledge project.

Adopted this the ___ day of _____, 20___ in Newton, North Carolina.

Randy Isenhower, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Barbara E. Morris
Clerk to the Board

APPOINTMENTS

RANDY ISENHOWER (Due) Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

Vacancy	Social Services Category (Valaree Adams resigned)	
Vacancy	District Atty Category (David Learner to assign designee)	
06/30/15	Ronn Abernathy	Eligible for a 7 th term
	Jennie Connor	Eligible for a 7 th term
	Karen Harrington	Eligible for a 1 st term
	Jennifer Mace	Eligible for a 4 th term
	Sarah Nelson	Eligible for a 3 rd term
	Brandi Tolbert	Eligible for a 6 th term
	Attorney Va Yang	Eligible for a 2 nd term

2-term terms

Chair Isenhower recommends the appointment of Dr. David Stegall for a first term to succeed Dr. Walter Hart on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. Chair Isenhower also recommends the reappointments of Karen Harrington for a first term, Attorney Va Yang for a second term, Sarah Nelson for a third term, Jennifer Mace for a fourth term, Bandi Tolbert for a sixth term and Ronn Abernathy and Jennie Connor for seventh terms on this Council. These terms will expire June 30, 2017.

RANDY ISENHOWER (Due) Economic Development Corporation

06/30/15	Steve Von Drehle	Eligible for a 1 st term
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Chair Isenhower recommends the reappointment of Steve Von Drehle for a first full term on the Economic Development Corporation. This term will expire June 30, 2018.

RANDY ISENHOWER (Due) Town of Maiden Planning Board

06/30/15	Lynn Jenkins	Eligible for a 3 rd term
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3-year terms

Chair Isenhower recommends the reappointment of Lynn Jenkins for a third term on the Town of Maiden Planning Board. This term will expire June 30, 2015.

RANDY ISENHOWER (Due) Voting Delegate and Alternate for 2015 NACo Annual Conference

Chair Isenhower will indicate his recommendation at your meeting.

DAN HUNSUCKER (Due) Newton-Conover Auditorium Authority

06/30/15	Don Essary	Resigned -
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3-year terms

Commissioner Hunsucker recommends the appointment of Ken Elliot for a first term on the Newton-Conover Auditorium Authority Board of Directors. This term will expire June 30, 2018.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Catawba County Board of Commissioners
FROM: Policy and Public Works Subcommittee
DATE: June 15, 2015
IN RE: Adoption of Catawba County Library Strategic Plan, 2016-2019 and Request for Funding one Digital Services Librarian Position

REQUEST

The Policy & Public Works Subcommittee recommends the Board of Commissioners adopt the Catawba County Library Strategic Plan 2016-2019, to enhance and grow library services and programming in alignment with community needs.

The Policy & Public Works Subcommittee further recommends the Board of Commissioners fund one Digital Services Librarian position at a total cost of \$66,728, in order to proceed with the top priority.

PROCESS

The State Library of North Carolina awarded a grant of \$20,352 to the Catawba County Library on June 11, 2014 to contract with planning consultant (Dr. Anthony Chow of Strategic Performance Systems) to develop a long-range strategic plan. Catawba County Library assessed current services and solicited community input to strategically identify priority goals for increasing alignment with citizens needs. Through the process, the Library convened a citizen-based steering committee and conducted a comprehensive community needs analysis over a ten-month period from July 2014 to April 2015, which garnered input from over 1500 residents through interviews with key stakeholders, public and staff surveys, targeted focus groups, and public community forums. This feedback, which culminated in the creation of a strategic plan that focuses on three main priorities (discussed below), has been endorsed by the Library Board of Trustees, which recommends approval of the plan to the Board of Commissioners.

The Library also collaborated with Hickory Public Libraries, which was simultaneously going through the same process using the same planning consultant, in gathering, sharing, and analyzing input to develop and prioritize goals and objectives, and will continue to collaborate in providing services in the future.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Driven by the results of the comprehensive community needs assessment, the Library will focus its efforts on the following strategic goals:

- As a Community Center of Excellence, Fuel Citizens' Passion for Reading, Personal Growth, and Learning
- Innovate to Provide 21st Century Access that Empowers Citizens
- Library Anytime, Anywhere: Expand Citizens' Access to Information and Ideas

With increased reliance on libraries during times of economic downturn, the plan focuses on enhancing County libraries' role in serving as community centers, increasing libraries' capacity to provide the

technology, digital resources, and personnel to bridge the digital divide for citizens, and increasing outreach and collaboration in the community to engage and empower citizens with resources, services and collections.

The committee developed specific supporting strategies for each of the goals outlined above. Several of these strategies are contingent upon funding availability and, as a result, have been prioritized against one another in order of importance. The Library has already begun leveraging resources towards some of these strategies, with specific progress to date and potential future plans reflected below.

