

**Craven County**



**Community Needs Assessment  
for the  
Public Libraries of Craven County**

RB Software & Consulting, Inc.  
August 2013

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	3
Introduction .....	5
Chapter 1. Demographic Data for Craven County .....	6
Chapter 2. Demographic Data for Towns in Craven County .....	12
Chapter 3. Community Survey .....	16
Chapter 4. Staff Survey .....	50
Chapter 5. Library Usage and Funding Data .....	65
Chapter 6. Focus Groups and Interviews with Community Leaders .....	68
Chapter 7. Assessing Public Library Space Needs for Craven County .....	74
Chapter 8. The Regional Library System .....	98
Chapter 9. Recommendations .....	106

## Executive Summary

- The purpose of this community needs assessment is to ensure that the future direction of the libraries in Craven County is consistent with the needs of the communities being served by those libraries.
- The assessment is based on demographic data for Craven County and its towns, library usage and funding data, surveys of county citizens and library staff, meetings with staff members and library board members, focus groups, and interviews with local community leaders.
- The demographic data for Craven County reflect the fact that the county is relatively young, well educated, and wealthy, compared with the state as a whole.
- Demographic trends show that the wealth of Craven County residents and the percentage of the population 65 and over has increased more rapidly than for the state as a whole. On the other hand, changes in education level and population growth in general have lagged that of the state.
- The towns in Craven County vary widely with respect to levels of education, wealth, and age of their populations.
- A survey of county residents found that respondents most frequently used the library for adult books, children's books, and Internet access computers. Nearly half the respondents rated the library as excellent in meeting their needs, and two thirds rated the library's customer service as excellent. The greatest number of suggested improvements dealt with books and computers.
- A survey of library staff found that those individuals considered programs and books for children to be the most important library services. Most staff members felt that the library was doing a good job of meeting the needs of patrons.
- Data regarding library usage and funding for the public libraries of Craven County show that the libraries rank high in the percentage of the population registered and program attendance per capita. The libraries rank near the bottom of the state's libraries in terms of non-print circulation per capita and in the number of public Internet workstations per 5,000 people.

- Focus groups, interviews with community leaders, and other meetings found strong support for books, computers and Internet access, children's services, and an interest in ebooks and more space in the library facilities.
- An analysis of the public library space needs for Craven County suggests that a reasonable target for public library facilities for Craven County for the next 20 years is 64,480 square feet, 62 per cent more than the amount of space allocated now. The analysis also found that a reasonable target for Craven County for the next 20 years is between four and six facilities.
- The report finds that the public libraries in Craven County benefit from membership in the CPC Regional Library System by receiving assistance from regional staff, by sharing an integrated library system, and by taking advantage of the ability to borrow materials from any of the ten member libraries in the regional library system.
- The report makes more specific recommendations for the public libraries in Craven County in each of the following areas:
  - Adult reading
  - Children's services
  - Computers and Internet access
  - Facilities
  - Genealogy and local history
  - Integrated library system
  - Local funding and funding patterns
  - Marketing and advocacy

---

## Introduction

In January 2013, the library board of the New Bern-Craven County Public Library contracted with RB Software & Consulting, Inc., for a community needs assessment to ensure that the future direction of the libraries in Craven County is consistent with the needs of the communities being served by those libraries.

The project has been funded by the New Bern Development Board, which provides funding “for the purpose of purchasing, building or improving facilities designed for the educational benefit of the community residents in and around Craven County.”

The community needs assessment has been conducted by Dr. Robert Burgin, a library consultant with 38 years of experience in library education, library consulting, and library administration.

---

## Methods

---

The methods employed in this community needs assessment have included:

- An examination of demographic data and demographic trends for Craven County.
- An examination of library usage and funding data for the public libraries in Craven County.
- A survey of the citizens of Craven County.
- A survey of the staff members of the public libraries in Craven County.
- Meetings with the staff members of the public libraries in Craven County.
- Meetings with three of the four library boards for the public libraries in Craven County.
- Meetings with focus groups made up of citizens from Craven County.
- Interviews with local community leaders.
- An analysis of the library facility needs of Craven County.

## Chapter 1

### Demographic Data for Craven County

A community needs assessment for a public library naturally begins with an assessment of the community being served by examining that community's demographic data.

---

#### County Data

---

A summary of the most recent demographic data for Craven County is shown in Table 1-1 on the following page.<sup>1</sup> The data for Craven County are listed for 17 measures and compared with the median for all 100 counties in North Carolina. Craven County's rank among the 100 counties is also shown, and the table is sorted by Craven's rank.

The demographic data for Craven County reflect the fact that the county is:

- Relatively young, primarily with respect to pre-K children. Craven County ranks 10th in the state in the percentage of its population under 5 years of age. It is important to note that the percentage of the population in Craven County under 18 years of age or 65 and over is not significantly different from that of the state as a whole. It is only the under-5 population that is markedly greater. This is likely due to the large number of families with young children associated with the Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station.
- Relatively well educated. Craven County ranks 11th in the state in the percentage of persons 25 and over with high school degrees or better and 26th in the percentage of persons 25 and over with B.A. degrees or better.

---

<sup>1</sup> The majority of the data comes from the United States Census Bureau (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37000.html>). Unemployment data are from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Employment Security (<http://www.ncesc1.com/pmi/rates/ratesmain.asp>). Literacy data are from the National Center for Educational Statistics (<http://nces.ed.gov/naal/estimates/overview.aspx>).

- Relatively wealthy. Craven County ranks 26th in the state in median household income and 31st in the median value of homes. These rankings reflect modest, although not top-tier, wealth relative to the state as a whole.

Table 1-1. Craven County Demographic Data

Measure	Craven	NC Median	Craven Rank
Population Under 5 Years of Age, 2011	7.3%	5.8%	10th
Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with High School Degree or Better, 2006-2010	87.5%	80.0%	11th
Land Area, 2010	708.96	462.7	15th
Population per Square Mile, 2010	146.0	113.1	24th
Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with B.A. or Better, 2006-2010	21.3%	16.3%	26th
Median Household Income, 2006-2010	\$44,599	\$40,180	26th
Total Population, July 2011	104,786	55,107	27th
Assessed Valuation, 2010-11 (millions)	\$9,400.0	\$4,614.8	28th
Median Value of Homes, 2006-2010	\$151,500	\$124,300	31st
Percentage Lacking Basic Literacy Skills, 2003	12.4%	14.5%	40th
Population Under 18 Years of Age, 2011	23.0%	22.5%	41st
Percentage Non-White, 2011	27.7%	22.9%	43rd
Percentage Hispanic, 2011	6.5%	6.1%	43rd
Population 65 Years and Over, 2011	15.6%	15.7%	52nd
Unemployment, June 2013	9.9%	9.8%	56th
Percentage in Poverty, 2006-2010	16.0%	16.9%	61st

---

### Demographic Trends

---

Table 1-2 on the following page shows several demographic trends based on a comparison of data from 2000 and 2011. The percentage change for each measure is shown for Craven County and for the state of North Carolina as a whole.

These trends reflect the following themes:

- Relative increases in measures of wealth. The median value of homes has increased much more rapidly in Craven County (56.8 per cent) over the last decade than it has for the state as a whole (37.7 per cent). Median household income has also increased more rapidly in Craven (24.0 per cent vs 16.3 per cent for the state). Nevertheless, growth in the percentage of the population in poverty has roughly equaled that of the state as a whole.

Table 1-2. Craven County Demographic Changes, 2000 to 2011

Measure	Craven	NC
<b>Median Value of Homes</b>	<b>56.8%</b>	<b>37.7%</b>
<b>Percentage in Poverty</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>
<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>
<b>Population 65 Years and Over</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>
<b>Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with B.A. or Better</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>
<b>Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with High School Degree or Better</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
<b>Population Under 5 Years of Age</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>- 3.0%</b>
<b>Population Under 18 Years of Age</b>	<b>-6.5%</b>	<b>- 2.9%</b>

- A relatively rapid increase in the age of the population. The percentage of the population 65 and over has grown slightly more rapidly in Craven County (16.4 per cent) than in the entire state (10.0 per cent). The percentage of the population under 5 years of age has held steady in Craven County while dropping for North Carolina's 100 counties by 3.0 per cent. The percentage of the population under 18 has declined more in Craven County (6.5 per cent) than for the entire state (2.9 per cent).
- Relatively slower increases in education level. While Craven ranks 26th among the state's counties in the percentage of persons 25 and over with B.A. degrees or better, that percentage has grown less rapidly over the past decade than it has for the state as a whole (10.4 per cent vs 16.0 per cent).



- Relatively high population growth. Between 2000 and 2011, Craven County grew less quickly than did the state (14.6 per cent vs 20.0 per cent).

---

### Growth Projections

---

The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management provides population data and projections for the 100 counties in North Carolina. That information is shown in Table 1-3 below for Craven County.<sup>2</sup>

Table 1-3  
Population Data and Projections  
Craven County, 2010 – 2030

Measure	2010	2020	2030
<b>Population</b>	<b>103,505</b>	<b>106,745</b>	<b>108,704</b>
<b>Population Growth, Previous 10 Years</b>	<b>11,651</b>	<b>3,240</b>	<b>1,959</b>
<b>Percentage Population Growth, Previous 10 Years</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
<b>Percentage Population Growth, Previous 10 Years, North Carolina</b>	<b>18.5%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>
<b>Births, Previous 10 Years</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>17,311</b>	<b>16,383</b>
<b>Deaths, Previous 10 Years</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>11,165</b>	<b>11,724</b>
<b>Natural Growth, Previous 10 Years</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>6,146</b>	<b>4,659</b>
<b>Net Migration, Previous 10 Years</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>-2,906</b>	<b>-2,700</b>

These statistics reflect the state's belief that growth in Craven County will taper off, from 12.7 per cent between 2000 and 2010 to just 3.1 per cent between 2010 and 2020 and 1.8 per cent between 2020 and 2030. While the population growth for the state as a whole is expected to decrease in the future, that drop is expected to be greater for Craven County.

---

<sup>2</sup> Data are found at "County/State Population Projections," URL: [http://www.osbm.state.nc.us/ncosbm/facts\\_and\\_figures/socioeconomic\\_data/population\\_estimates/county\\_projections.shtm](http://www.osbm.state.nc.us/ncosbm/facts_and_figures/socioeconomic_data/population_estimates/county_projections.shtm). Detailed growth data for 2000-2010 are not available on the site.

Much of this is due to net migration, which the state estimates will be quite high for Craven County (perhaps due to concerns about the impact of base realignment on the Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station). Between 2010 and 2020, the state expects a greater net migration in Craven County than in all but two of North Carolina's counties, and between 2020 and 2030, the state expects Craven's net migration to be larger than that of all but one of the state's counties.

---

### Implications for Library Services

---

These demographic patterns have several implications for public library services in Craven County.

- The relatively young population in Craven County (particularly those under 5 years of age) supports the need for strong children's programs and collections in the Craven County libraries. Public libraries have an important role to play in helping young children build the skills needed to succeed in school, and this is especially true in a county that ranks 10th in the state in the percentage of its population under 5 years of age.
- The population of Craven County is better educated and wealthier relative to the state as a whole, and both better educated and wealthier populations tend to be heavier library users. Consequently, demand for library services in Craven County is likely to be strong.
- The percentage of the population 65 and over had grown slightly more rapidly in Craven County over the past decade than it has in the state as a whole. Older populations tend to be strong users of library services in general and of traditional, book-oriented library services in particular.

## Chapter 2

### Demographic Data for Towns in Craven County

Craven County is not homogeneous, and parts of the county vary widely from one another. Demographic data also exist for the towns or census-designated places in Craven County, and the data can be used to show some of the characteristics of the populations of the different areas within the county and how these characteristics might affect public library services. Because these towns represent over 70 per cent of the county's population, their data reflect the traits of most of the individuals in the service area of the Craven County public libraries.

---

#### Town Data

---

A summary of the most recent demographic data for the towns in Craven County is shown in Tables 2-1 and 2-2 on the following pages.<sup>3</sup> The data for the towns are listed for 10 measures, some of which were also shown for Craven County as a whole in Chapter 1.

The demographic data for these towns have the following implications for library service:

- The towns with lower levels of education (based on the percentage of persons 25 and over with high school degrees or better and by the percentage of persons 25 and over with B.A. degrees or better) are Dover and Cove City, both currently served by the Cove City Public Library, and Vanceboro, currently served by the Vanceboro Public Library. Individuals with lower levels of education are more likely to require support for GED programs, literacy services, access to the Internet (because they are less likely to have access at home), and computer training.

---

<sup>3</sup> The data in this chapter come from the city-data.com Website. The URL for New Bern's data is <http://www.city-data.com/city/New-Bern-North-Carolina.html>, the URL for Havelock's data is <http://www.city-data.com/city/Havelock-North-Carolina.html>, etc.

Table 2-1. Town Demographic Data

Measure	Brices Creek	Bridgeton	Cove City	Dover	Fairfield Harbour	Havelock
Total Population, July 2011	3,073	457	400	402	2,952	20,810
Population Change, 2000 – 2011	49.2%	39.3%	-7.6%	-9.3%	48.9%	-7.3%
Population per Square Mile, 2010	387.0	1,269.4	625.0	423.2	1,021.5	1,246.1
Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with High School Degree or Better, 2006-2010	95.8%	76.8%	68.7%	65.2%	97.4%	90.0%
Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with B.A. or Better, 2006-2010	38.0%	24.0%	10.0%	6.7%	49.1%	18.7%
Median Household Income, 2006-2010	\$72,457	\$39,762	\$31,810	\$26,509	\$60,603	\$38,406
Percentage in Poverty, 2006-2010	2.3%	9.7%	19.7%	24.9%	0.7%	11.6%
Median Value of Homes, 2006-2010	\$280,510	\$119,415	\$90,637	\$72,884	\$270,587	\$145,327
Median Resident Age, 2011	41.9	44.0	47.8	40.1	63.5	23.5
Distance from Nearest Public Library	6 miles	5 miles	0 miles	7 miles	12 miles	0 miles

Table 2-2. Town Demographic Data

Measure	James City	Neuse Forest	New Bern	River Bend	Trent Woods	Vanceboro
<b>Total Population, July 2011</b>	<b>5,899</b>	<b>2,005</b>	<b>29,646</b>	<b>3,131</b>	<b>4,174</b>	<b>1,010</b>
<b>Population Change, 2000 – 2011</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>40.6%</b>	<b>28.2%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
<b>Population per Square Mile, 2010</b>	<b>709.0</b>	<b>677.4</b>	<b>1,149.1</b>	<b>1,227.8</b>	<b>1,424.6</b>	<b>587.2</b>
<b>Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with High School Degree or Better, 2006-2010</b>	<b>79.1%</b>	<b>97.2%</b>	<b>79.5%</b>	<b>94.2%</b>	<b>96.0%</b>	<b>78.5%</b>
<b>Percentage of Persons 25 and Over with B.A. or Better, 2006-2010</b>	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>48.3%</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>63.9%</b>	<b>16.5%</b>
<b>Median Household Income, 2006-2010</b>	<b>\$47,103</b>	<b>\$51,201</b>	<b>\$29,806</b>	<b>\$45,318</b>	<b>\$70,900</b>	<b>\$32,293</b>
<b>Percentage in Poverty, 2006-2010</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>23.5%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>
<b>Median Value of Homes, 2006-2010</b>	<b>\$172,893</b>	<b>\$207,295</b>	<b>\$162,308</b>	<b>\$203,105</b>	<b>\$249,196</b>	<b>\$118,644</b>
<b>Median Resident Age, 2011</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>50.2</b>	<b>31.1</b>
<b>Distance from Nearest Public Library</b>	<b>2 miles</b>	<b>8 miles</b>	<b>0 miles</b>	<b>8 miles</b>	<b>5 miles</b>	<b>0 miles</b>

- The towns with higher levels of education (based on the same measures) are Trent Woods, Fairfield Harbour, Neuse Forest, River Bend, and Brices Creek. These populations are currently served by the New Bern and Havelock Public Libraries. More educated populations tend to be strong users of library services in general and of traditional, book-oriented library services in particular.
- The towns with poorer populations (based on median household income, the percentage of the population in poverty, and the median value of homes) are Dover and Cove City, both currently served by the Cove City Public Library; New Bern, currently served by the New Bern-Craven County Public Library; and Vanceboro, currently served by the Vanceboro Public Library. Poorer individuals are especially more likely to need access to the Internet (because they are less likely to have access at home) and computer training.
- The towns with wealthier populations (based on the same measures) are Brices Creek, Fairfield Harbour, and Trent Woods, all currently served by the New Bern-Craven County Public Library. Like individuals with higher levels of education, wealthier individuals are more likely to be strong users of library services in general and of traditional, book-oriented library services in particular.
- The towns with younger populations in Craven County (based on median resident age) are Havelock and Vanceboro, both currently served by their own town libraries. Populations with lower median ages tend to have a large number of children and to require help from libraries in building the skills needed to succeed in school, through programs that get preschool children ready for school, programs that supplement the work of the schools for school-aged children, and summer programs that prevent children from slipping out of practicing their reading skills (the “summer slide”).
- The towns with older populations (based on median resident age) are Fairfield Harbour and River Bend, both currently served by the New Bern-Craven County Public Library. Populations with higher median ages tend to be strong users of library services in general and of traditional, book-oriented library services in particular.

## Chapter 3

### Community Survey

From late June through early August 2013, the public libraries in Craven County conducted a survey of the citizens of Craven County. A total of 319 individuals responded.

The survey asked respondents to list the library facilities that they used most frequently. The results are shown in Table 3-1 below. (Multiple answers were allowed, and so the percentages total greater than 100 per cent.)

Table 3-1. Library Most Frequency Used

Library	Percentage
<b>Cove City</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Havelock</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>New Bern</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Vanceboro</b>	<b>4%</b>

Two thirds of the respondents listed the New Bern-Craven County Public Library as the facility that they use most frequently, and just over one third listed the Havelock Public Library. These percentages are similar to the percentages of registered borrowers at each library, although Havelock (34 per cent of survey respondents vs 21 per cent of the registered borrowers in Craven County) is slightly overrepresented.

---

### Reasons for Using the Library

---

The survey asked respondents to list the library resources and services that they most frequently use. The results are shown in Table 3-2 on the following page.

By far, the most frequently used service or resource among survey respondents were books for adults; 64 per cent of respondents listed these as one of the most frequently used resources and services of the library.

Table 3-2. Most Frequently Used Library Resources and Services

Resource or Service	Percentage
<b>Books for Adults:</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Books for Children:</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Internet Access Computers:</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Library Website:</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Programs for Children:</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Personal Research/General Information:</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Books on Tape and CD:</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Newspapers and Magazines:</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Check Out Videos and DVD's:</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Programs for Adults:</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Reference Service (in-house and telephone):</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Books for Young Adults:</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Large Print Books:</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Computers for Children:</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Genealogical Research:</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Business and Work Related Research:</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>School Homework:</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Providing Meeting Space:</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Programs for Young Adults:</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Outreach Services to Pre-school Children:</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Foreign Language Materials:</b>	<b>3%</b>

Books for children were the second most frequently used resource or service; 37 per cent of respondents selected these. Internet access computers (30 per cent) and the library's Website (25 per cent) were also used by at least one fourth of the survey respondents.

