

Aurora Public Library

Five-Year Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020

Developed and Annually Updated by the Aurora Public Library Board of Trustees
Fall, 2015

A Division of the
Library & Cultural Services Department
City of Aurora, Colorado



City of Aurora, Colorado www.auroragov.org / www.auroralibrary.org

Mission Statement

Live. Learn. Achieve. The mission of the Aurora Public Library (APL) is to provide the citizens of Aurora with books, information and other resources in a positive and proactive manner.

Values

The foundation of democracy is the “freedom to know” and a public library is an essential service, one cornerstone of that foundation, and should be guided by the following values:

1. Ensuring free, equal and confidential access to the library’s core information resources and services.
2. Promoting the development of independent thinkers and literate people.
3. Creating a welcoming environment to promote a sense of community.
4. Making available appropriate technology and new resources to meet changing information needs.
5. Providing access to a broad spectrum of ideas, reflecting diverse cultures and points of view.
6. Enhancing the cultural needs of the community.

City Council Goal Supported by the Library

1. Create a superior quality of life for residents, making the city a desirable place to live and visit.

Five Year Plan Methodology

The primary resources used to develop the strategic directions for the APL are:

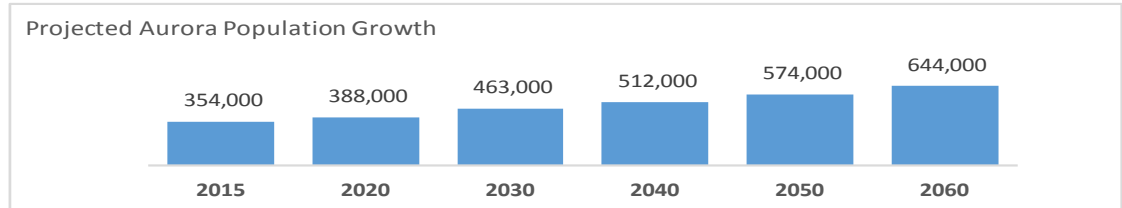
1. In-depth Bi-Annual Customer Survey.
2. Ongoing customer comments and service ratings.
3. Internal library input and output measures (circulation, customer count, statistics, etc.).
4. Staff observation of customer activity and verbal feedback within facilities and at outreach events.
5. The Annual Colorado State Library statistics report to compare with peer libraries.
6. Feedback at various community meetings.
7. Monitoring library industry trends through trade journals, peer groups and attendance at conferences.
8. City demographic data and City of Aurora Planning Department land use plans and development projections.

Key Strategic Planning Areas

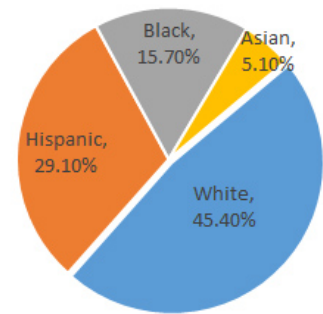
1. Library collection development and management.
2. How customers use the library and use of existing library space.
3. Programming, community outreach and marketing.
4. Hiring, training and internal business practices.
5. Customer service and service delivery.
6. Technology.
7. Future library facilities and expansion.

Demographic Overview for Aurora

1. The 2015 end-of-year population is projected to be approximately 354,000 individuals with long-term continued growth. Much of Aurora's growth is anticipated along the E-470 corridor and along the Aurora leg of the RTD Light Rail corridor to be completed in 2017.



2. According to the 2013 U.S. Census figures, Aurora's current ethnic composition includes the following: The Latino population is the fastest growing ethnic group in Aurora, concentrating principally in North Aurora. Only 45% of the population is white making Aurora the most racially diverse city in the State (see chart at right). The total number of foreign born residents in Aurora is 67,967 or 19.7% of the total population.
3. English-only speaking citizens comprise 70% of the population, and those who speak languages other than English are 30% of the population, with 17% of this latter category reporting that they speak English less than "very well". One hundred thirty-nine languages are spoken in the Aurora Public School system.
4. Eighty-four percent of the population have at least a high school diploma while 33.3% have college-level degrees as follows: Associate's degree (8.1%), Bachelor's degree (17.8%) and Graduate/Professional degree (7.4%). However, 16.2% have no high school diploma.