1. Fund Digital Services Librarian to drive implementation of digital strategy for expanded access through 24-hour availability of digital learning resources and a more intuitive, user-friendly website, and to oversee the provision of state of the art technology and technology programming to ensure access across the entire community.
2. Ensure availability of up-to-date computers and software within branches to facilitate bridging the digital divide and positioning the branches as community centers of excellence. *The Library and Technology Department are partnering to ensure the branches have up-to-date hardware and software on an appropriate replacement schedule.*
3. Creation of TechConnect spaces to expose citizens to state-of-the-art technologies while ensuring underserved populations have access. *To get this initiative started, the Library recently secured a \$20,495 grant from the State of North Carolina to create one digital learning space for citizens to get hands-on experience working with emerging technologies. Additional future grant opportunities through the same funding source will be pursued to further this effort.*
4. Fund Literacy Outreach Specialist to lead in early literacy efforts to ensure children start school ready to learn and positioned to excel; partner with community to expand reach of early literacy opportunities for all preschool children and their caregivers; enhance and support active learning for children by collaborating closely with schools to implement services and programs that strengthen students' access to reading and learning resources; and provide after school programming to meet families' opportunities for access.
5. Fund Adult Outreach / Programming Librarian to bring library resources to where people are, including non-traditional locations and targeting underserved audiences. *While it is not possible to fully implement this initiative without additional staff resources, the Library is being creative in identifying one-time initiatives and securing grant funding to begin moving in the desired direction. For example, recent grant awards from the National Endowment for the Arts (\$11,800) and the United Arts Council (\$5,000) will fund a community-wide Big Read initiative centered on Harper Lee's classic novel "To Kill a Mockingbird," involving several community partners (Hickory Public Library, Catawba Valley Community College, Lenoir-Rhyne University, and the Green Room Community Theater), and allowing the Library to distribute over 1,000 free copies of the book at locations where one wouldn't usually find books (sporting events, grocery stores, Social Services, gas stations, etc.). Further, steps taken to strategically re-work existing positions have made it possible to carve out a part-time position to begin conducting Spanish language outreach and programming, and the Library has applied for funds through the North Carolina Humanities Council that, if awarded, will be used to create a Spanish language film and discussion series that integrates arts and early literacy activities with adult programming.*
6. Explore provision of materials and services to satellite spaces – "Redbox" model at laundromats, soup kitchens, courthouse, YMCAs, community centers, malls, other public spaces.

7. Fund Teen Librarian to increase teen engagement with highly interactive creative programs, spaces, and resources. *The Library is pursuing a grant through Best Buy to enhance existing programming and technology for teens, to start progressing on this priority with existing staff.*
8. Develop and maintain relevant and inspiring collections that meet the community's evolving needs and expectations, ensuring equal access to underserved populations.
9. Create welcoming, vibrant, comfortable, and secure library spaces to position branches as a desirable place for citizens to spend time. *As a Reinventing department, the Library has initiated space refreshes using reinventing funds at the Newton Main and Maiden Libraries. Further, the Library received another State grant of \$72,624 (with a match of \$24,208) to install Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology at Claremont, Conover, Maiden, and Southwest branch libraries. RFID technology enhances materials security and enables patrons to use self check-in and –out stations, which in turn increases staff productivity. This project will complete the initiative started in the current year (also with the assistance of LSTA funding) to install this technology at Main, St. Stephens, and Sherrills Ford-Terrell branches.*
10. Ensure robust library resources that support job seekers and economic advancement to align the library's programs with local economic recovery efforts. *As part of the previously mentioned State grant to create TechConnect space, the Library integrated partnerships with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) and the Manufacturing Solutions Center (MSC), with the WPCOG sending a career specialist to the library twice a week, providing career guidance and targeted employment training to citizens, and the MSC offering guidance and training in using the professional tools and software applications.*
11. Evaluate expansion of library hours to increase convenience and access for citizens to include possible addition of evening and weekend hours.

As a Reinventing Department, moving forward the Library will target its use of Reinventing Funds primarily on one-time purchases to ensure sustainability of the fund balance. Additionally, as positions become vacant and as the use of self-check technology increases staff productivity, the Library will continue to strategically re-examine the functions to determine if portions of the strategic plan priorities can be addressed within existing resources.

Even with the focus on leveraging outside funding, several critical initiatives are not eligible for funding through existing grant sources, as they require ongoing operational and personnel resources, which are not sustainably funded through grants. As a result, the Library requests that the Board of Commissioners considers funding the top priority – the Digital Services Librarian position – to implement the top priority identified through the community needs assessment at an estimated cost of \$66,728. (County Management has advised that funding for this position could be made available from Special Contingency.)