By contrast, the library's programs for young adults, outreach services to pre-school children, and foreign language materials were the least frequently used resources and services; in each case, only 3 per cent of survey respondents listed these among their most frequent reasons for using the library.



Respondents who most frequently used the New Bern-Craven County Public Library rated books for adults (63 per cent) and books for children (63 per cent) as the two most frequently used library resources or services, with the library's Website (29 per cent) ranking third. Respondents who most frequently used the Havelock Public Library also rated books for adults (66 per cent) as the most frequently used library resource or service, but those respondents ranked Internet access computers (43 per cent) ahead of books for children (34 per cent) as the next most frequently used resource or service.<sup>4</sup>

The largest differences between the two groups of respondents were on Internet access computers, which 43 per cent of the Havelock respondents said that they used frequently (as opposed to 24 per cent of the New Bern respondents), and checking out videos and DVDs, which 30 per cent of the Havelock respondents said that they used frequently (as opposed to 17 per cent of the New Bern respondents).

---

### **Meeting the Needs of Community Members**

---

Respondents were asked to rate how well the library's resources and services meet their needs. As Table 3-3 on the following page shows, nearly half of the respondents rated the Craven County public libraries as excellent in this regard. Another 36 per cent rated the libraries as very good, and only 2 per cent rated the ability of the libraries to meet their needs as either unsatisfactory or poor.

The results were similar for both the Havelock and New Bern libraries: 45 per cent of the respondents who indicated that they most frequently use the Havelock Public Library rated the library's ability to meet their needs as excellent; the figure for the New Bern-Craven County Public Library was 46 per cent.

---

<sup>4</sup> Because of the low number of responses from Cove City and Vanceboro, meaningful breakdowns cannot be provided for those libraries.

Table 3-3. How Well Does the Library Meet the Needs of Respondents?

Rating	Percentage
<b>Excellent</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>1%</b>

---

### How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities

---

Respondents were asked how the library's services, resources, and facilities could be improved. A total of 130 suggestions were received, and these are shown in Table 3-4 on the following pages. The most popular suggestions for improvement included the following areas:

- **Books.** The most frequently mentioned area for improvement was books and, in particular, more books, either in general ("More books") or in specific areas like medicine, fantasy and science fiction, theology, and the sciences. Some respondents wanted newer books, some wanted best sellers, and some wanted children's books. A couple of respondents also noted the need for ebooks.
- **Computers.** Computers were the second most frequently suggested area for improvement. Both more computers and better computers were noted, and some respondents even complained about specific computers that tend not to work well.
- **Non-print items.** Several respondents recommended getting more books on CD, audio books, and DVDs.
- **Space.** A number of respondents noted the need for more space in the library facilities, either in general or for specific purposes, like meeting rooms in Havelock.

Table 3-4. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities

<b>Suggestion</b>
<b>1) Availability of work space for students/tutor 2) Would like to see an area designated for boating</b>
<b>A larger budget for obtaining new book (and multiple copies of the most popular ones). Also, additional computers.</b>
<b>All services, resources, and facilities are outstanding.</b>
<b>Audio book lending, if not already available, digital lending too</b>
<b>Better computer internet access</b>
<b>Better computer support</b>
<b>Better computers</b>
<b>Computer #7 in the library often freezes up on me when I use it. It is a lot frustrating</b>
<b>Computers #7 &amp; 8 are slow and freeze up a lot. It takes 5 minutes to load a single web page due to the freezing up and programs have to be restarted multiple times</b>
<b>Computers 7 &amp; 8 lock up constantly and multiple restarts on all programs</b>
<b>Computers need to be updated. Computers are still XP, when Vista, 7 and * have been released</b>
<b>Create a listserv for those interested in events</b>
<b>Current card catalog software is totally unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Drop-box would be helpful.</b>
<b>E-BOOKS FOR KINDLE</b>
<b>Extend weekend hours. Eliminate charge for interlibrary loans.</b>
<b>Facility is great for children's programs we attend</b>
<b>Faster and better computers</b>
<b>Faster computers</b>
<b>Faster internet service, computer was extremely slow and took a while to print item.</b>
<b>Have more copies of newest releases and better system for holding books</b>
<b>Have more recent books on the shelf</b>

Table 3-4. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities  
(Continued)

Suggestion
<b>Havelock's computers need to be faster and not lock up (slow to respond). New Bern needs more computers (usually a wait list)</b>
<b>Honestly, we have adequate resources and the facilities are well organized and clean. Librarians are helpful and polite as well.</b>
<b>I am not aware of what the Havelock library offers or the hours but do know where it is located. Marketing would help a great deal. Information sharing on the city's Facebook page maybe? Would hope it would have free wi-fi and would be neat to have an online library that you could check out books for kindles. A coffee shop perhaps (which would be an income generator). Are there book swaps like plant swaps? Summer reading programs?</b>
<b>I feel like this Library is one of the best in our area. I hope they can continue to be just that with the help of the county and city.</b>
<b>I have always had a pleasant experience.</b>
<b>I love Havelock Library. I wish it were bigger but I love that it is a quick turnaround when getting books from another location.</b>
<b>I suggest a room, staffed by volunteers, to sell used books, etc. year around. This is done in other places and makes more money for the library than the twice a year book sales.</b>
<b>I think this library offers great activities and lectures, just so much, and I love it here.</b>
<b>I wish there were more programs for children that working parents could attend, also, the library didn't have some of the large collections books like Fancy Nancy or Curious George</b>
<b>I would like to access new e--books just as in other library systems.</b>
<b>I would like to see the calendar posted earlier so I can plan ahead. Usually by the first day of the month, I have already scheduled appts. when there are programs available.</b>
<b>If a wealthy patron magically appeared and offered us our wish, how about a second floor (with elevators) and more computers so that downstairs was quieter and classes could be held upstairs.</b>
<b>If the computers that are "out of order" were serviced and fixed things would run much smoother in that area.</b>

Table 3-4. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities  
(Continued)

<b>Suggestion</b>
<b>Improve your computer program. For example 7-day books don't end up in computer.</b>
<b>If nonfiction DVDs could all be in one section, that would be great!</b>
<b>It has been impossible to place holds or check my due dates on several occasions when I have tried to do so online. The old systems worked much better.</b>
<b>It is fine.</b>
<b>It would be nice if there was a way to have more books available</b>
<b>Just wish I wasn't charged late fees. Or if something is late it would be nice to get a call or email like any other library</b>
<b>Knowledgeable staff. I have entered the wrong code at times, and the staff on hand could not or didn't reset the computer so I could sign in.</b>
<b>Maybe have equipment available for use or take out, i.e., tape recorder / player, CD players, visual aid equipment, projectors.</b>
<b>Medical information, textbooks</b>
<b>More audio books would be nice.</b>
<b>More best sellers</b>
<b>More best sellers.</b>
<b>More books</b>
<b>More books</b>
<b>More books available</b>
<b>More books on CD</b>
<b>More books on CD</b>
<b>More books on CD</b>
<b>More books on fantasy/science fiction</b>
<b>More books; computers that work; private meeting area</b>
<b>More books!</b>
<b>More children's books!</b>

Table 3-4. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities  
(Continued)

<b>Suggestion</b>
<b>More children's program</b>
<b>More computers</b>
<b>More computers</b>
<b>More computers, meeting room and some type of window dressing.</b>
<b>More convenient hours</b>
<b>More copies of popular children books, I was told I could order the ones I needed from another library and I would get an email...never did.</b>
<b>More extensive video collection, greater selection of books. I often search on the website for a book which I would wish to borrow, and find it is not available. I came from a small town where the library's book and DVD collection were much more extensive, and I used that library regularly. In New Bern, sadly, I have not formed the same habit. I support and am grateful for the library, but I wish it were more complete than it is in areas where I would most use it.</b>
<b>More frequent computer maintenance</b>
<b>More homeschool books</b>
<b>More Irish novels</b>
<b>More large print books!</b>
<b>More movies, more space</b>
<b>More new books; more modern facilities; better security</b>
<b>More new books. Astronomy magazine. Archaeology magazine.</b>
<b>More new books. Get rid of old, out of date books.</b>
<b>More programming for young people in the 11-15 age bracket</b>
<b>More up to date books</b>
<b>More up to date books</b>
<b>More up to date reference books for college. Books in present day circulation.</b>
<b>More working computers</b>
<b>More writings on theology, sciences, physics, universe. (Not text books but theory)</b>

Table 3-4. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities  
(Continued)

Suggestion
<b>Mostly, this library has the children's books I am looking for to read to my daughter. There are some it does not carry.</b>
<b>Need more books for preteens</b>
<b>Need more non-fiction books, more references, need movies/DVDs and videos, need more meeting spaces and provide a video phone</b>
<b>Never have book I want</b>
<b>No change is needed.</b>
<b>No charge for kids videos, some of the books are in pretty poor condition</b>
<b>No improvement necessary!</b>
<b>None. Everything has easy access. A lot of information.</b>
<b>Online check-out sometimes doesn't work.</b>
<b>Online e-books and audiobooks, better selection young adult books</b>
<b>Open more convenient hours.</b>
<b>Open more convenient hours.</b>
<b>Open more hours.</b>
<b>Open on Sunday 1 - 5?</b>
<b>Outside box for DVDs; wider selection of periodicals and DVDs; online instruction for library; access to periodicals online</b>
<b>Perhaps to have extra books available in advance of a discussion program about a book.</b>
<b>Please get all titles in series; there are many gaps in holdings by popular authors. Online holds are difficult/impossible to use.</b>
<b>Programs that reached out to the ECE students would be wonderful. A little investment now would make them life long members of the public library relationship.</b>
<b>Provide suggested reading lists for kids based on grade level</b>
<b>Put a divider/small wall up maybe to keep small kids from trying to crawl/walk away while doing kid activities/stories.</b>

Table 3-4. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities  
(Continued)

<b>Suggestion</b>
<b>Reading time for kids only Tues and Thursdays. More openings would be convenient.</b>
<b>Search technology for finding in house books isn't user friendly, even for library staff. Finding library hours online is taking forever.</b>
<b>Sell more books. Put a special area for the books to be sold.</b>
<b>Some of children's books are in very bad condition.</b>
<b>Some titles I could ask Havelock to borrow from other libraries; there are more local books I want to check out first. Internet speed and availability are good, especially considering budget items (what you can buy)</b>
<b>Some updated materials would be great, ex., travel books from 2000 are too out of date.</b>
<b>Sometimes I wish they (the library) would open on Sundays for a few hours to work on research needs.</b>
<b>Staff is excellent - always helpful; use only Havelock library</b>
<b>Staff is wonderful and a pleasure to work with! No improvements needed in my opinion :-)</b>
<b>Tables for personal computers with electricity access are very limited.</b>
<b>Teen programs</b>
<b>The catalog and account portions are often down.</b>
<b>The computers could run faster.</b>
<b>The computers still have some issues. I've tried to renew books with the computers in the library, can't seem to get it to renew, just keeps turning / finding.</b>
<b>The interlibrary loan could be better. A little more sophisticated literature, maybe the NPR lists s of books.</b>
<b>They need more of their team. The need was on the floor and two at the desk.</b>
<b>The New Bern library is an old building that needs better air circulation and air filtration. Many senior citizens with asthma cannot use the library due to the air quality. My elderly mother, who has asthma, will not enter the building because it becomes difficult for her to breathe. Many of her friends have stated the same problem.</b>



Table 3-4. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Services, Resources, and Facilities  
(Continued)

Suggestion
The program for the preschoolers during the school year is great just a little long for them 30 min would be good
The program for the preschoolers during the school year is great just a little long for them 30 min would be good
The selection of current books is poor.
Their computers could use an update because there have been times where they just stop working.
There are no areas that require improvement
They help people all the time with everything they need when they need it. They help the children with their work all the time when they ask.
They might need wireless internet or wi-fi.
Update check out so you don't need date due cards any more.
Updated computers.
We are usually at library on Wed 11-12 noon. Often there are disruptions from a group also there at the same time.
We love going to the library!
We need access to e-books and more print books in circulation.
We need more money for books.
Website ... book searches are discouraging. It seems to take months to get popular new releases. Also, depending on how I enter my account determines whether it accepts entries or forgets them later. Ex. A book I put on hold was not truly on hold after I waited for it.
Wifi

---

## Customer Service and Support

---

The survey asked respondents to rate the quality of customer service and support provided by the library staff. The results are shown in Table 3-5 below.

Roughly two thirds of all respondents (66 per cent) rated the staff's customer service and support as excellent. Another 25 per cent rated it as very good. Only 1 per cent of the respondents rated the customer service and support as poor.

Table 3-5. Quality of Customer Service and Support

Rating	Percentage
<b>Excellent</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>1%</b>

Again, the results were similar for both the Havelock and New Bern libraries: 67 per cent of the respondents who indicated that they most frequently use the Havelock Public Library rated the library's ability to meet their needs as excellent; the figure for the New Bern-Craven County Public Library was 65 per cent.

---

## How to Improve Customer Service and Support

---

Respondents were asked to describe ways in which the library's customer service could be improved, and these 76 ideas are listed in Table 3-6 on the following pages. The vast majority of these comments praised the staff for being helpful, but a few complained about the need for more staff or gave specific examples of poor customer service.

Table 3-6. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Customer Service and Support

Suggestion
? Always polite
/staff is very educated in their field
About half the staff is super nice and helpful the others well they don't seem to want to be there or they are too busy talking that they make the customers wait til they are done.
Already wonderful
As I stated on question 3, "more" staff! At any given time, the library can be packed, with "no" help.
Automatic text on emails sent 24-48 hours prior to books' due dates.
Bookmobile for the disabled at home.
Books in series should be bought.
Can't think of a thing, the staff is great, kind and considerate!
Card catalog isn't very user friendly
Children library staff, Ms. Pam & Mrs. Bryant, always make us feel welcome. Great programs offered.
Circulation needs to be informed better. Administrative & Department heads should have pagers to help keep staff from trying to locate them when patrons have to speak with them.
Computer is "down" too often.
Customer support has always been top notch!!
Customer support is excellent!
Even though I drive by the New Bern library several times a week, I avoid going in there as much as possible because of the rude, unfriendly staff. Instead, I drive 20 min to the Havelock Library, where the staff are all so sweet, very accommodating. Even our school-aged kids say that they "feel happier" at the Havelock library- "like they want us there".
Everyone has been great!
Everyone I have encountered has been very nice and helpful.
Excellent
Excellent, friendly service!

Table 3-6. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Customer Service and Support  
(Continued)

<b>Suggestion</b>
<b>Friendly, swift, the people are a plus</b>
<b>Great staff and volunteers - keep up the good work!</b>
<b>Great support</b>
<b>Havelock's staff is wonderful!!</b>
<b>I am very pleased, like the ability to get books from other branches and check my account at home and place holds. People so pleasant.</b>
<b>I can't ask for anything else from the library staff.</b>
<b>I don't use library staff support much.</b>
<b>I enjoy books on Christmas-Jesus birth, snow and decorations; love stories. It would be nice to have them all in one place.</b>
<b>I feel like they work very hard and we all are proud of how hard they work.</b>
<b>I have had several issues with the circulation desk. Books not checked in properly, not all books renewed when trying to renew multiple book, etc. Not all the circulation staff have been friendly as well.</b>
<b>I think all are amazing! I have a very talkative son with lots of questions and all are met on his level and with patience.</b>
<b>I use Havelock library. Staff is super. First library I've used that knows me by name. They're always willing to help me search for an item or get me past a "brain freeze" while on the computer</b>
<b>I use the Havelock facility and cannot say enough for the great service these people provide and they are always pleasant.</b>
<b>If software were an easier, simpler design, staff would be able to connect information faster.</b>
<b>It'd be nice if the staff that works in the Children's book area were more child-friendly. Usually, the librarian that sits in the room doesn't interact with my kids at all and isn't very willing to help. I rely on this person to help me find age-appropriate books for my 2 kids.</b>
<b>It's just so great!</b>
<b>More computer classes</b>
<b>More friendly staff in adult section</b>

Table 3-6. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Customer Service and Support  
(Continued)

<b>Suggestion</b>
<b>More staff available to help with research.</b>
<b>More Sun Journal subs. They usually are taken in use.</b>
<b>More workers</b>
<b>My favorite helper is Ms. Pat Cobb. She is very customer focused.</b>
<b>Need more help and research materials when conducting African-American genealogical research.</b>
<b>No change is needed.</b>
<b>Noise level. Control of children</b>
<b>None - it's excellent</b>
<b>None needed</b>
<b>None of the areas need improvements.</b>
<b>None, staff could not be more helpful!</b>
<b>None, the staff are great</b>
<b>None. Everything is great.</b>
<b>None. I'm always treated with respect and the staff is always willing to help with any problems.</b>
<b>None. They are always good!</b>
<b>Offer classes on using the online catalog and resources provided by the system.</b>
<b>Open more days. Closed on days surrounding holidays when people are off and could be using the library. Example, the Saturday before Easter.</b>
<b>Overall the library has a kind, helpful staff. The only thing that I see that could be improved is that there are times where no one is running the front desk.</b>
<b>Personal items, business items, educational assistance</b>
<b>Public telephone and a fax service</b>
<b>Same as number three.</b>
<b>See no.3. Totally satisfied...</b>

Table 3-6. Suggestions for How to Improve Library Customer Service and Support  
(Continued)

<b>Suggestion</b>
<b>Send out email the day library books are due instead of email saying library books are now overdue</b>
<b>Smile more</b>
<b>Staff is excellent- always cheerful and helpful!</b>
<b>Staff is excellent!</b>
<b>Superior!</b>
<b>Teach computer usage classes. Post a billboard showing library services available to the public.</b>
<b>The customer support is wonderful. No need to improve on it. Everyone is very polite and helpful.</b>
<b>Learning school work from each other. They help friends when they come from school. The moms and dads are with them all the time and they all help others.</b>
<b>The library is great.</b>
<b>The library staff is great!</b>
<b>The New Bern personnel could be more helpful.</b>
<b>The policy regarding "missing" books and who is responsible needs to be reevaluated.</b>
<b>The staff are very courteous and professional! I need help with e-books. Is there a class scheduled? The New Bern library had a recent class but I missed it. I will pay for the class or a tutor.</b>
<b>The staff is the best ever!</b>
<b>There is plenty of excellent support now and always has been. You just need more room. The staff is helpful, smart, and kind.</b>
<b>They are always courteous and helpful.</b>
<b>They are so nice the few times I have visited.</b>
<b>We attempt to avoid one or two front desk staff due to their curmudgeonly attitudes.</b>
<b>We would make more space to add more services.</b>
<b>Yes. You need more computers. Don't have many so people can work. We can get more computer.so no have to get up for computer when we work on a paper.</b>

---

### Frequency of Library Use

---

Survey respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they use the library's materials and services. The results are shown in Table 3-7 below.