Funding

As a Department of the City, the APL is funded by the City General Fund (\$291.5 million for 2015). The Library Division represents 1.5% of the Department's 2% of the General Fund. The remainder is a transfer to the Cultural Services Fund.

In 2010, the City faced a significant financial deficit due to the "Great Recession." After Aurora voters defeated a dedicated library mill levy in the fall of 2009, the APL budget was cut by 50% with four of seven locations closing and forty staff lay-offs. From 2010 to 2015, the APL has been able to improve funding and recover some services. The chart below shows General Fund support for library services emphasizing the 2010 reduction and gradual increased funding since then.

	2009	2010	2015
Personnel	5,014,000	2,426,000	3,437,000
Materials	896,000	190,000	864,000
Operating	693,000	411,000	420,000
Total	6,603,000	3,027,000	4,721,000

About the APL

The APL has eight locations including a large main library, three full service branches, two personal computer (PC) centers with some limited materials and other services, and unstaffed public PCs with printing at two city recreation centers.

Facility	Address	Square Feet	Annual Door Count 2014	Hours	Services
Central	14949 E. Alameda Parkway Aurora, CO 80012 303-739-6600	53,800	584,000	Mon-Thu: 8am-10pm Fri: 8 am-8 pm Sat: 8am-6pm Sun: 10am-6pm	Books, Audio Books, CDs, DVDs, Periodicals, Research Assistance, Holds, Computers, Microsoft Products, Filtered Internet, Wi-Fi, Printing, Copying, Scanning, Fax, Programs & Classes, Genealogy Collection, Meeting Rooms, Study Rooms
Martin Luther King, Jr	9898 E. Colfax Ave. Aurora, CO 80010 303-739-1940	10,325	174,000	Sun: closed Mon: 10am-6pm Tue: 11am-7pm Wed-Sat: 10am-6pm	Books, Audio Books, CDs, DVDs, Periodicals, Research Assistance, Holds, Computers, Microsoft Products, Filtered Internet, Wi-Fi, Printing, Copying, Scanning, Programs & Classes, Meeting Rooms, Study Rooms
Mission Viejo	15324 E. Hampden Circle Aurora, CO 80013 303-326-8600	17,502	135,000	Sun: closed Mon: 10am-6pm Tue: 11am-7pm Wed-Sat: 10am-6pm	Books, Audio Books, CDs, DVDs, Periodicals, Research Assistance, Holds, Computers, Microsoft Products, Filtered Internet, Wi-Fi, Printing, Copying, Scanning, Programs & Classes, Meeting Rooms, Study Rooms
Tallyn's Reach	23911 E. Arapahoe Road Aurora, CO 80016 303-627-3050	23,434	96,000	Sun: closed Mon: 11am-7pm Tue-Sat: 10am-6pm	Books, Audio Books, CDs, DVDs, Periodicals, Research Assistance, Holds, Computers, Microsoft Products, Filtered Internet, Wi-Fi, Printing, Copying, Scanning, Programs & Classes, Meeting Rooms, Study Rooms
Hoffman	1298 Peoria St. Aurora, CO 80011 303-739-1572	3,196	33,000	Sun: closed Mon: 11am-7pm Tues-Sat: 10am-6pm	Limited Books, Audio Books, CDs, DVDs. Research Assistance, Holds, Computers, Microsoft Products, Filtered Internet, Wi-Fi, Printing, Copying, Scanning, Programs & Classes, Study Rooms
Colfax & Chambers PC Center (inside Kmart)	15200 E. Colfax Ave. Aurora, CO 303-366-0307	603	23,000	Mon-Tues: 10am-6pm Wed: 11am-7pm Thurs-Sat: 10am-6pm Sun: closed	Research Assistance, Holds, Computers, Microsoft Products, Filtered Internet, Wi-Fi, Printing, Copying, Scanning, Programs & Classes.

