

Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity

A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library



2007





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"Helping Communities and Organizations Create Their Best Futures"

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A Unique Public Library Serving a Unique City

San Francisco is a city rich with legend and history, whose beloved icons, including the Golden Gate Bridge, cable cars, steep hills, and colorful homes, are imprinted on our national consciousness. This city in the mind's eye is inhabited by a diverse population including the bohemians of the 1960s cultural revolution; recent immigrants creating a new future for themselves; members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender population asserting and celebrating their rights and culture; and the knowledge workers of the high-tech economy.

Embedded in this brew of postcard images and cast of imaginary characters is a true sense of San Francisco's identity. This is a dynamic and forward-looking city of dense urbanism and vibrant neighborhoods, populated by residents who value diversity, democracy, equality of access and opportunity, and an active intellectual life.

The San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) is both a symbol of San Francisco and a direct contributor to what makes San Francisco the place that it is. SFPL has evolved to be a characteristically San Franciscan institution uniquely suited to serve this city and its inhabitants. This

is most evidenced in SFPL's specialized services for entrepreneurs and job seekers; the library's exceptional partnering with the San Francisco Unified School District and the early literacy community; the support and resources the institution provides for the city's most vulnerable populations; and the library's role in helping define and celebrate San Francisco's diverse populations and distinct neighborhoods.

This report describes and — when possible — quantifies the value which the library system provides to the San Francisco community. We approach this task with a broad perspective and consider the many different roles the library plays. We attempt to describe community benefits stemming from the direct provision of services, including the circulation of materials, the availability of public access computing, meeting room space, and other

functions, as well as the library's more indirect impacts on the San Francisco community.

We use the Benefit Assessment Framework illustrated in Exhibit 1 to describe and analyze the diverse array of benefits provided by SFPL.

Enriching Personal Learning and Recreation

San Francisco has a rich literary and intellectual history, including the Beatniks of the 1950s; the political, social and cultural revolution of the 1960s, the gay rights movement of the 1970s, and the high-tech boom of the 1990s. Along with its coffee shops, book shops, and institutions of higher learning, San Francisco Public Library plays a key role in contributing to this intellectual vitality. The library provides free and open access to more than 7.5 million printed and multi-media items, with more than 7 million items circulating annually, as well as a wealth of non-circulating reference materials, special collections, and more than 80 data-rich on-line databases.



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Exhibit 1
Benefit Assessment Framework

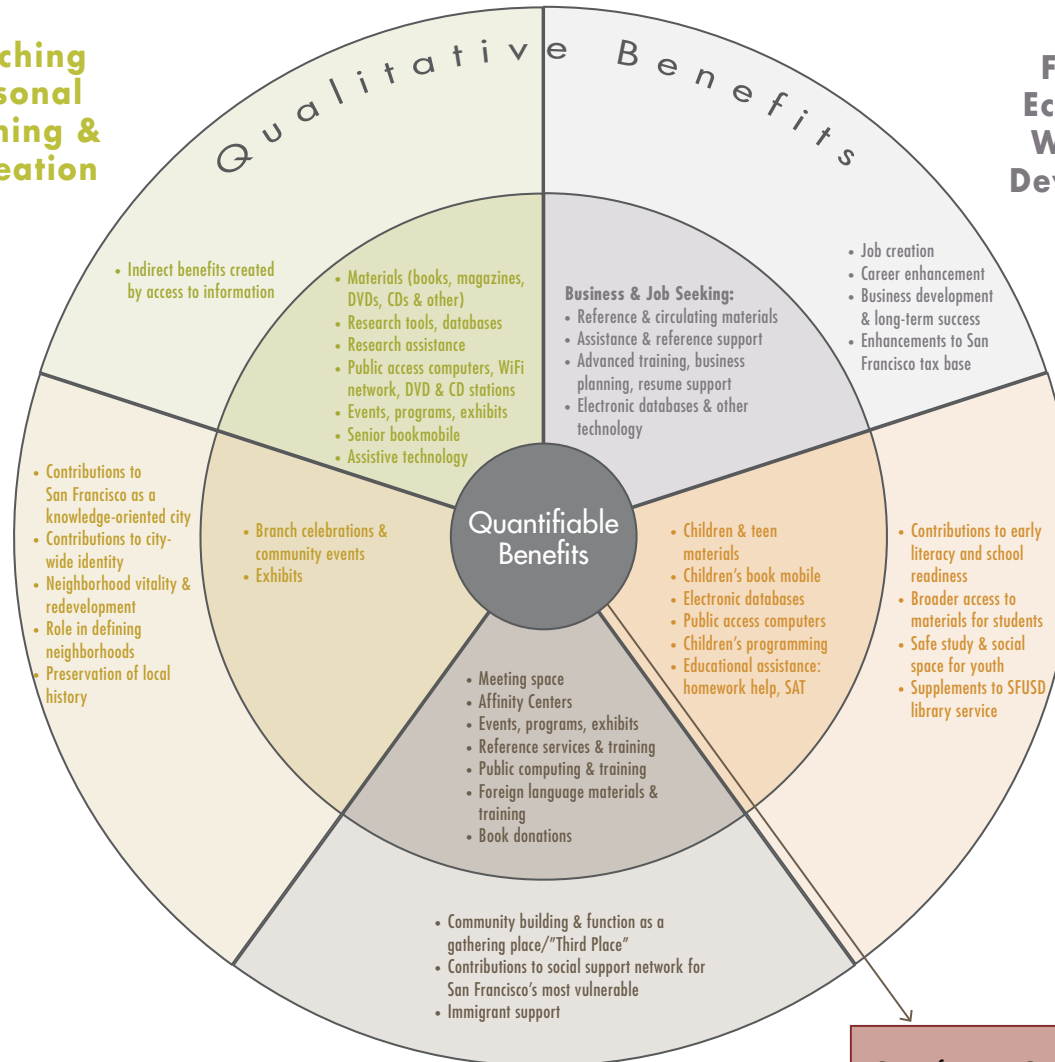
Enhancing Image & Identity for San Francisco & its Neighborhoods

Enriching Personal Learning & Recreation

Fostering Economic & Workforce Development

Partnering for Education & Early Literacy

Creating & Strengthening Communities



$$\frac{\text{Benefit}}{\text{Cost}} = \frac{\text{Benefits of Direct Services}}{\text{Cost of Library Operations}}$$

A Unique Public Library to Serve a Unique City

To help patrons find the answers they need in this ever-growing and ever more complicated sea of information, SFPL employs more than 200 reference librarians who respond to questions in-person, over the phone, and by email—with some reference services now available 24 hours a day. Many librarians hold specialized and expert knowledge not only of the resources they provide, but of the subject matter itself.

SFPL provides free patron access to an array of technologies, including a total of 407 Internet computers; word processing terminals; children's computers; and computers equipped with enabling technology for people with disabilities, as well as DVD and CD viewing and listening stations. While the free availability of these tools may be of value to anyone, this benefit is of greatest importance to those members of the San Francisco community who might not otherwise be able to access these costly resources across the digital divide.



Partnering for Education and Early Literacy

SFPL's strong partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) is a defining characteristic of the library system, with SFPL serving as an extension of the district's resource-constrained libraries. SFPL's print collections and on-line databases augment SFUSD resources and library staff provide important support for students, both in the library and in the classroom.

SFPL plays both direct and supporting roles in encouraging early literacy and school readiness among San Francisco's youth. Recognizing the importance of these skills for individuals, families, and communities, SFPL has dedicated staff who actively partner with parents, caregivers, and other early literacy and early education professionals. The library provides a wide range of stimulating programming encouraging youth to read outside the classroom, explore cultural interests, and become lifelong

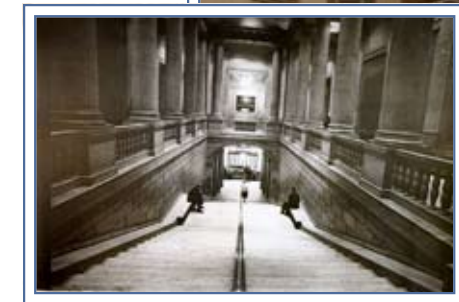
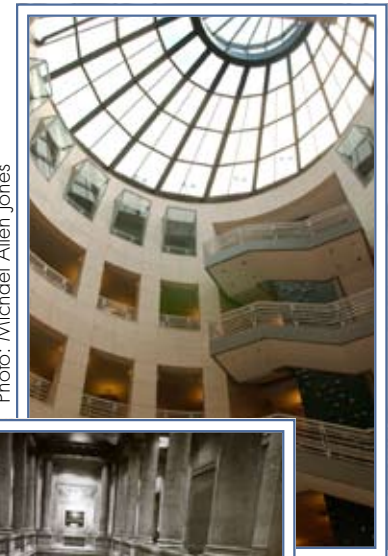


Photo: Michael Allen Jones



learners. This programming includes book talks, storytelling, summer reading programs, art courses, and practical classes such as SAT preparation. SFPL also provides free on-line homework assistance in math, science, and English, and serves as a safe, supervised place for children to gather after school and on weekends.

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Fostering Economic and Workforce Development

San Francisco is home to a wide range of entrepreneurs and job seekers, from individuals seeking baseline employment to the founder of Silicon Valley's next hot technology start-up. These individuals benefit in particular from SFPL's specialized centers, such as the Business, Science, and Technology Center; the Small Business Center; and the Jobs and Careers Center. The expert staff support and specialized resources of these centers are sought out by entrepreneurs researching patents and conducting market research to develop business plans and attract investors; small business owners seeking San Francisco-specific market and competitive information; investors analyzing market opportunities; and job seekers needing help with resume development or access to on-line job postings.

SFPL's Government Information Center has served as a government documents depository since the 1800's, housing more than two million documents worth over \$20 million.

Creating and Strengthening Communities

SFPL is a critical piece of San Francisco's vibrant cultural fabric, helping to make the city a dynamic and livable place. SFPL plays an important role supporting and enriching the ethnically and economically diverse populations that call San Francisco home. Neighbors frequent the libraries as a familiar "Third Place" that is neither home nor work. They attend book readings, film screenings, and discussion groups and use the library's meeting rooms for gatherings of political, civic, and social groups. For families with children—many of whom face severe economic challenges to stay in San Francisco—SFPL is a valued free resource and frequent destination.

For the city's most vulnerable, SFPL is a place of refuge and connection. With the implementation of a database and dedicated training, SFPL staff connect the city's neediest with appropriate social service agencies. For San Francisco's large immigrant population the library is a connection to

their home cultures and lands, as well as an important resource in becoming successful in their new home. The library carries items in more than 30 languages and library staff members speak a total of more than 20 languages.

SFPL's Affinity Centers celebrate and serve as a focal point for many of the city's sub-cultures, including various ethnic groups and San Francisco's gay and lesbian communities.



A Unique Public Library to Serve a Unique City

San Francisco Public Library Plays Many Roles

SFPL has adapted to the evolving demands of its patrons by broadening its roles, partnering with other organizations in the community, and providing an increasingly diverse and sophisticated array of materials. For those who think of libraries as repositories of printed material, consider the many roles the San Francisco Public Library plays:

- **Lender** of books, magazines, newspapers, DVDs and video cassettes, CDs and tapes, books on tape and CD, e-books, downloadable audio books, maps, computer files, and electronic databases
- **Provider** of public access computers and wireless computer networks
- **Partner** with the San Francisco Unified School District and contributor to early childhood and adult literacy
- **Facilitator** of connections to needed social services
- **Supporter** of small and larger businesses, as well as government offices
- **Recorder and archiver** of history
- **Curator** of rare and unique special collections
- **Host** for dynamic cultural and artistic exhibits
- **Catalyst** for quality of life, neighborhood identity, and economic revitalization

With these many roles, consider too, the diversity of users, including pleasure readers, researchers, children and families, the homeless, small business owners, government employees, recent immigrants, and many, many others of all ages, from all cultures, and speakers of a multitude of languages.

*Our libraries serve residents of all ages and backgrounds and impact the health of our city in innumerable ways. **As a community center, a neighborhood anchor, an educational resource, and an economic incubator, our libraries are a critical component of what makes San Francisco a livable and thriving city.***

Aaron Peskin, President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors

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Enhancing the Image and Identity of San Francisco and its Neighborhoods

SFPL contributes to San Francisco's image as a diverse community and a knowledge-oriented and ecologically-minded city. These attributes enhance its attractiveness to potential residents, workers, and employers.

While the city is home to more than three quarters of a million people in only about 50 square miles, this dense population is dispersed into smaller neighborhoods and districts, each with its own personality and neighborhood feel. Twenty-seven of these neighborhoods have their own branch of the San Francisco Public Library, providing easy access to library



resources while also helping to define and reflect the unique character and identity of each neighborhood. Through specialized collections and tailored programming, each branch library caters to the specific needs and interests of the population that lives around it.

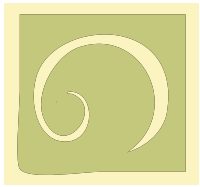
SFPL also serves a vital San Francisco cultural destination providing many diverse cultural programs and exhibits. The library also actively records local history, being one of the few libraries in the country with on-staff archivists.

The San Francisco Public Library's contributions to the health and vitality of our city are essential and vast. SFPL is an extraordinary civic institution, unique in its consistent ability to reach and serve diverse populations with great impact and longevity.

I'm consistently amazed at the variety of ways that SFPL benefits our city: educating children, enhancing the lives of seniors, providing resources to immigrants, creating communities, empowering entrepreneurs, making our city more livable for families. San Francisco depends on its library as a vital city service and San Francisco neighborhoods depend on their branch libraries as anchors for their communities.

*San Franciscans take great pride in this City's diversity, history and beauty; we are a population for whom civic engagement, cultural exploration, artistic adventures and the embrace of new ideas are core values. The library not only perfectly represents the principles of our community, it answers the needs of each and every San Francisco citizen. **It is public in the very best sense of the word: of and for all people.***

Mayor Gavin Newsom, City of San Francisco



Enriching Personal Learning and Recreation

"The San Francisco Public Library is dedicated to free and equal access to information, knowledge, independent learning and the joys of reading for our diverse community"

- San Francisco Public Library Mission Statement

San Francisco has always been a city that reads, consistently ranking among the top ten in the annual listing of America's "most literate cities*." Today, as the city's population not only reads books but downloads e-books, emails reference questions 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and seeks immediate access to obscure facts, SFPL has evolved to meet those needs.

Providing Access to a Wealth of Materials

A primary function of libraries is to provide access to materials for use in a wide variety of personal recreation, learning, and enrichment activities. These uses may range from pleasure reading to efforts at self-improvement to research on local history, family genealogy, or any other topic of interest. Whether the purpose is recreation, language- or skill-development, or simply answering a pressing question, San Francisco residents

frequently turn to their local library for the resources and answers they seek.

SFPL maintains an enormous collection of over 7.5 million total print and multimedia materials, with more than 7 million items circulating through branches and the Main Library between July 2005 and June 2006, equal to approximately 10 items per capita. Increasingly, this information is contained in a range of media formats. In addition to printed materials including books, magazines, and newspapers



(referred to as "treeware" by some), users are able to access DVDs and video cassettes, CDs and tapes, books on tape and CD, e-books, downloadable audio books, maps, computer files, and electronic databases. These materials are available in multiple languages and serve users of all ages.

SFPL maintains an enormous collection of over 7.5 million total print and multimedia materials. Between July 2005 and June 2006, over 7 million items circulated through branches and the Main Library.

Beyond its general collections, SFPL maintains many special collections. These collections include circulating and non-circulating materials organized into specific areas of interest, allowing patrons

*2006 (<http://www.ccsu.edu/amlc06/>); 2005 (<http://www.ccsu.edu/amlc/>) and 2004 (http://www.uww.edu/marketingandmedia/special_reports/cities/)

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to easily find and use the full range of information. Many branch libraries have specific children and teen areas. The Main Library houses the Art, Music, and Recreation Center; the Book Arts and Special Collections Center; the Business, Science, and Technology Center; the Deaf Services Center; the Environmental Center; the Educational Guidance Collection; the Library for the Blind and Print Disabled; and the International Center, among others. While SFPL is not a research library, some of these special collections have been developed to the level one would expect of a research institution, creating invaluable resources on specific topics including San Francisco history, business, and gay and lesbian studies.

SFPL maintains general reference resources in the Main Library and each of the system's 27 branch libraries, as well as searchable electronic databases accessible from the library website or on library terminals. Patrons posted nearly 1.6 million queries to these databases during the 2005-06 fiscal year, searching for media references, biographical information, college catalogs, business research, on-line maps, and even recommendations for what book to read next.

Answering Questions and Providing Expert Assistance

SFPL staff actively works with patrons to find the information they need. SFPL employs 203 full-time-equivalent reference librarians to answer patron questions posed in person, by e-mail, or by phone. The Ask Now live online reference service provides access to reference assistance 24 hours a day. Library reference staff responded to nearly one million queries during the 2005-06 fiscal year, with

questions ranging from simple, easily addressed fact checking to requests for in-depth research assistance. As patrons are increasingly able to answer simpler questions with on-line resources, a higher percentage of questions posed to reference staff are more complex and in-depth in nature.