The largest percentage of respondents (46 per cent) reported using the library 2 or 3 times per month. Another 30 per cent reported using the library 2 or 3 times per week, and 15 per cent reported using the library infrequently. Only 3 per cent had never used the library.

Table 3-7. Frequency of Use of Library Materials and Services

Frequency	Percentage
Daily	7%
2-3 Times per Week	30%
2-3 Times per Month	46%
Infrequently	15%
Never	3%

The respondents who most frequently used the Havelock facility were less likely to use the library 2 to 3 times per month (31 per cent) and more likely to use the library infrequently (36 per cent).

---

### Importance of Library Resources and Services

---

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of various library resources and services. The percentage of individuals who rated a resource or service as very important is shown in Table 3-8 on the following page.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Note that this is a slightly different question than the earlier one that asked respondents to list the library resources and services that they *use* most frequently. Someone might consider a resource important but not make heavy use of that resource.

Two resources and services were rated as very important by at least half of the survey respondents. Books for adults were the highest rated resource, with 67 per cent of respondents rating them as very important. Slightly more than half of the respondents (52 per cent) rated books for children as very important.

Table 3-8. Percentage of Respondents Rating the Library Resource or Service as Very Important

Resource or Service	Percentage
<b>Books for Adults:</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Books for Children:</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Programs for Children:</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Library Website:</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Books for Young Adults:</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Personal Research/General Information:</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Internet Access Computers:</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Programs for Adults:</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Computers for Children:</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Reference Service (in-house and telephone):</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>School Homework:</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Check Out Videos and DVD's:</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Outreach Services to Pre-school Children:</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Books on Tape and CD:</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Programs for Young Adults:</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Business and Work Related Research:</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Large Print Books:</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Newspapers and Magazines:</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Genealogical Research:</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Providing Meeting Space:</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Foreign Language Materials:</b>	<b>13%</b>



By contrast, only one resource was rated as very important by less than one fifth of the survey respondents. By a large margin, the lowest rated resource was foreign language materials, which only 13 per cent rated as very important.

Respondents who most frequently used the New Bern-Craven County Public Library rated books for adults (68 per cent) and books for children (53 per cent) as the two most important library resources or services, with programs for children (45 per cent) ranking third. Respondents who most frequently used the Havelock Public Library also rated books for adults (68 per cent) and books for children (52 per cent) as the most important library resources and services, but those respondents ranked personal research and general information (50 per cent) as the next most important resource or service.

The largest differences between the two groups of respondents were on Internet access computers, which 47 per cent of the Havelock respondents rated as very important (as opposed to 31 per cent of the New Bern respondents), and personal research and general information, which 50 per cent of the Havelock respondents said that they used frequently (as opposed to 36 per cent of the New Bern respondents).

---

### Limits to Library Use

---

The survey asked respondents to list the factors that limit their use of the library. The percentage of individuals who chose a particular factor is shown in Table 3-9 on the following page.

A total of 154 individuals out of 319 total survey respondents answered this question, indicating that just under half of the respondents (48 per cent) felt that some factor limited their use of the library. The other 52 per cent apparently did not believe that their library use is limited in any way.

Having a computer and Internet access at work or at home was, by far, the most frequently selected factor limiting the use of the public libraries in Craven County; just over two thirds (68 per cent) of the individuals who responded to the question chose this factor. Another 21 per cent stated that they get books, videos, and other items elsewhere.

Table 3-9. Limits to Library Use

Factor	Percentage
<b>I have computer and Internet access at work or at home.</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>The library hours are inconvenient.</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>I get books, videos, etc., elsewhere.</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>The library doesn't have what I need.</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>I don't enjoy the library's atmosphere.</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>I don't feel safe at the library.</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>The size or layout of the library is a problem.</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>The library's locations are not convenient.</b>	<b>5%</b>

Of the items more directly under the control of the libraries, the inconvenience of library hours (22 per cent) and the library not having what the respondent needs (19 per cent) were the most frequently listed factors.

The respondents who most frequently used the Havelock facility were more likely to say that the library's hours were inconvenient (18 per cent) than were respondents who most frequently used the New Bern library (7 per cent). Otherwise, there were few differences between the two groups on the limits to library use.

In addition, respondents were invited to provide comments on the limitations to their use of the library. The 52 comments received are shown in Table 3-10 on the following pages. The most frequently mentioned limitations include the following:

- **Safety.** Nine respondents mentioned safety issues as limiting their use of the library. Smokers and loiterers at the front door of the New Bern facility were a particular problem.
- **Space.** Several individuals noted the need for more space in the libraries or for specific improvements, like a private meeting room.
- **Ebooks.** About half a dozen respondents mentioned the need for access to ebooks. Several noted that they read "mostly" ebooks.

- **Hours.** Half a dozen individuals noted that the library hours were not convenient. Some wanted the library to be opened later, and some wanted Sunday hours.

Table 3-10. Additional Limits to Library Use

<b>Limit</b>
<b>A private meeting room is needed</b>
<b>Although I did not check the children's' or young adults' services, I think these are a very important part of the library services. I also very much enjoy the lunch and learn series and meeting the authors, or learning about other books. I also belong to a book club, and have used the book kits.</b>
<b>Although I don't have a need for children's books, etc., or some of the other services provided, I strongly believe they are necessary for our community. I hope they continue. The Havelock staff is always helpful and very friendly.</b>
<b>At times at the library I have not felt safe. Even though my child is old enough to be in the children's library alone I do not allow it. I have also had people ask me for money when entering the library or in the library parking lot.</b>
<b>At times I feel uncomfortable walking in &amp; out of library. Smokers at doorways are often a problem. Online book would be a huge hit. Maybe could even charge a fair monthly fee to access.</b>
<b>Being a County building I believe that the Police department should have to come in a couple times a day to check bathrooms and reading area.</b>
<b>Better computers</b>
<b>Can't always get books</b>
<b>Closing on Sundays has been inconvenient at times but I understand it saves resources, so I'm good with it. :)</b>
<b>Could be open later</b>
<b>Current DVDs; *separate meeting room*</b>
<b>Don't have up-to-date DVDs. Need more help when genealogical research and materials for African-American research.</b>
<b>Extending hours into evening might get me to visit more days. Budget item.</b>
<b>Great and pleasant people work here.</b>
<b>Great job at our location.</b>
<b>I don't have Internet access at home. On work I come to library for search on paper that I do.</b>

Table 3-10. Additional Limits to Library Use  
(Continued)

<b>Limit</b>
<b>I have a nook and would like to have more ebooks available.</b>
<b>I live in a different county or I would come more</b>
<b>I READ EXCLUSIVELY ON MY KINDLE AND WOULD BE SO THRILLED IF I COULD BORROW BOOKS ELECTRONICALLY.</b>
<b>I use the Cherry Point library. They have a kindle check out program and an online library of downloadable library books.</b>
<b>I wish Havelock would open at 9 a.m.</b>
<b>I would like to read large print books on line, I have a craven county library card, I would also like to read on my nexus, thank you.</b>
<b>Library layout---There are no meeting rooms at the library. We can find a place to meet but it is in the larger area. When the Friends of the Library meet, we take up tables that library users could be using. Hours--I often am waiting of the library to open at 10 am. Others are waiting with me.</b>
<b>Library services are not made public in an effective manner.</b>
<b>Many times I have requested a book and was 50+ in the queue. Duplicate copies of the best sellers would help.</b>
<b>More advanced search options for the online search.</b>
<b>More new books</b>
<b>My activities/volunteer work doesn't warrant using the library as I once did. Riverbend has its own library.</b>
<b>No electronic book borrowing</b>
<b>No meeting room, computers down most of the time.</b>
<b>None of the above. The Havelock library is very convenient in location, hours and layout. And the atmosphere is enjoyable and friendly.</b>
<b>NPR book list books. I use your audiobooks download and also Audible.com.</b>
<b>Public library closes early 2 days a week</b>
<b>Quite often the selection of books is geared more to seniors</b>
<b>Rap songs</b>
<b>Read mostly ebooks.</b>
<b>Read mostly ebooks.</b>

Table 3-10. Additional Limits to Library Use  
(Continued)

Limit
Really just unsafe feeling at entrances to library.
Smoking at front door
Sometimes kids/students loiter
The children's area could be a little "cozier" more soft places to sit and fewer tables.
The computer search and hold system frequently does not allow me to find a book in your library and place it on hold. A BIG problem!!
The computers are very slow and that limits me and my family.
The library feels very crowded, with few tables and only one reading area. The non-fiction section seems very outdated.
The library should be open late nights and weekends
There seem to be a lot of people "hanging around" and not there for library services.
This is the best library in Carteret and Craven county and NC service and material
Too many people hanging out in front of library.... no security there
Too many people hanging out in front of library.... no security there
When people talking loud and cell phones ring.
Where I live / distance
With the college next door I would have thought they would have built a larger library.

---

### Demographics

---

The survey also collected demographic data about the respondents, and this information is summarized in Table 3-11 on the following page.

Table 3-11. Demographics of Survey Respondents

Measure	Percentage
Have a library card	90%
Female	79%
Male	21%
White	80%
African-American	14%
Latino	1%
Asian	2%
20 years old and below	2%
21 to 30 years old	13%
31 to 40 years old	19%
41 to 50 years old	19%
51 to 60 years old	19%
61 to 70 years old	15%
71 years old and above	13%
Median age	49.5

**Library card holders.** A large majority of the survey respondents (90 per cent) had library cards. This result is not surprising, as the survey was provided in paper at the libraries themselves and the URL for the Web-based survey was advertised at the libraries.

Library card holders were much less likely percentagewise to use the library's Internet computers (28 per cent vs 53 per cent for respondents who did not hold cards) but much more likely to use books for adults (71 per cent vs 20 per cent) or books for children (41 per cent vs 3 per cent). This is not surprising, because a library card is required to check out books for adults and children but not to use the Internet computers, for those over 18 years of age.

Not surprisingly, card holders were more likely than those without library cards to rate the library's customer service and support as excellent (69 per cent vs 52 per cent). This result suggests that customer service is an important factor in attracting individuals to the library.

Library card holders were more likely to rate the library's adult books as very important than were those without library cards (82 per cent vs 60 per cent). Card holders were also more likely to rate the large print books as very important (42 per cent vs 20 per cent) but less likely to rate business and work related research (39 per cent vs 65 per cent) and school homework (47 per cent vs 71 per cent) as very important. Again, this difference may be related to the fact that using adult and large print books typically requires a library card while doing business and work related research and school homework may not.

Card holders were less likely to say that their use of the library was limited because they had access to computers and the Internet at home or at work (64 per cent vs 100 per cent of those who did not have a library card). It is not clear why this should be the case.

Otherwise, there were no substantial differences between library card holders and those without cards

**Gender.** Females made up 79 per cent of the survey respondents, a result that is not surprising, given the fact that females traditionally use public libraries more than do men.

Women were more likely than men to use books for children (42 per cent vs 21 per cent) but less likely to use the library's Internet computers (23 per cent vs 62 per cent). Not surprisingly, women were also more likely to rate books for children as very important than were men (80 per cent vs 60 per cent) and less likely to rate the library's Internet computers as very important (46 per cent vs 71 per cent).

Women were less likely to use the library daily or two to three times per week than were the male respondents (33 per cent vs 52 per cent).

Otherwise, there were no substantial differences between the two genders on their responses to the questions on the survey.

**Ethnicity.** Whites represented 80 per cent of the survey respondents, and African-Americans represented 14 per cent. Whites make up 72 per cent of the population of Craven County, and so they are slightly overrepresented in this survey.

This may be related to the fact that white individuals are typically heavier users of libraries than are members of the other ethnic groups.

Whites were less likely to use the library's Internet access computers on a frequent basis (25 per cent to 61 per cent). This result is not surprising, given that whites are more likely to own computers and have Internet access at home. This idea is supported by the fact that fewer non-whites listed having computer and Internet access at home or work as a factor that limited library use (50 per cent vs 70 per cent).

Non-whites were more likely than whites to rate several library resources and services as very important. These include newspapers and magazines (63 per cent vs 31 per cent), foreign language materials (52 per cent vs 20 per cent), business and work related research (65 per cent vs 37 per cent), and programs for young adults (73 per cent vs 54 per cent).

Otherwise, there were no substantial differences between whites and non-whites on their responses to the questions on the survey.

**Age.** The largest number of respondents was between 31 and 40 years of age, 41 and 50 years of age, and 51 and 60 years of age. Each of these age groups represented 19 per cent of the survey respondents.

The number of respondents 65 years and older (21 per cent) is a bit higher than the percentage of that age group for the population of Craven County (16 per cent, according to census data). The percentage of respondents under 18 years old (2 per cent) is far smaller than the percentage of that age group for the population of the county (23 per cent), but this is understandable, given the difficulty that children have in completing such surveys.

The oldest users (those 61 years old and above) were far more likely than those 60 years old and below to use books for adults (87 per cent vs 56 per cent) and large print books (27 per cent vs 7 per cent). They were also less likely to use books for children (6 per cent vs 54 per cent), programs for children (1 per cent vs 32 per cent), and Internet computers (13 per cent vs 37 per cent).

Respondents who were 61 years old and above were also more likely to rate programs for adults as very important (68 per cent vs 45 per cent) but less likely to rate



books for children (54 per cent vs 84 per cent) and programs for children (50 per cent vs 72 per cent) as very important.

Otherwise, there were no substantial differences between the oldest respondents and younger individuals on their responses to the questions on the survey.

---

### Home Zip Code

---

The survey also asked respondents to list their home Zip codes, and these can be seen in Table 3-12 below. Not surprisingly, nearly all of the respondents listed either a New Bern (68 per cent) or a Havelock (26 per cent) Zip code. A similar result was found when respondents listed the library that they most frequently used. (See Table 3-1.)

Table 3-12. Home Zip Codes of Survey Respondents

Home Zip Code	Percentage
<b>New Bern</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Havelock</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Other Towns in Craven County</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Vanceboro</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Other NC Counties</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Out of State</b>	<b>1%</b>

---

### Comments and Suggestions

---

Finally, the survey invited respondents to share any comments and suggestions that they might have. The 84 remarks that were received are shown in Table 3-13 on the following pages. The most common themes included:

- Positive comments. Over half of the additional comments praised various aspects of library service, including the staff and the programs.

- Ebooks. Several respondents mentioned the need for ebooks. As one person noted, "Online books would be a huge hit."
- Space. Several individuals made recommendations related to the library's space, including ways to make both the adult and children's areas "more inviting."

Table 3-13. Other Comments and Suggestions

<b>Comment or Suggestion</b>
<b>♥ the library</b>
<b>All of the staff in Havelock are wonderful</b>
<b>Bookmobile; working computers; monthly book club</b>
<b>Can the library lend ebooks?</b>
<b>Drop-box needed</b>
<b>Everyone is doing a great job and the library is very involved with the community!</b>
<b>Havelock library has a wonderful and very helpful staff.</b>
<b>I am very happy with our library's services especially the availability of new books and the staff is always very helpful and accommodating. I use the library frequently and always recommend it to my friends whenever the subject of books comes up.</b>
<b>I do enjoy that ours is a regional library and I don't have to have a library card for each library. Also am impressed I can order books from the surrounding areas and get them at my local library sight. The library in Beaufort is wonderful and seems to have the best selection of audio books but too far to drive. Ordering them is so convenient. Have tried to download from online but not successful.</b>
<b>I do enjoy the library. The atmosphere is peaceful, and people take advantage of it well.</b>
<b>I do not think the library should stay open past 8:00 p.m. during the week. The summer reading program is awesome. I wish it lasted for 6 weeks not just 4 weeks.</b>
<b>I enjoy all of my visits to the library.</b>
<b>I enjoy the great service and material.</b>
<b>I especially like using interlibrary loans.</b>
<b>I feel "safe" but I feel like I need to keep an eye on my belongings at all times.</b>

Table 3-13. Other Comments and Suggestions  
(Continued)

Comment or Suggestion
I find all the desk assistances very helpful in Havelock location.
I have been bringing children to the library on Fridays, Tuesdays, and SR Programs for 10 years.
I have been using the library since I was very young.... old enough to walk there on my own. When moving to different states, because my husband was in the Marine Corps, one of the first places I would check out would be the local Library :)
I have been very pleased with the staff and attended many of the programs that the library has offered. E-reader classes, historical classes, ghost story, etc. Please keep offering programs for seniors.
I have enjoyed participating in adult evening book discussions even though travel schedule has limited my attendance. Book selections opened my eyes to new authors.
I have lived here five years and am a retired school librarian. I am impressed by the services provided by our library. I do think we need to move forward and keep pace with technology such as offering new books as e-books for "check out". I am also concerned about the library services available to other areas of Craven County such as Harlowe. This is a topic of recent discussion by our Friends of the Library group. I have found all the library staff at the Havelock Library to be very helpful! They go out of their way to help patrons. The Let's Talk About Series offered in Havelock and New Bern have all been fantastic! I have used the New Bern Library also and participated in adult programs up there. It is a little further to travel and I appreciate the choice offered by these libraries. I love using the online catalog with interlibrary loan capabilities.
I have one major one but will not respond at this time.
I have worked as Havelock East Chief Judge for Craven County Board of Election and we worked several years in the Havelock Library with these elections and I can honestly say working there was the most pleasant experience I have had since I have done the elections which has been almost 16 years. The Havelock Library is run so efficiently and with a very professional staff. Thank you.
I haven't been using the library as I use to due to getting a NOOK several years ago. However as money is getting tighter (and I miss the feel of an actual book in hand) I plan to return to the Library in my near future. Thank you for being such a wonderful resource.

Table 3-13. Other Comments and Suggestions  
(Continued)

Comment or Suggestion
I look forward to going to the library soon to check out what CDs/DVDs are available.
I love the children's department, staff and kids storytime - New Bern is blessed to have such an awesome children's department. Thank you for all you do.
I love the library and its fine folks.
I love the library.
I love the library. It's peaceful for me
I miss the old Bookmobile, which used to come out to our neighborhood. For many elderly who do not drive, this was a great resource.
I pray the library does not close! Thanks for your work! I get a little confused @ the website and all the links - a more user friendly website would be cool. My library may not have all the listed possible resources but I think it should!! The library is a wonderful place for kids, young adults and adults. I have very fond memories of my weekly trips with my dad when I was younger and want to pass that on to my daughter.
I really love the library as it is and can't think of a way I would change it. Maybe the website could be updated.
I think books are very important. I refuse to get a Kindle- I like to hold a book. Libraries provide a lot of services- to all ages.
I think I've said it all. Thank you for doing the survey.
I think the other branches need more programs like New Bern. The puppet plays and the great lady who does them would really help the other branches.
I would be interested in more adult lectures/discussion groups. I have thoroughly enjoyed the Lets Talk About It programs, and several lectures that I have attended. When my sons were younger, they participated in the children's programs and the young adults programs and absolutely loved both!
If there were a simple way to locate DVD films if I come in wanting "something" but not knowing what I want.
In 1965, I researched my great-grandfather's Civil War record in your "Compendium of the War Between the States," and in reading everything written about the 15th Wis. Inf. Reg. And located what had happened to him at Chickamauga, being captured and wounded, died in Atlanta. My parents and I were able to pay respects to his grave in Marietta, GA, 100 years after his death.