Positive community benefits of creating this position include:

- A better informed citizenry able to seek and evaluate information online for e-government, health, education, and job seeking;
- Improved career readiness skills of the community;
- Improved quality of life for individuals as they are able to connect to friends and family using library technology;

- Strengthen partnerships with organizations including NCWorks and Manufacturing Solutions Center to provide relevant programming to an expanded audience
- Promote a culture of lifelong learning where it's common practice for individuals to take advantage of the many technology classes and programs at the library;
- A more engaged citizenry comfortable accessing e-government resources; and
- A culture of excellence at the library, with a well-trained, knowledgeable staff that is confident and well equipped to assist customers with their technology needs.

If approved, this staff position will be responsible for:

- Leading implementation of library technology infrastructure, related technologies and digital resources;
- Overseeing the library computer lab and new TechConnect space, providing user assistance and developing robust programming connecting citizens with new technologies;
- Creating a more intuitive, user-friendly library website;
- Ensuring citizens have access to digital resources (downloadable books, audio, etc.) through web-based portal, and assisting citizens in using their devices to access these materials;
- Providing weekly evening technology training series for citizens;
- Partnering with local organizations to arrange for delivery of their programs in the library space; and
- Cross-training library staff in technologies so that they can better assist customers.

RECOMMENDATION

The Policy & Public Works Subcommittee recommends the Board of Commissioners adopt the Catawba County Library Strategic Plan 2016-2019 to enhance and grow library services and programs in alignment with community needs.

The Policy & Public Works Subcommittee further recommends the Board of Commissioners fund one Digital Services Librarian position at a total cost of \$66,728, in order to proceed with the top priority.

Transfer From:

110-190100-994000 (Special Contingency)	\$66,728
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Transfer To:

110-810050-812100 (Regular Wages)	\$50,000
110-810050-821100 (FICA)	\$3,825
110-810050-822100 (Local Government Employees Retirement)	\$3,375
110-810050-823100 (Group Health)	\$6,032
110-810050-823300 (Group Dental)	\$338
110-810050-823600 (Disability – Long-Term)	\$85
110-810050-825500 (Disability-Short Term)	\$73
110-810050-849160 (Personnel Indirect Cost)	\$3,000

LIBRARY

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION



Catawba County Public Library 2016-2019 Strategic Plan





Request

1. Adoption of proposed Strategic Plan
2. Funding of Digital Services Librarian position

First We Listened

To over 1,500 Catawba County residents who participated through focus groups, community forums, surveys, and interviews



during a 10-month comprehensive needs analysis and strategic planning process



Who We Listened To

- Friends of the Library
- Library Advisory Board
- School superintendents
- Latino community
- African American community
- Hmong community
- Senior Citizens
- Home-school community
- Educational reps: teachers, media specialists
- Students & Parents
- City managers
- Workforce Development
- Partnership for Children
- Board of Commissioners
- General public



What We Heard

Public libraries are highly valued as hubs for reading and literacy, technology, print and digital resources, and are central players in “equalizing the playing field” by teaching digital literacy and providing technology to all

“The library staff are warm, loving, caring people. The first thing I find in a new community is the library. We found friends when we moved to Newton. Many of those friends are the library staff.”

(Catawba County resident, November 2014)



What We Heard

- *Catawba County libraries are valued!*

Our most important services:

- *Providing books and a place to read*
- *Supporting children*
- *Engaging programming*
- *Free access to information, services, resources, and technology,*
- *Knowledgeable staff and excellent customer service*
- *Public meeting spaces*
- *Wi-Fi and empowering technology*

Each Year, Our Citizens:

- Visit the library over **400,000** times
- Check out over **600,000** items
- Have their questions answered **53,000** times
- Use computers **140,000** times