More than 20 SFPL librarians are multilingual and spend a significant portion of their time assisting patrons who speak languages other than English. Many librarians are trained experts in specific fields including business and career development, San Francisco history, children's literature and resources, arts and music, and more. These individuals provide subject matter expertise that may extend beyond searching for a desired resource to actually interpreting the information once found.



Enriching Personal Learning and Recreation

Enabling Access to Technology

SFPL has responded to the growing importance of electronic information and communication by making public access to technology a priority. SFPL provides free patron access to a total of 407 Internet computers; word processing terminals; children's computers; and computers equipped with enabling technology for people with disabilities, as well as DVD and CD viewing and listening stations. The library provides public wireless network access (WiFi) at the Main Library and in 16 branches, with plans to extend coverage to all branches.

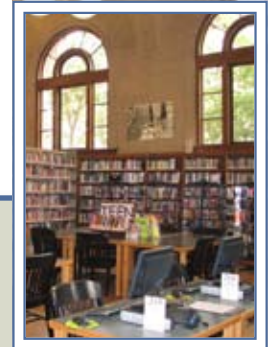
These technologies can be used by any patron to browse the Internet, send and receive email, write letters, develop resumes, or complete other tasks. While the library's provision of these tools may be of value to anyone, this benefit is of greatest importance to those members of the San Francisco community who might not otherwise be able to access these costly resources across the "digital divide." The value of this benefit is further described in the Enhancing the Image and Identity of San Francisco and Its Neighborhoods section.

SFPL Supports Special-Needs Populations

SFPL provides important resources for San Francisco residents with special needs. SFPL's Library for the Blind provides refreshable Braille displays and Braille printers, both of which are prohibitively expensive for individual purchase. The Library for the Blind also offers audio books on CD from the Library of Congress and "descriptive videos," in which a narrator on a second audio track describes the action in commercially available movies or public programming videos.

SFPL also offers screens with enlarged print and increased color contrast for those with difficulty seeing; assistive listening devices for those who are hard of hearing; and software that reads aloud the text on the monitor.

Many people use videos available at SFPL to train in American Sign Language (ASL). According to Marti Goddard, the Access Services Manager, people often come to the library to train in ASL to become interpreters for the deaf.



*The library is one of the best examples of a public institution that can empower its community through access to resources and knowledge. While information is readily available online, **virtual resources simply cannot take the place of the connections that are forged in real time and the depth of information and resources that are available for everyone at the library.***

David Blazeovich, Senior Programmer, The Bernard Osher Foundation



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Welcoming those with Limited Mobility and Reaching out to Seniors and the Homebound

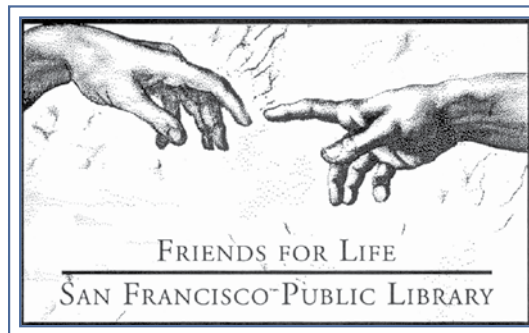
SFPL strives to make its libraries accessible to all and to provide services outside of the library for those who cannot easily travel.

The Main Library is currently fully accessible to individuals with limited mobility, with automatic entrance doors, full ramp and elevator access to all departments, and a variety of special equipment. The system's branch libraries are being renovated and retrofitted to make them fully accessible as well. Inside the library, volunteers and staff are available to assist with photocopying, catalog searches, finding items, and even reading aloud from library materials.

SFPL provides Friends for Life services for homebound San Franciscans, allowing these individuals to apply for library cards from home, borrow books and "Talking Books" by mail, and listen to local and national newspapers over the telephone.

SFPL's Library on Wheels makes regularly scheduled stops at more than forty senior residential facilities, adult day health

centers, and food banks around the city. This bookmobile features English-language books and magazines (including large print), an in-depth collection on health issues affecting older adults, audio books, language learning programs, classical and popular music in various languages, and smaller collections of children's books and materials in Chinese, Russian, and Spanish.



The library, like education, is the "great equalizer." The specific characteristics of SFPL services that create benefits to children and families are that they can be easily accessed throughout the city six days a week or more; that they give children and families of all socio-economic backgrounds the opportunity to make use of the facilities and resources; and that they offer a rich variety of culturally relevant programs and activities that appeal to a broad age range.

Alan V. Broussard, Director, Program Quality & Enhancement, San Francisco Unified School District Child Development Program





Partnering for Education and Early Literacy

SFPL makes important contributions to the education of San Francisco's youth through a strong partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District. The public library system serves as an extension of the district's libraries and supplements district materials with deeper, broader, and more diverse collections. SFPL also plays an important role in supporting early literacy and school readiness by promoting reading among the very young.

A San Francisco Partnership: Enhancing the Public School System

The synergy between SFPL and the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) creates one of the most important and unique benefits provided by the library. SFPL can be seen as functioning as an extension of the school district, providing essential support for the city's public school system.

California's public schools today are significantly underfunded in comparison to others in the nation as a result of Proposition 13, passed by voters in 1978, and other factors. This has

forced many school districts in the state, including SFUSD, to cut resources for school libraries.

While SFUSD is able to maintain similar student/teacher ratios as other cities of similar size around the country, the district's ratio of library staff per student is considerably lower. Generally, other cities of comparable size have one Librarian/Media Specialist for between 400 and 800 students. In comparison, San Francisco has 3,175 students per library staff member. Student access to SFPL librarians enhances the few library staff the school district is able to employ.

While SFUSD has equipped each school with a library, in many cases this facility is simply a small room stocked with few materials. Some are staffed with a librarian while others are not. Ann Dalton, Executive Director of Libraries, Technical, and Media Services for the school district, describes the district's libraries as "rooms of books," without the value full-time

The library setting is uniquely rich and perfectly poised to honor and share the importance of literacy as the foundation for school and life success.

Mardi Lucich, Citywide Child Care Administrator, San Francisco Department of Children, Youth & Their Families



librarians provide in helping students locate the information they need.

While San Francisco voters recently approved additional

funding for middle school librarians, the district will continue to depend on SFPL's resources to provide adequate library functions for its students.

SFPL Resources Augment or Reduce the Need for SFUSD Investments. The neighborhood presence of the San Francisco Library alleviates the school district from having to provide duplicative access, allowing the district to focus its

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limited resources on other aspects of the educational system. In describing this relationship Dalton says, "It would be devastating if SFPL did not provide students with the access the library currently provides. We need their materials, we need their librarians."

SFPL provides access to resources the school district otherwise could not afford:

- The library's **general collections** are significantly larger and more current than SFUSD's. Many teachers believe that access to these materials, including contemporary popular titles, engages student interest in the world in a way that standard school texts may not.
- According to Dalton and Rachelle Resnick, SFUSD Library Media Teacher, the SFPL's searchable **electronic databases** are one of the primary SFPL resources utilized by students. Currently, the district provides two databases for students. Without access to SFPL's resources, Refnick estimates that the district would need to purchase a minimum of 10 additional databases. At an estimated cost of \$0.80 to \$1.00

per student annually, with 57,000 students in the district, this would mean an additional cost to the school district of \$456,000 to \$570,000 per year.

- Several times a year, SFPL coordinates with the district to host full-day **author events** in schools. In such cases, authors generally make three different presentations at different schools. The

school district would likely not offer this programming on its own, with authors generally charging \$1,000 to \$3,000 per day, not including travel expenses.

- **SFPL librarians** introduce students to the world of information available to them, and teach them the skills to navigate these resources to find the specific information they need.

The Library Provides Greater Breadth and Freer Access to Materials

Ann Dalton, Executive Director of Libraries, Technical, and Media Services for the San Francisco Unified School District, believes that SFPL provides access to materials in a way no other institution can: "Access for youth is free and clear, with no judgment and no requirements. This is important in the development of democratic citizens."

According to Dalton, "Children need to be encouraged to read more – and to read beyond the curriculum." The library is able to offer students access to more materials than schools can, and "the fact that the public library couldn't be more anonymous [is attractive to students]. While school libraries are hesitant to buy edgier graphic novels, access to contemporary literature can encourage a love of reading and learning that so-called 'educational resources' couldn't."

*Dalton explains that, "Schools shield kids more. **The library's focus on freedom of information is an invaluable resource for students.**" By allowing students to access materials, they experience a different way of learning and make active choices about the books they read.*

Partnering for Education and Early Literacy

Assisting Teachers. Teachers and staff, as well as students, benefit from the relationship with SFPL. The library offers training for teachers on library resources and research methods. Library and research technology is changing rapidly and this training allows teachers to keep up to speed on information and computer technology.

Contributing to Early Literacy and School Readiness

SFPL has made strong commitments to encouraging early literacy and preparing children for success in schools by hiring an Early Literacy Specialist and expanding related programming and space in branch libraries. In a society in which education increasingly makes the difference between economic challenges and financial well-being, SFPL's efforts are increasingly important. While this may be particularly true for students in low-income or non-English speaking households, the library's encouragement of reading benefits all young people.

Providing Materials for those without Other Access. For some San Francisco families, SFPL's greatest contribution to

literacy is in its role of resource provisions, making books and other resources freely available. Betsy Keever, Interim Director of the non-profit Raising A Reader stated, "We work with 7,000 families, many of whom have no books in their homes. Free access to high quality books and library resources is critical to our program's goal of promoting early literacy within the city's hardest to reach families." The SFPL's provision of books in many languages is also important for immigrant communities, providing a connection to home or heritage cultures.

Promoting Family Literacy. SFPL engages in considerable outreach to encourage parents to read with their children. The library provides recommended reading lists, rhyming booklets, and even a baby/toddler summer reading club log with suggested literacy-promoting activities.

SFPL staff also get directly involved with children through weekly programming for young children ages under five at 27 branch libraries, the Main Library Children's Center, and the children's bookmobile. These efforts take the form of preschool storytimes and "lapsits" during which babies, toddlers, and caregivers enjoy rhymes, books, and songs.

The library is a physical place where thousands of books are showcased. Thus ***the library is a symbol that books and reading are valued in our culture.***

An important part of early literacy is exposure to print and books. The library provides a physical place for the community to browse and borrow books. This exposure sends an important message to children that books and the printed word are important.

Sheila Butcher Smith, Project Manager,
Early Learning, KQED, Education
Network



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Collaborating with and Empowering Other Professionals.

SFPL staff provide early literacy workshops free of charge for parents, caregivers, childcare providers, and community organizations working with children younger than five. These professional development opportunities are highly regarded by the early childhood education community, as are SFPL's collaborative efforts to partner with other organizations working in the field. SFPL staff was described by one partner as "flexible, creative, and amicable," with another stating that "We work together with the library on every level, from having their staff on our Advisory Board to provide guide and expertise in early literacy training to producing joint trainings, sharing resources, and creating early literacy partnerships."

While past theory held that the ability to read should be taught in elementary school, "current literacy development theory emphasizes the more natural unfolding of skills through the enjoyment of books, the importance of positive interactions between young children and adults who read, and the critical role of literacy-rich experiences."

Urban Libraries Council, 2007

Supporting Better Personal and Community Outcomes.

In its direct and collaborative early literacy work with children, parents, caregivers, and other professionals, SFPL is creating substantial benefits not just for individuals, but for families, communities, and the city as a whole. The benefits of early literacy and school readiness ripple and magnify in ways that are not wholly understood. A number of important studies, recently summarized in the 2007 Urban Libraries Council (ULC) publication "Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development," describe the returns of investments in early literacy, including improved performance in elementary grades and enhanced success of later education, youth development, and job skills training efforts. Investments in early literacy are described as exceptionally cost-effective economic development strategies, providing substantial returns to society as a whole (ULC, 2007).



Programming for Youth and Teens: Encouraging Creativity and Supporting Success in School

SFPL offers a wide range of programming encouraging teens and youth to explore reading outside a classroom setting and be lifelong learners. Programs for youth provide early exposure to reading and other educational and cultural experiences, ranging from traditional story times with authors or librarians to participatory performance pieces with dancers, musicians, and local artists:

Partnering for Education and Early Literacy

- Every year, SFPL youth librarians visit local elementary, middle, and high schools and host class visits to the library. During these visits, librarians: promote reading and support literacy development through **“book talks”** (similar to book clubs), **storytelling**, and **introductions to summer reading programs and events**. These visits build student competence and independence by introducing them to the basic structure and organization of the library, enabling them to navigate its resources for their needs and encouraging the development of information literacy.



*Our public libraries provide important tools for today's youth by providing access to information that will expand their perspectives. Young people are enabled by this to develop their potential in a productive and positive manner. This kind of constructive engagement **keeps young people focused and shepherds them away from unproductive and potentially harmful activities.***

Chief Heather Fong, City and County of San Francisco Police Department

- Some library programs focus on inspiring youth to explore their creative outlets through **poetry slams, knitting clubs, and classes in drawing comics, playwriting, mural making, and cartooning**. Young children are given the opportunity to experiment with **origami, bookmaking, and painting**.
- Many SFPL programs for youth are focused specifically on helping students succeed in school, get accepted to college, or find a fulfilling career. SFPL offers **practical classes** in study techniques, basic and advanced workshops for taking the SATs, instruction on getting financial aid, general college information, career planning, resume writing, and other relevant topics.
- In addition to reference librarian resources, SFPL provides free on-line tutoring assistance – **“homework help”** – in math, science, English, and social studies through the Tutor.com service every day from 2:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Students with questions can log on and receive real-time assistance through the Internet.



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The Library Serves as a Safe Haven after School and on Weekends

The library's resources are very valuable for students and families after school hours and on weekends, when neighborhood branches serve as quiet, supervised community space for youth to study, read, or socialize. Students use the library to do research, study individually, or collaborate on school projects. They also access the Internet, listen to music, and read for recreation. Principal Leslie Trook from AP Giannini Middle School notes, "It's a pleasure to see so many of my students in the library, finding the kinds of books they want to read—like those Harry Potter books. It amazes me to see the number of kids that read those big books!"

Some San Franciscans might say the library is outmoded, that the Internet has replaced the library. But reality doesn't jibe with that. There are no libraries in San Francisco elementary schools, so the library is often the first resource for young children to access books. In underserved communities, the library is a safe place to go to engage in fun and educational activities. And while the Internet has taken a primary role in research, the Internet exists for some people only through the library.

John Whitehurst, Principal, Barnes Mosher Whitehurst Lauter and Partners

For AP Giannini Middle School students and others across the city, the library is part of the social support network for youth. According to Trook, "The librarians are firm about how the library is used, so it has become an acceptable social outlet. If the library didn't exist it would leave an afternoon time slot empty for our students. The library gives them a place to be besides just roaming outside."

According to library and school district staff, students are often seen sitting in the aisles reading and socializing as if they were at a local bookstore or coffee shop, with the important difference being that at the library, they are welcome to linger and browse for free.



Principal Leslie Trook notes that students "can't stay at school all afternoon and many have working parents and no child care. The library is a safe and easy place for them to do homework, use the Internet for school and for fun, and stay out of trouble." The library provides "structure and stability... If you didn't have that, kids wouldn't be doing appropriate learning."



Fostering Economic and Workforce Development

A successful, growing economy is an essential component of healthy communities, providing jobs, services, and opportunity. The San Francisco Public Library supports businesses, entrepreneurs, individual workers, and the vibrancy of the broader Bay Area economy through special collections and centers, expert staff, a wide variety of trainings and courses, and strategic partnerships with other business support and workforce development organizations.



Supporting Small Businesses: a Critical and Susceptible Segment of the San Francisco Economy. Fostering small business success is an important element of economic development strategies focused on creating new jobs, growing and diversifying local economies, and improving quality of life. Michaela Hayes, a marketing and small business instructor at San Francisco State University asserts that “Small, local businesses are the lifeblood of the San Francisco economy.”

The competitive market environment is a challenging place for small business success. After two years, one-third of all new employer establishments will have closed, and after four years more than half will have failed (Small Business Administration and Knaup). Jill Winkelstein, Program Manager for the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, a San Francisco business incubator that provides training for entrepreneurs, believes that, “Without technical support and a strong market knowledge, entrepreneurs may venture out without the necessary research. That’s why we see so many [small businesses] fail.”

New business owners often lack the time, and financial resources needed to find and absorb the information that can help them plan and successfully run their business. SFPL helps reduce these barriers, which encourages business success and supports the many benefits they provide to the owners, employees, suppliers, and customers.

SFPL Business, Science, and Technology Center: Providing Business Resources

The SFPL Main Library houses the **Business, Science, and Technology (BST) Center**, a one-stop shop for collections and resources related to business-start-up, trademarking, market and stock research, investments and trade, and other related topics. In addition to this dedicated space, the Center also offers many resources online that patrons may access over the Internet. The Center is staffed and maintained by librarians who are experts in helping patrons access the business- and science-related materials they need.

Within the BST Center, SFPL has additional space and resources dedicated to the Small Business Center. This **Small Business Center** helps interested entrepreneurs determine how to plan for, finance, organize, operate, and market a small business. The Center is staffed by a full-time small business librarian.