Table 3-13. Other Comments and Suggestions  
(Continued)

Comment or Suggestion
It might be possible, by re-allocating space, to make the adult area of the library more inviting. Probably more computers are needed for community members who don't have Internet access. Also, some of the reference staff are not very enthusiastic about helping people. I have only had two transactions with the reference staff. First, I suggested a book for the library to buy. The book was purchased but there was no follow-up to let me know it had arrived. In other libraries I have used there was a system to place a hold for the person who suggested the purchase. Second, I could not place a hold using the automated system (which has been an ongoing problem) so I asked one of the reference staff to do it for me. It was placed for pickup at Newport rather than New Bern, so when they called me to pick it up I had to wait again for it to be sent on to New Bern. These are small things but things like this can add up to make a difference in people's perceptions of customer service.
Just love and value the library. Think it's great.
Keep up the good job!
Keep up the good work!
Keep up the great work!
Keep up the work Havelock Library NC. Great job.
Libraries are important to communities. Ours needs to be better funded by the county.
Libraries should be a vital and beloved part of any community. I am grateful for ours.
Library staff friendly and helpful. Wonderful facility. New Bern is fortunate to have this great asset.
Love love love the children's programs. My two oldest sons have been attending the one for 3rd - 5th graders and they have a blast. Thanks for all you do!
Love story time
Love the Lunch and Learn series, children's programs, and the garden program in May.
Love this library. Been coming here since I was a kid.
Luanne and the ladies at the library are great

Table 3-13. Other Comments and Suggestions  
(Continued)

<b>Comment or Suggestion</b>
<b>Maybe have the Pamlico county library do one of these.</b>
<b>More children's literature, some books are in poor repair and should be removed</b>
<b>My family enjoys the library and uses its services whenever the need arises. We use the library for both school projects and enjoyment. The library has been very valuable to me and my class this past year. Your staff was quite helpful and knowledgeable to the needs of my mentally disabled class. The materials they suggested were awesome and greatly appreciated. Kathy Noel</b>
<b>My young adults are not comfortable in the young adult section, especially finding books around the outside of the bookshelves. They also feel like the selection is limited.</b>
<b>Need a larger - separate children's library</b>
<b>Need accurate or appropriate speed for internet/printing. Convenient times for opening/closing library.</b>
<b>Need more buy in from the community. The city needs to distance itself from funding to the library. County needs to step up and provide service to the county resident.</b>
<b>New Bern's copier need to be able to print 11 x 17</b>
<b>Online books would be a huge hit. Could even charge a small fee to help with cost.</b>
<b>Play and Learn/Lending Library is hard to find on the internet and hard to find a schedule of events and programs that are available for sign-up (like Play &amp; Learn)</b>
<b>See above.</b>
<b>Summer reading programs are great!</b>
<b>Sure</b>
<b>Thank you so much to the fantastic Havelock library staff for creating a library where our entire family loves to visit. It is very important to me (despite the digital age!) for our children to grow up loving (print) books, and to have the library be a place of warm, fond memories, and your wonderful staff has helped to make this possible! :-)</b>
<b>The book sales are great. Everyone is very helpful when you ask a question or looking for a book. A well run library (Havelock).</b>

Table 3-13. Other Comments and Suggestions  
(Continued)

Comment or Suggestion
<b>The Cherry Point Library recently installed a Starbucks in their library. Could the Havelock one do so as well?</b>
<b>The Havelock library is a very nice, polite, family oriented place where everyone would come back to everyday, The treat their patrons like family. Plus, they have a very nice Horseshoe Crab shell on display near the entrance too.</b>
<b>The kids' section could just be a little more kid friendly. It's hard to find a place on the floor to snuggle up with a book and read to my child.</b>
<b>The library has always been my second home as I raised my family. Thank you for all you do to make everyone feel welcome.</b>
<b>The library is a gateway to our futures dreams :))</b>
<b>The library is a very important part of the community to me and I feel so glad that we have such a tremendous library with great staff in New Bern</b>
<b>The library should open a little early like 9 am some days. That would be awesome!!</b>
<b>The library staff at the Havelock library are outstanding. They are very helpful in providing answers to questions, knows exactly where the reference books are located, makes the atmosphere very conducive for learning. I feel comfortable doing my online college work.</b>
<b>The New Bern Library feels like home. Everyone there is helpful, kind and works hard to make our library experience easy and enjoyable. Thank you. P.S. Storytime is AMAZING, like a little Broadway show for kids, yet free!</b>
<b>The online survey did not have the option of noting which items were in a previous question were Not Applicable. I'd like to note that I don't have children, so those services aren't particularly important to me personally, but I appreciate the fact that they are available for the children of Craven County.</b>
<b>The staff in Havelock are all well prepared, knowledgeable, friendly and always smiling.</b>
<b>The staff is always friendly and helpful, but Cheryl in particular carries the banner for courteous, knowledgeable, professional and extremely helpful and dedicated service which is very beneficial to me.</b>
<b>To save money the library should close at 8:00 and should not be open on Sundays, this would save also.</b>

Table 3-13. Other Comments and Suggestions  
(Continued)

<b>Comment or Suggestion</b>
<b>Very good about rotating peoples times on the computer</b>
<b>We have an excellent, well-used library. The staff are very helpful and pleasant. Let's keep them all!</b>
<b>Would like to see more programs for children and young adults.</b>
<b>You have an excellent staff!</b>



## Chapter 4

### Staff Survey

In June 2013, the Craven County public libraries conducted a survey of the staff members of the various libraries. A total of 22 staff members responded.

---

#### Meeting the Needs of Patrons

---

Staff members were asked to rate how well the libraries are meeting the needs of their patrons. All but one of the 21 staff members who answered this question rated their library as a 7 or better on a scale of 1 (“Not Very Well”) to 10 (“Exceptionally Well”); the other staff member rated their library as a 3. This result indicates that most of the staff felt that the libraries are doing a good job of meeting the needs of patrons.<sup>6</sup>

The result (95 per cent of the staff rating the libraries’ ability to meet the needs of patrons as a 7 or better) is better than that of three other North Carolina public libraries that were recently surveyed by this consultant; for those libraries, between 60 and 80 per cent of staff rated the ability of the library to meet patron needs as a 7 or better.

Staff members were asked to elaborate on their ratings, and Table 4-1 on the following pages shows the 11 comments that were received. Some of the comments highlighted positive aspects of the libraries’ services (“we try to keep up with the latest books” and “The library has been working very hard to provide high quality reference and information services to the public”) while others focused on ways in which service to the public could be improved. Computer problems, the need for staff training, and funding (especially for staff) were the most frequently mentioned areas for improvement.

---

<sup>6</sup> In order to ensure anonymity, staff were not asked to indicate the library at which they work. Consequently, the library of the staff member who rated the library so low is not known.

Table 4-1. How Well Does the Library Meet the Needs of Its Patrons?

Comment
<p>1. One of the reasons I gave us an 8 is because we have a lot of computer malfunctions. Our system is better, but it still has bugs. When our system malfunctions we have to ask our patrons to wait for us to reboot our system. 2. Our staff needs training on posting job resumes, helping people using different email accounts with their communications, and responding with job applications. 3. Needs training on showing patrons how to get on their community college page.</p>
<p>I feel that our staff is meeting the needs of our patron in a very high matter. We go beyond our need to help, and supply whatever service is needed.</p>
<p>Funding is key to our problems here. Funding for additional staff who focus on technology and community programs (children, young adult, tutoring, etc.) are not available. We do not have any young adult programs offered to our teens. Advertising by staff regarding online access to NC LIVE, audio books, eBooks, access to their online library account information and our website information is rarely offered to our patrons. Almost all of our staff does not know how to download audio books or eBooks to a device. How can they then teach our patrons? Training would be nice, but when there is a lack of desire to learn, funding devoted to training would be wasted.</p>
<p>I believe the library is meeting the needs of our patrons because we try to keep up with the latest books and we try and beyond in trying to assist their needs</p>
<p>I think we do a very good job addressing the needs of our patrons. Patrons frequently come in asking for fax service, which we do not have for the public and telephone service. Our public telephone was removed by the phone company because they said it was not used enough. We do allow patrons to use our business phone if they need to call for a ride, but they sometimes need more time than we can give them. The other place we could improve our service is with EBooks. We do have a listing on our web page where people can download the classics. Our patrons want to know when we will have all the books available. I think our service is excellent. We try to help with all the services offered on our web site in any way we can.</p>
<p>Most of our facilities seem helpful and well-appointed to meet the needs of patrons, but it could be argued that having a public phone in the library for patron use would be helpful.</p>
<p>Patrons are treated differently, staff are too loud, many times if some patrons are studying, I have seen them leave the Library because of the noise level.</p>

Table 4-1. How Well Does the Library Meet the Needs of Its Patrons?  
(Continued)

Comment
<b>The computerized catalog is fickle for home users and often does not allow patrons to place books on hold or view their account. The computer classes are constantly booked and a continuous waiting list exists for all classes. The 11 public use computers are constantly in use, and often require maintenance. Patrons would like a free way to access ebooks. The mp3 program for books is not user friendly. (One Click Digital)</b>
<b>The library has been working very hard to provide high quality reference and information services to the public.</b>
<b>We do a good job in general with some outstanding aspects but there are services that users would like that we do not offer. eBooks is the primary example, more Internet computers and possibly more computer instruction. A separate computer lab and more quiet study areas would also allow us to better serve the needs of our users.</b>
<b>We have a wonderful Community and they enjoy the Library.</b>

---

### Importance of Library Resources and Services

---

Staff members were asked to rate the importance of various library resources and services. The percentage of staff members who rated a resource or service as “Very Important” is shown in Table 4-2 on the following page.

Two resources and services were rated as “Very Important” by at least 90 per cent of the staff members: programs for children and books for children. All but one of the staff members rated programs for children as “Very Important,” and all but two gave the same rating to books for children.

Large print books (rated as “Very important” by 82 per cent of staff) and books for young adults (77 per cent) also received high ratings from staff.

Table 4-2. Percentage of Staff Members Rating the Library Resource or Service as Very Important

Resource or Service	Percentage
<b>Programs for Children:</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Books for Children:</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Large Print Books:</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>Books for Young Adults:</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>Programs for Young Adults:</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Books for Adults:</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Computers for Children:</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Internet Access Computers:</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Business and Work Related Research:</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Programs for Adults:</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Books on Tape and CD:</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>School Homework:</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Outreach Services to Pre-school Children:</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Personal Research/General Information:</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Library Website:</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Genealogical Research:</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Reference Service (in-house and telephone):</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Check Out Videos and DVD's:</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Newspapers and Magazines:</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Providing Meeting Space:</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Foreign Language Materials:</b>	<b>23%</b>

By contrast, only 23 per cent of staff rated the library's foreign language materials as very important. Providing meeting space (rated as "Very Important" by only 33 per cent of staff) was also rated lower than were other resources and services.

It is interesting to compare the staff's rankings of the importance of library resources and services with those of the public in the community survey. (See Table 3-8.) These represent areas where staff and patron expectations diverge and where staff may want to better understand how patrons view the importance of library resources

and services so that staff can better promote these resources and services to the public and better allocate funding for them.

The largest discrepancy between the two rankings was large print books, which the staff ranked as the third most important library resource or service but which the public ranked as the 17th most important. (Even respondents over 60 years of age ranked large print books as only the sixth most important resource or service.)

The next largest discrepancy between the two rankings was the library's Website, which the staff ranked as the 15th most important resource or service but which the public ranked as the fourth most important.

Other large discrepancies were personal research and general information (which the public ranked higher than did staff), business and work-related research (which the staff ranked higher than did the public), and programs for young adults (which the staff ranked higher than did the public).

It is also interesting to compare the staff rankings of the importance of library resources and services with the actual use made of these resources and services by the public, based on their responses to the survey. (See Table 3-2.) Staff may wish to consider whether resources and services that they feel are important are being underutilized and how to correct that. Staff may also wish to re-assess their thoughts on the importance of certain resources and services based on the actual usage patterns on their patrons.

The largest discrepancy between the staff's perception of importance and the actual use of the services was programs for young adults, which the staff ranked as the fifth most important resource or service but which patrons ranked as the 19th most frequently used resource or service.

The next largest discrepancy between the staff's perception of importance and the actual use of the services was the library Website, which the staff ranked as the 15th most important resource or service but which patrons ranked as the fourth most frequently used. The discrepancy in rankings for newspapers and magazines was equally large; while the staff ranked these as the 19th most important, the public ranked these as the eighth most frequently used.

Large print books were also ranked more highly in importance by staff and used less frequently by the public. By contrast, videos and DVDs were used more frequently by the public and ranked as less important by the staff.

---

### Library Strengths

---

Staff members were asked to list the greatest strengths of their libraries, and the 19 responses are shown in Table 4-3 on the following pages.

The most frequently mentioned strengths included:

- The staff and the high level of customer service that they try to provide. As one respondent noted, “We provide a friendly and helpful environment. Our library does everything we can to provide the information and sources that patrons need to get their projects done. We enjoy our jobs and want to help each patron.”
- Children’s programs, described by one staff member as “very successful.”
- Genealogy and local history. Typical was the remark that the “Kellenberger room for genealogy is terrific.”
- Adult programs.
- The ability to borrow materials from other libraries in the county and from other libraries in the CPC Regional system.
- The library’s location.

Table 4-3. Library Strengths

Strength
<p><b>1. Our computer access. Our desire to be helpful to all our patrons. 2. Our children's room book collection and child friendly computers. 3. The ability to borrow books from three counties. 4. A friendly place for people to come and use our services. 5. A good selection of books for all age levels.</b></p>
<p><b>Children's Programs are very successful. Our weekly preschool program and Summer Reading Program is attended well. Our latest library tours have been a huge success with our local elementary schools. Our selection of DVD's, an excellent source of income, is strong.</b></p>
<p><b>Customer Service</b></p>
<p><b>Customer Service; Children's Programming; Genealogical &amp; Local History Resources</b></p>
<p><b>Great children's programs. Kellenberger room for genealogy is terrific. Good service for getting books from branch libraries.</b></p>
<p><b>Great location, attractive building, excellent genealogical resources, helpful and competent staff, diverse programs for children, young adults and adults.</b></p>
<p><b>I think some of our greatest strengths are the employees, the children department, genealogical research and overall the location. However I do believe the patrons play a great part in the strengths of the library too because without them, we would not exist</b></p>
<p><b>Most library employees are usually friendly to patrons and we do provide good resources for people to complete research and other projects.</b></p>
<p><b>operating hours books and magazines free computer use free movies and other programs</b></p>
<p><b>our helping at all lengths and trying every avenue to please our patrons</b></p>
<p><b>Our library is in the historic district, but we are pressed for room. I think that the computers should be in a separate area with security.. It think that the reference librarians offer a great service and are so unappreciated, but continue to do their jobs. I doubt that anything will change but maybe with the new boss it will.</b></p>
<p><b>Our willingness to help our patrons through any means available to us. Close links to the community through our local churches and citizens.</b></p>
<p><b>Programming - for both children and adults Kellenberger Room- local history collection Friendly and knowledgeable staff ability to borrow materials from other libraries in the region</b></p>

Table 4-3. Library Strengths  
(Continued)

<b>Strength</b>
<b>Staff's knowledge of support and willing to assist.</b>
<b>The greatest strengths are all the staff are very welcoming and provide the best service for their clients within a restricting budget.</b>
<b>The library provides a tremendous amount of free services - Internet access, Wi-Fi, computer classes, programs, and classes - the majority of which is free to the public.</b>
<b>They try hard to supplies the public with the books that they are looking for. And also help the patrons find books that are located at different libraries.</b>
<b>To be able to acquire, organize and provide ready access to a variety of resources and services.</b>
<b>we provide a friendly and helpful environment. Our library does everything we can to provide the information and sources that patrons need to get their projects done. We enjoy our jobs and want to help each patron.</b>

---

### **Opportunities for Improvement**

---

Staff members were also asked to list the greatest opportunities for improvement in their libraries, and the 19 responses are shown in Table 4-4 on the following pages.

The most frequently mentioned opportunities and needs were:

- The need for more space, including specific suggestions for added space for a separate computer room or more space in the children's room.
- Computers, including the need for "More computers for adults and children to do school projects" and the need for newer computers.
- Programs and services for young adults and teens, which one staff member called "nonexistent."



Table 4-4. Opportunities for Improvement

<b>Opportunity for Improvement</b>
<b>1. More computers for adults and children to do school projects. 2.. Additional help at times. 3. Time to train our staff on public information needs</b>
<b>children's books our out dated (non-fiction ) and our adult non fiction</b>
<b>Computer &amp; Technology (i.e. Online Catalog &amp; Circulation Software); Outreach Services</b>
<b>I can't see that we have any opportunities. We need new reading material, and more room, but have no way of seeing this happen due to the budget.</b>
<b>If we have more space and money we could add more programs for the adults. And also buy more computers for the library.</b>
<b>Improve website Improve use of social media increase YA area and services to Teens</b>
<b>increasing digital holdings cleanliness more space more computer classes better computer maintenance</b>
<b>Keeping adults interested in reading by having programs for them.</b>
<b>Literacy programs. Young adult programs, which are presently nonexistent. Advertising all that a library patron can access online is relatively nonexistent through the staff.</b>
<b>More programming opportunities for young adults and tweens</b>
<b>Staff need to be professional and dress appropriately</b>
<b>The greatest opportunities for improvement are with the newest technologies and increasing computer availability.</b>
<b>The library greatest opportunities for improvement I think is always having the proper tools that is needed to run and become a better library in all ways in serving the people and surrounding counties</b>
<b>The library needs to introduce eBooks to the public. There is a tremendous, growing demand for this. I recommend that the number of printed books and periodicals be reduced, so that funds can be diverted toward an eBook collection.</b>
<b>There are some common miscommunications and other areas where the needs and desires of employees from one department to the next do not get communicated very well. In addition, everyone seems to have a different way of doing things, with no two people following precisely the same procedures, which makes many routine tasks confusing and often frustrating.</b>

Table 4-4. Opportunities for Improvement  
(Continued)

Opportunity for Improvement
<b>There is a need for more room, a separate room for computers with security, parking for staff</b>
<b>To plan ahead for further growth of our library.</b>
<b>We need more space for children's room and storage area to store materials.</b>
<b>We need to move and find more room</b>

---

### Future Priorities for the Library

---

Staff members were asked to list the top five priorities for their libraries to concentrate on now and in the foreseeable future. The 20 responses to this question are provided in Table 4-5 on the following pages.