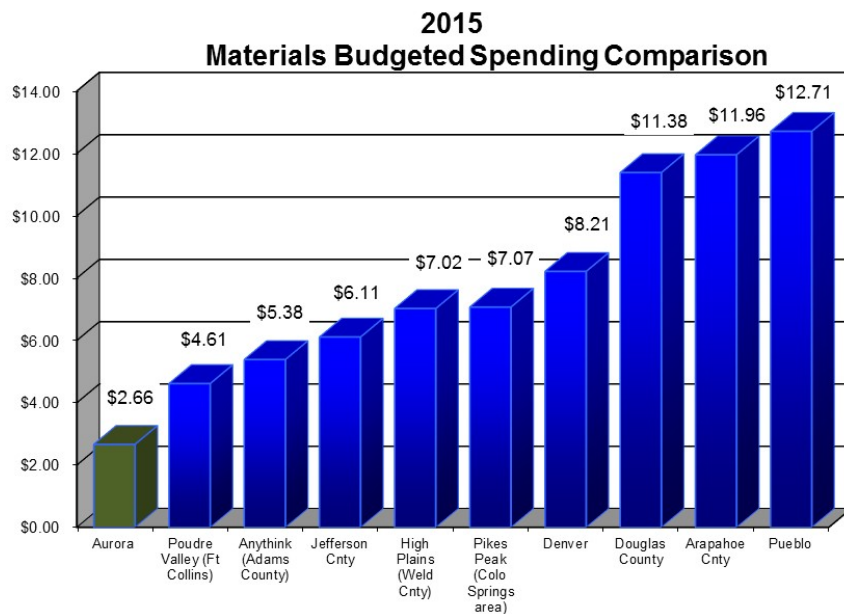
The APL offers full on-line services with catalog search, holds, renewals, reading lists, notifications, account management, Prospector services, downloadable books, movies and music, on-line payment and donations, full web program calendars and registration, and agency information. Telephone renewal and notification are also available as desired by the customers.

The APL also offers many free computer classes in addition to other common full-service library programming. Outreach efforts are significant and complemented by the library "Info To Go" van, which is heavily scheduled at community and school events, and operates in conjunction with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to supplement various recreation programs and events.

Key Strategic APL Planning Areas

Library Collection Development and Management

Books and DVDs: Contrary to popular belief, the APL follows national trends in that the top demanded library resources are books, followed by DVD/CDs. Both adult and youth customer's rank physical books and DVDs as their top resource demand. Sixty-six percent of adults say they use the collection for recreational reading and 58% of youth report they use the library's resources to read "for fun". However, 52% of customers say they must request items from other libraries and only 57% say there are enough copies on hand. City General Fund support for APL materials funding was \$1.8 million in 2008, dropped to \$190,000 in 2011 and has grown to \$863,000 for 2015.



Strategic Direction: Continue to demonstrate the need for and request increased collection funding and processing staff to support the funding growth in the annual city budget process, as well as seek funding from grant/state/other sources. Purchases will focus on most demanded genres.

On-Line Research Databases: The APL subscribes to a number of databases. Even with a special effort by staff in 2014 and 2015 to market and promote these databases, the cost per usage of these resources has been high overall.

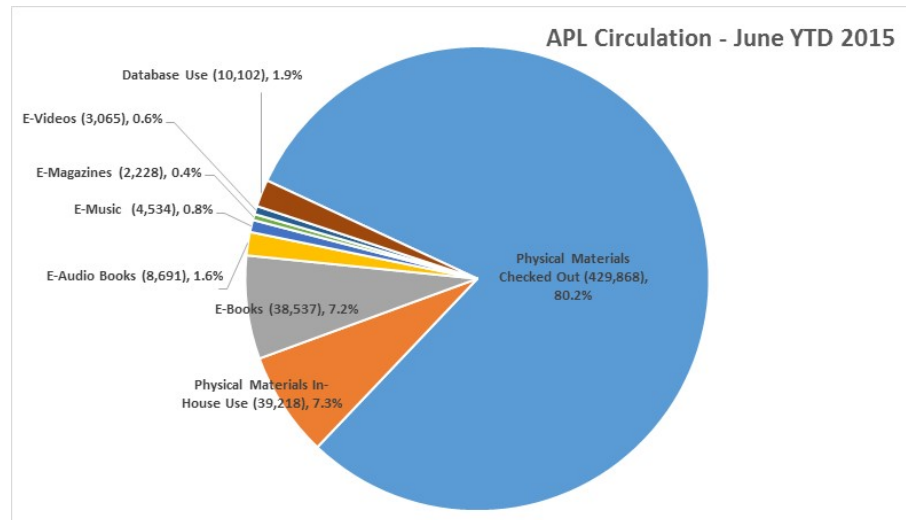
Strategic Direction: The APL has removed some subscriptions and will carefully monitor the cost per usage in order to direct collection funds to the areas in highest demand.