Assisting Strategic Business Planning and Attracting Investors. The Small Business Association highly recommends that entrepreneurs have a business

Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

plan to guide their business strategy and share their vision with investors. Having accurate and timely market and management information is a key ingredient in a business plan, and yet many small businesses or entrepreneurs lack the financial means or technical expertise to access these resources.

The Small Business Center provides free resources in business planning, business strategy, trends analysis, patent and trademark research, and general industry research, including information on market and demographics, business clustering, and possible competitors. "It's just an incredible resource," Michaela Hayes of San Francisco State University says. "My students are blown away."

SFPL's collections are practical and useable resources for business owners. "The resources the library has developed for trend analysis are more useful than highly academic studies because they come from business journals and trade publications," according to Winkelstein. The library also maintains professional and trade association databases to help patrons better understand specific industry areas, current market trends, workforce needs, and technology changes.

The vast resources from SFPL, online and onsite, are essential tools in developing or executing a plan.

The public library tools make it possible to support (in writing) the pro forma financials presented to a lender or investor. Entrepreneurs easily discover their real 'target market'. Without wasting time and money, they learn quickly who to approach when selling their specific goods and services.

Kathleen Butler-Tom at the San Francisco Small Business Association

SFPL Leverages San Francisco-Specific Research. The library maintains national statistics and research, but also focuses on the San Francisco market specifically. According to Winkelstein, "The library's resources provide the ability to really drill down. For example, the demographic information that is available is a lot more specific to San Francisco than what is available through the Census."

Information provided by the library can help entrepreneurs understand competitors and complimentary businesses in the San Francisco market. According to Winkelstein, the library provides "neighborhood-level information with all the nuts and bolts necessary for locating and doing business in San Francisco."

Librarians Help Navigate a Profusion of Information. Given the breadth of information available and rapidly changing technology, it can be difficult for entrepreneurs to find information in an efficient manner. In addition to maintaining collections, SFPL staff helps budding entrepreneurs search for and digest information. According to Winkelstein, "The reference librarians have an enormous depth of knowledge. The consultation is invaluable, especially for small businesses that otherwise don't have the resources to access this kind of information."

The Business, Science, and Technology Center offers classes, trainings, and individual information sessions. They also bring in S.C.O.R.E. (Service Corps of Retired Executives) counselors for free, one-hour business counseling sessions.

Fostering Economic and Workforce Development

Free Access to Expensive Resources Opens Doors for Prospective Business Owners.

Opening a business can be cost-prohibitive and access to strategic information can be a major expense when opening a business. By offering expensive resources such as electronic databases at no charge, SFPL is opening doors to more prospective business owners, including many from low-wage backgrounds. Winkelstein believes that, "New business owners wouldn't have the money to purchase the industry research and a great deal of the other expensive reference books and electronic materials that the library maintains."

Career and Workforce Development

The American job market is evolving, with more demand for service and technology jobs than ever before. This is particularly true in high-tech centers like San Francisco. These new jobs call for higher level skills, and most positions require significant ongoing professional development to keep up with changing tools and practices. In addition to adult literacy programs, access to technology, and technology training (discussed in the Creating and Strengthening Communities

If you go into the Main Library, you see people researching ideas for new businesses, developing business plans, using the databases. Also lots of small investors, who are able to access information they couldn't otherwise.

From a big business perspective, while I was at PacBell, I saw benefits in terms of quality of life for employees. The library enhances the intellectual development of our community and serves as an information source for the average person to learn things and study.

SFPL helps raise everyone's education and abilities which supports the economy and benefits business if only because people are more capable of buying your products.

Steve Coulter, Author and Commissioner, San Francisco Library Commission



Section below), SFPL offers a wealth of employment resources designed to help San Franciscans find and keep productive positions in the local economy.

SFPL's Jobs and Careers Center: Helping Job Seekers Meet Success.

Over 1,000 patrons per week visit SFPL's **Jobs and Careers Center** at the Main Library. As part of the Business, Science, and Technology (BST) Center, this resource provides access to practical information including job-hunting techniques, resume and cover letter development, wage

and salary information, and professional development resources. Jobs Center librarians are available to respond to any question related to job seeking. They also review resumes, help with online applications, and even provide coaching on interview skills.

The Jobs and Careers Center also offers general classes and trainings, such as "Jobs and Career Resources on the Internet," a two-hour, hands-on training session on how to find a job using the Internet.

SFPL Collaborates with Other Business and Workforce Support Services

SFPL partners with other small business and workforce development agencies, encouraging them to leverage the library's resources and space. Mark Hall, Reference Manager for the Business, Science, and Technology Center, believes the most important thing the BST Center can do is "build and maintain relationships with organizations that are counseling people with small businesses."

For a lot of people, the library is a vehicle for finding employment. Particularly for communities without resources like Internet access, there is an expectation that the library will fill that need. So many businesses now don't accept paper job applications. People who can't afford services like resume preparation count on the library.

James Lazarus, Senior Vice President,
Public Policy, San Francisco
Chamber of Commerce

This work connects a larger population of potential and existing entrepreneurs with local business support resources.

The BST Center is constantly reaching out to other business and workforce development support organizations, including the Small Business Administration, S.C.O.R.E. counselors, the Women's Initiative (a business incubator for low-income women), the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, educational institutions including UC Berkeley and San Francisco State, and other organizations.

One successful example of this collaboration is the SBA seminar titled "Free and Low-Cost Resources to Help You Start and Grow Your Small Business." Offered once a month, a portion of the seminar is devoted to a presentation from a BST Center librarian describing the library's resources. According to instructors, class attendance varies in relationship to the strength of the local economy: at its high point after the dot com crash, the class had between 50 and 60 participants a session. In the current, more stable economy, the average class size is 20 to 25 attendees monthly.

The staff and resources from the SFPL Main Branch are instrumental in guiding and maintaining business within San Francisco. I have personally discovered the staff to be outstanding and devoted people, dedicated to improving the economic development of the communities that they serve. It is wonderful that staff from the SFPL business library take the time to explain the tools they offer, either at our class or at the library.

Kathleen Butler-Tom, Small Business
Administration



SFPL's Government Information Center: Connecting the Public to the Public Sector

SFPL's Main Library is located in a civic center that includes City Hall and a variety of federal and state buildings. SFPL's Government Information Center makes information easily obtainable for those who work in government, are visiting other governmental institutions, or are simply interested in public sector issues. Cathy Nyan, manager of the Center, noted that there is a twice-daily influx of government employees who come to the Center during their lunch hour or after work to access the library's government documents.

A partnership between SFPL, the City of San Francisco, and the State of California established SFPL's Government Information Center as a government documents depository in the 1800s. The Center currently houses a collection of more than 2 million documents, with an estimated total value of nearly \$21 million. The Center provides free access to government documents ranging from the city and regional level to the state and federal level. These documents include public policy materials, agency documents, and information on political science, public administration, and the law.

The Government Information Center contains the Wallace Stegner Environmental Center which houses information on the environment with a goal "to inspire understanding and appreciation of the interconnectedness of life on earth by providing environmental literature and innovative public programs." Offerings in this area include environmentally-focused books and periodicals, programs, lectures, and government environmental documents such as Environmental Impact Statements.

Also a part of the Government Information Center is the Brooks Walker Patent and Trademark Center. SFPL is one of five U.S. Patent and Trademark Depository Libraries in the State of California. Here patrons can find a complete list of all patents granted from 1790 to the present, as well as all necessary Patent and Trademark Office forms, publications, and regulations. In addition, there are legal guides for patents, books and periodicals, Copyright Office forms, and various special events.







Creating and Strengthening Communities

SFPL's 27 branch libraries serve as social meeting places, centers of neighborhood community and identity, and a place to become an engaged participant in the democratic system. They are the rare place where a resident can ask any question, research any subject, or sit quietly for hours without intrusion. SFPL enhances the quality of life for all San Franciscans by serving as a focal point that concentrates and builds community, helping make the City a livable place for all by connecting people with needed resources and enriching San Francisco's cultural landscape.

SFPL Functions as a Third Place: Fostering and Empowering Community

San Francisco neighborhoods are the spirit of San Francisco's community character, and SFPL's 27 branch libraries function as a concentrating point for each neighborhood, serving as a place people gather formally, interact informally, and build community.

In [The Great Good Place](#), Ray Oldenburg defined "Third Places" as "informal gathering places where people in a

particular community or neighborhood meet to develop friendships, discuss issues, and interact with others." Third Places benefit communities by fostering social networks, relationships, and friendships; creating a sense of place and community; and invoking a sense of community pride.

Mission District librarian Martha Neves asserts that her library is "a community center." Local residents meet their neighbors and friends at their neighborhood branch, and they scan bulletin boards for information about community events and news. Like at other community centers, the demographics or visitors change with the hours. Daytime and early afternoons belong to parents and caretakers "who bring their kids, exchange resources, and tell stories," according to librarians. After

school, students crowd study areas and aisles doing homework, collaborating on school projects, and socializing. After five and on the weekends, libraries are filled with patrons browsing, picking up holds, using the Internet, and attending programs with other members of their community.



If SFPL were to suddenly not exist, Chet Roaman of the Council of Neighborhood Libraries believes "our quality of life would go down. There would be no central core to our neighborhoods... life would not be the same."

Carol Kocivar, a former San Francisco Parent Teachers Association president and early childhood learning expert, similarly describes the San Francisco Public Library as "a highly valued asset that is a part of the fiber of our community."

Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

Supporting Specific Communities. Affinity Centers are dedicated to celebrating, recording, and supporting specific communities by building and conveniently locating relevant collections, putting on exhibits and programming, and providing community space. The Main Library houses Affinity Centers for Latino/Hispanic, Filipino, African American, Chinese, and gay and lesbian communities. The role of these centers, which are partially supported by direct contributions from the communities they feature, is more than passively providing shelf space for related literature: they are important partners in the active life and vibrancy of these communities.

One of the most extensive and frequented affinity centers is the **Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center** which has collections documenting gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) history and culture, with emphasis on San Francisco and the Bay Area. The Center also provides dedicated meeting space for the community, and so plays an important role in supporting the GLBT population in San Francisco. In 2005 the Hormel Gay



and Lesbian Center celebrated its 10th anniversary with an exhibit titled "Out at the Library," which included special events, talks, and a traveling exhibit that visited six cities across the country.

Providing Resources for Democratic Citizens and Community Groups.

As stated by Marcia Rosen, retired director of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, the library is a one of the "fundamental institutions of democracy and places of community building." In addition to being neutral political ground and a welcoming Third Place, the library is the one place in San Francisco that provides free and unencumbered access to newspapers, the Internet, community and political flyers, and space for



*When the Library of Alexandria burned, this was a devastating loss because the library not only holds the knowledge and imagination, but it holds the culture of a society. People may say, "I have the Internet and I don't need libraries," but what you do not get with the Internet is the breadth and depth of society and culture. This feeling, this knowledge is stimulated just by walking in to the environment of the library. **The library is a part of San Francisco history, preserving archives, genealogy, and neighborhood legacies. If the public library didn't exist, you would lose that history of the community.***

Effie Lee Morris, San Francisco
Public Library Children's Services
Coordinator, 1963-1977

Building Neighborhood Vibrancy and Connecting Communities



public discussions and meetings – critical ingredients in the development of a civically engaged community.

SFPL provides meeting space in the Main Library and branch libraries to many different groups and organizations free of charge. These rooms range in size from an auditorium seating 235 people to smaller rooms that seat 15. Having easy access to free community gathering and meeting space allows community groups to form, grow, and have an impact on individual lives and communities.

*A library can be an important contributor to lifestyle in a new “town center” development like Mission Bay, or it create a similar halo effect to what you see around schools and parks in more established communities. In either case, the benefit is due to the library’s role in providing community space. This isn’t about meeting rooms, but **the use of the library as a community and cultural hot spot**. It is a medium that caters equally to a diverse age ranges: the same building affords something to toddlers, college students, people seeking employment, general pleasure readers across all categories, and a certain real source of grounding and community for seniors.*

Darin Buchalter, Managing Director,
Navigant Consulting and Vice Chair
of the Friends of the San Francisco
Public Library Board of Directors

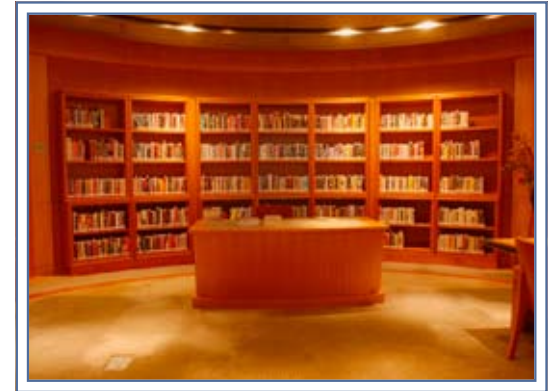


Photo: Michael Allen Jones

Speaking their Language: Materials and Assistance in Languages other than English. SFPL supports the diversity of the San Francisco population with extensive collections in more than 30 languages. The library catalog is available in Spanish and Chinese, and more than 20 librarians speak a language other than English and regularly assist patrons with interpretation or translation. Recognizing the importance of this resource for patrons, and as incentive to attract additional staff with such abilities, SFPL provides a bilingual premium for such staff. The SFPL website guides patrons to the branches where they can get the help they need with a page that lists the languages spoken by staff at each branch library.

Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

SFPL Provides Resources, Refuge, and Access to Social Services to those in Need

Strong social services are a defining feature of San Francisco, a city which cares about the provision of basic needs, equality of access, and quality of life issues. SFPL plays a critical role in maintaining access and services for the city's neediest, who might not otherwise have access to resources, comfortable public space, and specific human and social services.

Services for the Most Vulnerable: Providing Resources, Bridging the Digital Divide, and Acting as a Place of Sanctuary. San Francisco Public Library is the one place in the city that anyone from any walk of life can enter at almost any time to gain access to a wealth of resources including extensive collections and expert staff – or simply to find a peaceful place to sit undisturbed, read, or get out of the rain. As Chet Roaman of the Council of Neighborhood Libraries notes, “Bars and coffee shops are very different. You have to like to drink to use a bar and

The feeling at the library reflects the city's welcoming and helpful attitude toward downtrodden people. The library's peacefulness, quiet and safety can decrease people's anxieties. Those with housing-related, mental and/or physical ailments can stay in the library without a time limit; being able to stay in one place can be restorative physically and mentally.

The library provides sources of pleasure and information that can be life-enhancing and life-changing.

Dr. Rajesh Parekh, Program Director, San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team, San Francisco Department of Public Health

The value of the library is two-fold. The first is absolute: access to information. The other is more subtle: just knowing it's here. Like wilderness areas that you don't have hike to understand their value, even if you were never to use it, people value the presence of the library.

San Francisco has a very high social consciousness – we know about the digital divide and that many people in the city don't have the income to provide all educational opportunities for themselves. The people who use the library and the people who pay aren't always the same – and that's ok.

Jim Chappell, President, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association



Photo: Michael Allen Jones

Building Neighborhood Vibrancy and Connecting Communities

the library doesn't require that you read books to use it. Parks are great, but only in good weather and not at night. The library is more communal."

In some cases, the library's primary value is as a place of refuge. When people enter a library, they are "protected and given respite from the violence and dangers of the street, which results in fewer injuries and illnesses. Respite is part of a recovery model, where good health means being able to enjoy life, hold a job, reconnect with family – all things that are difficult to do when one is scrambling for survival" (Dr. Rajesh Parekh).

In other cases, it is access to the library's resources – freely available to all – that has the greatest impact. The library's role as a clearinghouse for information is particularly important for patrons who could not otherwise afford access to such resources. In addition to SFPL's collections the library provides 407 public access computer terminals for a variety of uses including Internet access and word processing. In addition to general use computers and access to the Internet, the library also provides viewing stations for watching DVDs, listening

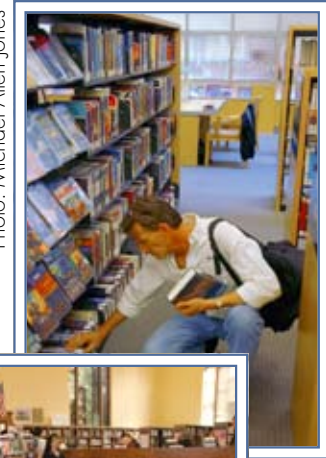
stations for CDs, and many specialty items to assist those with disabilities. While of use to a college student checking email or an office worker surfing the Internet during lunch, these free resources – critical to advancement and success in today's world – are of particular importance to populations without other means of accessing these tools.

Connecting Those in Need to Critical Social Services.

Because SFPL is perceived as a non-threatening place to ask questions and receive services, librarians are in a unique position to provide critical support and resource connections to the city's neediest communities. As questions and requests for help often fall far outside a librarian's traditional knowledge base, SFPL developed and maintains the **San Francisco Community Services Directory**, a resource which helps patrons find anything from free English lessons to domestic violence shelters.

This database connects librarians and patrons to over 1,700 San Francisco government agencies, community-based organizations, neighborhood groups, health and human services providers, and

Photo: Michael Allen Jones



merchants' associations. SFPL offers a one-hour training session to train patrons to efficiently use this directory themselves by accessing it from the web.

SFPL also provides free legal advice clinics during which individuals may sign up for a private consultation.

Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

Lifelong Learning Opportunities: Continuing Education and Adult Literacy

The library's role in the social support network makes it an ideal place to support continuing education opportunities for all San Francisco residents, including some who may not speak English or otherwise be able to afford to classes. The library offers many of its courses in Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, and other languages, ensuring that all members of the San Francisco community can have access to the same learning opportunities.

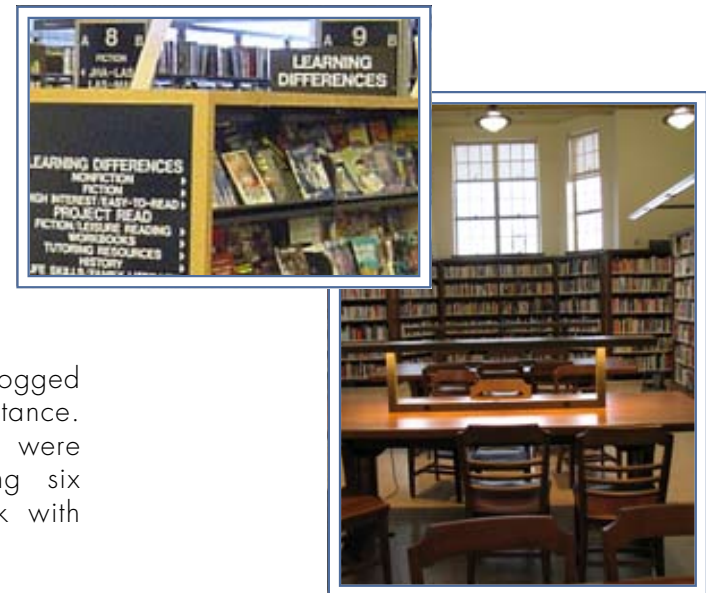
- **Computer Training for a Range of Abilities.** SFPL offers many computer courses that are designed to teach fundamental skills to individuals with very little prior computer experience. These classes teach how to use a mouse, create an email account and send messages, use a word processor, and navigate the Internet. Specific introductory computer classes are provided for seniors with little or no previous computer experience.

Outside of structured classes and trainings, librarians frequently help

inexperienced patrons navigate the Internet, set up email accounts, send pictures to family, apply for jobs online, and more.

- **Supporting Adult Literacy.** As mentioned earlier in this report, SFPL is an integral part of a collaborative network of organizations promoting early literacy among San Francisco's youth. Promoting adult literacy can be much more challenging, but is just as important. The library is committed to supporting literacy through initiatives such as Project Read, in which tutors provide one-on-one instruction to English-speaking adults who wish to improve their basic reading and writing skills. Tutors also provide job-related assistance such as helping to write a resume or prepare for a driving test. In 2006, 177 tutors logged 9,484 hours of volunteer assistance. In addition, 64 more tutors were trained, with each attending six classes in how to best work with adults with low literacy skills.

SFPL staff offers training and support to many other organizations that work with low-literacy clients, including the City College of San Francisco, Episcopal Community Services, and Walden House Educational Services. In addition, many SFPL staff members participate on committees and boards such as the San Francisco Head Start Community Advisory Committee and the San Francisco First Book Advisory Committee.



Creating Cultural Connections: SFPL's Role in Immigrant Support

San Francisco played a large historic role in greeting newcomers to the United States, with its Angel Island dubbed the "Ellis Island of the West." This tradition persists today as the city continues to see a steady influx of people from across the globe, adding to the diversity and dynamism of the city. Immigration and immigrant communities are important parts of San Francisco's history, present identity, and future.

In providing service to diverse immigrant communities, each with its own language and social customs, SFPL strives to be

responsive, effective, and culturally appropriate. The services provided by SFPL help individuals learn English, acculturate, and become productive members of the San Francisco community, the individuals, their families, and broader society all benefit. Similarly, individual lives, family bonds, and the San Francisco community are enriched when SFPL helps these communities celebrate their diversity and heritage by retaining a strong connection to one another and to their homelands.

SFPL strives to be a welcoming place to immigrants – a neutral place where people

can operate at the same level as native English language speakers regardless of cultural background. This commitment to cultural competency is evident in the library's staffing, collections, training and services.

- SFPL requires that some **staff positions** be filled with speakers of Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, or Tagalog. These staff are distributed across the system, and include a number of different positions including adult, teen, and children librarians and circulation staff.
- The library maintains a rich **collection** of materials in other languages, including books, newspapers, magazines, databases, CDs, and DVDs. Some of these materials wouldn't otherwise be available to members of the San Francisco community, even to wealthy individuals. To facilitate access to these materials, the SFPL catalog is available in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

Biblioteca Pública de San Francisco 

*Good libraries, healthcare, and excellent schools should be considered human rights, because healthy and well-educated citizens are the prerequisite to a competent populous in a democracy. **Libraries are the backbone of a democracy; they provide equal access of information to all.***

In the Latino community we are able to continue to enjoy Spanish literary works, keep up with news from our birth countries and at the same time have access to books and materials that foster our acculturation and biculturalism.

Dr. Carlotta del Portillo, Dean, Mission Campus of City College of San Francisco

Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity
A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

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- The library provides **computer classes** in many languages, covering such basics as how to use the Internet or open an email account. Email and access to online newspapers can allow immigrants to stay connected with their families and home countries. Being Internet savvy can also open the door to online assistance provided by other social service organizations.
- Library staff provides frequent **referrals to government and non-profit services**. When Immigration Services began requiring that appointments be made online, agency staff began to send their clients who could not use the Internet directly to the library for support. SFPL staff regularly refer patrons to appropriate government services and help dozens of patrons make Immigration Services appointments each day.



*San Francisco has a large immigrant population and the library is a place that their cultures and languages are celebrated. Certainly Europeans are accustomed to seeing themselves reflected in the larger culture but when a **Chicana, African, or Philipina** sees her reflection in a **huge municipal institution**, the whole city benefits. It's an invaluable early step in bringing immigrants into the civic life of our city.*

Jewelle Gomez, Director of Grants and Community Initiatives, Horizons Foundation and San Francisco Library Commissioner



SFPL's Chinatown Branch: A Vital Part of Vibrant Community

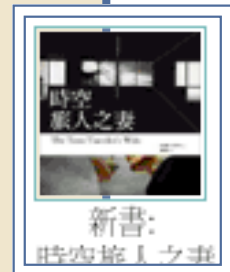
The Chinatown Branch is SFPL's busiest branch, accounting for nearly 20% of the circulation among the 26 branch libraries. Staff report lines at the door when the library opens in the morning, story times that are standing room only, and waiting lists for English as a Second Language classes; Senior Net courses teaching computer skills to seniors in Chinese; and author lectures on Chinese history and culture.

Teen materials in the collection enjoy high circulation, and the weekly Teen 'Zine, which offers an opportunity to learning about the community while developing computer skills, attracts both American-born and newly-arrived teens. The Kid Power, Reading Buddies, and Summer Reading programs not only help children develop important literacy skills, they also provide rewarding volunteer opportunities for middle and high school students. Other cultural programs connect children to Chinese culture through story-telling or brush painting classes, and provide exposure to Shakespeare and aspects of other cultures as well.

The Chinatown Branch is an integral part of the Chinatown community, partnering with community-based organizations such as the YMCA, YWCA, schools, and churches, and serving as a valued resource and connector to social services. Community members frequently ask for assistance from the branch's Cantonese-, Mandarin-, and Vietnamese-speaking staff.

Chinatown Branch children librarians work hand-in-hand with the area's preschools, child development centers, after-school groups, and with the nearby public and private schools, to offer story times, library orientations, monthly film days, early literacy support for parent groups, and a variety of other educational and recreational programs.

The branch is an active participant in community celebrations, participating in the Mid-Autumn Festival Street Fair and hosting special celebrations in honor of the Lunar New Year, including Lion Dancers, traditional Chinese music, and the ever-popular Riddle Contest.



Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

Retaining San Francisco's Young Families

San Francisco is losing its families with young children, with the proportion of city households with children dropping from 21% in the 1990 Census to 19% in 2000*. Over the same time period, the number of children under the age of 5 dropped 15%.

From examining Census statistics, it is difficult to ascertain how this trend relates to economic status: while it is

"Families are leaving right after grade school, during the transition from elementary school to middle school. We are making an effort to connect with families early on, helping them make attachments to neighborhood institutions such as libraries and schools. While the school is the predominate attachment, we believe libraries too are a part, as are issues such as public transit, public safety, and cultural attractions such as parks and zoos. Added together, hopefully these amenities outweigh the cost of living in an urban center"

Julian Potter, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor

clear that the number of poor families living in San Francisco declined by nearly 25% between the two Census takings, one "cannot tell from these comparisons whether the trend is due to improvement of the circumstances of families with children or selective out-migration of families with fewer resources" (ibid).

Given the high cost of living in San Francisco, it seems reasonable to assert that families of less means are being priced out of the city. This theory may be supported by the fact that the decline in families with children is particularly pronounced and disproportionate among African American families, with more than 40% leaving San Francisco between 1990 and 2000 (ibid).

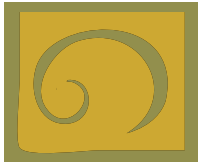
The loss of families with children and its potential adverse affect on diversity are significant issues that have the attention of the Mayor's Office. According to Julian

Potter, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor, the principal strategy to retain the city's young families is ensuring the city remains livable, with free and open access to cultural amenities and public space.

In the face of declining budgets and increasing costs of entry at other cultural institutions, SFPL plays an ever-important role as a free resource for families, providing free access to its collections, computing terminals, workshops, lectures, exhibits, and children's programming. As described earlier in this report, the library also contributes directly to the San Francisco Unified School District – the key institution in attracting and retaining young families – through a highly effective partnership.



* Getting Behind the Headlines: Families Leaving San Francisco, Public Research Institute, San Francisco State University, September 2005



Enhancing the Image and Identity of San Francisco and Its Neighborhoods

The presence of a large and vital library system helps define San Francisco's image as a community that values education, knowledge, diversity, and a high quality of life. Branch libraries also play an important role in defining and reflecting San Francisco's distinctive neighborhoods.

The Library Fosters a Citywide Image and Identity

SFPL shapes outsiders' views of the city and contributes to the city's unique identity, helping to make the city the dynamic and attractive place to live that it is.

SFPL Helps Attract Members of the "Creative Class" to San Francisco. In a world in which workers and businesses are increasingly mobile and free to locate where they please, a competition has emerged to attract desirable employers and a well-educated workforce. In this competition, communities are frequently measured by the quality and diversity of their natural, cultural, and architectural amenities.

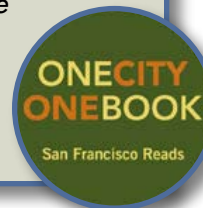
San Francisco's public library system is a part of a fabric of amenities that make the city an attractive place to live, perhaps particularly for the "knowledge worker" or member of the "creative class" who value dynamic and stimulating communities with diverse populations, strong cultural amenities, and a robust intellectual life – all attributes of San Francisco that are directly enhanced by SFPL.



These educated, generally affluent members of society, bring with them high tech employers and high-paying jobs – desirable features for any city's economic development. Evidence of San Francisco's success in attracting these knowledge workers may be seen in the development of a substantial "reverse commute" composed of San Francisco residents who commute south to the more suburban South Bay for employment in the Silicon Valley. The number of commuters traveling from San Francisco County to Santa Clara County nearly doubled between 1990 and 2000 according to data from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission – the agency responsible for transportation planning, coordinating, and financing across the nine counties that comprise the Bay Area.

One City One Book Unites Readers Across the City

SFPL is one of a few community resources that unite many members of the City's population. In 2006, over 10,000 people participated in the library's "One City, One Book" program, a book club for the entire City, with related talks, movie screenings, and workshops. Residents tout the program as "a wonderful concept to bring the whole City together. You'll see other people reading the book on BART and feel connected."



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While SFPL may not be identified as the primary reason such workers find the San Francisco an attractive place to live, it is clearly a contributing factor. As noted by Julian Potter, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor, "San Francisco doesn't have the cheap housing and space that the suburbs offer. What we have is density and cultural amenities. Our libraries, unique non-profits, and cultural institutions are part of the urban texture that explains why people want to live and work in San Francisco."

SFPL Contributes to San Francisco's Environmentalism. Libraries are the ultimate resource sharers, allowing countless individuals to enjoy a single copy of a book, CD, DVD or computer terminals throughout the week. SFPL



By nature the library is the "greenest" institution around and always has been – from sharing resources and thus reducing the environmental impacts of production and consumption to being conveniently located so that people don't use a lot of energy to get to them. Thus, without thinking about it the library's constituents have also been "green."

Shawn Rosenmoss, Senior Environmental Specialist, City of San Francisco Department of the Environment

goes beyond this fundamental function as a provider of reusable resources in a number of different ways, reflecting and encouraging San Francisco's culture of environmentalism.

A strong partnership has been developed between SFPL and the San Francisco Department of the Environment. Through the Green Libraries Project the two agencies have established a common workplan with focus on the following areas:

- **Programs and Outreach** – Speakers, summer reading programs, film screenings, and pod-casts of events and talks are used to promote environmentalism and sustainability.
- **Resources** – Recommended reading lists, resource compilations, and highlighted web pages with an

environmental theme all work to provide interested patrons with access to the information and support they need to advance their environmental concerns.

- **Facilities** – The library is developing an environmental report card to evaluate existing buildings, as well as establishing sustainable building standards with a checklist that parallels the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification checklist for renovation or new construction. Libraries are purposefully sited in order to be within easy walking distance of denser neighborhoods, or easily accessible by public transit. New bicycle sharing stations are also being implemented outside of some libraries.

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BRANCH LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM SUSTAINABLE BUILDING

EXCELSIOR BRANCH LIBRARY

The complete renovation of the Excelsior Branch Library included all new electrical and lighting systems, major upgrades to ventilation and heating, and the installation of a solar photovoltaic power generation system on the roof of the building.

The energy efficient design resulted in an average monthly reduction in energy use of 34% a month, comparing 1998 to 2006. kWh use dropped from 9270 to 6160. (For comparison, the average American home uses approximately 1500 kWh per month.)

This savings in energy is even more impressive considering that the newly remodeled branch has many more computers, better mechanical ventilation, and vastly improved lighting for patrons and staff alike.

GREEN CHECKLIST: EXCELSIOR

- Site Selection - *Using an existing building site.*
- Connection to Community - *Located in a vibrant neighborhood community.*
- Access to Alternative Transportation - *Located on major Muni routes.*
- Reduction of Heat Island Effects - *New landscaping and white roof.*
- Reduction of Light Pollution - *Lights the building, not the sky.*
- Water Efficient Landscaping
- Zero Use of Refrigerants - *no air conditioning.*
- Storage and Collection of Recyclables - *dedicated spaces in the building.*
- Re-use of over 75% of Existing Structure
- Diversion of over 50% of Construction Debris from Landfill
- Low emitting Paints and Materials
- Energy Saving Light Controls
- Energy Saving Heating Controls
- Natural Ventilation Using Numerous Operable Windows
- Daylight and Views from 75% of Spaces



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SFPL Stimulates Community and Economic Development and Redevelopment

San Francisco's Main Library and 27 neighborhood libraries create vibrant, active public spaces that stimulate and help define San Francisco's diverse neighborhoods. They serve as anchors for development and redevelopment by bringing foot traffic and creating a neighborhood amenity.

As its neighborhoods help to define San Francisco, so too do SFPL's 27 branch libraries help to define these neighborhoods.

The Main Library: Revitalizing the Urban Space. Construction of the new Main Library in 1996 marked the beginning of the revitalization of the area surrounding the Civic Center and Market Street. Other significant construction projects—including a new Asian Art Museum—increased police presence and physical streetscape and pedestrian improvements, have helped the redevelopment and revitalization of the district. More than 10 years after its construction, the Main Library continues to serve this function,

bringing more than 2 million visitors through the neighborhood and into its doors in 2006.

Branch Libraries Help Develop and Define Vibrant Neighborhoods. SFPL's branch libraries have had an impact on local neighborhoods similar to the Main Library's impact on the Civic Center area. Over 3 million people visited the 24 San Francisco branch libraries open in 2006. This volume of foot traffic helps activate

depressed and booming urban areas alike as library visitors not only utilize SFPL resources, but also frequent local shops and restaurants and add to the street energy that makes a neighborhood dynamic and inviting.

Photo: Michael Allen Jones



A library is a defining characteristic of a neighborhood. People say we're a neighborhood because we have a library you can go to.

It's also clear that the library is the 21st Century community center. Libraries, police stations, playgrounds, community centers, daycare, and other public facilities should be grouped together for efficiencies and to give neighborhoods a sense of identity.

*SFPL gets that concept, even though it scares some people. **The San Francisco Public Library is not your grandmother's library** and has been quite good at partnerships and new attitudes – frankly that scares some people who think it should be a quiet mausoleum for books.*

Jim Chappell, President, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association

Enhancing the Image and Identity of San Francisco and Its Neighborhoods

In many cases, the local library may serve as an icon or center point of a neighborhood's landscape. Chet Roaman of the Council of Neighborhood Libraries believes community members and visitors alike can best understand a neighborhood by visiting the local library and watching the friendly interactions of neighbors, reading the community bulletin boards, or browsing branch collections tailored to local demographics and interests.