What We Heard

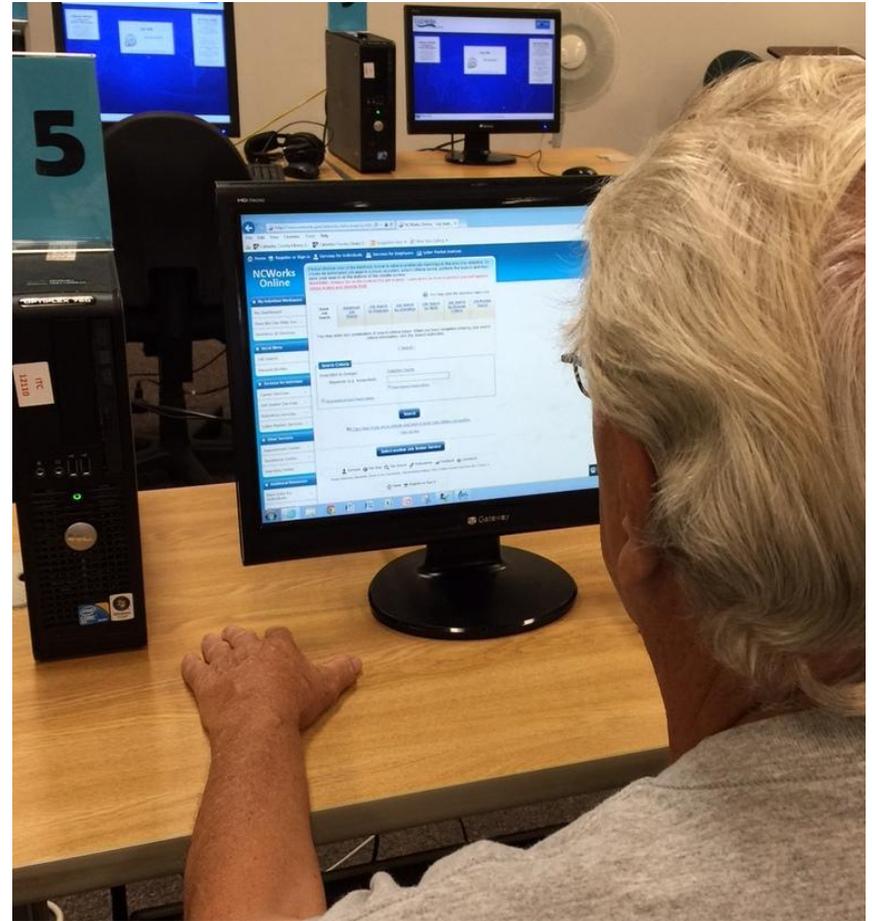


- Reach out and create stronger community connections
- Create engaging and collaborative spaces
- Align with economic development needs-- job seeking and employment
- Ensure ready access to collections and resources

What We Heard

Like libraries across the country, ours is seeing a shift in how it's being used

We're highly valued as provider of access:
Internet, technology,
resources, and services



Moving Into Action

- **Maintain core strengths and innovate** as community needs evolve
- **Support economic development** with job searching and employment services, technology access and training
- **Align community collaboration, engagement, and outreach efforts**
- **Evolve the concept of libraries as empowering community places** with welcoming and inviting spaces



Moving Into Action

- **Ensure ready access to collections and resources**
- **Ensure robust technologies**
- **Explore expanded hours**
- **Expand community partnerships with innovative services**



Our Vision

Our
Community's
Place to
Connect,
Explore,
and Grow



Our Mission



We empower lives
and build our
community by
bringing people,
information, and
ideas together



Our Values

To realize our vision and fulfill our mission, these ideals direct us in our service to Catawba County and interactions with each other—what we believe in

- Providing Exceptional Service with Integrity and Respect
- Connecting People with Empowering Resources and Expertise
- Enhancing Early and Lifelong Learning
- Collaborating to Build Strong Teams and Community
- Ensuring Access and Engagement



Core Competencies

The value-added core services we offer the people of Catawba County

- Inspiring Children and Adults with Lifelong Learning Opportunities
- Delivering the Right Resources at the Right Time—Connecting People with the Information They Need When They Need It
- Empowering People with High-Tech, High-Touch Technology Services
- Strengthening Community through Outreach & Partnerships
- Engaging People with Positive Experiences, Creativity and Storytelling
- Fostering Innovation and Risk-Taking

High Priority Goals: What we do



Goal 1

Library Anytime, Anywhere: Expand Citizens' Access to Information and Ideas



We will drive new models for improving information access and delivery and expand the reach of library services beyond the physical walls of the building.



Goal 2

As a Community Center of Excellence, Fuel Citizens' Passion for Reading, Personal Growth, and Learning

We will serve as a central community destination for diverse, free information, entertainment, and enrichment--enhanced by welcoming, expert help.



Goal 3

Innovate to Support 21st Century Access That Empowers Our Citizens

We will align ourselves with the community by meeting current and anticipating future needs of Catawba County with vibrant, modern, and relevant information, services, technology, and programming to empower all in our community.

Expand Citizens' Access to Information and Ideas

- Bring library resources to where people are



- Expand library's reach through website

- Expand access with digital learning and 24-hour delivery of digital learning resources

hoopla



- Collaborate with the community to provide and share programs and services
- Evaluate expansion of library hours to increase convenience and access for citizens