E-Books and Downloadables:

E-book demand and usage saw sharp increases in the mid-2000s with the wide scale purchases of e-reader devices.

APL and national trends have seen the demand level off to a slower growth rate of about 2% a year. The APL's 2015 statistics will show

at 10% to 20% growth, but this may be due to added collection funding allowing for the purchase of more titles. The APL offers downloadable e-books, audio books, magazines and streaming video services. Most periodical titles, due to cost and efficiency of delivery, have moved to the on-line format. The cost of e-books in particular has been high due to publisher concerns about content control. However, negotiations by the American Library Association and large library systems are resulting in improved pricing.



Strategic Direction: Continue to monitor on-line downloadable and streaming services and adjust the allocation to these resources.

Collection Management: The APL currently has a full service on-line collection management system (Millennium) that allows vendor direct purchasing access where much of the cataloging and labeling is contracted to the vendor. That system also provides materials usage analysis to assist with purchasing items in greatest demand and weeding outdated and low-demand items to make room for new materials on a continual basis. The APL has lagged, due to funding limitations, in the implementation of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tagging and automated collection inventory management technology. Additionally, the Millennium vendor (Innovative Interfaces Inc.) will no longer support the current software.

Strategic Direction: Funding for both RFID item tagging, theft control gates and automated inventory management tools has been approved (\$220,000) for 2016. The migration to a new system management software (Sierra) has also been approved (\$70,000) for 2016. Long-term, automated sorting systems will be explored which will also require some space reconfiguration in facilities where such systems show a positive return on investment.

How Customers Use the Library and Use of Existing Library Space

How Customers Use the Library: Based primarily on reported industry trends and staff observation, the library is becoming a key Third Place (or Third Space), i.e., home, work, community gathering spot. With the growth in collaborative learning, the APL is seeing considerable increases in study groups and tutoring driving the demand for small venue meeting rooms. Fifty-eight percent of APL

youth users report they come to the library for schoolwork and study. Seventy-two percent of youth say they come to the APL with family or friends. Since 2010, the Central Library has added eight small study rooms and converted a lounge/cafeteria room into a large quiet study room. The demand for these spaces has been extremely high. Central also re-arranged shelving in 2015 to open a large amount of floor space for study areas. In 2015, Central added a collaborative reading area near the main entrance. Without exception, creating added space is a challenge at other locations.

Strategic Direction: Consider future funding requests to add study rooms at Tallyn's Reach and Mission Viejo. Continue to gradually purchase a variety of study friendly furniture to efficiently maximize seating while maintaining an aesthetically pleasing environment.

General Library Space Maintenance and Improvements: The Central Library's Large Community Meeting Room underwent a major remodel in 2015. The projection and audio system was replaced in 2012. Major HVAC improvements were made to the building in 2012/13. A swinging outer public door replaced problematic slider doors at the public entrance and a new book drop was installed, both of which reduced chilly conditions on cold days for the circulation staff at Central.

Strategic Direction: Continue to work with City Facilities Maintenance, where funds are budgeted and expert support exists, to update and maintain library facilities. Planned future major projects include:

- Re-carpeting at Central and Hoffman.
- Restroom remodels at Central and Mission Viejo.
- Return of Central's patio area to some type of customer-use space.
- A ceiling mounted projector system in the Central Small Community Room and the Mission Viejo meeting room.
- Create a heat curtain near the windows in the Central staff circulation area and add an emergency exit in this area.

Youth Services Areas: This area has undergone significant change and improvement in the past four years. Sound glass was added along a large part of the balcony area to eliminate spillover noise into the lower level adult non-fiction and study areas. A larger teen area was created through efficient repurposing of space allowing for more computers and a distinct "teen-area" feel. The shelving layout and service desk was revamped into a spoke design with a central desk to improve window views, lighting and staff visibility of floor space. This redesign created an open story-time area within the main children's area. Finally, a program room was converted at the Central Library to an Early Literacy Center (ELC) with educational toys and special children's computers. A similar ELC was built at Mission Viejo with a "playhouse" look from the outside.