Exhibit 2 shows how many of the city's distinctive neighborhoods are served by a local facility. SFPL's contributions to neighborhood vitality are best understood by examining three specific cases: **Mission Bay**, San Francisco's newest neighborhood, and the two more established neighborhoods of the **Potrero** and **Mission Districts**.

*The library is seen as a major component of what comprises a town center. It can serve that function because of the foot traffic it draws – a lot of young families who then use nearby retail. **The library is a synergistic component that supports retail and other uses.***

Mark Schatz, Principal,
Field Paoli

The Potrero District is separated from the rest of the City by its location between two freeways. The neighborhood library is centrally located on top of the hill on 20th Street, one of two neighborhood commercial streets. While most outsiders think of 18th Street's restaurants and nightlife when they think about Potrero, according to locals, 20th Street embodies the "soul of the hill." In addition to the library, 20th Street is home to local markets, coffee shops, and other community services.

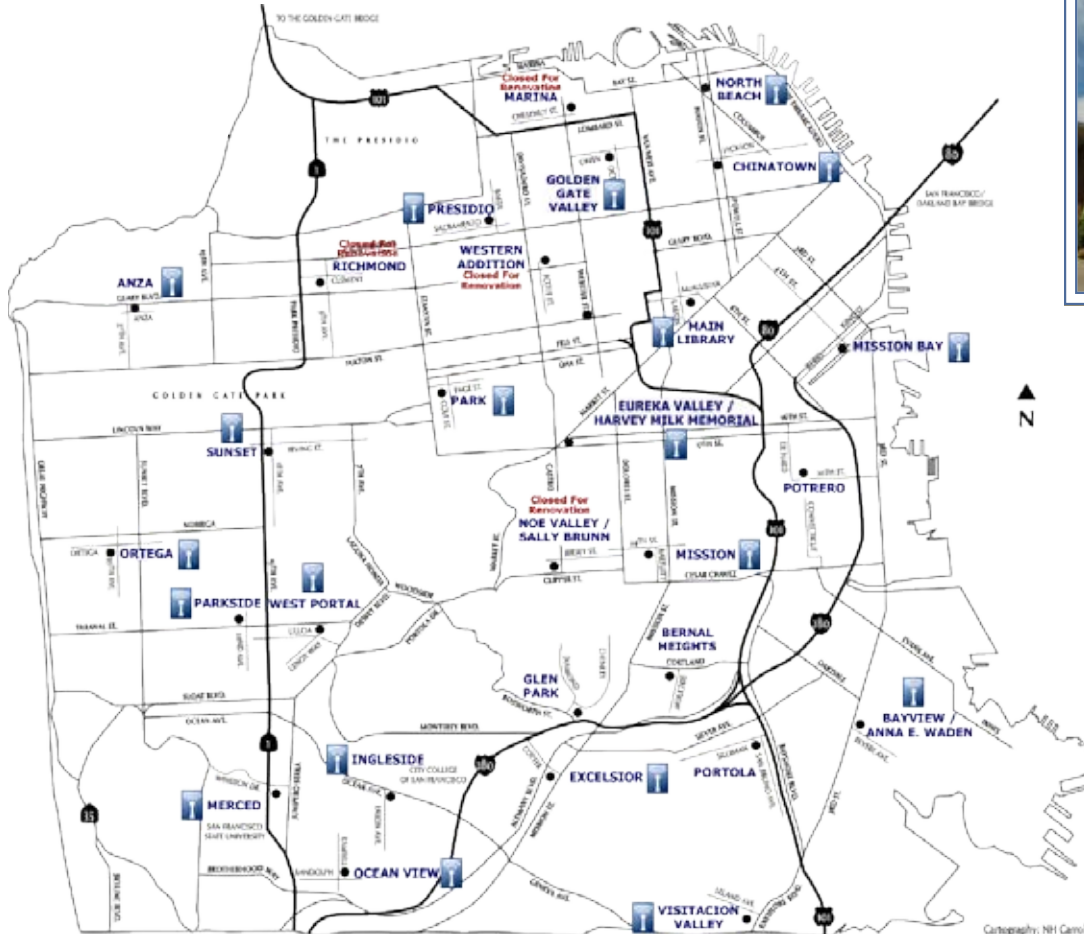
The library, according to one resident, "acts as [the neighborhood's] heart. Residents check out books, use the resources, leave books for book sales, and relax on the couches. Often, residents go into the library just to say hello to the librarians and meet their neighbors."

The resident went on to say, "It is a very tiny library in terms of square footage, and it is always packed. It has the best view in the City: it's absolutely gorgeous and people like to be there."

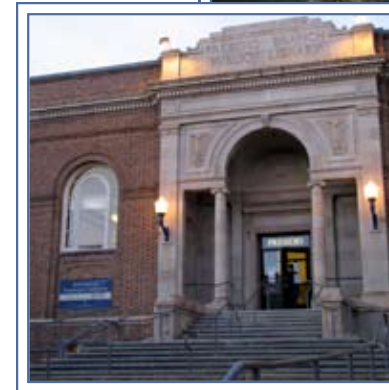
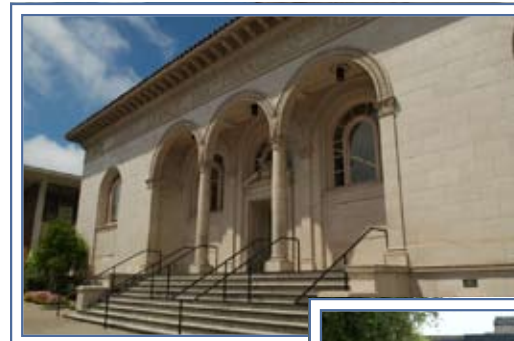


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Exhibit 2 San Francisco Public Library Branch Map



Source: SFPL, 2007



Enhancing the Image and Identity of San Francisco and Its Neighborhoods

SFPL's Mission Branch has been serving its community for nearly 120 years. During this time, the population of the Mission District has changed from a largely Irish population to a predominately Hispanic community during the last 30 to 40 years. The library has adapted to reflect this demographic evolution through changes in its programming and collections.

The branch contains the largest popular collection of Spanish language materials in San Francisco as well as a collection of materials in English focusing on the history and culture of Latin America. Bilingual services include providing basic information for personal or school use, referrals to social service and vocational agencies, reader's advisory, story times, class visits, presentations to parent groups and other community organizations, and library tours for English as a Second Language classes. The library also provides Internet training courses in Spanish.

In addition to providing specific services for Spanish speakers, the branch also caters to the other members of its multiethnic and multicultural neighborhood, by offering the latest best-selling books, a wide range of movies and CDs, contemporary urban fiction, and Chinese language materials.



Mission Bay: SFPL'S Contribution to San Francisco's Newest Neighborhood

The rail yard east of Interstate 280 and North of Mariposa street offered San Francisco an opportunity to create a new neighborhood – a rare opportunity for such a densely populated metropolitan area. The City, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, and the community worked together to determine how to create a vital, urban place with all the amenities and opportunities a neighborhood would ideally have. Together they designed a plan for the 300 acres that includes 6 million square feet of office and life science technology commercial space; 6,000 new homes, 28% of which are to be affordable housing; a variety of retail uses; a University of California San Francisco campus; a new hospital; more than 40 acres of public open space; schools; a light rail stop; and even a new baseball stadium on the bay.

To Marcia Rosen, retired Director of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, a library was an amenity important to making the neighborhood “real.” The Mission Bay Library – SFPL’s first new branch in 40 years – shares a building with a public senior housing unit and an adult day health center. The branch library can be seen as a piece of basic “community infrastructure” and as the neighborhood continues to evolve and grow, the library supports the addition of new residents and more services.

Development of Mission Bay is expected to continue for at least 20 years, though much of what has already been developed is reported to be thriving. “Pretty much every parcel in Mission Bay North is spoken for,” reports San Francisco Redevelopment Agency official Kelley Kahn. He further states that the biotech industry has taken off in Mission Bay, with “two new buildings and a robust pipeline” (San Francisco Examiner, June 4, 2007).

As the neighborhood continues to see residential development and other uses, the library’s relationship with the community will also evolve. With opportunities for partnership with UCSF, the biotech industry, and others, Rosen “envision[s] it playing a larger role” in the community in years to come.



Here Comes the Neighborhood

The San Francisco Examiner, July 7, 2006

SAN FRANCISCO - It's not often a new public library branch opens in San Francisco — it's been 40 years, in fact. But by all accounts, San Francisco residents will find the new library in Mission Bay worth the wait.

Mindful of its location in a budding center of technology, library officials have created a facility that updates the library formula for a new generation, offering free wireless Internet capability and an eclectic selection of DVDs and more than 1,400 CDs — complete with listening station — along with 3,000 new books in the 7,500-square-foot facility at Fourth and Berry streets. A reading room in the back will offer a tranquil space to linger and gaze out over Mission Creek.

The new library, which opens Saturday, cost \$4 million to build and was funded by a \$105 million library bond measure in 2000. But it will offer more than just an alternative to bookstores. It also will serve as a focus for the nascent Mission Bay neighborhood, which contains about 1,000 housing units but is slated for thousands more over the next few years, in conjunction with the development of the biotech industry in the area.

That doesn't even take into account the emerging neighborhoods surrounding Mission Bay, especially Rincon Hill, the Transbay Terminal area and parts of South of Market, where thousands more high-rise units are scheduled to be built over the next decade in a building boom that will transform the South of Market skyline.

Though the way people use libraries may be changing, one thing that hasn't changed is the need for neighborhood fixtures that serve as places for newcomers to meet old friends and make new ones.

As blueprints become reality and Mission Bay develops, the library will serve a key role in making it a real neighborhood.

[emphasis added]

Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

Tailor-Made Neighborhood Branches: Reflecting and Enriching the Flavor of the Local Community.

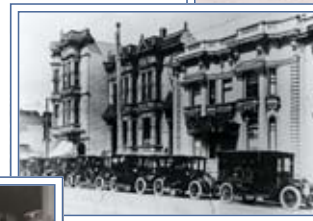
Each of SFPL's 27 branch libraries is customized to be responsive to and reflective of the population that calls a particular library its "home branch." This adaptation begins in the design and construction or reconstruction of the building itself and extends into operational aspects including programming, exhibits, and special collections.

- SFPL holds **programming** and author events that respond to the interests of the local community. The Mission Bay Branch, for example, has featured travel authors and a film series by a well-known local director.
- Branch library **collections** are similarly tailored to reflect the interests and preferences of its neighborhood population. While the Excelsior Branch has a large Filipino collection, the Mission Branch focuses on Spanish language materials, the Western Addition Branch has a large Japanese collection, and the Richmond Branch features many Russian materials. The proximity of the Mission Bay Branch to the baseball stadium is reflected

by a baseball special collection, the North Beach Branch features a history of the Beat generation and a large poetry collection, and the Bayview Branch features an African American collection.

- Through the **"Shades of San Francisco"** program, branches display historical photos collected from library archives and donated by community members. The program highlights the cultural and political history and contributions of each community.

Outside of the library building, SFPL staff members are active participants and contributors to the neighborhood in which they work, participating in local community events and street fairs.



SFPL is an Important San Francisco Cultural Institution

Through special events and programming, San Franciscans, residents of the larger Bay Area, and even out of town tourists observe or participate in a variety of free cultural experiences at the Main Library or one of the branches. Between July 2005 and June 2006, attendance at SFPL's adult and children's programs and exhibits totaled more than 280,000.

Library Programming: A Variety of Cultural Experiences.

Recent cultural programming at SFPL includes talks by the city's Poet Laureate, major authors, artists, musicians, and other luminaries.

Recent events have included slide shows of foreign travels, lectures on everything from insects to opera, spoken word festivals, discussions of plug-in hybrids, and presentations on the history of African quilt-making. Mainstream and independent films have been screened on subjects as diverse as architecture, learning disabilities, older women artists, death row inmates,

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the Gay Games, and rock and roll. All manner of mediums and styles have been featured, from traditional Chinese paper cutting to the latest happenings in hip-hop.

SFPL Functions as a Museum. The Main Library displays rotating exhibits in two display rooms: the Skylight Gallery, which has 2,200 square feet of exhibition space, and the Jewett Gallery, offering 1,500 square feet of space. Both galleries display exhibits from the library's special collections, as well as items on loan from other organizations.

Recent exhibits have included *Striving for Justice: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, *The California Courts of Appeal, 1905-2005*; *Disbound and Dispersed: The Leaf Book Considered*; *Illustration and Bande Dessinee: Comix French Style*; *Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933-1945*; and *From City to Landscape: Paintings by Igor Kolombatovic*, among many others.

SFPL's Plays an Active Role in the Preservation of Local History and Culture.

In addition to serving as a venue for lectures, performances, and exhibits, SFPL actively records and interprets local history. It is one of a very few libraries in the county with staff archivists, who work to preserve and tell the history of San Francisco, the story of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender community, and other specialized topics. The Historical Photograph Collection, housed in the Main Library's San Francisco History Center, features more than 250,000 photographs dating back to the mid-1800s, with many of the images available for viewing on the library's website.

The library is the most tangible place for community in our city. It is where we join, whether incidentally or because of particular purpose, and come to understand that while we are all very different, we each have opportunity to make the place we share a very special city.

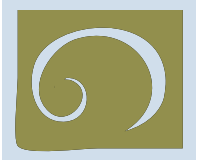
Charles Higuera, Principal, VBN Architects and President of the San Francisco Library Commission



Photo: Michael Allen Jones

The Moscone Center, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and Exploratorium respectively saw paid attendance of 1 million, 770,000, and 550,000 respectively in 2006. The door count at the Main Library alone was over 2 million for the same time period, with approximately 4 million additional people visiting a branch library, all without paying an admission fee.





Summary and Quantification of Benefits

Summary of Benefits

The preceding five chapters qualitatively describe the many benefits provided to the San Francisco community by its library system. These benefits derive from the diverse resources and services provided by the library, including:

- Materials for pleasure reading and personal enrichment
- Strong support of the public school system
- Specialized resources for entrepreneurs and job seekers
- Resources and activities for families with young children
- Public spaces for informal and formal community building
- Critical resources and connections to social service organizations for those in need.

The library also enhances San Francisco's attractiveness as a dynamic and diverse place to live, with high quality of life and vibrant neighborhoods.

A Focus on the Public Good. If these services were provided by any other entity, either for-profit or non-profit, the public benefit would not be the same. SFPL's mission and status as a public institution dictates that it provide these benefits under a particular philosophy

- As a publicly funded institution, SFPL provides most services free of charge, meaning they are as accessible to those with few resources as they are to society's wealthy
- Privacy and free speech are paramount to the library's mission, meaning patrons are able to explore and ask questions confident that questions are answered without judgment and records are private
- The library values breadth and diversity and its collection not subject to screening for profitability, popularity, or political and social acceptability



Quantitative Analysis of SFPL Benefits

The following analysis assigns a dollar value on a small portion of the diverse benefits provided to the San Francisco community by SFPL. These quantifiable benefits are related to the library's direct services, for which the library tracks usage data and for which a defensible methodology can be employed to determine their value. Quantifiable benefits include the circulation of library collections, the use

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of databases and reference materials; provision of research assistance and multi-lingual reference services; courses and trainings; events, and programs for children, teens, and adults; the use of library meeting space and exhibits; access to computers, viewing or listening stations, and assistive technology for special needs patrons; and library donations to the community.

The value of most of these services was estimated by determining the market cost of a comparable service or other means of acquiring the same benefit. This market value was then multiplied by the number of uses by SFPL patrons in the 2005-2006 fiscal year. For example, the value for use of a public access computers was estimated by multiplying the cost of using a comparable machine for an hour in an Internet café by the number of total public accessing computing hours used by SFPL patrons during the 2005-06 fiscal year.



Limitations to What is Quantifiable.

The benefits that are calculated in this section are only a portion of the actual benefits received by the community and are limited to those for which the library gathers data and for which there is a clear method for the calculation of market value. Many of the benefits provided by SFPL cannot reasonably be quantified due to a lack of information about the number of people benefiting or the value of the benefit to each recipient. In attempting to put a reasonable and defensible dollar figure to the value of benefits provided by the library, the following very significant categories of benefits are **not** captured (see Appendix B for definitions):

- The positive externalities of the information provided by library collections, programming, and trainings; these indirect benefits may include the value associated with a

more highly-educated population and the economic and social value generated by enhanced performance of the city's businesses.

- The positive externalities created through SFPL's partnership with SFUSD and the library's early literacy and school readiness initiatives, including the personal, social, and economic benefits associated with better educated youth who are more likely to be successful in their chosen careers.
- The library's contributions to civil society and an active and informed citizenry.
- SFPL's contributions to the character of San Francisco and its neighborhoods, including the library's function as a "Third Place."
- The avoided social costs associated with successful job seekers who .
- The avoided social costs and enhanced economic and social contributions associated with connecting people with needed social services.

Summary and Quantification of Benefits

- The increased earnings associated with job seekers and entrepreneurs (and their employees) who receive support from SFPL.
- Contributions to San Francisco's image and identity, attracting residents, employees, and employers to the city.