Staff addressed a wide range of priorities in answering this question, and the most frequent responses were in the following areas:

- **Computers.** Staff mentioned the need for new computers and for maintaining the existing computers as well as the need for training the public on a number of computer-related topics, including the social media.
- **Books.** Several staff noted the need for books, especially in areas like children's and adult nonfiction, and ebooks.
- **Building issues.** A number of priorities were tied to the buildings themselves, including several calls for additional space or better use of existing space.
- **Staff issues.** Several priorities were related to the staff and included emphasizing good customer service, improving staff morale, and focusing on better communications between staff members.

Table 4-5. Future Priorities for the Library

Priority
<b>(1) new computers (2) children' s non-fiction (3) more money (4) adult non-fiction (5) curtain</b>
<b>1. Training 2. Programing for the elderly. 3. Keeping all our computers in working order. 4. Access to funding for new books.</b>
<b>1. eBooks 2. Intercom system 3. Automated computer check in system with print modules (such as: SAM) 4. Additional space is needed 5. A branch library is needed 6. Direct Deposit for staff</b>
<b>1. Expansion of physical structure; that would require new location for the library 2. Outreach Services</b>
<b>1. Having current reading materials available. 2. Maintenance of our computers, and office equipment. 3. Keeping our current patrons happy and satisfied on a limited budget. 4. Trying to get more people involved with the library. 5. Keeping employee moral up.</b>
<b>Better use of existing space; increased storage eBooks for patron pleasant and efficient customer service</b>
<b>Children's and Young Adult services and programs. Electronic Books, Computer classes, Facebook, Twitter, Tumbler etc. The technology changes so quickly many people are left behind.</b>
<b>Fairness Enforced Rules Staff need to stay in their job duties and not try to run the whole Library More computer classes Keep sleepers out</b>
<b>I think we need to work on computerized books and high technology.</b>
<b>Improve the computer system. Better organize the books and audio on tapes. More table space so more people can use the library. More money so they can order more new DVDs and books when they come out. A raise.</b>
<b>improved computer technology, books for kindles/iPads; more reading groups for adults; additional computers; additional staff</b>
<b>Increased funding for additional staff. Quarterly evaluations, documented, of staff computer knowledge. Someone solely devoted to Children's Programming and outreach to local preschools. Classes offered to patrons on the how to's of NC LIVE. Someone solely devoted to the website and advertising through the local paper and Facebook.</b>

Table 4-5. Future Priorities for the Library  
(Continued)

Priority
<b>Keeping the book collection up-to-date, keeping internet computers available for patron use (and streamlining the process for patrons to sign up), children's and adult reading programs, improving and maintaining communications between employees, and instituting a standard method of performing all tasks then ensuring that all employees are aware of the processes.</b>
<b>More shelving space for books and. materials, need time and help for bringing in more programs for the community. More training in helping people. doing computer projects.</b>
<b>More space for expansion. Having another satellite location. Possible computer lab.</b>
<b>see the above</b>
<b>space for growth in the young adult area technological advancement upgrade to computer systems (Internet browsers for patron use especially)</b>
<b>stay relevant stay open</b>
<b>The parking space, more lighting in the area, more computers for the patrons, more study rooms to be used and building space</b>
<b>To provide staffs with up to date information about services available at our library or out in the community.</b>

---

### Work Environment

---

Staff members were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed with a number of statements about the library's work environment. Table 4-6 on the following page shows the percentage of the 22 staff members who answered the question and who gave a rating of 4 or 5 to these statements, indicating a high degree of agreement.

For the most part, staff members were positive about the work environment at the libraries. In no case did more than half of the staff members show strong disagreement with any of the statements.

Table 4-6. Percentage of Staff Showing High Degree of Agreement with Statements about Library Work Environment

Statement	Percentage
<b>My work is important to the library.</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>I have the necessary resources to do my work.</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>My fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>My input seems to count.</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>I see myself working here five years from now.</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>I receive praise frequently for doing good work.</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Our organization and my peers are all on the same page when it comes to our goals.</b>	<b>59%</b>

Staff members were especially likely to believe that their work is important to the library (95 per cent gave a rating of 4 or 5 to that statement), to feel that their supervisors care about them (86 per cent), and to believe that they have the resources needed to do their work (82 per cent).

There was less agreement that staff had been talked to about their progress in the last six months (59 per cent) or that all staff were on the same page when it comes to the goals of the library (59 per cent). These may represent areas where supervisors need to pay additional attention.

The survey also asked staff members to add comments related to the work environment, and these are shown in Table 4-7 on the following page. Most of the comments were positive, citing enjoyment is “being part of the library staff.”

Table 4-7. Comments on the Library's Work Environment

<b>Comment</b>
<b>I enjoy being part of the library staff and enjoy working with our patrons.</b>
<b>I have not been at my current position for 6 months yet. I am very happy and content with my job. I work with wonderful people, and have many likeable patrons. I would like to have more training within our library system.</b>
<b>I love working with children. I wish other library responsibilities take away so much of my time. If I had more time I could do more with my program.</b>
<b>I will be retiring within the next 5 years.</b>
<b>Our county Commissioners have been very helpful and caring about our library. All the libraries work together in helping and sharing books and materials. I look forward to going to work and helping others.</b>
<b>The future priorities of the library should be: eBook Lending Collection, purchase of an automated computer check-in system, weeding of print collections to accommodate eBooks and additional computers</b>

---

### Comments

---

Finally, staff members were asked to provide further comments about the strategic direction of the library. These are shown in Table 4-8 on the following page.

The comments covered a wide number of topics, many of which reflect answers to earlier questions about opportunities for improvement and future priorities for the libraries.

Table 4-8. Comments on the Library's Strategic Direction

<b>Comment</b>
<b>eBooks and an automated computer reservation system should be the top 2 priorities.</b>
<b>I don't feel that we have a direction. We are basically sitting still, trying to make the best of what we have.</b>
<b>I know that we are an aid and a help to the community. But sometimes when they (the Public) go wrong, I wish that my co-workers and I could look to the bosses and get support That rarely happens.</b>
<b>I wish we had more funding so we could have more storage.</b>
<b>Looking forward to enlarging our building. More programs in the future with more staff.</b>
<b>My hope is that our funding will increase so we can move forward as a library and better meet our patron's needs. Increased staffing is a huge priority. Without the staff, we cannot continue to move forward. It's just not possible.</b>
<b>New Bern will need an additional library branch in the near future. I think we need job counselors on hand, and an office supply area. Many of the patrons are filling out job and school applications, or working on resumes and employment flyers. I think we could be more in touch with the local schools and have the books on hand for the reading lists.</b>
<b>Not at the present, however I do hope the library strategies will continue to grow more abundantly in whatever direction it takes for the future</b>
<b>Some staff won't speak to co-workers and they speak to patrons and it is noticed and talked about. Could be a more friendly work place.</b>

## Chapter 5

### Library Usage and Funding Data

Data regarding library usage and funding for the public libraries of Craven County are shown in Table 5-1 on the following page.<sup>7</sup> The library data for the Craven County libraries are listed for 15 measures and compared with the median for the 68 county and regional libraries in North Carolina.

The Craven County libraries' rank among these county and regional libraries is also shown, and the table is sorted by Craven's rank. (These data represent 2011-2012 because these are the most recent statistics available for the entire state.)

The usage and funding data for the public libraries in Craven County reveal several aspects of library service and funding.

- The libraries in Craven County rank third among the state's county and regional public libraries in the percentage of the population registered; 86 per cent of the population of the county have library cards. This ranking may reflect heavy use of the library by the public or it may mean that the borrowers' database has not been checked recently to ensure that the records are up to date and that expired card holders have been deleted. Staff should make sure that the borrowers' database is kept current.
- The number of FTE staff per 25,000 people served is reasonably good for the public libraries in Craven County, relative to the rest of the state. However, it should be remembered that the level of staffing among North Carolina's public libraries is lower than that of public libraries in the southeastern United States. Even though the Craven County public libraries appear to be reasonably well staffed, this may not be the case. For example, the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association guidelines recommend one FTE staff member for every

---

<sup>7</sup> Library usage and funding data are from the CPC Regional Library staff and from reports by the State Library of North Carolina (<http://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/ld/aboutlibraries/statistics.html>).



2,000 people in the service population,<sup>8</sup> which would suggest that the public libraries in Craven County should have 52 FTE staff, 18 more than they currently have.

Table 5-1. Craven County Public Libraries Usage and Funding Data

Measure	Craven	NC Median	Craven Rank
Percentage of Population Registered	86%	53%	3rd of 68
FTE Staff per 25,000 Population Served	8.64	6.53	14th of 68
Program Attendance Per Capita	0.29	0.18	15th of 68
Library Visits Per Capita	3.24	2.79	27th of 68
Book Volumes Per Capita	1.81	1.76	33rd of 68
Library Income Per Capita (Local)	\$13.04	\$13.26	36th of 68
Personnel Expenditures Per Capita	\$10.43	\$11.46	40th of 68
Turnover Rate (Circulation per Book)	1.49	1.66	43rd of 68
Users of Internet Computers Per Capita	0.69	0.76	45th of 68
Reference Questions Per Capita	0.34	0.51	45th of 67
Print Circulation Per Capita	2.71	3.18	47th of 68
Materials Expenditures Per Capita	\$1.10	\$1.67	52nd of 68
Total Circulation Per FTE Staff	8,894	14,040	57th of 68
Non-Print Circulation Per Capita	0.34	0.79	57th of 68
Public Internet Workstations Per 5,000 People	2.10	3.36	58th of 68

- The public libraries in Craven County are doing a good job with adult and children's programs, and the libraries rank 15th in the state in program attendance per capita.
- Relatively little money is being spent on materials by the public libraries in Craven County. This is unfortunate, because even though the number of books per capita in the libraries is reasonably good and higher than the state median,

<sup>8</sup> North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, "Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries," URL: <http://www.rburgin.com/ncplda-guidelines-1998.html#collect>.

the lack of funding for new materials will make it difficult for staff to keep collections current and to meet the demands of the libraries' users.

- The public libraries in Craven County have a relatively low non-print circulation per capita. This may be related to the lack of funding for materials, because less funding for materials like non-print typically leads to fewer items to check out and lower circulation figures. Print circulation per capita, while better than non-print circulation, is also not strong, relative to the other public libraries in the state.
- The public libraries in Craven County also rank low, relative to other public libraries in the state, in the number of public Internet workstations per 5,000 people. This is particularly unfortunate, given the heavy use of these computers. As the survey noted, the libraries' Internet access computers were the third most heavily used of the libraries' resources and services (see Table 3-2). The lack of public Internet workstations is a particular problem at the New Bern-Craven County Public Library; while that library has over three times the number of registered borrowers than Havelock, for example, it has just one more Internet access computer.

## Chapter 6

### Focus Groups and Interviews with Community Leaders

The project consultant spoke to approximately 50 Craven County citizens and community leaders in direct interviews, focus groups, and other meetings. The following themes were the most frequently mentioned by these individuals.

---

#### Books

---

Books were one of the most frequently mentioned library resources by the individuals interviewed.

- As one New Bern patron noted, the library does “an amazing job with the book collection for adults. [There is a] great array of materials.”
- Another added that there was a “pretty good collection of popular books,” although it “would be nice to see some sections filled in.”
- One New Bern user mentioned children’s books and talked about how great it was “to see kids with 10 or 12 books at a time.”
- Several individuals noted, in particular, the ability to borrow books from other libraries as a tremendous service of the library.
- A New Bern patron said that he liked the interlibrary loan process that allowed him to borrow books from outside the CPC Regional Library system.
- Several New Bern patrons expressed an interest in ebooks, and one added that providing ebooks would be “a good way to position [the library] for the future.” Another suggested charging a fee for ebook access to help defray the costs.
- Members of the New Bern library board cited the need for more books.

---

#### Computers and Internet Access

---

The library’s computers and Internet access were also cited by several of those interviewed.

- According to one local government official, “The PCs are heavily used.”
- A user in New Bern suggested that wifi access is more important than many people might think.
- A library board member in Cove City stressed the importance of Internet access, “especially for kids doing school work.”
- One New Bern patron wanted the ability to have more sessions on the computers in any given day.
- A teenage patron in New Bern felt that the library needed more computers and that users needed more time on the computers, especially for school work.
- A user in Cove City described the computers there as “antiques” and mentioned the need for newer computers.

---

### Children’s Services

---

Several of the individuals interviewed noted the importance and the popularity of the library’s children’s services.

- According to one local government official, “The children’s area is heavily used.”
- A New Bern patron said that the library “seems to have a good range of children’s programs.”
- One library board member in Havelock noted that “from a young person’s experience, the library is great.”
- Cove City board members praised that library’s “terrific” children’s programs.
- Members of the New Bern library board talked about how good that library’s children’s programs are. “The library changed my kids’ lives,” said one. “My children grew up here,” said another.
- New Bern library board members mentioned the need to “reach more kids, especially the children of working parents” and the need to “have programs at more convenient hours” for these individuals.

---

## Facilities

---

A number of those interviewed commented on the library facilities in Craven County, both the facilities themselves and the locations of those facilities.

- One local government official noted that “lots of people would like to see [the New Bern Library] move” and added that there are “several locations [that would be] good fits.”
- Several New Bern patrons commented on the library’s “great location” and said that it was “convenient.”
- New Bern library board members mentioned the need for more space at the library and, in particular, more space for the Kellenberger Room.
- Library board members in Havelock noted the lack of meeting space in their library.
- Library board members in Cove City felt that their facility needs to be expanded. One noted that “50 children plus their parents came for the summer reading program” and that “so many people just flowed out of the tiny space.”

---

## Integrated Library System

---

There were a number of complaints about the integrated library system, which one New Bern patron described as “touchy.”

- The major complaint focused on the system’s problems with holds on books. Several individuals described incidents where a book would be placed on hold and then later no longer be on hold.
- As one New Bern patron noted, the problems with the integrated library system are “very hard on staff,” who have to apologize for the system’s problems to patrons. In spite of having to handle these complaints, though, “Staff are universally pleasant,” according to one New Bern patron.

- In spite of the problems with placing books on hold, other patrons liked the system's online catalog. One New Bern patron noted that "getting into the catalog is easy," and another said that "finding books in series is easy."

---

### Marketing and Fundraising

---

Ways in which the libraries could better market their efforts and ways in which the libraries could engage in fundraising were also mentioned by some of the individuals who were interviewed.

- One local government official complained that he did not receive user data for the library, especially data regarding the courier service and the number of books loaned among libraries within the county and the regional system.
- One New Bern patron also said that "It would be good to hear more about [library] usage and budgets" and pointed out that this information "could be used to sell the library."
- A patron in New Bern said that the library needed to think about "how to reach out to the community more," and another commented that "any PR would be good." She added that she belongs to several book clubs and is always surprised that some of the other members don't know about the library or its book club kits.
- Another patron in New Bern added that staff members have made "a concentrated effort to include the 'more marginal' by helping them see what's available at the library."
- Another New Bern user suggested using email "blasts" to publicize the library's programs and services.
- One New Bern patron wondered if the library could have an endowment, and another suggested that the Friends of the Library do more fundraising.

---

## Programs

---

A number of those interviewed were impressed with the library's programs, especially those for adults.

- As one person in New Bern noted, "these make the library fun."
- One New Bern patron said that she "likes the different formats – lectures, discussions, Read All About It."
- Another New Bern patron felt that the library "does a good job of including different parts of the community" in their programs."

---

## Services for Teens

---

Several of the individuals interviewed mentioned the library's services for teens and, in particular, the need to strengthen these.

- One teenage patron in New Bern noted that "teen resources and programs are sparse."
- The teenage patrons in New Bern had a number of specific suggestions for library programs for teens. One pointed out that "Teens like music, vampires movies, 'guy' movies, and zombie movies." Another suggested "more teen magazines for girls."
- Members of the library board in New Bern expressed the desire for "more for tweens and teens" and cited the need "to keep those kids."

---

## Staff

---

Several individuals who were interviewed noted the need for more staff at the library.

- One person in New Bern noted that there might be 10 or 11 people on the library's computers but only two people on the desk to assist them.
- A New Bern user urged me to "stress the lack of staff" and added that existing staff are "too busy, especially if they want to reach out to the community." She also wondered whether volunteers would help, although another user pointed out that "you have to be careful [with volunteers]; they have to be trained."
- Still another New Bern user wondered whether existing staff "could be re-balanced" and felt that there might be enough staff in circulation but not in reference.

Others interviewed praised the efforts of existing staff, both staff in general and specific staff members.

- One patron in New Bern noted that the staff "are really nice" and that she had encountered just one "nasty" person in 20 years of coming to the library.
- A teenage patron in New Bern said that "Lots of people are nice to me."
- Another New Bern patron noted that "Based on my library experience elsewhere, people here do well."
- One of the New Bern users felt that "the library has come a long way and is more involved in really helping people." Another user added that "A lot of that is staff. They are good, helpful, and knowledgeable."
- A teen user in New Bern admitted that his favorite thing about the library was "spending time with the librarians."
- Library board members in Havelock praised their staff members for being "caring" and for "trying to help, even with limited resources."
- Cove City board members praised their staff as "user friendly" and "doing their best to find answers and help people."
- Among the many staff members who were singled out for praise were the staff of the Kellenberger Room, whom one individual called "wonderful." As one patron in New Bern pointed out, "The Historical Society refers people to them."



## Chapter 7

### Assessing Public Library Space Needs for Craven County

In addition to the assessment of public library service needs for the citizens of Craven County, an assessment of the future public library space needs of the county was requested.

In order to assess those future space needs, it is necessary to address the following questions:

- What current public libraries exist? What do these facilities provide and what do they lack?
- How much space is needed to provide adequate public library service in Craven County?
- How many public library facilities are needed?
- How large should each facility be?
- Where should the public library facilities be located?

---

#### Current Public Library Facilities

---

Public library service in Craven County is currently provided at four facilities: Cove City; Havelock; New Bern; and Vanceboro. The facilities and their square footage are listed on the following page in Table 7-1. The number of registered borrowers and the number of items circulated for 2011-2012 are also listed for each facility.

**Cove City.** The Cove City Public Library has 9 per cent of the square footage devoted to public libraries in Craven County. It also represents 3 per cent of the registered borrowers among the public libraries in the county and 3 per cent of the items circulated. Consequently, the library's 3,400 square feet would appear to be adequate, based on its level of activity.

Table 7-1. Craven County Public Library Facilities

Facility	Square Feet	Borrowers	Items Circulated
<b>Cove City</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>2,877</b>	<b>9,954</b>
<b>Havelock</b>	<b>8,449</b>	<b>19,851</b>	<b>44,790</b>
<b>New Bern</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>63,514</b>	<b>256,086</b>
<b>Vanceboro</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,507</b>	<b>9,343</b>

However, the Cove City Public Library does lack a meeting room, a serious drawback to any public library facility. Several staff and library board members mentioned the need for more space, particularly for children's programs. One used the library's summer reading program as an example, remembering how 50 children and their parents tried to cram into the small space available to them in the library.

