



IFLA Metropolitan Libraries Section  
<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s46/index.htm>





# Making Cities Stronger

Public Library Contributions to Local  
Economic Development



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*“Strengthening the role of  
public libraries in urban life”*

- 167 library, corporate and associate members (U.S. & Canada)
- Programs, conferences and special research projects
- Current areas of focus:
  - Capacity Building
  - Urban Youth
  - Urban Assets
  - Future Forecasting



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**EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP  
INSTITUTE**

Librarians for America's  
**NEIGHBORHOODS**



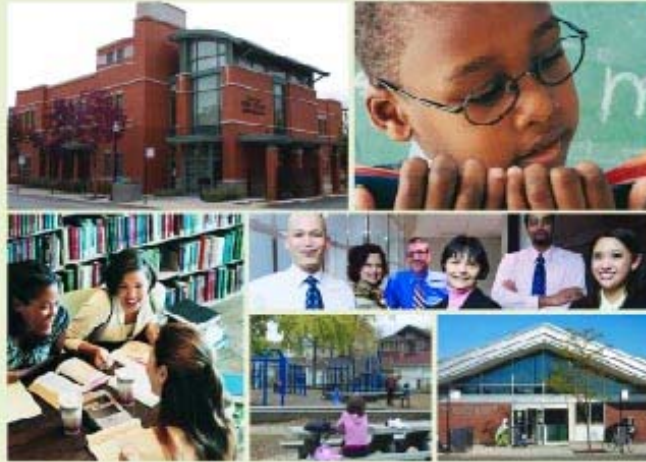
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# THE Engaged Library:

*Chicago Stories of Community Building*

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# Making Cities Stronger

- Value Proposition
  - Defining the Return on Investment
  - Direct vs. Indirect Benefits



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Direct Economic Benefit
  - Save the consumer money?
  - Have you added value?
  - Time is money
- Indirect Social Benefit
  - Long-term
  - Community enhancements



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# Librarians Study The Value Proposition

- *Placing a Value on Public Libraries*, Glen Holt, Don Elliott, 1999 ([www.slpl.lib.mo.us/libsrc](http://www.slpl.lib.mo.us/libsrc))
- *The Economic Impacts & Benefits of Florida Public Libraries* – Information Institute, Florida State University, 2001 ([www.dlis.dos.state.fl.us](http://www.dlis.dos.state.fl.us))
- *The Economic Impact of Libraries on South Carolina*, School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina, 2005 ([www.libsci.sc.edu](http://www.libsci.sc.edu))
- *The Seattle Public Library Central Library: Economic Benefits Study*, 2005 ([www.berkandassociates.com](http://www.berkandassociates.com))
- *Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Community Impacts & Benefits*, 2006 ([www.clpgh.org](http://www.clpgh.org))





# Library Value Conclusions

## ○ Direct Return on Investment

- \$1 generates \$3 in benefit (Pittsburgh)
- \$1 generates \$2.86 (South Carolina)
- \$16 million in new spending (Seattle)
- \$1 generates \$6.54 (Florida)



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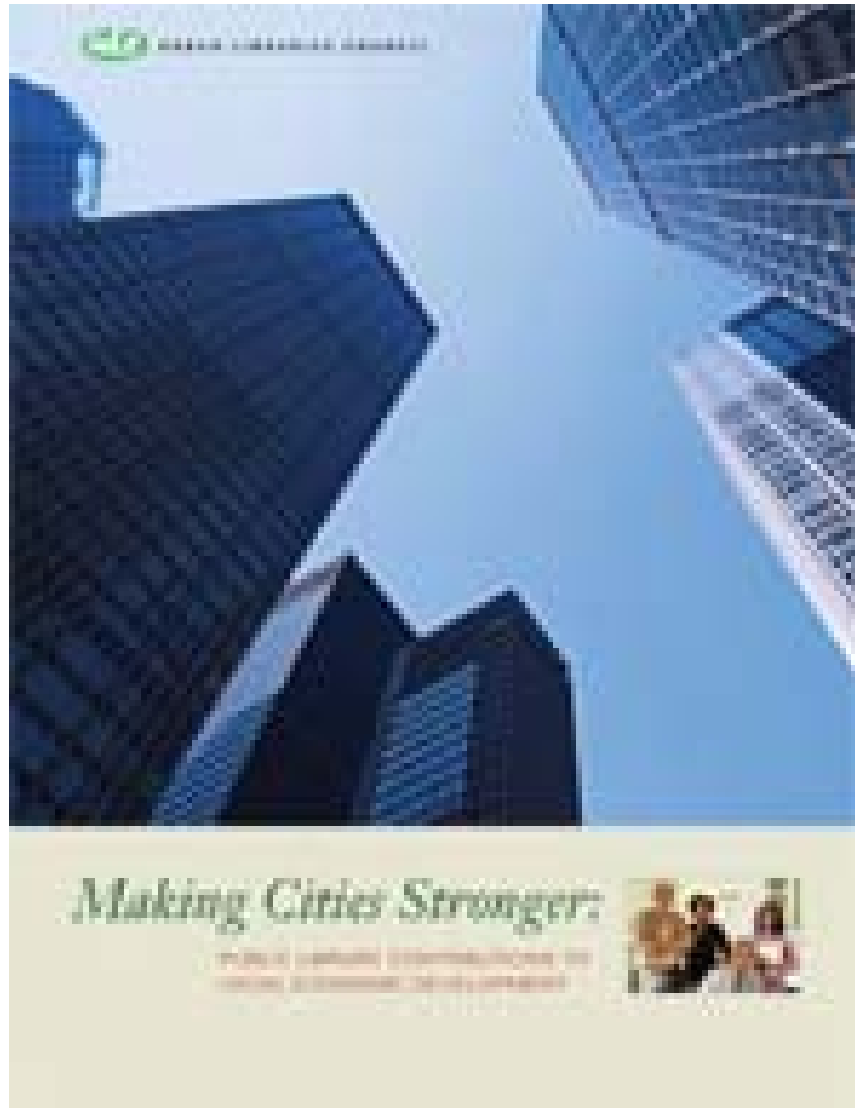
# Library Value Conclusions