As an example, in estimating the value of circulated materials, the circulation of each book is assigned the same value. If a patron reads a book on business planning, that book is valued the same as someone checking out a copy of the latest Danielle Steel novel or a copy of *A Tale of Two Cities*. However, the business planning book may provide essential information that helps advance that person's career—bringing benefits such as increased salary, and in turn, increased economic activity, or may help someone open a business—providing additional economic benefit to the entrepreneur and her employees.

Similarly, the person who attends an author reading at the library receives a benefit, valued in this analysis at the average price it would cost him or her to attend a similar activity elsewhere. The analysis does not capture the additional

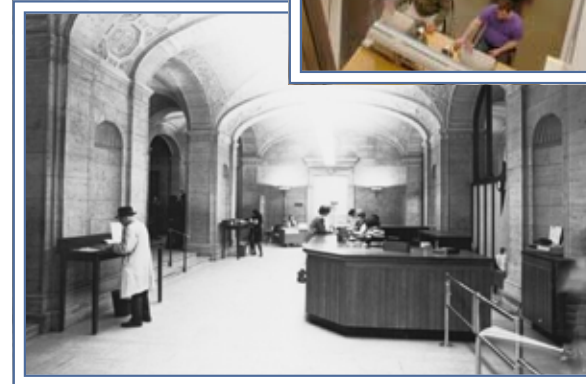
benefit that person may receive simply by being able to attend a community activity, meet other people with similar interests, and gain knowledge that may enrich his or her life.

These are individual and unquantifiable positive externalities, and while they most certainly exist, the nature of such indirect benefits is often subjective and outside of the realm of the marketplace. They are beyond our ability to clearly and reasonably measure. With the omission of these important and real contributions to individuals and the community as a whole, the actual value of benefits provided by the library is a number substantially larger than the conservatively calculated value described below.

Results. Exhibit 3 presents a summary of the annual benefits associated with each of the quantifiable direct services provided by the library. For more detail regarding the usage and market value assumptions for each service, see Appendix A. The total value of these benefits for the 2005-06 year ranges from a low of \$87 million to a high of \$207 million.



Photo: Michael Allen Jones



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A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library

Exhibit 3
Summary of Estimated Annual Value of Benefits Provided by SFPL

Benefit	Total Estimated Annual Benefit	
	Low	High
Circulation Data		
Hardback books	\$ 17,299,481	\$ 42,597,900
Paperback books (Trade)	\$ 14,307,111	\$ 25,434,864
Paperback books (mass)	\$ 585,971	\$ 937,554
Library for the blind (special materials)	\$ 277,250	\$ 390,203
DVDs	\$ 1,295,230	\$ 5,504,728
VHS Video Cassettes	\$ 354,143	\$ 1,947,787
CDs, music	\$ 2,149,260	\$ 2,579,112
Audio books, cassette	\$ 309,551	\$ 1,100,624
Audio books, CD	\$ 400,565	\$ 762,980
Audio cassettes, music	\$ 12,392	\$ 23,013
Language Learning audio	\$ 261,368	\$ 1,437,521
Phonograph records	\$ 10,694	\$ 13,505
ebooks (text)	\$ 229,697	\$ 292,341
Downloadable ebooks	\$ 88,841	\$ 118,455
Magazines, adult	\$ 406,070	\$ 1,843,538
Magazines, children's	\$ 60,319	\$ 197,929
Magazines, non-English	\$ 130,950	\$ 436,500
Subtotal	\$ 38,178,890	\$ 85,618,553
Reference Services		
Reference materials	\$ 5,931,650	\$ 29,007,594
Reference services	\$ 11,395,807	\$ 26,661,350
Business Reference Questions	\$ 558,817	\$ 838,225
On-line Databases	\$ 24,358,427	\$ 49,483,059
Viewing/Listening Stations	\$ 82,500	\$ 220,000
Subtotal	\$ 42,327,201	\$ 106,210,228
Programming		
Adult		
Training/Instruction	\$ 127,227	\$ 339,271
Lecture Panel	\$ 77,446	\$ 154,891
Author Reading	\$ 52,635	\$ 210,539
Exhibit Openings	\$ 5,156	\$ 10,313
Film/Video	\$ 76,765	\$ 102,353
Clubs/Performances/Celebrations	\$ 14,554	\$ 36,386
Mission Bay Branch Opening	\$ 32,000	\$ 80,000
Children		
Story times	\$ 224,438	\$ 561,096
Media events	\$ 130,298	\$ 138,984
Special programs	\$ 508,872	\$ 1,272,180
SAT/Training classes	\$ 47,500	\$ 71,250
Library visits from schools	\$ 191,904	\$ 479,760
Librarian visits to schools	\$ 146,812	\$ 367,030
ASL Storytimes	\$ 34,560	\$ 47,520
Subtotal	\$ 1,670,166	\$ 3,871,573
Use of Space		
Meeting space rentals	\$ 377,425	\$ 793,075
Exhibits	\$ 262,989	\$ 631,174
Subtotal	\$ 640,414	\$ 1,424,249
Technology		
Computer Usage (including assistive technology)	\$ 3,398,160	\$ 8,863,327
WiFi	\$ 481,140	\$ 962,279
Subtotal	\$ 3,879,300	\$ 9,825,606
Donations		
Annual Donations	\$ 514,583	\$ 514,583
Subtotal	\$ 514,583	\$ 514,583
TOTAL ESTIMATED BENEFITS FOR FY05-06:	\$ 87,210,554	\$ 207,464,792

Source: Berk & Associates

Summary and Quantification of Benefits

Benefit/Cost Ratio. Now that we've analyzed the quantifiable benefits that SFPL provides, it is important to put this number in context by considering the cost to the community of funding the library. In fiscal year 2005-06, SFPL had operating expenditures of \$62 million, primarily supported through property tax and other general funds, with additional resources coming from State grants, gifts and bequests, interest, and fees.

Using this operating cost as the denominator, a benefit/cost ratio for SFPL can be calculated. As shown in Exhibit 4, for every dollar spent supporting SFPL, the citizens of San Francisco see a return in the range of \$1.40 to \$3.34.

SFPL's operating budget is a key factor in determining the benefit/cost ratio and therefore deserves further consideration. Due to the nature of the services a library

provides, the primary cost of a library's operating budget lies in wages and benefits for employees. In fiscal year 2005-06, employee wages and benefits accounted for nearly 75% of SFPL's total operating budget.

Because wages are such a large part of the budget, cost of living becomes an important driver of a library's expenses. SFPL's expenses are significantly affected by cost of living, as San Francisco has the second highest cost of living among metropolitan cities in the U.S., trailing only New York City.

As an illustration of the differences in cost of living for cities of similar size around the country, we can look at a hypothetical salary. In San Francisco, one would need a 27% higher salary than someone living in Boston, Massachusetts to maintain the same lifestyle. Compared to Seattle,

Washington one would need a 50% higher salary, and compared to Denver, Colorado, 65% higher (CNNmoney.com and bankrate.com). In order to offer competitive wages, SFPL must necessarily pay more than other cities of comparable size; a fact that has a very real impact on the library's operating budget.

To illustrate the impact of cost of living on SFPL's benefit/cost ratio, we have calculated SFPL's benefit/cost ratio using adjusted salary costs based on the cost of living in several comparable cities.

Looking at the Seattle comparison as an example, the portion of SFPL's budget spent on salaries and benefits has been

Exhibit 4
Benefit/Cost Ratio for San Francisco Public Library

	Low	High
TOTAL ESTIMATED BENEFITS FOR FY05-06:	\$ 87,210,554	\$ 207,464,792
Total 05-06 SFPL Budget:	\$ 62,108,717	\$ 62,108,717
Benefit/Cost ratio	1.40	3.34

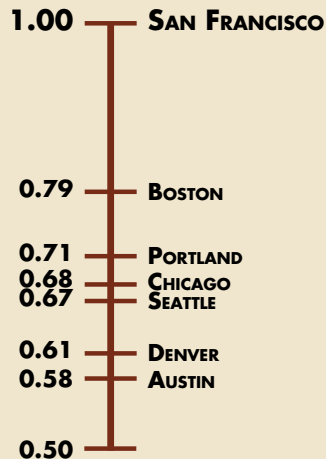
Source: Berk & Associates

Capital costs associated with property acquisition and building construction are not included in calculating the benefit/cost ratio. These costs would be recouped – likely with substantial positive returns given San Francisco's strong real estate market – if library facilities were closed and divested. These expenditures therefore represent investments rather than true costs, and so capital costs and benefits are excluded from consideration here.

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multiplied by an adjustment factor of 0.67 (a 33% decrease in cost). This new hypothetical wages expense is added back to the full cost of other expenses paid by SFPL to create a new hypothetical SFPL budget, adjusted for cost of living in Seattle.

The continuum below illustrates the relationship between the typical cost of an item in San Francisco, and the relative cost of that same item in other comparable cities. This difference in cost is what drives the cost of living adjustment made to the benefit/cost calculations shown in Exhibit 5.



Because much of the estimated benefit value is based on nation-wide prices (such as books and information brokers available on the Internet), this number would likely not change much from city to city and so remains constant. The result shows that were San Francisco's cost of living the same as Seattle's, SFPL's benefit/cost ratio would change from \$1.87 to \$4.45.

Exhibit 5 shows benefit/cost ratios based on the calculated benefits SFPL provides and a lower hypothetical SFPL budget based on the cost of living in other comparable metropolitan areas.

Exhibit 5
SFPL Benefit/Cost Ratio Adjusted for Cost of Living in Comparable Cities

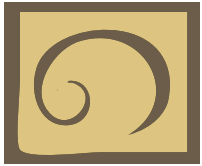
	Adjusted Benefit/Cost	
	Low	High
Boston, MA	1.66	3.95
Portland, OR	1.78	4.24
Chicago, IL	1.84	4.37
Seattle, WA	1.87	4.45
Denver, CO	1.97	4.68
Austin, TX	2.03	4.83

Source: Berk & Associates

SFPL Branches: A Critical Asset and a Cost-Driver

Contributions provided by SFPL's 27 neighborhood branches are an important theme in the first five chapters of this report. Branch libraries are noted for helping define and enrich neighborhoods, serving as busy Third Places, and bringing foot traffic and energy to streets across the city. Branch libraries are even important to SFPL's environmental contributions, providing easy access to SFPL's resources for many San Franciscans without the use of a car.

This neighborhood presence does come with a cost, however, as branch libraries require more resources to staff, operate, and maintain than fewer, larger libraries would. While small, dispersed branch libraries don't achieve the economies of scale that "big box" libraries would, and so negatively affect the library's benefit/cost ratio, it is clear that the consolidation of neighborhood branches into fewer regional libraries would destroy many of the very special, non-quantifiable benefits that SFPL's system of neighborhood libraries provides.



Appendix A:

Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

Methodology

The analysis that follows attempts to quantify a portion of the benefits provided to the San Francisco community by the library's direct services. For most services, this was done by placing a market value on each service provided and multiplying that value by the number of uses in the 2005-06 fiscal year.

The benefits calculated in this section are only a portion of the actual benefits received by the San Francisco community, limited to those for which the library gathers data and for which there is a clear method for the calculation of market value.

While this analysis does assist in placing a value on the benefits received by the community, it falls short in capturing benefits that are not easily quantified. The quantified values are calculations of the estimated benefit received by patrons from a particular library service; they do not capture all the additional benefits one may receive beyond the direct services, or from the knowledge that the services are available should they ever need them.

For example, the person who attends an author reading at the library receives a benefit valued in this analysis at the average price it would cost him or her to attend a similar activity elsewhere. However, that person may also receive significant additional benefit simply by being able to attend a community activity,

meet other people with similar interests, and gain knowledge that may enrich his or her life. The nature of these additional benefits is often subjective and outside of the realm of the marketplace and therefore beyond clear measure.

Circulation of Materials

One of the largest benefits provided by SFPL comes from the circulation of library materials. SFPL circulates approximately 7.5 million materials each year including, books, CDs, DVDs, magazines, phonograph records, and more.

Most of these circulating materials were valued using two approaches, creating a range of value based on how patrons may use these items. The first approach was based on the market price of purchasing a used copy of the item. That price was then discounted to account for the difference in owning the item and having the use of it for a limited period of time, as one would from the library. The second approach used the value of purchasing the item



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new and subtracting the sell-back price, mirroring how a patron may purchase the item, use it for a period of time, and then sell it for its remaining value. Items valued using this methodology are the following: books, unabridged books on CD (Library for the Blind special materials), music CDs, and audio books on CD. There is no discount applied in this method, since it is assumed that the owner of the new book is only using it for a limited period of time before selling it again.

Items that differed in approach were the following: DVDs, for which there are varied rental prices which more closely simulate the value of use from the library; VHS tapes, audio tapes, books on tape, phonograph records, and back issues of magazines, all of which were valued based on a range of used prices and then discounted, since they are now difficult to purchase new; and e-books and downloadable audio books, for which market prices were used and discounted, as used prices do not exist.

Exhibit 6
Estimated Value of SFPL Circulation

Materials	SFPL Annual Circulation	Market Value Low	Discount Rate	Estimated Value (Low)	Total Annual Benefit (Low)	Estimated Value (High)	Total Annual Benefit (High)
Hardback books	2,366,550	\$ 9.75	25%	\$ 7.31	\$ 17,299,481	\$ 18.00	\$ 42,597,900
Paperback books (trade)	2,119,572	\$ 9.00	25%	\$ 6.75	\$ 14,307,111	\$ 12.00	\$ 25,434,864
Paperback books (mass market)	156,259	\$ 5.00	25%	\$ 3.75	\$ 585,971	\$ 6.00	\$ 937,554
Library for the blind (unabridged CD books)	20,537	\$ 18.00	25%	\$ 13.50	\$ 277,250	\$ 19.00	\$ 390,203
DVDs	1,295,230	\$ 1.00	0%	\$ 1.00	\$ 1,295,230	\$ 4.25	\$ 5,504,728
VHS Video Cassettes	708,286	\$ 0.99	50%	\$ 0.50	\$ 354,143	\$ 2.75	\$ 1,947,787
CDs, music	429,852	\$ 10.00	50%	\$ 5.00	\$ 2,149,260	\$ 6.00	\$ 2,579,112
Audio books, cassette	68,789	\$ 6.00	25%	\$ 4.50	\$ 309,551	\$ 16.00	\$ 1,100,624
Audio books, CD	38,149	\$ 14.00	25%	\$ 10.50	\$ 400,565	\$ 20.00	\$ 762,980
Audio cassettes, music	7,081	\$ 3.50	50%	\$ 1.75	\$ 12,392	\$ 3.25	\$ 23,013
Language Learning audio	34,849	\$ 10.00	25%	\$ 7.50	\$ 261,368	\$ 41.25	\$ 1,437,521
Phonograph records	2,037	\$ 10.50	50%	\$ 5.25	\$ 10,694	\$ 6.63	\$ 13,505
ebooks (text)	27,842	\$ 11.00	25%	\$ 8.25	\$ 229,697	\$ 10.50	\$ 292,341
Downloadable ebooks (audio)	7,897	\$ 15.00	25%	\$ 11.25	\$ 88,841	\$ 15.00	\$ 118,455
Magazines, adult	98,322	\$ 5.50	25%	\$ 4.13	\$ 406,070	\$ 18.75	\$ 1,843,538
Magazines, children's	22,935	\$ 3.50	25%	\$ 2.63	\$ 60,319	\$ 8.63	\$ 197,929
Magazines, non-English	29,100	\$ 6.00	25%	\$ 4.50	\$ 130,950	\$ 15.00	\$ 436,500
Total Estimated Benefit					\$ 38,178,890		\$ 85,618,553

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Appendix A: Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

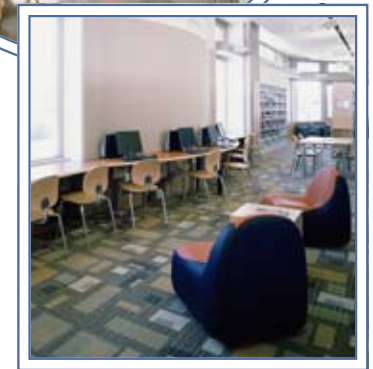
The estimated high and low values for each circulating item are shown in Exhibit 6, along with the estimated total benefit, which is calculated by multiplying the estimated value by the number of times circulated.

Beyond the general collections at SFPL, there are special collections and "Affinity Centers." These centers organize the information available at the library into specific areas of interest, allowing patrons to easily find and use the full range of information. The values shown in the table above likely underestimate the total value of circulation, since many of the circulating items come from one of these special collections and may be of much higher value than an average book or media item.

These collections may create additional benefit beyond the direct services and materials they provide by raising the visibility of these materials and creating a sense of connection within different communities. A patron in need of employment may feel more comfortable visiting the Jobs and Careers Center than entering a vast library in which the information he or she needs may be difficult to find, and in which it may be difficult to track down the appropriate person to help them. A person of Chinese decent may feel more in touch with their culture and

heritage if they are able to visit the library and peruse a large collection of materials written in their native language, rather than having to search the individual library shelves to find what they need. These are services that make people feel comfortable in obtaining the information they desire, which in turn, is likely to make them more apt to use it. These collections may also draw people to the library who then learn of the other services provided that may further enrich their lives. These benefits are among those that are invaluable, but unquantifiable.