Strategic Direction: Extend the glass balcony noise wall at Central to include the teen area. Install a kid friendly entry facade into the children's area at Central. Consider an ELC area at Tallyn's Reach.

Tallyn's Reach Space Use Re-Evaluation: The initial Tallyn's Reach Library design was planned for more staffing than will likely be possible or needed due to changing library service models into the foreseeable future.

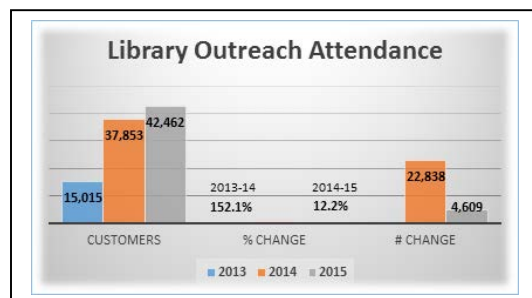
Strategic Direction: Conduct and make changes as recommended on the overall floor space layout and usage at Tallyn's Reach to improve service, staff visibility and better meet customer demand for study space, youth areas, programming and overall function.

Library Video/Security: During the past four years, security cameras were added to the Central Library, Mission Viejo and Hoffman. Tallyn's Reach and Martin Luther King, Jr. systems were improved. These systems all vary from being a fully stand-alone system over ten years old at Mission Viejo to local server-based systems at Central, Tallyn's Reach and Martin Luther King, Jr. to a modern web-based system at Hoffman. Video security is an important crime deterrent, and at times an incident documentation tool, and overall creates a safer/secure customer experience.

Strategic Direction: Install a uniform modern web-based system for all facilities, possibly in conjunction with such a system used at other city facilities where similar issues exist for centralized management and cost efficiency.

Programming, Community Outreach and Marketing

Programming and Outreach: Nearly all programming was eliminated after the 2010 budget reductions. Since then, a concerted effort to re-establish both site-based and centralized programming has taken place. An existing position was appointed to oversee outreach programs and 1.5 FTE were later added to this effort. A back-up courier van was transformed with a lively graphic wrap and some modifications into the "Info To Go" van to allow outreach staff to have a library presence with some books, to provide a Wi-Fi hot spot and the ability to issue library cards, and to conduct programs at a wide variety of events and venues in the city. The outreach staff has grown program events from 120 in 2010 to a 2015 projection of 2,000. Library site-based programs have also been a priority, which includes computer classes, youth programs and clubs, and adult programs classes. Many of these are made possible by collaborative efforts with other agencies like the Red Cross and Arapahoe/Douglas Works.



Strategic Direction: Continue to explore the best outreach and programs to meet community needs, and market and expose library services to the community. Expand staffing in this area with a special focus on reaching minority and immigrant communities, schools and programs in the Tallyn's Reach area, which is growing rapidly with a large child/youth population. Place added emphasis on English as a Second Language (ESL) programs internally or in conjunction with community partners.

Poet Laureate: In 2014, the City created an official City Poet Laureate volunteer position. The organization of the program and recruitment was assigned to the Library Board. A candidate was successfully recruited and appointed by City Council and has been very successful in representing the city at numerous events.

Strategic Direction: Work with the Poet Laureate Advisory Committee to refine the program and conduct future recruitments as needed. Seek ways to expand the opportunities for the Poet Laureate to represent the City, promote literacy, and compose and perform poems in the community.

Low Income Lunch Student Programs: The APL has partnered for several years with the Foodbank of the Rockies to provide summer lunch programs at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, serving 13,089 meals in 2014.

Strategic Direction: Continue this program working with the Parks and Open Space staff that oversees program applications and grants for added services based on provider and logistical reviews to the Central Library, Hoffman and Mission Viejo where the program income requirements may be met.

General Library Marketing: The APL receives support with press items from City



Communications. Internally, the APL relies on its Outreach Services, Facebook, Twitter and other social media accounts to promote the library. A system-wide quarterly Program Guide launched in 2014 has resulted in positive customer feedback and significantly improved program attendance. Primarily, the APL markets its services and programs through its web pages, bookmarks, fliers and in-facility postings. Various free community publications and guides are also utilized where available. The APL launched the “Library Rewards Card” program in 2014 where currently twenty-four local businesses offer discounts to library customers when they present their library card. These businesses and their offers are listed on the APL web site in an effort to market the library while also working jointly with the local business community.