The Cove City Public Library could be expanded in its current location. There is adequate room behind the existing facility on which to construct a meeting room or other additional space.

**Havelock.** The Havelock Public Library has 21 per cent of the square footage devoted to public libraries in Craven County. It also represents 22 per cent of the registered borrowers among the public libraries in the county and 14 per cent of the items circulated.

These figures indicate that the existing facility should be just adequate, but as with Cove City, the library in Havelock lacks a meeting room and this presents problems for the staff of the library, especially given the strong need for children's programming at this library, based on the large percentage of children in the library's service area. As one staff member in Havelock noted, "The building lacks dedicated space for kids, especially the little ones, who get noisy. And there's no room for crafts and music, which appeal to the little kids."

The Havelock Public Library could be expanded in its current location, but there are some issues that might make expansion difficult to implement. There is space behind the existing facility for expansion, but the facility is part of the Craven Community

College Havelock campus, and any expansion would need to be approved by the college. In addition, because of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point, that base would also need to approve any expansion to the facility.

**New Bern.** The New Bern-Craven County Public Library has 63 per cent of the square footage devoted to public libraries in Craven County. It also represents 71 per cent of the registered borrowers among the public libraries in the county and 80 per cent of the items circulated. These figures indicate that the existing facility in New Bern is not adequate, based on its level of activity.

Unfortunately, it would be difficult to expand the New Bern-Craven County Public Library in its current location. The property on which the library sits will not allow for expansion without sacrificing parking space, and parking space is already inadequate. Adding a second floor to the existing facility does not appear to be feasible from a structural or financial point of view. Furthermore, because the current library is located in a historic district, any changes to the existing facility would need to be in keeping with the district's architectural restrictions.

Relocating the library might be possible, but this alternative would remove the library from its current location, which is quite convenient to a large number of users. Several New Bern patrons commented on the library's "great location" and said that it was "convenient." There also seems to be a natural connection between New Bern's historical downtown area and the resources provided by the library, particularly through its Kellenberger Room, which is one of the state's best collections of local history and genealogy.

A better alternative, and one that is explored below, is to retain the current facility in its existing location and to build one or two new library facilities in another part of Craven County. This approach would have the advantage of continuing to provide library service to those individuals downtown while providing more space for library services in a part of the county in which a large number of users live.

The facility on Johnson Street could provide a reduced level of library services to adults and children and could support local history and genealogy services through an

expanded Kellenberger Room. The CPC Regional Library's offices could remain there as well.

**Vanceboro.** The Vanceboro Public Library has 8 per cent of the square footage devoted to public libraries in Craven County. It also represents 4 per cent of the registered borrowers among the public libraries in the county and 3 per cent of the items circulated. Consequently, the library's 3,000 square feet would appear to be adequate, based on its level of activity.

However, like Cove City and Havelock, the library lacks a meeting room, a serious drawback to any public library facility. Only 16 children can fit into the children's room in Vanceboro, which makes programming difficult. One staff member also noted that "the shelves are full" and that "we have books on top of the shelf units."

Unfortunately, the Vanceboro Public Library cannot be expanded on its current site; the property on which the library currently sits will not allow for expansion. Consequently, any expansion of the library in Vanceboro will require that the library be moved to another location.

At a minimum, then, the libraries in Cove City, Havelock, and Vanceboro need additional space for meeting rooms, while the New Bern-Craven County Public Library needs additional space and parking to reflect the amount of activity supported by the library. This might be best achieved by constructing a new library facility in Craven County and maintaining the current facility on Johnson Street in New Bern.

---

### How Much Space is Needed

---

When assessing the future facility requirements of the public libraries in Craven County, the next question to be considered is how much total space is needed countywide for all public library facilities.

Public libraries should, of course, be built for the future needs of the communities being served and not based on current population levels. Consequently, this assessment bases its consideration of space needs on the projected population for

Craven County for the year 2033, i.e., 20 years into the future. The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management estimates that the population of Craven County will be 109,292 in 2033.<sup>9</sup> This projected total has been used as the basis for the space needs estimates that follow.

Space is needed in a public library for five basic types of service: books and other collections, seating for users, public computers, meeting and programming space, and special uses. In addition, space must be allocated for staff work space and service points and for non-assigned space. Standard formulas have been developed by architects and library space planners to translate these service and program needs into space needs.

---

### **Space Needs – Books and Other Collections**

---

Public libraries offer a range of books and other types of materials (both print and non-print) to meet the information and learning needs of people of all ages, from pre-school children to seniors. The space needed to house these collections represents a large part of the space needed by the public library facilities in a given county.

The importance of books and other materials to the users of the public libraries in Craven County is reflected in the survey of users that was conducted between late June and early August 2013. By far, the most frequently used library resources were adult books and children's books. Almost two thirds of the 319 respondents listed adult books as the most frequently used resource, and 37 per cent listed children's books. In addition, books for adults and children were the most likely resources to be rated by respondents as very important. When asked how to improve the library's services, resources, and facilities, the most frequently mentioned area for improvement was books and, in particular, more books.

The most commonly used standard for public library collections is "a minimum of two books per capita plus other materials."<sup>10</sup> A conservative estimate of the collection

---

<sup>9</sup> See [http://www.osbm.state.nc.us/ncosbm/facts\\_and\\_figures/socioeconomic\\_data/population\\_estimates/demog/countygrowth\\_2033.html](http://www.osbm.state.nc.us/ncosbm/facts_and_figures/socioeconomic_data/population_estimates/demog/countygrowth_2033.html).

<sup>10</sup> North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, "Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries," URL: <http://www.rburgin.com/ncplda-guidelines-1998.html#collect>.

needs of the public libraries in Craven County in the year 2033 is two books per capita times the estimated population of 109,292 or 218,584 books.

Currently, the four public library facilities of Craven County provide 1.81 books per capita. The target of 2 books per capita by 2033 represents a net growth rate of less than 1 per cent per year and should be easily obtainable.

The amount of space required to house the collections in a public library collection is generally given as one square foot per ten items (i.e., books and other materials).<sup>11</sup> The 218,584 books recommended for the public libraries in Craven County for the year 2033 translate into a need for 21,858 square feet of space to house these collections.

---

### Space Needs – Seating for Users

---

Public libraries also need to provide their users with places to sit while they use the library. When asked which library resources and services they most frequently used, 56 per cent of the respondents of the recent community survey listed personal research and general information, 50 per cent listed school homework, 41 per cent listed business and work related research, and 37 per cent listed newspapers and magazine. These and other activities require seating of various types.

Guidelines for seating in public libraries are based on the service population of the library system. Dahlgren<sup>12</sup> recommends 2.25 seats per 1,000 people for libraries serving 100,000 people. Using these guidelines with the estimated 2033 population for Craven County of 109,292, the recommended number is 246 seats.

The amount of space required to accommodate seats in a public library is usually given as thirty square feet per seat.<sup>13</sup> The 246 seats recommended for the public

---

<sup>11</sup> Anders C. Dahlgren, "Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline," Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>. This figure assumes full-height shelving that is 84 inches or 90 inches tall and is installed on five foot centers with a 42-inch aisle, with the top and bottom shelves left vacant for future expansion.

<sup>12</sup> Anders C. Dahlgren, "Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline," Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Anders C. Dahlgren, "Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline," Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>.

libraries in Craven County for the year 2033 translate into a need for 7,380 square feet of space.

---

### **Space Needs – Public Computers**

---

Public libraries also offer computers and Internet access for use by the public, and these services present space requirements. The popularity of Internet access is reflected in the survey of users, which found that the library's Internet access computers were the third most frequently used resource; 30 per cent of the survey respondents said that the Internet access computers were their most frequently used library resource.

Currently, the public libraries in Craven County provide approximately one computer per 2,386 individuals in the service area. This ratio is well below the median for public libraries in North Carolina, which is 1,438. Given an estimated 2033 population of 109,292 for Craven County, the number of public computers needed by its public libraries in order to meet the current median for public libraries in the state would be 76, more than the current 44 public computers provided by the Craven County public libraries.

The North Carolina Public Library Directors Association guidelines recommend that "At least 50 square feet are allotted for each public workstation."<sup>14</sup> That standard would require 3,800 square feet to accommodate the 76 computers needed by the public libraries of Craven County in 2033.

---

### **Space Needs – Meeting and Programming Space**

---

Public libraries also provide space for programs, both those sponsored by the library itself and those sponsored by other groups in the community. Meeting space in public libraries generally includes auditorium seating, conference room seating, and space for children's programs.

---

<sup>14</sup> North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, "Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries," URL: <http://www.rburgin.com/ncplda-guidelines-1998.html#tech>. The same guideline can be found in Anders C. Dahlgren, "Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline," Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>.

The importance of programming and meeting space for the users of the public libraries in Craven County is reflected in the recent survey of library users, which found that 22 per cent of respondents listed children's programs as their most frequently used library service, 14 per cent listed adult programs, and 5 per cent listed using meeting space.

A commonly used standard for meeting and programming seats in public libraries is one seat per 300 individuals being served.<sup>15</sup> This standard and the 2033 estimated population for Craven County of 109,292 yield 364 seats.

The amount of space required for meeting and programming seats is generally given "10 square feet per audience seat, plus another 100 square feet for a speaker's podium / presentation area at the front of the room."<sup>16</sup> Using the current number of public library facilities in Craven County (four), then the space required would be 3,640 square feet for the seats plus 400 square feet for the areas at the front of the four meeting rooms or a total of 4,040 square feet.

In addition, because children represent an important target audience for the public library, space for children's activities and story times must be added. Commonly used standards include an area in every public library facility for 30 children<sup>17</sup> and "For a storytime room plan for 10 square feet per child, plus another 50 square feet at the front of the room for the program leader. If storytimes generally include crafts, add another 5 square feet per child."<sup>18</sup> Again, if we assume four public library facilities, then the amount of space needed for children's activities and story times will be 500 square feet per facility (15 square feet per child multiplied by 30 children, plus 50 square feet for the program leader) or 2,000 square feet in all.

---

<sup>15</sup> Phil Barton, "Wayne County Public Library: Strategic Plan for Library Facilities," 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Anders C. Dahlgren, "Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline," Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Phil Barton, "Wayne County Public Library: Strategic Plan for Library Facilities," 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Anders C. Dahlgren, "Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline," Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>.



---

### Space Needs – Special Use Space

---

In addition to the space allocated for the activities listed above, a library facility should provide space for furnishings and other items that are not been accounted for under the categories previously outlined: books and other collections; seating for users; public computers; and meeting and programming space. Examples include newspaper racks, photocopiers, display racks, special equipment like magnifiers at desks for the visually impaired, microfilm reader machines, file cabinets for vertical files containing local history materials, and kitchens connected to meeting rooms.

The amount of space set aside for these special uses is typically 10 per cent of the space allocated for collections, user seating, public computers, and meeting and programming space.<sup>19</sup> The total recommended for these activities is 39,078 square feet, and so the amount of space recommended for special uses is 3,908 square feet.

---

### Space Needs – Staff Work Space and Service Points

---

Space must also be allocated for the library staff, who do a good bit of work “behind the scenes,” and for the library’s public service points, such as the circulation desk. This category also includes a lounge and eating area for the staff.

A commonly used standard for staff work space and service points in public libraries is 20 per cent of the total public space.<sup>20</sup> The total public space recommended in this plan is 42,986 square feet. Consequently, the amount of space needed for staff and for service points would be 8,597 square feet.

---

<sup>19</sup> Anders C. Dahlgren, “Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline,” Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Phil Barton, “Wayne County Public Library: Strategic Plan for Library Facilities,” 2005.

---

### Space Needs – Non-Assigned Space

---

Finally, as Dahlgren<sup>21</sup> notes, “Other space, sometimes called non-assigned space, is used for utility closets, rest rooms, corridors, stairwells, and other necessities that can take up 20 to 25% of the space of a building.” Using the conservative figure of 20 per cent and the estimated space needs from the previous sections yields a recommended allocation of 12,896 square feet for non-assigned space.

---

### Space Needs – Parking

---

As the “Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries” of the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association note, “Adequate public parking is essential for the success of a library facility.”<sup>22</sup>

The North Carolina Public Library Directors Association guidelines recommend “at least one parking space for every 200 square feet of gross square footage of the facility.” Based on the gross square footage recommended in this plan of 64,480 square feet, the public libraries of Craven County should also provide 322 parking spaces.

This recommendation may be conservative, because as the “Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries” argue, “Additional space for parking is needed if the library provides public activity rooms, story time rooms, computer rooms, conference rooms, or other special purpose facilities.”

---

### Space Needs – Gross Space

---

Based on the above estimates of space for books and other collections, seating for users, public computers, meeting and programming space, special use space, and

---

<sup>21</sup> Anders C. Dahlgren, “Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline,” Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998 URL: <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, “Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries,” URL: <http://www.rburgin.com/ncplda-guidelines-1998.html#facilities>.

non-assigned space, the total gross space recommended for the public libraries of Craven County is 64,480 square feet. (See Table 7-2 on the following page for a summary of these estimates.)

As noted earlier, the four public library facilities in Craven County currently total 39,849 square feet. (See Table 7-1 above.) The recommended amount of space would increase the total allocated to public libraries in Craven County by 62 per cent and the per capita allocation by 54 per cent.

The total would also represent 0.59 square feet per capita (based on the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management's 2033 population estimate), which is slightly less than the space allocation recommended by the 1998 "Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries," developed by the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, which state that "Library systems serving more than 25,000 people provide library facilities totaling not less than 0.65 square feet per capita, with at least one facility of not less than 16,000 square feet."<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, the estimate of 64,480 square feet represents a reasonable target for facilities planning for the Craven County public libraries for the next 20 years.

---

### How Many Library Facilities

---

The preceding analysis recommends that 64,480 square feet be provided for the public library facilities in Craven County. The additional space might be added to existing facilities or it might be provided in the form of new facilities. This raises the question of how many public library facilities would be needed to adequately serve the citizens of Craven County over the next 20 years.

Unfortunately, there are no standards and there is no guidance in the literature to help resolve the question of how many public library facilities are needed for a given population. The best that can be done is to estimate a range of facilities that would be appropriate to a specific county, based on the current distribution of public library facilities throughout the 100 counties in North Carolina.

---

<sup>23</sup> URL: <http://www.rburgin.com/ncplda-guidelines-1998.html>.

Table 7-2  
Estimated Space Needs by Category  
Craven County, 2033

Category	Standard	Recommendation	Square Feet Required	Total Space Recommended
Books and other collections	2 books per capita	218,584 books	1 square foot per 10 books	21,858
Seats	2.25 seats per 1,000 population	246 seats	30 square feet per seat	7,380
Computers for the public	1 computer per 1,438 population	76 computers	50 square feet per computer	3,800
Program seats	1 program seat per 300 population	364 program seats, 4 facilities	10 square feet per program seat plus 100 square feet per facility	4,040
Children's programming		30 children per facility, 4 facilities	15 square feet per child plus 50 square feet per facility	2,000
<i>Total for above uses</i>				<b>39,078</b>
Special use space			10 per cent of total for above uses	3,908
<i>Total public space</i>				<b>42,986</b>
Staff work space			20 per cent of public space	8,597
<i>Total assignable space</i>				<b>51,584</b>
Non-assigned space			20 per cent of total	12,896
<i>Total recommended space</i>				<b>64,480</b>
Parking	1 parking space per 200 gross square feet			322

In North Carolina, the number of public library facilities in a single county ranges from one in several counties to 20 in Mecklenburg (2011 population of 940,697) and Wake (2011 population of 925,938). Between these two extremes, there is a great deal of variation. A county as large as Rowan (2011 population of 138,309) has only three public library facilities, while a county with far less population, like Columbus (2011 population of 57,657) has six.

This variation is explained in large part by three factors: the population of the county; the population density of the county; and the number of towns in the county with a population of 5,000 or more.

Population plays an important role in determining how many facilities a given county will have, with the more populous counties tending to have a greater number of public library facilities. For example, all of North Carolina's eight most populous counties have eight or more public library facilities each. Statistically, the 2000 population of a county accounts for 77 per cent of the variability in the number of public library facilities in the state's counties.

Population density also shows a strong positive correlation with the number of public library facilities in a given county, although not as strong as that shown by population. Nine of the state's eleven most densely populated counties have eight or more public library facilities each. Statistically, the 2000 population density of a county accounts for 61 per cent of the variability in the number of public library facilities in the state's counties.

Finally, the number of towns in the county with a population of 5,000 or more shows a strong positive correlation with the number of public library facilities in a given county. The 21 North Carolina counties with at least two towns over 5,000 population have an average of eight public library facilities. Statistically, the number of towns in the county with a population of 5,000 or more accounts for 56 per cent of the variability in the number of public library facilities in the state's counties.

The strongest of these three factors – population – can be used to create a statistical model that estimates how many public library facilities a given county “should” have based on that county's population. The model “recommends” that any county have approximately two public library facilities with an additional facility for every 48,500

people in the county. As noted above, this model explains 77 per cent of the variability in the number of public library facilities in the counties of North Carolina.<sup>24</sup>

Based on the projected population of 109,292 for Craven County in 2033, the model “recommends” four public library facilities (two for the baseline service “expected” of any county and another two based on population) for the county.

The model’s “recommendation” should be viewed as a rough estimate of what is reasonable, given the current distribution of public library facilities in North Carolina’s counties, and not what is “right.” At most, four public library facilities should be considered a minimum for a range in the number of facilities that would be appropriate for Craven County.

The upper limit of that range can also be estimated by looking at the current distribution of public library facilities in North Carolina’s counties. Based on this distribution, it appears that Craven County’s population and population density could reasonably support as many as five or six public library facilities. Eight counties with smaller populations and smaller population densities than Craven’s (Beaufort; Carteret; Columbus; Duplin; Halifax; Montgomery; Moore; Surry) have five or six public library facilities each.

Based on the current distribution of public library facilities in North Carolina, then, a reasonable target for Craven County for the next 20 years is between four and six facilities.

---

### How Large Should Each Facility Be

---

The analysis above recommends that the total space allocated for public library facilities in Craven County for the year 2033 should be 64,480 square feet. How this square footage should be divided among the facilities is the next question to be addressed.

The “Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries” of the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association recommend that “Every library system has at least one

---

<sup>24</sup> Even a more complicated model that takes all three variables into consideration only accounts for 0.0009 per cent more of the variability than does the simpler, population-based model.

full-service library facility with a minimum gross square footage of 16,000 square feet regardless of population served. Library systems serving more than 25,000 people provide library facilities totaling not less than 0.65 square feet per capita, with at least one facility of not less than 16,000 square feet.”<sup>25</sup>

Based on that recommendation, at least one of the public library facilities in Craven County should be at least 16,000 square feet in size. The 25,000 square foot facility in New Bern currently meets that recommendation.

The remaining square footage could then be used to expand the existing public library facilities in the county or to provide one or two new facilities, based on the earlier finding that Craven County could reasonably support between four and six public library facilities.

**Cove City.** As noted earlier, the current facility in Cove City should be adequate, based on that library’s circulation and registered borrowers. The library does, however, lack a meeting room, and there is adequate space on the existing property to add such a space.