Other benefits not captured in this valuation are those associated with the actual knowledge gained from using the materials. If a patron reads a book on business planning, that book is valued the same as someone reading a novel for recreation. However, readers of each will certainly get additional benefit beyond the market value of the book. The business planning book may provide essential information that helps advance that person's career, or helps her open a business. The person reading for recreation may get much more enjoyment during the time spent reading the book than the market price would suggest. These benefits are individual and unquantifiable, but most certainly exist.



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Reference Services

Another large segment of benefits provided by SFPL are the reference services. As discussed previously, these services include assistance with a multitude of reference materials, a total of 203 full-time-equivalent (FTE) reference librarians on staff to answer questions, and a long list of electronic databases.

In addition to general reference services, SFPL has several special reference centers including the Business Center, the San Francisco History Center, the Children's Center, and the Arts and Music Reference Center. SFPL also has a rare books collection and has served as a depository for government documents since the 1800s. Along with current government documents, the library houses many rare and out-of-print documents as well.



As a proxy for the market value of these reference services, we used the average hourly price of \$100 (\$1.67 per minute) for an "Information Broker." These brokers are available to assist in researching different subjects and charge by the hour. Many of them use the same databases used by

librarians and are able to help surface similar information. The average hourly charge for these services was then multiplied by the estimated annual amount of librarian time spent answering questions. The low estimated value is based on the library's estimate of the average time it takes to answer a question in different reference areas of the library. This value, however, likely understates what a patron would be required to pay for such a service, since many brokers have a half-hour or hour minimum charge. For the higher value estimate, we have assumed a minimum charge of fifteen minutes per question. This value may still be very conservative given that brokers commonly charge for longer periods of time.



Photo: Michael Allen Jones

In addition to the general value of the library's reference services, many librarians are multilingual and assist those who do not speak English. A premium value was placed on the time these staff spend working in other languages, based on an average hourly rate for translation services for this period of time.

Appendix A: Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

Exhibit 7 Estimated Value of SFPL Reference Question Services

	Number of Ref. Questions	Ave Minutes Answering Questions (Low)	Total Minutes Answering Ref. Questions (Low)	Total Value (Low)	Ave Minutes Answering Questions (High)	Total Minutes Answering Ref. Questions (High)	Total Value (High)
MAIN LIBRARY							
General Reference	413,139	5	2,065,695	\$ 3,442,825	15	6,197,085	\$ 10,328,475
Reference Centers	94,356	10 to 12	949,474	\$ 1,582,457	15	1,415,340	\$ 2,358,900
BRANCH LIBRARIES							
General Reference	456,207	5	2,281,035	\$ 3,801,725	15	6,843,105	\$ 11,405,175
SUBTOTAL				\$8,827,007			\$24,092,550
Additional Value from Multilingual Librarians				\$2,568,800			\$2,568,800
SUBTOTAL				\$11,395,807			\$26,661,350

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Exhibit 7 shows the number of reference questions answered in the library in FY 2005-06 and the estimated average length of time each one takes to answer. Total minutes were multiplied by the \$1.67 per minute estimated market value for these services. The high estimate assumes a minimum 15 minute per-question charge.

Again, these values understate the total benefit received by a patron since they are based solely on the time a librarian spends producing the information. They do not include any additional value that a patron receives from the information provided.

Electronic databases

SFPL provides access to more than 80 searchable databases on a wide variety of topics and in multiple languages. The use of these databases provides an estimated total value to patrons second only to the use of circulating materials.

Because these databases are so varied, they were first divided into topic categories. The types of information gathered from each category were then given an estimated market value based on the cost of purchasing the information elsewhere. As an example, Indexes/

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Directories category was given a low value of \$5.00 and a high value of \$40.00, while Articles/Journals/Papers ranged from \$25.00 to \$30.00. Company/Business category information ranged from \$200.00 to \$500.00 for lists of specific industry lists and business contact information.

These estimated values were then multiplied by the number of uses in the FY 2005-06 time period. The number of uses was determined by data gathered by SFPL on the number of searches and the number of downloads for each individual database.

Exhibit 8 displays the database categories along with the estimated number of successful searches and the market value of the information received.

As with the valuation of other services, the totals for database use understate the actual benefit by only considering the cost of acquiring the information. The value of the information itself, and how it may benefit the user, is beyond the calculations done for this study.

**Exhibit 8
Estimated Value of SFPL Database Use**

Database Type	Total Count	Positive Result Rate	Estimated Successful Searches	Estimated Value (Low)	Estimated Total Value (Low)	Estimated Value (High)	Estimated Total Value (High)
Downloadable books	32,981	45%	14,841	\$ 11.00	\$ 163,256	\$ 14.00	\$ 207,780
Articles/Journals/Papers	728,205	54%	390,689	\$ 25.00	\$ 9,767,223	\$ 30.00	\$ 11,720,667
Indexes/Directories	264,510	65%	172,983	\$ 5.00	\$ 864,916	\$ 40.00	\$ 6,919,331
Geneology information	14,859	5%	743	\$ 25.00	\$ 18,574	\$ 30.00	\$ 22,289
Company/Business information	227,866	24%	54,688	\$ 200.00	\$ 10,937,568	\$ 500.00	\$ 27,343,920
Manuals/Repair information	3,014	5%	151	\$ 25.00	\$ 3,768	\$ 30.00	\$ 4,521
Schooling information	111,053	14%	15,916	\$ 25.00	\$ 397,907	\$ 30.00	\$ 477,489
Facts and Statistics	128,890	52%	66,594	\$ 25.00	\$ 1,664,838	\$ 30.00	\$ 1,997,806
Health information	26,240	23%	6,166	\$ 25.00	\$ 154,143	\$ 30.00	\$ 184,971
Foreign Language	20,267	17%	3,401	\$ 3.00	\$ 10,203	\$ 45.00	\$ 153,048
Other	33,425	45%	15,041	\$ 25.00	\$ 376,031	\$ 30.00	\$ 451,238
Total	1,591,310		741,213		\$ 24,358,427		\$ 49,483,059

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Appendix A: Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

Reference Materials

The non-circulating reference materials available in the library are extremely diverse. In addition to dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, and other general reference materials, there are multitudes of rare books, government documents, historical photographs, musical scores, and others. Because of this variation, the materials were placed into general categories for valuation. Each item value was then multiplied by the estimated annual usage. Usage statistics come from the reshelving of items in different reference sections of the library. Item values were discounted by 10% under the assumption that not all items that are pulled from the shelf provide the desired result for the patron. In addition, periodicals were discounted further by 25% since their prices are based the value of purchasing the item, not browsing as is the case at the library.

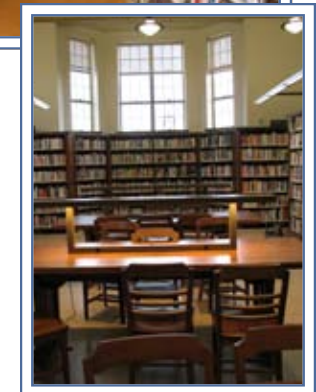
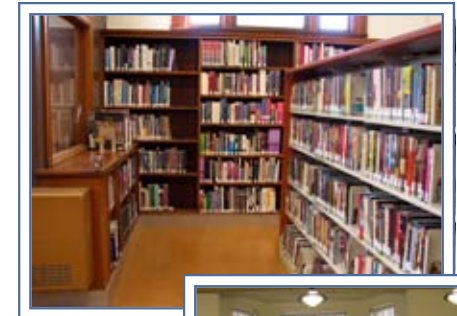
General reference materials such as dictionaries, thesauruses, atlases, and encyclopedias were given a low estimated value of \$5.00 and a high estimated value of \$25.00. Although many encyclopedia sets cost \$800 to \$1,000 dollars new, the piece of information sought may be available in another format for less, such as the purchase of a research article on the Internet. For this reason, the high value

is equal to the estimated cost of a journal article purchase, assumed to be \$25.00.

Newspapers and magazines were estimated based on a market value. Many of the library's periodicals are received from other countries and carry a high postage price. The estimated low value for these items is \$2.50 and the estimated high value is \$5.00.

Because the government documents held by the library are widely varied and not easily assigned an individual market value, library staff estimated the value of the entire collection. This total value was then divided by the number of items in the collection to reach an average value per item. For this reason there is no low and high value associated with this collection. The estimated per-item value is \$10.00.

Similarly to the collection of government documents, the historical photos collection was valued as a whole and divided by the number of items. For this collection the library provided a low and high estimated total value, resulting in an estimated low per-item value of \$1.20 and an estimated high value of \$1.50.



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Unfortunately, the estimated total value of reference material use does not include usage of rare books or materials from the Art and Music Research section. The diversity of these collections and variation in item values prohibits a general estimate of collection value. Short of performing an in-depth appraisal of each item, there is no way of generating a dependable estimate. To avoid using an unreliable number, these collections of materials were not included in the valuation.

The estimated high and low values for each type of reference material are shown in Exhibit 9 below, along with the estimated total benefit. The benefit for each category was calculated by multiplying the estimated item value by the

number of times it was used and applying the appropriate discount as explained above.

The difficulty of quantifying the value of the library's reference materials is illustrated by the fact that the value of several of the special collections could not be reliably estimated. The valuation of special collections becomes further complicated by the fact that, in many cases,



Exhibit 9
Estimated Value of SFPL Reference Materials

Category	Estimated Annual Use	Estimated Value (Low)	Discount Rate	Total		Estimated Value (High)	Discount Rate	Total	
				Estimated Value (Low)	Total Annual Value (Low)			Estimated Value (High)	Total Annual Value (High)
General	1,263,233	\$ 5.00	10%	\$ 4.50	\$ 5,684,550	\$ 25.00	10%	\$ 22.50	\$ 28,422,750
Business	16,250	\$ 5.00	10%	\$ 4.50	\$ 73,125	\$ 25.00	10%	\$ 22.50	\$ 365,625
Govt Docs	11,500	\$ 10.00	10%	\$ 9.00	\$ 103,500	\$ 10.00	10%	\$ 9.00	\$ 103,500
Mags/News	22,667	\$ 2.50	35%	\$ 1.63	\$ 36,833	\$ 5.00	35%	\$ 3.25	\$ 73,667
Hist/Photos	31,150	\$ 1.20	10%	\$ 1.08	\$ 33,642	\$ 1.50	10%	\$ 1.35	\$ 42,053
Art & Music	15,417			\$ -	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
Rare Books	7,292			\$ -	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
Total					\$ 5,931,650				\$ 29,007,594

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Appendix A: Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

there is no direct market comparison. Many of the items in the library's collections are one-of-a-kind or extremely rare. If they were not available at the library it is difficult to know what it might cost to gain access to them elsewhere, or if that would even be possible. These items therefore have almost limitless value to someone who relies on them.



SFPL also provides viewing and listening stations for watching DVDs and listening to CDs at the library. The value of these stations was estimated using rental rates for DVD and CD players and multiplying by the number of uses. The table in Exhibit 10 displays the high and low estimated total value of these stations for FY 2005-06.



Exhibit 10
Estimated Value of SFPL Viewing and Listening Stations

	Total Annual Uses	Est. Session Value (Low)	Est. Total Value (Low)	Est. Session Value (High)	Est. Total Value (High)
Viewing Stations	5,500	\$ 10.00	55,000	\$ 30.00	\$ 165,000
Listening Stations	2,750	\$ 10.00	27,500	\$ 20.00	\$ 55,000
Total	8,250		\$ 82,500		\$ 220,000

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

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Programming

As discussed previously in this report, SFPL provides a wide range of programs to its patrons at no cost, including trainings and instruction, lectures and talks, author readings, films, performances, and events such as exhibit openings.

These programs have been valued based on market cost for attending a similar event or training, and multiplying that number by the number of annual attendees in FY 2005-06. Exhibits 11 and 12 illustrate the estimated value for adult and children's programming by type of event or training.

Exhibit 11 Estimated Value of SFPL Adult Programming

	Trainings/Instruction		Lecture/Panel		Author Reading		Exhibit Openings		Film/Video		Clubs/Performances		Mission Bay Opening			
Attendance																
Main	4,540		3,948		6,708		460		9,131		1,623					
Branch (estimated)	549		477		811		56		1,104		196		4,000			
Total Attendance	5,089		4,425		7,519		516		10,235		1,819		-			
Average Hours Per Event	1.67		1.75		1.40											
Total Estimated User Hours	8,482		7,745		10,527											
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Total	Total
Estimated Per-Hour/Event Value	\$ 15.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 7.50	\$ 10.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 20.00		
Total Estimated Value	\$ 127,227	\$ 339,271	\$ 77,446	\$ 154,891	\$ 52,635	\$ 210,539	\$ 5,156	\$ 10,313	\$ 76,765	\$ 102,353	\$ 14,554	\$ 36,386	\$ 32,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 385,782	\$ 933,753

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Exhibit 12 Estimated Value of SFPL Children's Programming

	Storytimes		Media Programs		Special Programs		Teen SAT Courses		Visits from Schools		Visits to Schools			
Attendance	56,110		17,373		42,406		225		31,984		36,703			
Average Hours Per Event	0.50				1.50		10 + 1@5 hrs		0.75		0.50			
Total Estimated User Hours	28,055				63,609		2,375		23,988		18,352			
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Total	Total
Estimated Per-Hour/Event Value	\$ 8.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 7.50	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 20.00		
Total Estimated Value	\$ 224,438	\$ 561,096	\$ 130,298	\$ 138,984	\$ 508,872	\$ 1,272,180	\$ 47,500	\$ 71,250	\$ 191,904	\$ 479,760	\$ 146,812	\$ 367,030	\$ 1,249,824	\$ 2,890,300

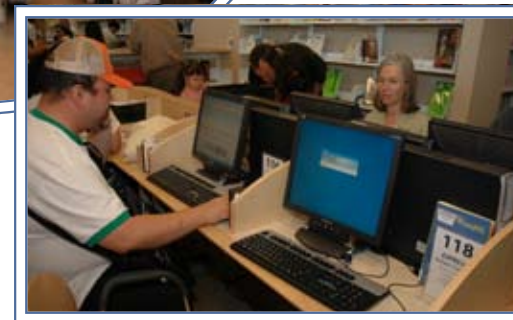
Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Appendix A: Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

This valuation of benefits, based on the average cost of a similar event, likely dramatically understates the value of these programming services. Similarly to the valuation of circulation materials, these numbers only include the estimated cost of the service; they do not include the value of the information gained.

In the case of programming, these unquantifiable benefits may add up to be a very significant number. Consider the additional value of a student who attends an SAT course at the library, enabling her to get a good enough score to be accepted into college. The benefit received by that student and her dependents throughout the rest of her life is likely to be immense.

Likewise, a patron who is able to attend a computer course that increases her skills and allows her the opportunity for a better job receives a much greater benefit than the estimated cost of the course. A child who regularly attends storytime may have her interest in reading and learning stimulated for a lifetime. These benefits are beyond reasonable estimation and are likely to be significant.



Use of Space

Meeting Rooms

SFPL provides meeting space spread across the system, to many different groups and organizations free of charge. These rooms in the Main and branch libraries, range in size from an auditorium, seating 235 people, to smaller rooms that seat 15.

Exhibit 13 shows the estimated annual value of the use of this space. High and low average hourly market prices for meeting rooms of comparable size were multiplied by the approximate annual number of hours each room is in use.

Exhibit 13
Estimated Value of SFPL Meeting Room Use

	Seating	Hours Per Week	Approx. % Full	Hours in Use Per Week	Estimated Hourly Rate (Low)	Annual Value (Low)	Estimated Hourly Rate (High)	Annual Value (High)
Main Library								
Koret Auditorium	235	60	50%	30.0	\$ 50	\$ 75,000	\$ 100	\$ 150,000
Latino/Hispanic Community Room A	40	60	50%	30.0	\$ 35	\$ 52,500	\$ 65	\$ 97,500
Latino/Hispanic Community Room B	70	60	50%	30.0	\$ 35	\$ 52,500	\$ 65	\$ 97,500
Mary Louise Stong Conference Room	15	60	25%	15.0	\$ 10	\$ 7,500	\$ 50	\$ 37,500
Martin Paley Conference Room	15	60	25%	15.0	\$ 10	\$ 7,500	\$ 50	\$ 37,500
The Sycip Family Conference Room	15	60	25%	15.0	\$ 10	\$ 7,500	\$ 50	\$ 37,500
Branch Libraries								
Bayview	80	40	25%	10.0	\$ 50	\$ 25,000	\$ 100	\$ 50,000
Bernal Heights	75	37	25%	9.3	\$ 35	\$ 16,188	\$ 65	\$ 30,063
Chinatown	50	53	25%	13.3	\$ 35	\$ 23,188	\$ 65	\$ 43,063
Excelsior	60	53	25%	13.3	\$ 35	\$ 23,188	\$ 65	\$ 43,063
Golden Gate	70	41	10%	4.1	\$ 35	\$ 7,175	\$ 65	\$ 13,325
Ocean View	40	33	25%	8.3	\$ 35	\$ 14,438	\$ 65	\$ 26,813
Park	100	40	50%	20.0	\$ 50	\$ 50,000	\$ 100	\$ 100,000
Potrero	50	36	25%	9.0	\$ 35	\$ 15,750	\$ 65	\$ 29,250
Total Estimated Benefit						\$ 377,425		\$ 793,075

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Appendix A: Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

Exhibits

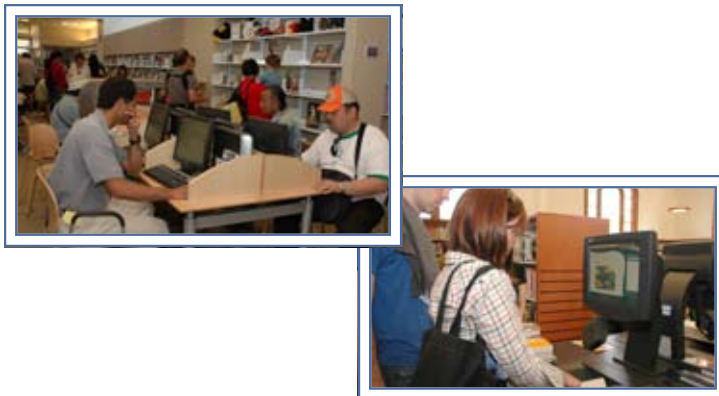
Exhibit 14 displays the estimated annual value to patrons from the gallery exhibits. These estimates were derived by multiplying the average cost of attending an exhibit elsewhere in the Bay Area by the estimated number of annual visitors to these library exhibits.