Expand Citizens' Access to Information and Ideas

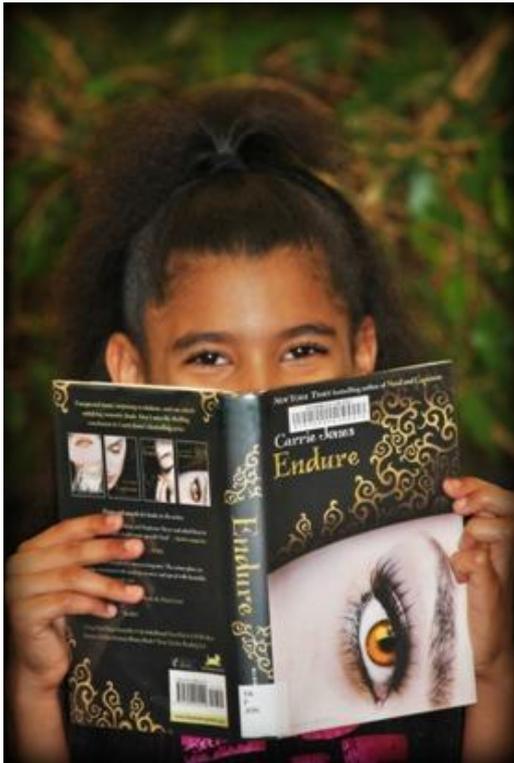
Strong Foundation

- Book-baggers: books to daycares
- Collaborate with Schools, Workforce Development, Libraries, Theater and Arts
- Pilots: Early Outreach Literacy Programming to Daycares; Digital Outreach to Senior Centers
- Online tools: eBooks, eAudio, eMovies, eMusic, author, career, legal, auto, language learning

The Next Level

- Outreach & Services to non-traditional locations: Nursing Homes, Assisted Living, Public Housing, Group Homes, Shelters...
- Collaborate more deeply, with MSC, Community College, Latinos program grant
- Improved, interactive website
- Online tools: magazines, e-learning, 24/7 tutoring

Fuel Citizens' Passion for Reading, Personal Growth, and Learning



Develop and maintain relevant and inspiring collections that meet the community's evolving needs and expectations, ensuring equal access to underserved populations

Create welcoming, vibrant, comfortable, and secure library spaces

Establish a culture of excellence by empowering a well-trained, knowledgeable staff



Build community presence by partnering and devising new and creative ways to raise awareness of library services and value





Fuel Citizens' Passion for Reading, Personal Growth, and Learning

Strong Foundation

- Pilot Bestsellers to Go Collection
- Spanish Collection
- Vibrant Spaces: Sherrills Ford, Maiden, Newton, St. Stephens
- Technology classes
- New community engagement specialist
- Book clubs
- Community Garden and program series

The Next Level

- Expand Bestsellers to Go
- Expand Spanish Collection
- ESL learning materials
- Vibrant Spaces: Maiden, Southwest refreshes
- Weekly technology classes, full time 1-on-1 help, train the trainer
- Engage through social media, speaking, participate in community events
- Adult literacy

Innovate to Support 21st Century Access That Empowers Our Citizens

Lead in early literacy efforts to ensure children start school ready to learn and positioned to excel



Embrace and support active learning for children

Provide and maintain state of the art technology and technology programming to ensure access across the entire community and bridge the digital divide



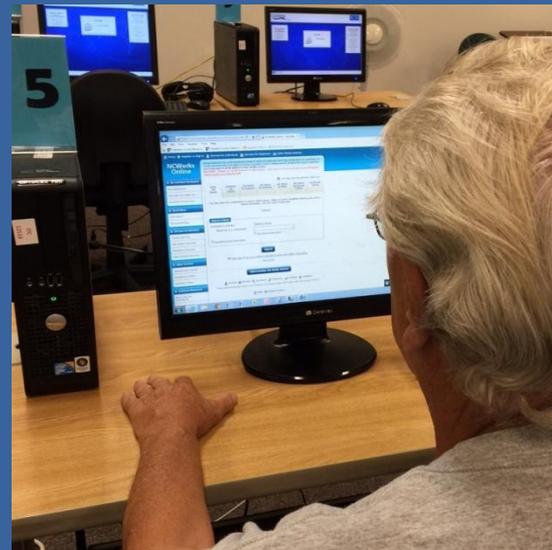


Be Catawba County's source for high quality free lifelong learning programs that support personal growth for diverse community populations



Increase teen engagement with highly interactive, creative programs, spaces, and resources

Offer resources and programming to further career readiness through employment and job skills development



Engage the community by comprehensively integrating opportunities for citizens to volunteer and participate in library programs and services





Innovate to Support 21st Century Access That Empowers Our Citizens

Strong Foundation

- Story-times at all locations
- Book-baggers program, materials to daycares
- STEAM programming
- Connecting with schools, CVCC, Workforce Development
- Access through public computing and WiFi, iPads at libraries
- Seasonal lifelong learning programming
- Big READ

The Next Level

- Expand story-times, including non-English
- Early literacy outreach to underserved
- Expand programming for children and teens in partnership with schools
- TechConnect Spaces and programming; early literacy tech
- Weekly evening lifelong learning programming, partnered with local organizations
- Strengthen and deepen collaborative efforts