Based on the formulas used earlier in this report, a total of 4,040 square feet in meeting space is needed for the four existing library facilities in Craven County. Based on the current amount of space allocated to each library, 345 square feet of this space would be allocated to the Cove City Public Library. In addition, 500 square feet was recommended for each facility for children’s activities. Thus, a total of 845 square feet is recommended as an addition for the Cove City Public Library.

This additional space would bring the total recommended for the Cove City Public Library to 4,245 square feet – the existing 3,400 square feet plus an 845 square foot addition for meeting space and children’s activities. (See Table 7-3 on the following page for the recommended square footage for all facilities in Craven County.)

Because there is adequate room behind the existing facility on which to construct the additional space, the Cove City Public Library could be expanded in its current location.

---

<sup>25</sup> North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, “Guidelines for North Carolina Public Libraries,” URL: <http://www.rburgin.com/ncplda-guidelines-1998.html#facilities>.

Table 7-3. Recommended Square Footage for Craven County Public Library Facilities

Facility	Current Square Feet	Recommended Square Feet
<b>Cove City</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>4,245</b>
<b>Havelock</b>	<b>8,449</b>	<b>9,806 – 14,262</b>
<b>New Bern</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>
<b>Vanceboro</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,804</b>
<b>New Facility or Facilities</b>		<b>17,169 – 21,625</b>

**Havelock.** This report recommends that between 9,806 square feet and 14,262 square feet be allocated for the Havelock Public Library.

The smaller number is based on the existing 8,449 square feet, which should be adequate based on that library's circulation, plus an additional 857 square feet in meeting room space (based on the current amount of space allocated to each library in the county) and another 500 square feet for children's activities. The total of those spaces is 9,806 square feet.

The larger number is based on the number of registered borrowers at the Havelock Public Library, which represents 22.1 per cent of the total for Craven County. An equivalent percentage of the 64,480 square feet recommended for all public library facilities in the county would be 14,262 square feet. The additional 5,813 square feet should include spaces for a meeting room and children's activities.

As noted earlier, the Havelock Public Library could be expanded in its current location, although any expansion would need to be approved by the Craven Community College Havelock and the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point.

**New Bern.** This report recognizes that the space allocated to the New Bern-Craven County Public Library is less than adequate, based on that library's level of activity and based on comments by various individuals who were interviewed as part of this project.



However, because of the difficulties involved in expanding the Johnson Street facility on its current site and because of the convenience of the current location, this report recommends continuing to provide public library service from the existing 25,000 square foot facility but constructing a new library in another part of Craven County.

As noted earlier, the current facility could provide a reduced level of library services to adults and children in downtown New Bern, could support local history and genealogy services through an expanded Kellenberger Room, and could house the CPC Regional Library's offices.

**Vanceboro.** As with Cove City, the current library facility in Vanceboro should be adequate, based on that library's circulation and registered borrowers. The library does, however, lack a meeting room, and so this report recommends building a new library or finding an existing facility that can be converted into a library.

Based on the formulas used earlier in this report, a total of 4,040 square feet in meeting space is needed for the four existing library facilities in Craven County. Based on the current amount of space allocated to each library, 304 square feet of this space would be allocated to the Vanceboro Public Library. In addition, 500 square feet was recommended for each facility for children's activities. Thus, a total of 804 square feet is recommended for the Vanceboro Public Library in addition to the current 3,000 square feet.

This additional space would bring the total recommended for the Vanceboro Public Library to 3,804 square feet – the existing 3,000 square feet plus another 804 square feet for meeting space and children's activities.

Because the Vanceboro Public Library cannot be expanded on its current site, any expansion of the library in Vanceboro will require that a new library be constructed or that the library be moved to another facility, one that should provide 3,804 square feet at a minimum.

**New Facility.** Given the recommendation of 64,480 square feet for the public libraries in Craven County and given the space recommendations for the existing

libraries (see Table 7-3), there should be between 17,169 and 21,625 square feet for one or two new public library facilities in Craven County.

This recommendation is consistent with the earlier finding that, based on the current distribution of public library facilities in North Carolina, a reasonable target for Craven County for the next 20 years would be between four and six facilities.

The decision regarding whether to build one larger new facility or two smaller new facilities and where to locate these should be driven by factors discussed in the following section of the report.

---

### Where to Locate the Library Facilities

---

Unfortunately, there are no standards to guide the location of library facilities. Furthermore, lacking a detailed knowledge of potential sites in Craven County, it is difficult to make specific recommendations.

Site selection will depend on a wide range of factors, including what sites are available at any given time. The library staff and others involved in decisions about library sites are encouraged to keep in mind a number of criteria for the evaluation and selection of specific sites for public library facilities. These include:<sup>26</sup>

1. *Demographic patterns.* Is the site in center of the population and employment area to be served?
2. *Site size and configuration.* What size site do you require for present and future needs? Does the site have that much usable space? Does the configuration of the site match the building needs? A square or rectangle-shaped parcel is most desirable.
3. *General suitability.* What is the zoning of the site and adjacent properties? Availability of all utilities? Drainage system considerations? Soil and sub-soil characteristics?

---

<sup>26</sup> Lee B. Brawner and Donald K. Beck, Jr. *Determining Your Public Library's Future Size*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1996. p. 144.

4. *Accessibility*. What is the driving time for automobiles or public transit to the site from strategic locations? Availability of on- and off-site parking? Proximity to major and/or secondary thoroughfares?<sup>27</sup>
5. *Neighborhood compatibility*. What are the current and projected land-use patterns? Does the neighborhood complement and generate library usage?
6. *Visibility*. What are the traffic counts for the site? How much frontage (linear feet) will the library building have on major and secondary thoroughfares?
7. *Image and identity strengths*. Is the site located in a recognized area with a positive identity or image (e.g., landmark building or major shopping center)?
8. *Regulations*. Is the site in compliance with current zoning (e.g., setbacks, right-of-way, building height restrictions), sewer and storm drainage regulations?
9. *Ownership*. Is the site relatively easy to assemble and purchase in terms of one or multiple owners? Must existing businesses or tenants be relocated and at what liability or cost?
10. *Assessed value*. Can the site be purchased at a reasonable market value, taking into account the present assessed value of the property?

In addition to the above considerations, there is general agreement that library facilities should be located near actual and potential users. For example, six major studies cited by Susan Palmer found that 57.4 per cent of public library users lived within two miles of their libraries and that 89.7 per cent lived within five miles.<sup>28</sup>

Table 7-4 on the following page lists the towns in Craven County and the distance from each town to the nearest library facility. As the table shows, 84 per cent of the population of these towns lives within five miles of one of the existing public library facilities in Craven County.

---

<sup>27</sup> Along these lines, staff should consult the traffic volume maps that are available from the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Information, Mapping, and Graphics Unit, URL: <http://www.ncdot.org/it/img/DataDistribution/TrafficSurveyMaps/>.

<sup>28</sup> E. Susan Palmer, "The Effect of Distance on Public Library Use: A Literature Survey," *Library Research* 3 (1981): 315-334.

This section of the report looks at some of the advantages and disadvantages of locating a new library facility in one of the areas currently without a library.<sup>29</sup> Of the eight towns that do not currently have library facilities, six can be considered as pairs, because of their proximity to one another: Brices Creek and James City; Bridgeton and Fairfield Harbour; and River Bend and Trent Woods. Dover and Neuse Forest are considered separately.

Table 7-4. Distance from Each Town to the Nearest Library Facility

Town	Distance
Brices Creek	6 miles
Bridgeton	5 miles
Cove City	0 miles
Dover	7 miles
Fairfield Harbour	12 miles
Havelock	0 miles
James City	2 miles
Neuse Forest	8 miles
New Bern	0 miles
River Bend	8 miles
Trent Woods	5 miles
Vanceboro	0 miles

**Brices Creek and James City.** The towns of Brices Creek and James City are located south of the Trent River from New Bern.

The primary advantage of locating a public library facility in the Brices Creek and James City area is that the population of the two towns (8,972) represents the largest population of any areas in Craven County without a library. In addition, growth in Brices Creek over the past decade (49 per cent) has been the strongest of any town in Craven

<sup>29</sup> It would, of course, be possible to locate a new public library facility in New Bern, which already has the largest public library facility in the county. This report, however, sees more value in locating a new facility in an area of the county without an existing public library building, thus providing more convenient library service to a greater number of individuals.

County, and growth in James City (9 per cent) has outpaced that of the county as a whole.

The disadvantage of locating a public library facility in this area is that the two towns are already close to an existing library. James City is just 2 miles from the New Bern-Craven County Public Library, and Brices Creek is just 6 miles from that facility.

**Bridgeton and Fairfield Harbour Area.** The towns of Bridgeton and Fairfield Harbour are located east of the Neuse River from New Bern.

The main advantage of locating a public library facility in the Bridgeton and Fairfield Harbour area is that these are two of the fastest growing towns in Craven County; over the last decade, Fairfield Harbour's population increased by 49 per cent, and Bridgeton's by 39 per cent. In addition, Fairfield Harbour represents the town that is farthest from an existing library facility.

The disadvantage of locating a public library facility in this area is that the two towns represent less population (3,409) than do either the Brices Creek and James City area or the River Bend and Trent Woods area.

**Dover.** The town of Dover is located west of New Bern on Old US Highway 70, near the Lenoir County border.

The mayor of Dover has mentioned the idea of a public library in Dover, and that interest represents the primary advantage of locating a library facility there.

Unfortunately, Dover has very little population; at 402 people, it represents the smallest town in Craven County without a library facility. Furthermore, the town's population has declined by 9.3 per cent over the past decade and represents the lowest growth figure of any town in the county. Finally, Dover is just seven miles from an existing public library facility in Cove City.

**Neuse Forest.** The town of Neuse Forest is located on US Highway 70, just north of Havelock.

The primary advantage to locating a library facility in Neuse Forest is that the area is rapidly growing. Over the past decade, population growth in this town has been 41 per cent, the third highest of any town in Craven County.

On the other hand, disadvantages include a small population of only 2,005 and the fact that Neuse Forest is only eight miles from an existing public library facility in Havelock.

**River Bend and Trent Woods Area.** The town of River Bend and Trent Woods are located west of New Bern, just south of US Highway 17.

The primary advantage of locating a public library facility in the River Bend and Trent Woods area is that the population of the two towns (7,305) represents the second largest population of any towns without a library in Craven County. In addition, there is already strong interest in a public library in River Bend, which has its own subscription library, located in the building next to the police station and staffed by volunteers.

One disadvantage of locating a public library facility in this area is that the two towns are already close to an existing library. Trent Woods is just 5 miles from the New Bern-Craven County Public Library, and River Bend is just 8 miles from that facility. Another is that growth in these towns has not been as great as in some other parts of Craven County; in fact, over the last decade, the population of Trent Woods decreased by slightly less than 1 per cent.

---

### Other Issues

---

There are, of course, a number of other issues involved in any decision to expand existing library facilities or build new facilities. These include identifying funding for any construction, staffing the expanded or new facilities, and funding for ongoing operations.

It is beyond the scope of this report to address these issues in any depth. However, the following points can be made.

**Funding Construction.** In addition to local government funding, those involved in fundraising activities for any construction of library facilities should consider non-governmental funding. The Foundation Center's report (*Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates* for 2011<sup>30</sup>) reports that there are more than 76,600 grantmaking foundations in the United States and that these organizations made grants totaling \$46.9 billion in 2011. It may be possible for the public libraries in Craven County to obtain grants from private companies and foundations, but these require that the staff members identify such grants and apply for them. The following actions may help the staff in these efforts:

- Being familiar with Web and print resources for information on foundations, including the following:
  - The Foundation Center (<http://foundationcenter.org/>) provides a wide range of information on philanthropy in the United States. Of particular interest is the Foundation Finder, a free database that provides basic information on 80,000 private and community foundations. The Foundation Directory Online provides more information on the foundations but is available only through subscription.
  - GuideStar: The National Database of Nonprofit Organizations (<http://www2.guidestar.org/Home.aspx>) also provides a free searchable database of information on foundations and other nonprofit organizations.
  - Noza (<https://www.nozasearch.com/>) provides a similar free database of information on foundations.
- Monitoring the "Library Grants" blog at <http://librarygrants.blogspot.com/>. The blog is maintained by Stephanie Gerding and Pam MacKellar, whose book (*Grants for Libraries: A How-to-Do-It Manual*, Neal-Schuman 2006) should also be consulted.
- Being aware of the fundraising process. Two older articles from *North Carolina Libraries* (Joline R. Ezzell's "A Twelve-Step Program for Stronger Grant Proposals," *North Carolina Libraries* 53 [Spring 1995]: 6 – 7; and Steve

---

<sup>30</sup> Available on the Web at <http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/fqge12.pdf>.

Sumerford, "Careful Planning: The Fundraising Edge," *North Carolina Libraries* 53 [Spring 1995]: 3 – 5) may prove helpful to staff of the Lucy Cooper Finch Library.

**Staffing.** Adequate staffing must be kept in mind, particularly if a new facility is constructed. As noted above in Chapter 5, the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association guidelines recommend that the public libraries in Craven County should have 52 FTE staff, 18 more than they currently have.

**Funding for Ongoing Operations.** Adequate funding must also be provided for the ongoing operations of library facilities. In addition, in Craven County, a decision must be made regarding the relative amount of town funding vs county funding for any new public library. Currently, the libraries in Cove City and Vanceboro are totally funded by Craven County, while county funding represents 71 per cent of the funding for the Havelock Public Library and 93 per cent of the local funding for the New Bern-Craven County Public Library.



## **Chapter 8**

### **The Regional Library System**

The public libraries in Craven County belong to the CPC Regional Library System, which includes Craven, Pamlico, and Carteret Counties.

There are currently twelve regional library systems in North Carolina, which include 42 of the 100 counties in the state. They were largely created in the 1950s and 1960s and based on the belief that larger units of library service are more effective and economical than are smaller units (counties and municipalities).

However, in the last seven years, three regional library systems have dissolved, and no new regional library system has been created in North Carolina since the 1960s.

The question of whether the CPC Regional Library is working for the public libraries in Craven County arose during the community needs assessment, and this chapter attempts to address that question as well as the more general question of what constitutes a strong regional library system and what can be done to ensure that the CPC Regional Library System is providing a high level of service to the public libraries of Craven County.

---

#### **Attributes of a Strong Regional Library System**

---

In order to determine what makes a regional system strong, I asked the current regional library directors in North Carolina for their thoughts. These are shown in Table 8-1 on the following pages.

Among the ideas stressed by these directors are the following:

- Strong regional systems have a strong leadership team that includes a strong, experienced regional director and good representation from the individual libraries that make up the regional system. Members of the leadership team meet regularly.

Table 8-1. North Carolina Regional Library Directors' Thoughts on What Makes a Strong Regional System

**Comment**

**A strong and functional Regional Library system has an experienced Director at the helm. The member county library branch managers share in the team development, have input for decision-making and goal setting despite the geographic distances. Monthly meetings are held at one location or via Skype. Open communication and movement in the same direction in unison is crucial. Different county libraries in a regional system each doing something differently is dysfunctional. A functional regional library system is current with five year plans, technology plans and complies with all requirements that a single county library must follow. For example, safety training, new employee orientation, disaster drills, MSDS notebooks, staff development, and annual evaluations should be in place. Each library including staff and supervisors should be engaged with the local communities and agencies collaborating when appropriate. A strong regional library system has one shared website and even though each library has its own name, all are under the umbrella of the regional library name on all letterhead, library cards, logos etc. Having all libraries follow same policies, procedures, fine schedules, and processes yields the best results. Team unity and vision can be achieved by a monthly staff newsletter and supervisor meetings so all staff feel like they are part of a larger unit. A portal for all staff documents also provides efficiencies and uniformity. Mentor all staff to obtain participation in grant seeking, book reviews, media releases, and programming. In other words, a functional regional library should embrace change, meet challenges, find solutions and not only survive the economic conditions, but flourish making the regional library system indispensable to the communities.**

Table 8-1. North Carolina Regional Library Directors' Thoughts on What Makes a Strong Regional System  
(Continued)

**Comment**

**Contact and advocacy at all levels-patrons, local boards, regional board members, all need to help in letting county commissioners/town commissioners see and know faces that they can associate with their public libraries.**

**I have also been lucky that turnover in county managers and most town managers has been at a low level over the last 10-12 years. It is a big plus not to have to reestablish relationships over and over again.**

**Funding at the local level has been tough the past six years. Many rural counties are still feeling great financial pain since 2008. I have seen a strong willingness on the part of local governments to continue to maintain support for public libraries even though this is a year by year struggle.**

**In short, I think a strong regional system is one that can provide a good variety of supporters for local funders to see.**

**Ditto about good staff. These are often friends and neighbors of elected officials.**

Table 8-1. North Carolina Regional Library Directors' Thoughts on What Makes a Strong Regional System  
(Continued)

**Comment**

**First, leadership by the Regional Library Director. Her/his knowledge base and continued learning. Participation in the profession statewide and nationally if possible. The former is essential, the latter may be done by keeping up with the literature and research. Partly based on the research from as far back as the 60's that indicate library success comes based on the personality of the librarian. But also my observations as a real librarian in the trenches and observations of my colleagues here in NC for whom I have the greatest respect and appreciation.**

**Second, a strong board whose members are knowledgeable (kept so by the Director) and strong advocates of the services provided. What we do and why we are doing it.**

**Third, regular personal communication with the funding agencies--- individual managers as well as individual council people. Especially by the Director with back up by Board members.**

**Fourth, financial support at local and state level. We would not have a prayer without state funding.**

**A good team of library staff! And I mean a team.**

Table 8-1. North Carolina Regional Library Directors' Thoughts on What Makes a Strong Regional System  
(Continued)

**Comment**

**I agree ... but would move adequate funding from State and Local governments to the forefront. Even a bad director can accidentally do great things for their service community if they are provided the financial resources to make good things happen.**

**A sufficient number of well trained and dedicated staff who receive decent financial compensation for their work. Good staff who are poorly paid may always be looking for other opportunities because they might feel undervalued. Of course not all well paid staff do great work either.**

**Local library board members who are willing to speak up/speak out for their library as a routine course of action, not just in times of financial need.**

**Mutual respect between libraries and their funding agencies. As outside agencies libraries can/are sometimes treated like red headed stepchildren (that's an old phrase – don't know if that is politically correct anymore). Becoming more and more difficult as the culture/attitudes of politics change. When you hear commissioners saying that "everyone has Internet at home" so we don't need public libraries does not lead to mutual admiration.**

Table 8-1. North Carolina Regional Library Directors' Thoughts on What Makes a Strong Regional System  
(Continued)

**Comment**

In my almost twenty years as the Director of a Regional Library System, my feelings are that a Regional Library benefits the most from strong central leadership. I may be slightly biased, as the XXX Regional Library System has always been very centralized, but I feel that this is the best way to ensure that all of the patrons of the various members of a Library System receive the same high level of service.