## ○ Indirect Social Benefits

- Access to information saves consumer \$
- Access to computer technology
- Job/Career resources
- Business resources (small business)
- Support for education
- Community asset (business development; destination, character, livability)
- Image & identity



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Traditional Physical Development Strategies
  - Business tax abatements/credits
  - Preferential financing
  - Land and/or other real property
- Emerging Human Investment Strategies
  - Skilled, educated workforce
  - Responsible government
  - Good schools & public amenities



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Methodology
  - Survey ULC member libraries
  - Field studies
  - Analysis & evaluation in the context of emerging economic development programs



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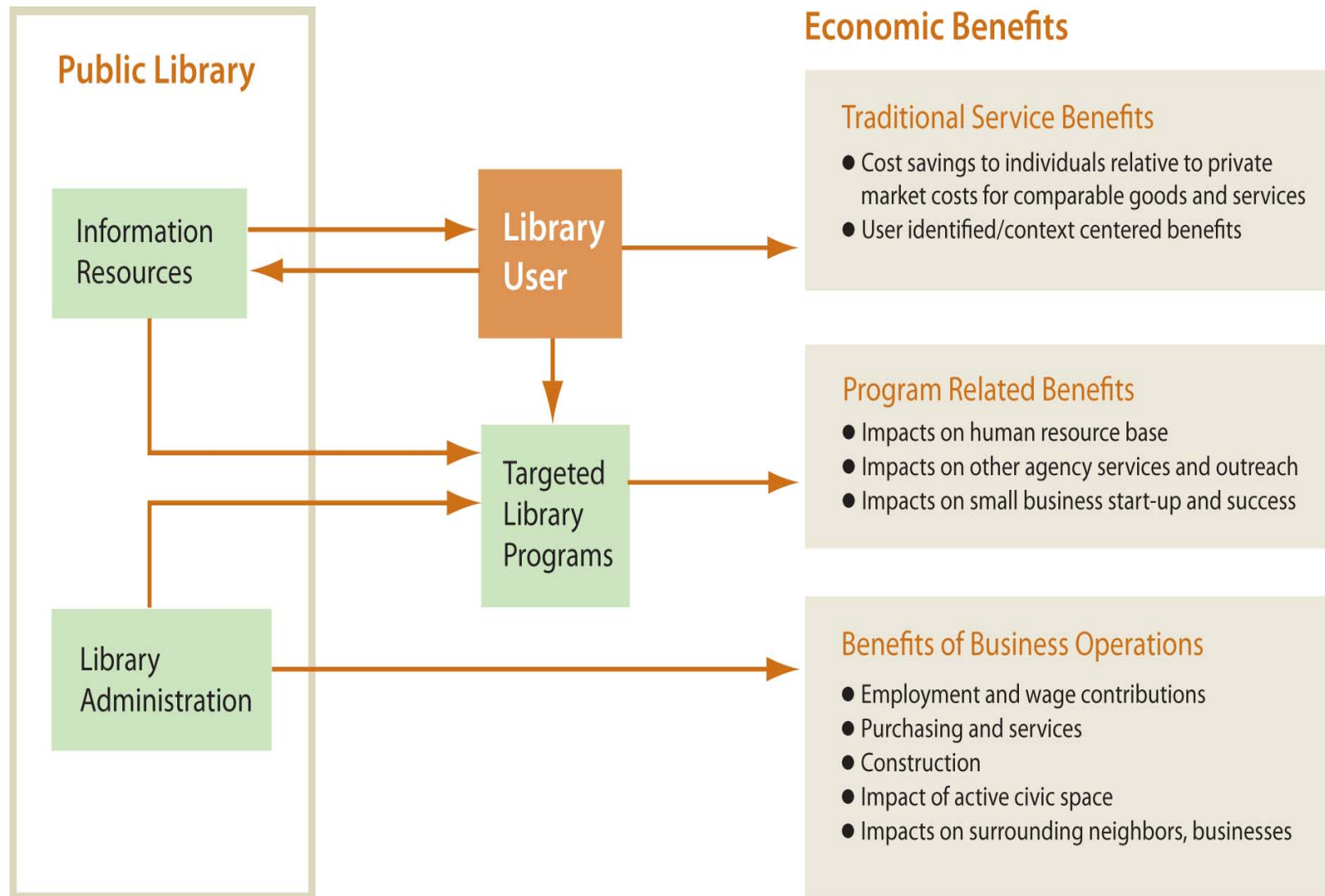
# Making Cities Stronger