Moving Forward

Integrating Strategic Plan
with Outcomes

Performance Dashboard
for Tracking Goals



Moving Forward

As we move forward, reaching top community priorities will rely on county funding commitment and will guide how we can meet community goals and objectives

We will also focus on leveraging additional county, state, and national resources and community partnerships to enhance and bring this vision to life



Top Priorities Requiring Funding

1. Fund Digital Services Librarian
2. Ensure up-to-date computers & software
3. Creation of TechConnect Spaces
4. Fund Literacy Outreach Specialist
5. Fund Adult Outreach / Programming Librarian
6. Explore satellite spaces
7. Fund Teen Librarian
8. Develop & maintain inspiring collections
9. Create welcoming, vibrant, comfortable secure spaces
10. Support job seekers & economic advancement
11. Evaluate expanded library hours



Priority One

Digital Services Librarian

To drive implementation of digital strategy for expanded access, and to oversee the provision of state of the art technology and technology programming to ensure access across the entire community.

- Robust technology training for the community and staff: Microsoft Office Suite, online research tools, downloadable eResources, online applications, job seeking, small business, health & wellness, scanning, 3-D printing, video editing
- Full time One-on-One help: resume writing, job applications, TechConnect tools, mobile devices, downloading eBooks and other online resources
- Manage library's technology and TechConnect spaces, and ensure tools and technology for public access



Recommendation

1. Adoption of proposed Strategic Plan
2. Funding of Digital Services Librarian position



Thank You

It takes a village!

Our Community

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Library Staff

Library Board and Friends

County Leadership

County Commissioners



Project funded by



This project was made possible through funding from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

LIBRARY
STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Plan Catawba County Library 2016-2019



OUR COMMUNITY'S PLACE TO CONNECT, EXPLORE, AND GROW



“The library staff are warm, loving, caring people. The first thing I find in a new community is the library. We found friends when we moved to Newton. Many of those friends are the library staff.”
(Catawba County resident, November 2014)

Special Thanks

- Over 1,500 Catawba County residents who participated through focus groups, community forums, surveys, and interviews
- Library Strategic Planning Committee
Susan Anderson, Carson Bailey, Anthony Chow, Ellen Dewey, Sherry Drum, Cynthia Eades, Alex Frick, Mary Furtado, Pat Gibson, Abigail Hardy, Dewey Harris, Kim Lyke Holden, Debbie Hovis, Wendy Johnson, Amelia Kennedy, Mary Bess Lawing, Siobhan Loendorf, Scott Millar, Glenn Morrison, Jennifer Patterson, Brenda Sigmon, David Stegall, Suzanne White, Amy Wilson, Dawn Wilson, Staci Wilson, Kenneth Wright, Lee Yount, Tammy Yount
- Catawba County Library Staff and Library Board
- Funding from the State Library of North Carolina and the Library Services & Technology Act
- Strategic Performance Systems and Dr. Anthony Chow

We are excited about moving forward in connecting with and empowering our citizens in the coming years with these community-driven vision, mission, and goals at the forefront. Many goals are contingent upon funding availability, and these initiatives will be prioritized for local funding against other critical County services. The level of volunteerism, community support, and citizen engagement will also impact the pace of implementation. In light of this reality, we will take advantage of all local, regional and national funding sources and harness the community’s volunteer energy to bring this vision to life in a way that acknowledges the County’s current and future financial condition.



This project was made possible through funding from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

The Voice of the Community

The Catawba County Library System conducted a comprehensive 10-month community needs analysis and strategic planning process from July 2014 to May 2015.

Over 1,500 Catawba County residents shared their thoughts about library services through interviews, focus groups, community forums, and surveys gathered both at the library and in the community.

The top six ways the Community uses the Library include:



1. Checking out printed books
2. Getting help from library staff
3. Using public meeting rooms
4. Using the Library as a place to read, work, learn, and study
5. Using the Library's website and digital services
6. Accessing Wi-Fi and technology



Our Vision | What we aspire to be

Our community's place to connect, explore, and grow

Our Mission | What we commit to

We empower lives and build our community by bringing people, information, and ideas together



Core Values | What we believe in

1. Providing Exceptional Service with Integrity and Respect
2. Connecting People with Empowering Resources and Expertise
3. Enhancing Early and Lifelong Learning
4. Collaborating to Build Strong Teams and Community
5. Ensuring Access and Engagement

Core Competencies | How we thrive

1. Inspiring Children and Adults with Lifelong Learning Opportunities
2. Delivering the Right Resources at the Right Time—Connecting People with the Information They Need When They Need It
3. Empowering People with High-Tech, High-Touch Technology Services
4. Strengthening Community through Outreach & Partnerships
5. Engaging People with Positive Experiences, Creativity and Storytelling
6. Fostering Innovation and Risk-Taking



HIGH PRIORITY GOALS: WHAT WE DO

GOAL 1

Library Anytime, Anywhere: Expand Citizens' Access to Information and Ideas

We will drive new models for improving information access and delivery and expand the reach of library services beyond the physical walls of the building.