A centrally-run Library with an organized and proactive Director and professional staff can use the resources available to them most efficiently to process materials, offer services, and ensure happy patrons. I envision our Library's Headquarters as being like an air traffic control center, where we carefully observe how we can benefit those we serve the most and then direct our Library's resources to the various branch locations accordingly.

There are other factors that I feel are very important. The Library's leadership must have a very solid understanding of finance. At the most basic level, the Library is run like any other business or organization that has income and expenses, and a solid understanding of these elements is essential to ensuring that the Library is able to operate smoothly. And of course, having capable and talented staff members is an absolute must, especially at the professional level. The mid-level supervisors of a Library are the eyes and ears of the Administration, and having staff members who will take the initiative to diagnose and remedy problems within the Library plays a huge role in a Regional Library's success. With strong, centralized, professional staff, it is not necessary to have professional librarians at smaller, rural branches. With modern technology, staff can assist patrons at all locations with questions that require professional attention through email, fax, or telephone.

Finally, in order to ensure a strong Library System, the Library's Director and Board must serve as advocates to the local units of government to continue providing adequate funding to the Library. In the past, I have sometimes found it difficult to express to local administrators how critical their funding is to providing services to patrons. Directors of Regional Libraries may find it hard to convey that their counties or cities are part of the System and that their citizens are benefiting just as much as the other members. I feel that our local administrators finally understand how important their roles are in our Library System, and it is very gratifying to see how willing they now are to work with our Library to ensure that their citizens receive the absolute best library service possible.

- Strong regional library systems have unified goals. As one director noted, “Different county libraries in a regional system each doing something differently is dysfunctional.”
- Strong regional library systems have strong staff members, what one director called “well trained and dedicated staff who receive decent financial compensation for their work.”
- Individual library staff and library boards should advocate for their libraries in their communities. One director pointed out that local staff “should be engaged with the local communities and agencies collaborating when appropriate.” Another mentioned the importance of “Contact and advocacy at all levels.” Yet another cited “Local library board members who are willing to speak up/speak out for their library as a routine course of action, not just in times of financial need.”
- Strong regional libraries have strong funding at the local and state levels.

---

### **Is the CPC Regional Library Working for Craven County?**

---

The public libraries of Craven County derive several tangible benefits from membership in the CPC Regional Library System. The most important of these include:

- Regional staff who are able to provide assistance to all of the libraries in the regional system. These include the regional library director, who should be able to assist the directors of the individual libraries with a wide range of matters; a library technology coordinator, who should be able to ensure that the technologies employed in the member libraries are kept up to date and functioning; a technical services supervisor; and a bookkeeper. If the public libraries in Craven County did not have access to these staff members, then funding would need to be found to provide at least some similar positions, particularly a library technology coordinator.
- The integrated library system, which includes a circulation module that allows staff to check out materials and to manage reserves and overdues, an online

catalog that enables staff and users to access a wide range of library resources, and a cataloging module, which allows library staff to manage the central database of the library's holdings. If the public libraries in Craven County did not share the region's integrated library system, they would be forced to purchase and maintain one on their own, which could cost as much as \$100,000 to acquire and \$40,000 per year to maintain.

- The ability to borrow materials from any of the ten member libraries in the CPC Regional Library System. The public libraries in Craven County provide a total of 190,000 books to their users; another 165,000 books are available from the libraries in Carteret and Pamlico counties. Having access to all of these materials and knowing about them through the regional system's shared online catalog is a great advantage of membership in the CPC Regional Library System. A number of individuals who commented on the community survey and a number of those interviewed as part of this needs assessment commented on the value of this benefit. If the public libraries of Craven County did not have access to these materials, then either additional funding would be needed to provide more materials locally or service to library patrons would suffer noticeably.

Of course, more might be done to ensure that local libraries see tangible benefits from membership in the regional system, and regional staff members are encouraged to publicize the current benefits of membership as well as to explore other region-wide services that might make clear the advantages of belonging to the region, including region-wide staff training, programming, and marketing and advocacy efforts. The experiences of the other regional library systems in North Carolina and similar systems throughout the United States should be used to guide the staff of the CPC Regional Library System in these explorations.



## Chapter 9

### Recommendations

The following recommended areas for future focus are based on an analysis of demographic data and demographic trends for Craven County, usage and funding data and trends for the public libraries in Craven County, a survey of the citizens of Craven County, a survey of the staff members of the public libraries of Craven County, and information gleaned from meetings with the staff members and library board members in Craven County, focus groups made up of citizens from Craven County, interviews with local community leaders, and a space needs analysis of public library facilities in Craven County.

These recommendations represent the areas of focus that the project consultant feels would help the public libraries of Craven County best meet the needs of the citizens of Craven County.

---

#### Adult Reading

---

By far, the most frequently used service or resource among respondents to the recent community survey were books for adults; 64 per cent of respondents listed these as one of the most frequently used resources and services of the library. Books for adults were also the library resource or service most likely to be rated as very important by those who responded to the survey and the most frequently mentioned area for improvement by survey respondents.

The demographics of Craven County suggest that the population being served by the library is likely to be strong users of traditional, book-oriented library services in particular, especially in areas with higher levels of education, higher levels of wealth, and a larger percentage of the population 65 and over.

- More funding for books is needed. As noted above in conjunction with Table 5-1, relatively little money is being spent on materials by the public libraries in Craven

County. This is unfortunate, because even though the number of books per capita in the libraries is reasonably good and higher than the state median, the lack of funding for new materials will make it difficult for staff to keep collections current and to meet the demands of the libraries' users.

- The libraries should make available ebooks as well as traditional print books. Several New Bern patrons who were interviewed as part of this project expressed an interest in ebooks, and one added that providing ebooks would be “a good way to position [the library] for the future.” Respondents to the community survey and library staff also noted the need for ebooks.
- Readers' advisory services should be emphasized so that patrons know that the library staff are able to make book recommendations and help them with book selection. Training for staff in readers' advisory and on the use of readers' advisory tools like Novelist and Goodreads should be part of any emphasis on readers' advisory services.
- Books for young adults should be included in any emphasis on books for adults. Books for young adults were the fifth most important library resource or service, according to the respondents of the community survey.
- Book-related programs for adults and young adults should also be part of any emphasis on books for these age groups.
- The libraries in Craven County may wish to model the approaches taken by libraries like Wake County (NC) or Baltimore County (MD), which emphasized purchasing large numbers of popular materials like best sellers. This approach might be especially popular with the number of respondents who said that their use of the library was limited because the library doesn't have what they want. (See Table 3-9.)

---

### Children's Services

---

The relatively young population in Craven County (particularly those under 5 years of age) supports the need for strong children's programs and collections in the Craven County libraries. Public libraries have an important role to play in helping young

children build the skills needed to succeed in school, and this is especially true in a county that ranks 10th in the state in the percentage of its population under 5 years of age.

According to the recent community survey, books for children were the second most frequently used library resource or service, and books for children were also ranked as the second most important resource or service. In addition, programs for children were third most important resource or service, according to survey respondents.

Children's services will be especially important in areas with younger populations, which tend to have a large number of children.

- The Craven County public libraries appear to have very strong children's programs already, and the libraries should build on this strength by continuing to offer the programs that are in place and to expand these where possible.
- The libraries should focus on three aspects of children's services:
  - Building the skills needed to succeed in school through programs that get preschool children ready for school.
  - Supplementing the work of the school system for school-aged children by providing resources to help with school work.
  - Providing summer programs that prevent children from slipping out of practicing their reading skills (the "summer slide").
- All library facilities should have adequate spaces for children's programs. This may require the expansion or replacement of several existing library facilities, which are hampered by the lack of meeting rooms and adequate room for storytimes and other children's programs.

---

## Computers and Internet Access

---

According to an August 2013 Pew Research Center report, 30 per cent of all adults in the United States lack high-speed broadband Internet access at home.<sup>31</sup> Public libraries have an important role to play in providing access to the Internet for this large group of individuals, many of whom would have no other way to access job information, apply for jobs, access government information, and apply for government benefits.

Internet access computers were the third most frequently used library resource or service among the respondents to the recent community survey and were the second most frequently suggested area for improvement for the libraries.

Internet access computers and training on their use should be particularly important in areas with lower levels of education and areas with poorer populations.

- The most pressing need is for more Internet-accessible computers. Currently, the public libraries in Craven County provide approximately one computer per 2,386 individuals in the service area, well below the median for public libraries in North Carolina, which is 1,438. Given an estimated 2033 population of 109,292 for Craven County, the number of public computers needed by its public libraries in order to meet the current median for public libraries in the state would be 76, more than the current 44 public computers provided by the Craven County public libraries.
- The lack of public Internet workstations is a particular problem at the New Bern-Craven County Public Library; while that library has over three times the number of registered borrowers than Havelock, for example, it has just one more Internet access computer.
- The libraries should explore ways to provide both computer hardware and software in the most economical way possible. The CPC Regional Library

---

<sup>31</sup> Kathryn Zickuhr and Aaron Smith, "Home Broadband 2013." Available at <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Broadband/Findings.aspx>.

System, which includes the libraries in Craven County, has begun exploring a virtual desktop approach that would enable multiple computer clients (typically half a dozen) to share a single computer server, thus greatly reducing the cost of computer hardware and software to the libraries.

- In addition to providing more computers, it is important to ensure that existing computers are working. A large number of respondents to the recent community survey complained about computers not working, and some respondents even complained about specific computers that tend not to work well.
- Training for both patrons and staff is also extremely important. The New Bern-Craven County Public Library, in particular, does a very good job with patron training, and ways to expand this training to the other libraries in Craven County need to be explored.
- Because staff are frequently called upon to support the use of computers by patrons, they also need continual training in both hardware and software.

---

## Facilities

---

Chapter 7 of this report has examined the public library space needs for Craven County. As that chapter notes, the four public library facilities in Craven County currently total 39,849 square feet.

Several of the individuals who responded to the recent community survey noted the need for more space in the libraries or for specific improvements, like a private meeting room. Library board members in Cove City felt that their facility needed to be expanded. One noted that “50 children plus their parents came for the summer reading program” and that “so many people just flowed out of the tiny space.” Staff members at every public library in Craven County mentioned the need for more space or for specific areas like meeting rooms.

Chapter 7 of this report makes the following observations and recommendations:

- Based on widely used formulas for library space needs, the total gross space recommended for the public libraries of Craven County for the next 20 years is

64,480 square feet, an increase in the total allocated to public libraries in Craven County of 62 per cent.

- Based on the current distribution of public library facilities in North Carolina, a reasonable target for Craven County for the next 20 years is between four and six facilities.
- Additional space for meeting rooms and children's programming is recommended for the Cove City, Havelock, and Vanceboro libraries.
- The Havelock Public Library could be expanded to 14,262 square feet, based on its level of activity.
- The space allocated to the New Bern-Craven County Public Library is less than adequate, based on that library's level of activity and based on comments by various individuals who were interviewed as part of this project. However, because of the difficulties involved in expanding the Johnson Street facility on its current site and because of the convenience of the current location, this report recommends continuing to provide public library service from the existing 25,000 square foot facility but constructing a new library in another part of Craven County.
- The current New Bern facility could provide a reduced level of library services to adults and children in downtown New Bern, could support local history and genealogy services through an expanded Kellenberger Room, and could house the CPC Regional Library's offices.
- One or two new facilities could be built in Craven County. The total square footage allocated to these facilities should be between 17,169 and 21,625 square feet. The most reasonable locations for new facilities would appear to be the River Bend and Trent Woods area, the Bridgeton and Fairfield Harbour area, and the Brices Creek and James City area.
- The appropriate individuals – library staff, library board members, or local government officials – should consider hiring a space needs consultant who specializes in public libraries to help develop a building program for the new facility or facilities.

- The appropriate individuals should also begin considering questions about funding for any construction, staffing for expanded or new facilities, and funding for ongoing operations.

---

### Genealogy and Local History

---

Genealogy and local history resources and services represent an important aspect of library service and one that is particularly important in a town as rich in local history as New Bern. The New Bern-Craven County Public Library is lucky to have one of the finest such collections in the state in its Kellenberger Room, and these resources and services should continue to be a central focus of that library.

Several staff members named the Kellenberger Room when asked to list the strengths of the New Bern-Craven County Public Library. Several library patrons praised the staff of the Kellenberger Room during interviews.

- If a new public library facility is built in Craven County and staff, collections, and resources are moved from the present New Bern-Craven County Public Library, the facility on Johnson Street could support local history and genealogy services through an expanded Kellenberger Room. New Bern library board members mentioned the need for more space for the Kellenberger Room.
- The importance of collaborations with the many local history and genealogy groups in New Bern and Craven County cannot be overemphasized.
- The staff of the Kellenberger Room are also encouraged to use the technologies to enhance access to local history and genealogy resources. Providing additional online resources and digitizing the library's archival collections will make local history and genealogy information more accessible to a wider range of users and preserve valuable materials against the damage associated with the use of such items. It is also likely that a strong digitization effort will raise the profile of the library, both in the county and in the wider research community.
- The staff of the Kellenberger Room are also encouraged to consider pursuing external funding to assist with any efforts to make the collections more

accessible, through digitization or other means. The State Library of North Carolina's LSTA Access and Digitization Project Grants program may be of particular interest.

---

### Integrated Library System

---

The libraries in Craven County share an OCLC integrated library system with all of the libraries in the CPC Regional Library System. The system provides a circulation module that allows staff to check out materials and to manage reserves and overdues, an online catalog that enables staff and users to access a wide range of library resources, and a cataloging module, which allows library staff to manage the central database of the library's holdings. The fact that every public library in North Carolina uses an integrated library system is evidence of their utility in helping library staff members serve their patrons.

However, there are some significant problems with the OCLC integrated library system that the public libraries in Craven County use. Several respondents to the community survey expressed concerns about various components of the library's system, including the online catalog (which one person described as "totally unsatisfactory") and the system for placing items on reserve.

A number of the library patrons and community leaders who were interviewed also complained about the system. Again, the major complaint focused on the system's problems with holds on books. Several individuals described incidents where a book would be placed on hold and then later no longer be on hold.

Staff members also mentioned the frequent problems that patrons have placing items on reserve and the tendency of the system to mishandle these transactions.

- The staff of the CPC Regional Library System should continue to work with OCLC to make improvements to the integrated library system and to resolve the problems with placing items on reserve in particular.
- In the event that these problems are not resolved to the satisfaction of staff members, the staff of the CPC Regional Library System should consider



switching to a different vendor, as soon as the contract with OCLC has expired. One very promising alternative is the NC Cardinal system that is being sponsored by the State Library of North Carolina.

- Libraries apply for LSTA funding to join the NC Cardinal system. If approved, there is no cost for the first two years of membership in the system, which includes migration from the old system to NC Cardinal and all staff training on the new system.
- Annual costs beginning in the third year vary depending on the size of the library, but annual costs for the CPC Regional Library System are likely to be less than \$30,000.
- Four other regional library systems and 15 county libraries currently belong to the NC Cardinal system.
- Member libraries can borrow materials from one another, much as the Craven County libraries can borrow materials from other libraries in the CPC Regional Library System. This service would provide users of the Craven County libraries with access to roughly 4.2 million items from the libraries that currently belong to NC Cardinal.
- Because the NC Cardinal system is a hosted, cloud-based system, local staff expertise and workload are minimized.
- If interested, staff members of the CPC Regional Library System can obtain further information about NC Cardinal from Tanya Prokrym, the NC Cardinal Program Manager, at the State Library of North Carolina.

---

### **Local Funding and Funding Patterns**

---

Craven County provides an adequate level of funding for its public libraries. As Table 5-1 earlier notes, total per capita funding for the libraries in 2011-2012 was \$13.04, just below the state median for county and regional libraries of \$13.26. The libraries represent approximately 1.5 per cent of the total county budget, which is slightly better than the median for county and regional libraries in North Carolina.

Nevertheless, several points should be made.

- First, while the public libraries in Craven County are funded near the state median, more local funding will be needed to improve library services by a significant amount. If local citizens wish to have a higher quality of library service in Craven County, then they need to work with library boards and Friends groups to advocate for increased funding.
- A long-term goal for public library funding in the county could be established and a strong program of advocacy could be initiated. For example, if the goal were to fund the public libraries in Craven County at a level equal to the top one-third of county and regional libraries in North Carolina, local funding would need to increase to \$16.45 per capita, an increase of 26 per cent.
- There are also questions about how county funds are currently distributed to the four public libraries in Craven County. As Tables 9-1 and 9-2 on the following page show, at present, the Havelock Public Library receives a smaller share of county funds than would be warranted based on that library's level of activity. (Havelock receives only 9 per cent of the county funds while representing 14 per cent of the circulation among the county's libraries and 22 per cent of the registered borrowers.) While it is reasonable to provide a minimal level of funding to smaller libraries like Cove City and Vanceboro, regardless of their level of activity, local officials need to find a way to more equitably distribute local funding based on a library's level of activity.
- The current practice of allowing towns to supplement county funds is reasonable, and the county might consider some sort of matching arrangement to encourage all of the towns to provide funding to their libraries.

Table 9-1. County Funding to Town Libraries and Levels of Activity – Totals

Library	County Funding	Circulation	Registered Borrowers
<b>Cove City</b>	<b>\$86,234</b>	<b>9,954</b>	<b>2,877</b>
<b>Havelock</b>	<b>\$113,887</b>	<b>44,790</b>	<b>19,851</b>
<b>New Bern</b>	<b>\$977,514</b>	<b>256,086</b>	<b>63,514</b>
<b>Vanceboro</b>	<b>\$70,688</b>	<b>9,343</b>	<b>3,507</b>

Table 9-2. County Funding to Town Libraries and Levels of Activity – Percentages

Library	County Funding	Circulation	Registered Borrowers
<b>Cove City</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Havelock</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>New Bern</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>Vanceboro</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>

---

### Marketing and Advocacy

---

It is extremely important for the staff members of the libraries in Craven County to better market their resources and services and for library board members, Friends of the Library members, and other library supporters to better advocate for the libraries. This need was pointed out by several members of the community, including one who noted that “It would be good to hear more about [library] usage and budgets” and pointed out that this information “could be used to sell the library.”

- The importance of the libraries’ Websites cannot be overemphasized as a way of marketing the resources and services of the libraries. Respondents to the recent community survey ranked the Website as the fourth most heavily used and the fourth most important library resource. Two of the Craven County libraries (Cove City and Vanceboro) do not currently have Websites, and this situation needs to

be addressed, either by local staff or regional library staff. Even simple Websites designed on the LibGuides model would prove helpful.

- It is especially important to provide information about the libraries' activities to local government officials. In the interviews, one local government official complained that he did not receive user data for the library. Local government officials cannot be expected to make informed decisions about library funding without this kind of information.
- The libraries in Craven County or the CPC Regional Library System may wish to investigate a product such as Ebsco's LibraryAware, which helps libraries create and deliver high-quality promotional materials.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> See <http://www.ebscohost.com/novelist/libraryaware> for details.