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LIBRARY SERVICES ELEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Library Services Element of the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan is to ensure the provision of library services to residents. This Element is optional, as it is not required by Chapter 163, F.S. The standards set in this Element will guide the future development of the Palm Beach County Library System (Library System). The County is responsible for the funding and operation of the Library System through the Palm Beach County Library District. The Library System is the community's primary agency for storage and retrieval of information. The Library System is an institution available to all residents regardless of economic or educational level, physical handicap, race, creed or national origin. It provides access to information, ideas and cultural expression objectively and is dedicated to representing all viewpoints on issues. The Library System is instrumental in developing a sense of community and local pride in the County by providing a forum for discussion of issues important to the community as a whole.

B. Assessment and Conclusions

In 1989, the Library System was comprised of eleven locations totaling 112,290 square feet, which represented 0.22 square feet per capita. An additional 104,660 square feet was added as a result of the Library Expansion Program I, which was completed in 1997. This ambitious expansion program increased the number of facilities to fourteen and the square feet per capita to 0.36.

In 2002, voters overwhelmingly approved the issuance of bonds to help fund the Library Expansion Program II (LEP II). The \$104.7 million program was funded with income from the sale of bonds, impact fee revenues, and operating budget transfers. Completed in 2015, the second phase brought the number of branches to seventeen, added 189,063 square feet, and ~~raise~~ the facilities level of service was raised to 0.44 square feet per capita. Despite these efforts, the Library System remains far below the nationally accepted service level of 0.60 square feet per capita. Similarly, additional increases in the holdings, information technology access, and professional and other staff levels are necessary to achieve State-recognized standards and to keep pace with growth. A Phase III of the Library Expansion Program (LEP III) will be necessary to address these concerns. In the meantime, construction of a new 33,000 square foot library building in the West Boynton area is scheduled to begin in early 2022 and is projected to open in 2023.

To ensure that needs are met, the Library System utilizes a planning methodology based on its mission statement, that helps align the Library System's long range plan, performance measures, budget document, and the goal, objectives, and policies of this element. This methodology is applied on an ongoing basis and provides for public participation.

II. GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

GOAL 1 PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

It is the **GOAL** of Palm Beach County to provide a Library System that serves the informational, educational, and recreational reading needs of residents of all ages, interests, and circumstances, thereby promoting the broad dissemination of knowledge.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Implementation

All public activities concerned with the provision of library service shall be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Library Services Element and with all other elements of the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 1.1-a: The Library System shall provide programs of service based upon the following components of its Mission Statement:

- Connect Communities:
 - The Library connects communities by enhancing the role of the library in the community, by promoting inclusivity and embracing diversity in all that we do, and by providing opportunities for community members and organizations to become involved with the Library.
- Inspire Thought:
 - The Library inspires thought by providing the public with free access to library materials and resources, in a variety of formats, to meet the community's borrowing and research needs, and by providing a welcoming environment to spark creativity, stimulate thoughtful conversation and encourage collaboration.
- Enrich Lives:
 - The Library enriches lives by providing educational opportunities to learn and grow for people of all ages.

Policy 1.1-b: The Library System shall annually evaluate the services provided and determine if the balance of library programs is appropriate to the needs of the community.

Policy 1.1-c: The Library System shall pursue the means to allow for the provision of equitable access to all library facilities, resources and services within the County by all County residents and to ensure equalization of Library Service throughout Palm Beach County.

Policy 1.1-d: The Library System shall review its long-range plan annually to ensure that progress toward the adopted levels of service is reflected in the Long-Range Plan objectives.

Policy 1.1-e: The Library System shall encourage public participation and comment in the planning process, including local public forums, focus groups, and user surveys that help assess user needs.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Adequate Library Collection

The Library System shall adopt Level of Service Standards in order to provide residents with a collection of library materials that will serve their informational, educational, and recreational needs by the year 2030.

Policy 1.2-a: The Library System shall provide a minimum of 2.0 holdings per capita by the year 2030 to reach the service standard for populations of more than 25,000 people as stated in the *Florida Public Library Outcomes & Standards*. Expenditures on materials in all formats are between ten and fifteen percent of the library's operating budget.

Policy 1.2-b: *(deleted in Amendment Round 12-1)*

Policy 1.2-c: The Library System shall conform to *Florida Public Library Outcomes & Standards* by providing access to the internet via a wireless connection at all times, including outside access on library property during hours when the library building is closed.

Policy 1.2-d: The Library System shall participate in regional, statewide and national consortia or networks to enhance access to information and achieve economies by sharing resources.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 Levels of Service: Staff

The Palm Beach County Library System shall adopt Level of Service Standards to provide a library staff that is sufficient in number and in range of expertise to provide access to the library collection and to other information resources throughout the region, the State and the nation.

Policy 1.3-a: The Library System shall maintain the professional librarian staff at .3 of the Library's permanent full time equivalent (FTE) positions through 2030.

Policy 1.3-b: The Library System shall maintain all staff positions at .6 FTE per 1,000 population through 2030.

Policy 1.3-c: *(deleted in Amendment Round 06-1)*

OBJECTIVE 1.4 Level of Service: Facilities

Level of service standards shall be set in order to provide for the effective housing of the library collection and for access to that collection and to other information available in the region, State, and nation.

Policy 1.4-a: The Library System shall provide 0.60 square feet per capita of library facility by the year 2030 to reach the basic standard as stated in the *Florida Public Library Outcomes & Standards*.

Policy 1.4-b: The Library System shall monitor evolving standards on access to public computing resources and online resources in the library community and make provision in its annual budget to support changes in technology.

Policy 1.4-c: The Library System shall prepare a needs assessment study in connection with Phase III of the Library Expansion Program (LEP III).

OBJECTIVE 1.5 Funding

Palm Beach County shall utilize (within the Library District) alternative methods for funding facilities, equipment, staff and collection acquisition.

Policy 1.5-a: The Library System shall consider and evaluate all revenue sources available to provide funding for operating expenses and capital improvements.

Policy 1.5-b: The Library System shall continue its efforts to obtain state and federal grants to help fund the facilities, equipment, staff and collection of the Library System.

Policy 1.5-c: The Library System shall provide assistance and guidance to the Friends of the Library System in their ongoing efforts to stimulate public support for the Library through private funding.

Policy 1.5-d: *(deleted in Amendment Round 06-1)*

Policy 1.5-e: The Library System shall continue the use of volunteers to enhance library service.

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Library Services Element Amendment History

Round	Description	Adoption	OrdNum	Effective	Note*
89-1	Adopted	8/31/1989	1989-17	9/11/1989	
90-1	Stipulated Settlement Agreement Amendments to find Plan in compliance	9/18/1990	1990-32	10/4/1990	Settlement
97-2	EAR Re-write and Map Revisions	11/17/1997	1997-48	1/14/1998	
98-1	To revise library LOS	9/16/1998	1998-46	11/12/1998	
99-1	Managed Growth Tier System consistency revisions to evaluate need in Exurban Tier	8/17/1999	1999-29	10/14/1999	
01-1	Existing and Future Conditions Sections deleted and relocated to support documents	8/27/2001	2001-45	10/22/2001	
06-1	Library Services Updates	8/21/2006	2006-19	10/20/2006	
12-1	To revise and update, including adjusting levels of service and updating dates and timeframes.	7/23/2012	2012-21	8/31/2012	
21-B2	To revise and update the Library Services Element	11/3/2021	2021-30	12/19/2021	

* NIE means not in effect - not within element