- **Early literacy services** contribute to long-term economic success
- **Library employment and career resources** prepare workers with new technologies
- **Small business resources and programs** lower barriers to market entry
- **Public library buildings are catalysts** for physical development



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## Model Distinguishing Economic Benefits Derived from Library Service and Administrative Functions







# Making Cities Stronger

- Early literacy services contribute to long-term economic success



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# Making Cities Stronger

## Early Literacy

School readiness/academic success

Community Campaigns

Elevate awareness of the need to read early and often

Baby Lap-Sit to PreK reading activities

Elevate levels of early literacy, expand learning resources

Outreach to parents and caregivers

Elevate levels of early literacy, improve quality of child care

Child care training and certification

Strengthen community-wide child care provider network,  
improve child care worker qualifications



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Recommendations for linking library programs to early literacy:
  - Broaden support for outreach to parents and area caregivers
  - Strengthen partnerships with area child service providers
  - Evaluate literacy program and collect meaningful data over time.



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Library employment and career resources prepare workers with new technologies



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# Making Cities Stronger

<b>Workforce Development</b>	
	Expand quantity and competencies of local workforce, long-term community economic capacity
Access to technology	Expand employment aptitudes, competencies
Access to internet	Expand access to employment search and application opportunities
Access to technology training	Expand employment skills and opportunities
English language training, adult literacy resources & services	Expand employment opportunities, economic sustainability
Career skills workshops (w/agencies)	Provide support for career pathways, expand audiences/reach of agencies



# Making Cities Stronger

- Recommendations for linking library programs to workforce development:
  - Strengthen connections with area workforce development agencies
  - Build better employer connections
  - Know your customers
  - Know the broader workforce outlook/trends.



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Small business resources and programs lower barriers to market entry



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# Making Cities Stronger

## Small Business Support

	Strengthen key local enterprise base and stimulate new job creation
Access to databases and other resources	Reduce cost for research and planning
Technical assistance for start-ups and micro-enterprises	Reduce costs and barriers to entering market, reduce failure rates, expand audience for other local agencies involved in small business support, expand small business sector
Technical assistance to existing businesses	Strengthen viable small business sector, expand reach and lower costs of other local agencies with shared facilities and resources, increase clustering of enterprises for competitive advantages



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Recommendations for linking library programs to small business:
  - Invest in targeted staff development and training
  - Build community-wide access to business information resources
  - Aggressively market business resources
  - Understand and support small business clusters and financing
  - Provide tailored support for micro-enterprises





# Making Cities Stronger

- Public library buildings are catalysts for physical development



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# Making Cities Stronger

## Physical Development

	Contribute to vibrant urban and suburban life
Downtown (often "central" or "main")	Anchor development, generate foot traffic, revitalize commercial and cultural activity
Mixed-use, residential	Provide amenity value, generate foot traffic, increase quality of life and safety
Mall, commercial development	Generate traffic, but not sales competition, strengthens developer financing pro forma
Joint-Use	Reduce development costs, generate synergy of consumers/service providers



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# Making Cities Stronger

- Recommendations for linking libraries to physical development:
  - Demonstrate that public and private services can work together in mutually supportive ways
  - Identify ways in which public libraries can complement local development plans
  - Provide data to change developer perceptions
  - Understand the challenges in shared buildings.



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# Making Cities Stronger

- What's the big deal?
  - Publication can be used to create a dialogue with elected officials and economic development professionals
  - Examples of best practices on how libraries can link their efforts with economic development



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