Strategic Direction: Continue and grow existing strategies when successful. Paid advertising is not planned given tight funding and the difficulty in today’s fragmented media/marketing environment. The APL will work with the City Branding Project to ensure marketing materials benefit from this extensive research and support. Collaborative ways to jointly market library awareness with other agencies and businesses will be a priority.

Hiring, Training and Internal Business Practices

Point of Sale: Cash management at the APL is conducted via a manual cash register system with no direct interface to the customer accounts in the library management system.

Strategic Direction: Request funding for an integrated point of sale system using a module of the existing Envisionware vendor software, which will interface and create a full-service point of sale system.

Hiring: As part of the City's emphasis on hiring the best and most qualified people for positions, the APL has made hiring a high priority.

Strategic Direction: Library supervisors will continue to receive city training in the art of hiring and managing people. The APL will continue to place high importance on customer service, work ethic, and collaborative and people skills, especially in areas where technical skills can be acquired through training, mentoring and on-the-job experience.

Training: The APL has limited training funding. The Library System Administrator annually attends the library system vendor's training conference to ensure a well-functioning and fully utilized integrated library system. Other library staff training is peer based and through the use of on-line resources/classes offered by the City and the State Library.

Strategic Direction: Continue System Administrator training. The City is purchasing a comprehensive Learning Management System. This system allows the APL to create or access on-line training curriculum where on-line tests can be administered and progress tracked per employee account. Outside training and credentialing can also be tracked.

Customer Service and Service Delivery

Circulation Services: The APL has long offered self-checkout, full on-line customer account, search and item hold placement services. The APL is a member of the Prospector network (forty-four library systems in Colorado) allowing customers to search and request holds to be delivered to any APL location from most libraries in Colorado. Usually items can arrive in five days if available by the member lending library. Seventy-one library systems in the State of Missouri were added to this network in 2015.

Strategic Direction: The APL will continue to offer these services with improvements as vendor software improves. The APL expects the Prospector network to continue to grow. With the implementation of the RFID program, self-check stations should improve so that customers can check out a stack of items in one action rather than scanning each item.

Self-Service Expanded Hours: Much of current library use involves computers and study time. The APL implemented additional hours at the Central Library in 2014 with minimal staff services. Staff service is very limited during these times (early morning and late evening hours), but this allows the library to be open at very low cost when it would have otherwise been closed. Significant numbers of customers use the library during these hours.

CENTRAL LIBRARY HOURS			
Expanded Self Service Hours			
	OPEN		FULL SERVICE
Mon. - Thurs.	8AM	- 10PM	9AM - 8PM
Friday	8AM	- 8PM	10AM - 6PM
Saturday	8AM	- 6PM	10AM - 6PM
Sunday	10AM	- 6PM	12:30PM - 6PM
DVD Hold Pickups, Reference Help, Check-Out Desk, Account Help and Cashier Services are ONLY available during FULL SERVICE HOURS			

Strategic Direction: Continue self-service hours at Central and consider expansion of the concept at other facilities where feasible. Demand, facility layout and budgetary conditions are influencing factors. Full staff services are desired when possible.

The Customer Experience: All APL staff have participated in the City's CORE 4 customer service training program. The library subscribes to the CORE 4 values – Customer Service, Respect, Integrity and Professionalism.

Strategic Direction: The APL will continue to ascribe to City CORE 4 training and values. Emphasis will continue on improving systems, service models, processes and facility appearances to ensure customers have an all-around positive customer experience at APL facilities and programs.

Technology

Internet Speed: In 2014, the APL received a 200mb dedicated Internet connection after sharing bandwidth with other City operations. This resulted in a tremendous increase in Internet speed for customers. In 2015, the public Wi-Fi access was moved from local Comcast business service accounts to this connection, improving speed and allowing Wi-Fi access to run through the library filter.

Strategic Direction: Continue to monitor Internet speed and customer perceptions with the assumption that Internet content and usage options will continue to demand larger bandwidth.

Internet Filtering: In 2015, the APL replaced and upgraded the public side filtering software. Filtering has been a long-standing Council policy and is also required for eligibility for State and Federal library grant funds.