Exhibit 14
Estimated Value of SFPL Exhibits

Main Library	Square Feet	Attendance	Estimated Visit Value (Low)	Estimated Total Value	Estimated Visit Value (High)	Estimated Total Value
Skylight Gallery	2,200	23,377	\$ 5.00	\$ 116,884	\$ 12.00	\$ 280,522
Jewett Gallery	1,500	29,221	\$ 5.00	\$ 146,105	\$ 12.00	\$ 350,652
Total Estimated Benefit				\$ 262,989		\$ 631,174

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates



Access to Technology

Access to technology is another area of large benefit provided to the community by SFPL. In addition to general use computers and access to the Internet, the library provides many specialty items to assist those with disabilities.

The Library for the Blind provides refreshable Braille displays and Braille printers, both of which are expensive to purchase, prohibiting most of the general public from being able to own such hardware. The Library for the Blind also offers unabridged audio books on CD,

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received from the Library of Congress and “descriptive videos” in which a narrator describes the action on a second audio tract in commercially available movies or public programming videos (the benefit of these audio books and videos is calculated in the circulation section above).

SFPL also offers screens with enlarged print and increased color contrast for those with difficulty seeing; assistive listening devices for those who are hard of hearing; and software that reads aloud the text that appears on the monitor.

Exhibit 15 displays three tables showing the estimated high and low value of access to different types of technology. The first table is for general computers, the second is for computers to assist the disabled (ADA computers), and the third is for children’s computers which have specialty software for children. These values were estimated using average hourly market prices for access to similar

technology. The ADA computers have a large range of value estimation based on the range of assistive technology available, some of which is fairly easy to use or purchase elsewhere, and some of which is difficult to find and/or extremely expensive.

Exhibit 15
Estimated Value of SFPL Computer Use

	Internet/ Laptop/CD Computers	Total Usage Hours	Value per Hour (Low)	Total Regular Computer Value (Low)	Value per Hour (High)	Total Regular Computer Value (High)
Main Library	152	418,864	\$ 4.00	\$ 1,675,458	\$ 9.50	\$ 3,979,212
Branch Libraries	232	376,122	\$ 4.00	\$ 1,504,489	\$ 9.50	\$ 3,573,161
Total	384	794,987		\$ 3,179,947		\$ 7,552,373

	ADA Computers	Total Usage Hours	Value per Hour (Low)	Total ADA Computer Value (Low)	Value per Hour (High)	Total ADA Computer Value (High)
Main Library	12	3,901	\$ 11.50	\$ 44,867	\$ 204.50	\$ 797,848
Branch Libraries	-	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
Total	12	3,901		\$ 44,867		\$ 797,848

	Children's Computers	Total Usage Hours	Value per Hour (Low)	Total Children's Computer Value (Low)	Value per Hour (High)	Total Children's Computer Value (High)
Main Library	12	9,758	\$ 6.25	\$ 60,986	\$ 18.50	\$ 180,518
Branch Libraries	12	17,978	\$ 6.25	\$ 112,361	\$ 18.50	\$ 332,588
Total	24	27,735		\$ 173,347		\$ 513,106

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

Appendix A: Quantitative Benefits of Direct Services

Donations

SFPL runs an active donation and book swap program. Considering all national and international donations, the library donates approximately 65,000 books annually. These donations are sent around the world to many countries. The largest receiver of books is the Philippines, which pays a small fee per box of books to have them shipped to schools, libraries, and orphanages. The library has a book exchange program with San Francisco's sister city Shanghai, swapping approximately 150 new books annually.

Shown below in Exhibit 16 is the estimated annual value of book donations made by SFPL. The estimated market value comes from an average of the hardback, trade paperback, and mass market paperback books used in the circulation section of this report.



Photo: Michael Allen Jones

Exhibit 16
Estimated Value of SFPL Local Book Donations

	Number of Books	Estimated Market Value	Estimated Total Value
Annual Donations	65,000	\$ 7.92	\$ 514,583
Total Estimated Benefit			\$ 514,583

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates

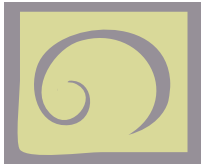
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Summary

Exhibit 17
Summary of Estimated Annual Value of Benefits Provided by SFPL

Circulation Data	Benefit	Total Estimated Annual Benefit	
		Low	High
Hardback books	\$	17,299,481	\$ 42,597,900
Paperback books (Trade)	\$	14,307,111	\$ 25,434,864
Paperback books (mass)	\$	585,971	\$ 937,554
Library for the blind (special materials)	\$	277,250	\$ 390,203
DVDs	\$	1,295,230	\$ 5,504,728
VHS Video Cassettes	\$	354,143	\$ 1,947,787
CDs, music	\$	2,149,260	\$ 2,579,112
Audio books, cassette	\$	309,551	\$ 1,100,624
Audio books, CD	\$	400,565	\$ 762,980
Audio cassettes, music	\$	12,392	\$ 23,013
Language Learning audio	\$	261,368	\$ 1,437,521
Phonograph records	\$	10,694	\$ 13,505
ebooks (text)	\$	229,697	\$ 292,341
Downloadable ebooks	\$	88,841	\$ 118,455
Magazines, adult	\$	406,070	\$ 1,843,538
Magazines, children's	\$	60,319	\$ 197,929
Magazines, non-English	\$	130,950	\$ 436,500
Subtotal	\$	38,178,890	\$ 85,618,553
Reference Services			
Reference materials	\$	5,931,650	\$ 29,007,594
Reference services	\$	11,395,807	\$ 26,661,350
Business Reference Questions	\$	558,817	\$ 838,225
On-line Databases	\$	24,358,427	\$ 49,483,059
Viewing/Listening Stations	\$	82,500	\$ 220,000
Subtotal	\$	42,327,201	\$ 106,210,228
Programming			
Adult			
Training/Instruction	\$	127,227	\$ 339,271
Lecture Panel	\$	77,446	\$ 154,891
Author Reading	\$	52,635	\$ 210,539
Exhibit Openings	\$	5,156	\$ 10,313
Film/Video	\$	76,765	\$ 102,353
Clubs/Performances/Celebrations	\$	14,554	\$ 36,386
Mission Bay Branch Opening	\$	32,000	\$ 80,000
Children			
Story times	\$	224,438	\$ 561,096
Media events	\$	130,298	\$ 138,984
Special programs	\$	508,872	\$ 1,272,180
SAT/Training classes	\$	47,500	\$ 71,250
Library visits from schools	\$	191,904	\$ 479,760
Librarian visits to schools	\$	146,812	\$ 367,030
ASL Storytimes	\$	34,560	\$ 47,520
Subtotal	\$	1,670,166	\$ 3,871,573
Use of Space			
Meeting space rentals	\$	377,425	\$ 793,075
Exhibits	\$	262,989	\$ 631,174
Subtotal	\$	640,414	\$ 1,424,249
Technology			
Computer Usage (including assistive technology)	\$	3,398,160	\$ 8,863,327
WiFi	\$	481,140	\$ 962,279
Subtotal	\$	3,879,300	\$ 9,825,606
Donations			
Annual Donations	\$	514,583	\$ 514,583
Subtotal	\$	514,583	\$ 514,583
TOTAL ESTIMATED BENEFITS FOR FY05-06:	\$	87,210,554	\$ 207,464,792
Total 05-06 SFPL Budget:	\$	62,108,717	\$ 62,108,717
Benefit/Cost ratio		1.40	3.34

Source: SFPL, Berk & Associates



Appendix B:

Summary of Economic Concepts

As a discipline, economics recognizes that society is continually making choices (consciously or unconsciously) about how to use the finite resources that are available to them. In light of this recognition, most of economics deals with two questions:

1. How can available resources be used to maximize people's well-being?
2. How are the costs and benefits of a given choice distributed?

The terms below speak to these two questions.

Economic Benefit

The economic benefit of an action is the value that society, as a whole, derives from that action. In many instances, the value of an economic benefit can be quantified through the survey-based willingness-to-pay methodology. A commuter with a taste for espresso and a need for caffeine may, for example, be willing to pay as much as \$6 for an espresso at her local coffee shop. The drink may only actually cost her \$3, but because she is willing to pay as much as



\$6, an economist would say the economic benefit she derives from consuming that espresso can be quantified as \$6.

The notion of willingness-to-pay extends to non-market goods or services as well. For example, all together, the residents of the Atlanta metropolitan area might be willing to pay as much as \$5 billion each year for mosquito control. Just because no private market exists to provide mosquito control does not mean that willingness-to-pay does not exist.

In the case of libraries, some of the economic benefits that are generated revolve around non-market goods and services (e.g. the value of the local library as a "Third Place" that promotes community). Other benefits involve services for which private markets do exist (e.g. access to a computer and the Internet may be available at an Internet cafe). In these latter cases, the net economic benefit of the library's service is the cost saving associated with accessing the service through the library.

Economic Impact

An economic impact is defined as a net change in economic activity within a defined geographic area when compared with some form of no-action baseline. Economic impacts are described in terms of new business revenue, new jobs, or new earned income associated with newly-introduced demand for a region's economic output.

A "direct" economic impact is defined as the initial shift in demand for the economic output of the area in question. For example, if an expanded convention center resulted in San Francisco attracting new conventioners from around the United States, then the new visitors to the area would bring with them a series of direct impacts: new demand for San Francisco's hotel, restaurant, retail, and entertainment industries. New demand in these industries, in turn, would create ripple effects (indirect and induced impacts) throughout the Bay Area economy.

Typically, public libraries generate great economic benefits for a city (i.e. they provide many services that residents value), but they do not generate large economic impacts—at least not directly. In other

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words, to the extent that providing library services is one of many ways a region can spend its money, increased activity by a library does not directly introduce new demand for the goods and services that the region produces.

Benefit/Cost Analysis

A benefit/cost analysis attempts to quantify the benefits and costs associated with a particular entity or action. By quantifying as many costs and benefits as possible, it becomes clearer whether the value of the benefits outweigh the costs. By putting costs and benefits into dollar terms, it also becomes easier to compare different types of projects by considering which project produces the greater benefit compared to the cost.

This study attempts to quantify the benefits of SFPL and compare them to the system's operating costs to estimate the additional value provided to the community beyond what is paid.



Return on Investment

Return on Investment (ROI) is a comparison of the money earned on an investment versus the amount invested. It is expressed as a percentage and is calculated by dividing the return (interest, profit, etc.) by the amount invested (capital, cost basis of investment, etc.). For example, a \$100 investment that returns the principal invested (\$100) plus an additional \$10 has a 10% ROI. ROI is usually stated in terms of the compounded annual rate of return.

Externalities

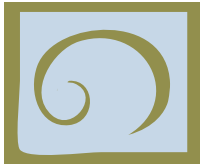
For many transactions, the buyer is the person who experiences the benefits of a product and the seller is the one who experiences the costs of production. Externalities occur when someone other than the buyer or seller experiences a benefit or cost from the product.

The most common example of a negative externality is pollution; if the seller does not have to pay to compensate for polluting a river, then the cost of that damage will

not be incorporated in the price of the product, but will be paid by others in the community. An example of a positive externality is education; if an individual within a community pays to put herself through college, the remaining community members benefit from her education, enjoying life in a neighborhood with less crime (increased education levels typically correlates with a decreased propensity to engage in criminal activities) and greater availability of professional services.

Avoided Social Costs

The term "social costs" refers to negative events that affect a society as a whole. Sometimes a price can be placed on certain social costs and the dollar value of avoiding those social costs. For example, if drug use led to \$10 million in thefts within a city's borders, a program that reduced drug use by 50% would lead to avoided social costs of \$5 million for that city. In other instances, social costs are present but difficult to quantify (e.g. dependence on foreign oil is often referred to as a social cost, but it is difficult to determine the full dollar value of that cost).



Appendix C: Sources

Interviews Conducted

Friends of the San Francisco Public Library

- Donna Bero, Executive Director

San Francisco Public Library

- Brian Bannon, Chief of Branches
- Toni Bernardi, Chief of Children and Youth Services
- Jason Gibbs, Librarian, Art/Music/Recreation
- Marti Goddard, Access Services Manager
- Mark Hall, Reference Manager, Business Sciences and Technology
- Luis Herrera, City Librarian
- Kathy Lawhun, Chief of Main
- Martha Neves, Mission Branch Librarian
- Cathy Nyhan, Fifth Floor Manager
- Asa Peavy, Program Manager, Book Arts and Special Collections Center
- Marcia Schneider, Director of Public Affairs/Adult Services

San Francisco Unified School District

- Alan Broussard, Director of Program Quality & Enhancement, SFUSD Child Development Program
- Anne Dalton, Executive Director of Libraries, Media and Technical Services

- Rachele Resnick, Library Media Teacher on Special Assignment Library Program Support

Other Organizations

- David Blazeovich, Senior Programmer, The Bernard Osher Foundation
- Lee Blicht, Vice President for University Advancement, San Francisco State University
- Darin Buchalter, Managing Director, Navigant Consulting and Vice Chair of the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library Board of Directors
- Kathleen Butler-Tom, Small Business Administration
- Jim Chappell, President, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association
- Dan Coughan, Catellus
- Steve Coulter, Author and Commissioner, San Francisco Library Commission
- Dr. Carlotta del Portillo, Dean, Mission Campus of City College of San Francisco
- Ellen Egbert, Council of Neighborhood Libraries
- Peter Fitzsimmons, Em Johnson Interest, Inc., Executive Director Jazz Heritage Center
- Diane Filippi, Director, SPUR Urban Center
- Chief Heather Fong, City and County of San Francisco Police Department
- Marcia Garland, Executive Director, San Francisco's Historic North Beach Chamber of Commerce

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- Jewelle Gomez, Director of Grants and Community Initiatives, Horizons Foundation and San Francisco Library Commissioner
- Michaela Hayes, Instructor, San Francisco, State University Extension
- Charles Higuera, Principal, VBN Architects and President of the San Francisco Public Library Commission
- Betsy Keever, Interim Director, Raising a Reader
- Carol Kocivar, Former President, San Francisco Parent Teachers Association
- James Lazarus, Senior Vice President, Public Policy, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
- Mardi Lucich, MA, Citywide Child Care Administrator, San Francisco Department of Children, Youth & Their Families
- Lauralee Brown Markus, Director of Public Policy, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
- Ingrid Mezquita, Program Officer, Preschool for All
- Effie Lee Morris, San Francisco Public Library Children's Services Coordinator, 1963-1977
- Mike Neumann, Swinerton Builders
- Mayor Gavin Newsom, City of San Francisco
- Larry Nibbi, Nibbi Brothers Construction
- Dr. Rajesh Parekh, Program Director, San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team, San Francisco Department of Public Health
- Aaron Peskin, President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors
- Marcia Popper, Council of Neighborhood Libraries
- Julian Potter, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
- David Prowler, Prowler, Inc.
- Chet Roaman, Council of Neighborhood Libraries
- Marcia Rosen, Executive Director, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency
- Shawn Rosenmoss, Senior Environmental Specialist, City of San Francisco Department of the Environment
- Ron Schmidt, Business Counselor, SCORE, Counselors to America's Small Business
- Mark Schatz, Principal, Field Paoli
- Sheila Butcher Smith, Project Manager, Early Learning, KQED, Education Network
- Lygia Stebbing, Program Director, Jumpstart, Western Region
- Jim Sutton, The Sutton Law Firm
- Leslie Trook, Principal, AP Gianinni Middle School
- Richard Ventura, Executive Director, San Francisco Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- John Whitehurst, Principal, Barnes Mosher Whitehurst Lauter and Partners
- Peter Wiley, Wiley and Sons Publishing
- Jill Winkelstein, Renaissance Center

Appendix C: Sources

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