GOAL 2

As a Community Center of Excellence, Fuel Citizens' Passion for Reading, Personal Growth, and Learning

We will serve as a central community destination for diverse, free information, entertainment, and enrichment--enhanced by welcoming, expert help.

GOAL 3

Innovate to Support 21st Century Access That Empowers Our Citizens

We will align ourselves with the community by meeting current and anticipating future needs of Catawba County with vibrant, modern, and relevant information, services, technology, and programming to empower all in our community.

We have identified objectives and supporting actions for each of the 3 goals. These actions have been assigned implementation timeframes: short-term = 0-18 months; mid-range = 18 months-3 years; long-range = 3+years)

GOAL 1

Library Anytime, Anywhere: Expand Citizens' Access to Information and Ideas

- 1. Bring library resources to where people are, including non-traditional locations, and target underserved audiences**
 - a. Coordinate with Partnership for Children to ensure Imagination Library participants automatically receive County library card as additional benefit of participation (*short-term*)
 - b. Explore options for digital learning outreach --visiting daycares, senior centers, etc. (*mid-range*)
 - c. Explore options for building partnerships with community agencies (Meals on Wheels, Backpack Program for Children, Greenways, etc.) to provide access to library resources for underserved populations (*mid-range*)
 - d. Explore provision of materials and services to satellite spaces (ex. – “Redbox” model at laundromats, soup kitchens, courthouse, YMCAs, community centers, malls, other public spaces) (*long-range*)



- 2. Implement digital strategy to expand access through creating a virtual library with 24-hour delivery of digital learning resources (*mid-range*)**
- 3. Expand library's reach with an improved intuitive, user-friendly website (*mid-range*)**
- 4. Collaborate with non-profits, civic-minded community organizations, and other local governments to share information about their programs and services throughout the community (*mid-range; ongoing*)**
- 5. Evaluate expansion of library hours to increase convenience and access for citizens (to include possible addition of evening and weekend hours) (*mid-to long-range*)**

GOAL 2

As a Community Center of Excellence,
Fuel Citizens' Passion for Reading, Personal Growth, and Learning

1. Develop and maintain relevant and inspiring collections that meet the community's evolving needs and expectations, ensuring equal access to underserved populations

- Support the principle of open access and freedom to read by updating collection development policy to reflect best practices (*short-term*)
- Improve availability of best sellers and most popular titles and customize branch offerings to match local community demographics and needs (Latino and Hmong collections, etc.) (*short to mid-range*)
- Partner with schools to align collections with school based initiatives (accelerated reader, Battle of the Books, Common Core, etc.) (*mid-range*)



2. Create welcoming, vibrant, comfortable, and secure library spaces

- Enhance access and security of collection with Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) installation (*short-term*)
- Enhance community access to library spaces by aligning applicable policies around facility use (*short-term*)
- Explore options for providing coffee and refreshments at branch locations (*short-term*)
- Provide device charging stations for customers (*short-term*)
- Build community partnerships with the United Arts Council, its funded affiliates, and other artists and organizations, to bring rotating exhibits into library spaces (*mid-range*)
- Ensure proper lighting for visibility and safety and install security cameras as appropriate (*mid-range*)
- Explore possibility of providing access to current events and news resources via branch-based televisions (*mid-range*)
- Update and modernize branches for both individual and collaborative furnishings and spaces: group and individual seating, meeting/work space (*long-range beyond existing activities*)

3. Establish a culture of excellence by empowering a well-trained, knowledgeable staff

- a. Secure training opportunities focused on capacity building: partnership development, community engagement, grant writing, etc. (*short-term*)
- b. Ensure staff is technology trained in latest devices, software, electronic resources, and reference services (*short-term*)
- c. Offer training in reference, readers' advisory services, and customer service (*short-term*)
- d. Provide tutorials, classes, online training modules and troubleshooting guides (*short-term*)
- e. Continue to encourage staff involvement in local, regional, state, and national professional associations (*short-term*)
- f. Provide cross training among library locations and departments in a "train-the-trainer" model with rotation of staffing and sharing of best practices (*mid-range*)
- g. Offer training in security, safety and crisis management, and update policies and procedures to ensure clarity and staff understanding (*mid-range*)

4. Build community presence by partnering and devising new and creative ways to raise awareness of library services and value