Strategic Direction: Monitor and fine tune for unique URL blocking or allowances. Continue to monitor and make upgrades as software improvements and options become available.

Public Computing: By early 2016, all PCs will have been replaced.

Strategic Direction: Monitor PC usage and right size the inventory by facility based on demand. Computer life has gradually increased as the technology has stabilized in the last five years. Monitor for a possible wide scale replacement program in 2020. The APL will continue to work with City IT on developing improved and more automated PC console-based management, expanding browser options and keeping basic Microsoft software (Word, Excel, etc.) versions current.

Customer Device Checkout: Due to staff maintenance time and cost, the APL does not check out devices (laptops, e-readers) to customers. This is a trend in many libraries and many are still working out cost, management time and theft control issues. Regardless of current models used at peer libraries, the cost of providing this service is very high.

Strategic Direction: The APL has had little customer demand for this type of service and given the cost/staffing to customer use ratio to provide the service, APL will monitor options as technology and prices change, but has no plans to enter this service realm.

Customer Printing Devices: The APL has long provided black and white computer and photocopying. Scanning was introduced via inexpensive office style scanners where content is saved to a thumb drive that must be taken to a computer to print. Copy machines were purchased over ten years ago from an initial lease. Most copy machines are over fifteen years old.

Strategic Direction: The APL plans for a two to three year printing device replacement program where each facility will receive a color or black and white high speed scanning/fax device where scanning can send content to a thumb drive or an email address. All computer printing devices will add a color option. Scanning and domestic outgoing faxing will be free and copies will be priced accordingly. Long term, as part of the point of sale proposed upgrade, all coin acceptance devices will be replaced and credit card or cash payment options offered.

New Technologies: The APL is now in a position to explore various new technologies that may improve the customer experience. The integrated library system upgrade in 2016 to Sierra may open doors for new service modules as well as new technologies.

Strategic Direction: The APL plans to implement mobile printing in 2016 where customers can send print jobs to library printers (released upon payment) from home or a Wi-Fi device in the library. The APL also is working toward mobile library web applications and iPhone scanning technologies (Boopsie).

Future Library Facilities and Expansion

New Facility Locations/Expanded Space: After closing in 2010, the Mission Viejo Library has returned to service forty hours a week. Hoffman has reopened to about 30% of its original floor space, sharing space with a City Recreation/Teen center. In 2013, the APL opened a computing center in an enclave at the front of the Kmart store on Chambers and Colfax, offering fifteen public computers, printing and book return/hold services.

Strategic Direction: In 2016, Mission Viejo, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Tallyn's Reach locations will add eight hours to the service schedule going from five to six eight-hour service days with \$217,855 budgeted for staffing. Hoffman will expand (\$40,000 construction) and double its size into a storage area, which will return the floor space to about 50% of what it was pre-2010 closure. Hoffman will continue to share the remaining space with Recreation. Finally, a roughly 2,000 square foot computer center with limited library materials will open in 2016 in the southwest area of Aurora (\$533,945 staffing/rent/tenant finish) in an effort to re-establish a library presence in this area after the roughly 7,000 square foot Iliff Square Library was closed in 2010.

Long-Term Library Facility Planning: Aurora continues to grow at a fast rate that is expected to continue. The APL must continue to consider added locations and other innovative/cost effective ways to provide services.

Strategic Direction: Library services will continue to expand with the City and must respond to demographic needs. The APL is working with the City Planning Department and others to include libraries in future strategic locations and to expand existing locations/services as follows:

1. A high priority area, where considerable growth has already occurred, is Murphy Creek where a 15,000 to 20,000 square foot facility is desirable.

2. A 10,000 to 15,000 square foot library in the Vista Peak High School area.
3. A location near the Colfax and Chambers PC Center inside Kmart to supplement or replace that current location.
4. Expand the newly reopened (2016) Iliff Square location to its full pre-closure space and size.
5. A future library/PC center style storefront location in Regatta Plaza after the shopping center is re-built for exposure and customer convenience to the adjacent Parker Road/I-225 light rail expansion. This site will serve a considerable Aurora work and student commuter population.
6. Add one more "Info To Go" van with one additional staff person.
7. Identify re-use of existing space or added space for Maker Spaces/STEM/STEAM equipment and programs.
8. Have a library presence at RTD stations on the new Aurora Line. This may take the form of automated book lockers similar to the unit at the Community College of Aurora, micro-libraries or materials drop-off bins.