- a. Tell the library's story and connect the community to literacy services by launching outreach and marketing campaign (targeting community groups, festivals, and events) (*short-term; on-going*)
- b. Engage the community via social media, targeted email, and website (*short-term*)
- c. Build connections with schools to ensure presence at school orientations and other school functions (presentation/video, materials, etc.) (*short-term*)
- d. Distribute vibrant welcome packet when adults and children get their library cards (*short-term*)
- e. Partner with county departments and community organizations in offering library programs to the public and in sharing information about library programs and services throughout the community (*short-term*)
- f. Initiate campaign to grow library use among school-aged children by providing parents with library card applications for their children (*mid-range*)
- g. Explore installation of electronic outdoor signage for increased awareness of library activities (*mid-range*)



GOAL 3

Innovate to Support 21st Century Access That Empowers Our Citizens

1. Lead in early literacy efforts to ensure children start school ready to learn and positioned to excel

- a. Provide infants a “first library card” at hospitals / doctors’ offices along with information about literacy tools and early learning opportunities at libraries (ex. – Born to Read program) (*short-term*)
- b. Provide highly interactive learning and sensory stations for preschool children (*mid-range*)
- c. Partner with community organizations to expand reach of early literacy opportunities for all preschool children and their caregivers (*mid-range*)

2. Embrace and support active learning for children

- a. Collaborate closely with schools to implement services and programs that strengthen students’ access to reading and learning resources (*mid-range*)
- b. Offer engaging hands-on learning opportunities through interactive displays and community partnerships (*mid-range*)
- c. Provide incentive-based interactive programs to promote continued engagement with reading and learning (ex. – reading challenge competitions, rewards, etc.) (*long-range*)
- d. Organize periodic children’s art contest with winning design placed on library card (*long-range*)
- e. Explore providing after-school programming to meet families’ opportunities for access (*long-range*)
- f. Explore options for enhancing literacy opportunities for Spanish-speaking families (*long range*)



3. Provide and maintain state of the art technology and technology programming to ensure access across the entire community and bridge the digital divide

- a. Offer tablets for public use at all locations (*short-term*)
- b. Improve printing workflow and wireless printing for customers and staff (*short-term*)
- c. Provide a technology “petting zoo” with tablets and other high-tech devices (*short-term*)
- d. Offer classes and one-on-one sessions with customers to provide skill development in technology devices and resources, in partnership with IT Department (*short-term to mid-range*)
- e. Partner with IT Department to replace public and staff computers and update software every 4 years (*mid-range*)
- f. Ensure robust technology access and services by partnering with IT Department to update technology infrastructure, evaluate wireless access reliability, and improve as necessary (*mid-range*)
- g. Create and maintain Tech/Maker Spaces equipped with the latest technology like Microsoft Office, Movie maker, Go Pro, editing software, smart tables, etc. in partnership with IT Department (*mid-range*)



4. Be Catawba County's source for high-quality free lifelong learning programs that support personal growth for diverse community populations

- a. Provide robust family and adult literacy and learning programs to include technology learning, gardening, cooking, healthy living, movies, exercise, language learning, crafts, arts, and Spanish and Hmong classes (short-term)
- b. Foster shared passion for reading and discussion by facilitating book clubs (*mid-range*)
- c. Enhance access to literacy and lifelong learning opportunities and improved quality of life by partnering with literacy advocates, senior groups/centers, and other community groups (*mid-range*)
- d. Accommodate working people by offering evening programming and classes (*mid-range*)
- e. Enhance multi-lingual learning skills by exploring options for promoting a community conversation club (*long-range*)
- f. Encourage cross-generational collaboration between children and seniors with programs (*long-range*)
- g. Explore options for partnering in the community to provide adult literacy services (*long-range*)
- h. Enhance strategy for gathering ongoing feedback and input for data-driven program development (*short-term*)
- i. Explore options for facilitating use of self-guided learning and educational resources (*mid-range*)



5. Increase teen engagement with highly-interactive, creative programs, spaces, and resources

- a. Connect with teen population to determine needs (*short-term*)
- b. Explore possibility of implementing teen advisory group (*mid-range*)
- c. Create specialized teen spaces (*mid-range*)
- d. Align robust and specialized teen programming, (technology and arts, gaming, STEM, clubs, etc.) with identified needs (*mid-range*)

6. Offer resources and programming to further career readiness through employment and job skills development

- a. Partner with NC Works to provide employment and job skills counseling, both hard and soft skills (*short-term*)
- b. Partner with Small Business Administration, Manufacturing Solutions Center, etc. to provide relevant programs and workshops (*mid-range*)
- c. Ensure robust library resources that support job seekers and economic advancement (*mid-range*)
 1. Employment database subscriptions (*mid-range*)
 2. Job search-focused web and print resources (*mid-range*)

7. Engage the community by comprehensively integrating opportunities for citizens to volunteer and participate in library programs and services