On the following page is a GIS-based map showing current library use based on library materials checkouts in 2015.



Give Back @ Your Library



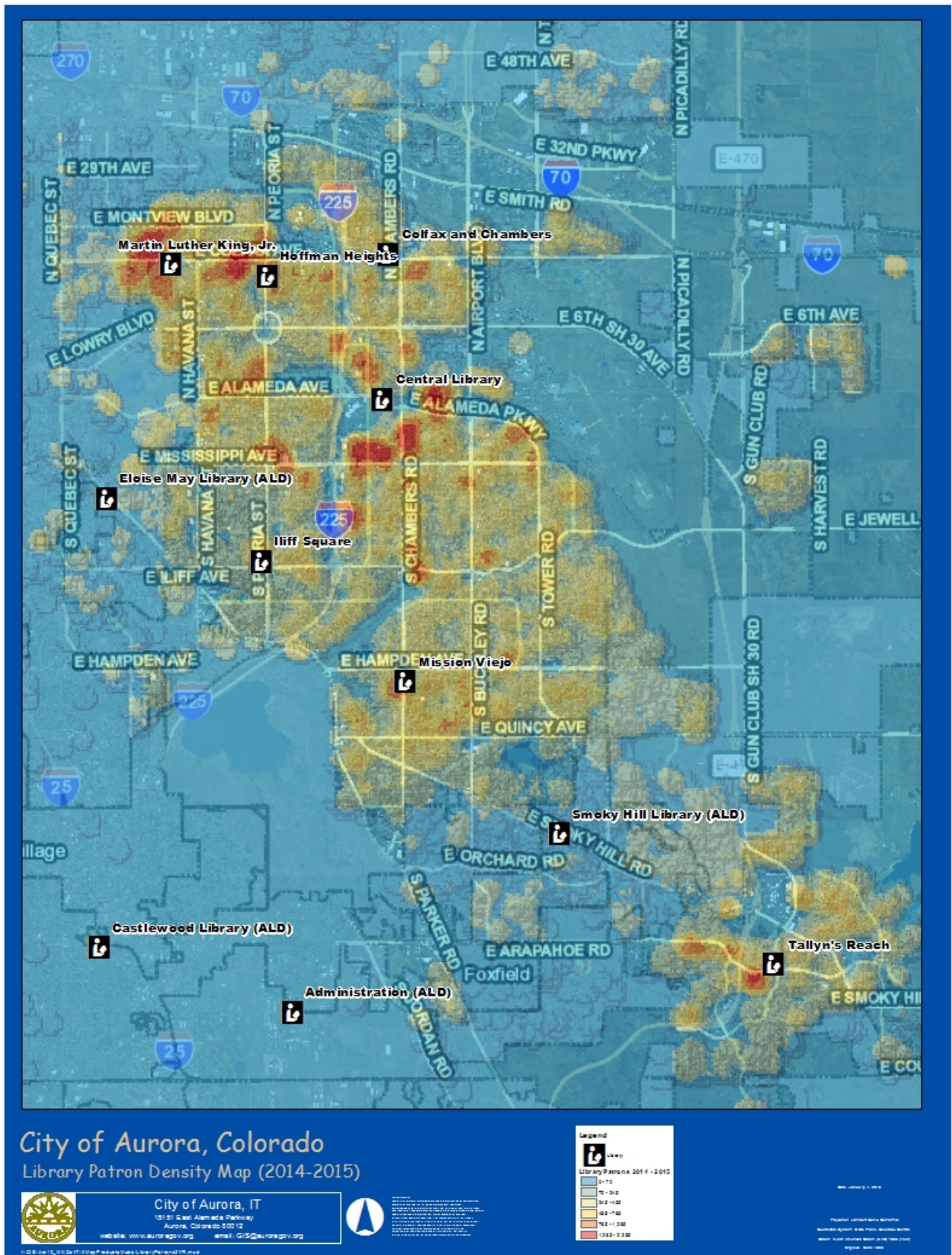
Super Heroes



Purrfect Reading Buddy



Maker Faire 2015



Note: Eloise May, Smokey Hill and Castlewood are Arapahoe Library District library locations and are shown here only for informational purposes.