A young boy with short dark hair, wearing a green polo shirt, is shown in profile, looking down at an open book he is holding. The book has a red cover and yellow pages. The background is a blurred library with bookshelves filled with books. The entire image is framed by a thick blue border, with a thin yellow vertical line on the left side.

A Great Community Deserves a Great Library

Findings and Recommendations
Prepared by the
Pacifica Library Foundation
January 2007



A View from the Foundation

Near the end of the nineteenth century, Andrew Carnegie offered to build libraries if communities would provide the land and take responsibility for their maintenance, governance, and oversight. As a result of this visionary philanthropy, 1,689 “Carnegie Libraries” were built throughout this country between 1881 and 1917, helping to educate generations of Americans and contributing to the ascendance of the United States as a world leader in the 20th century.

Now, at the beginning of our century, as Pacifica celebrates its 50th anniversary, we face the challenge and the opportunity to envision and then build a library that will serve the needs of our community in ways that are simply not possible with our present small branches. In the following pages, we have compiled essential information about our community and our libraries, and we describe the kinds of services that a city of our size and quality should have. We invite our city officials and all of our citizens to join us in making a modern, 21st century community library a reality.

We dedicate this report to all those who have helped create a unique coastal community that values not only the natural environment but also the diverse skills, abilities and talents of its residents—and most especially to those who have, over the past 17 years, insisted that Pacifica deserves and should have the highest quality of library services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "H. James Crow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

H. James Crow, Ph.D.
President



ABOUT THE PACIFICA LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Mission

The Pacifica Library Foundation is dedicated to ensuring a financially secure future for library services to all citizens of our community through leadership, fund development and public support.

Long Term Goals

- Secure the financial support necessary to deliver the highest quality of library services to meet the changing needs of our community.
- Serve as a champion to ensure Pacificans have free access to library services.
- Provide an independent forum for the community to explore innovative solutions to key library challenges.
- Partner with library professionals to identify the most efficient and effective strategies for ensuring our libraries remain vibrant community learning centers.

Board of Directors 2006-2007

<u>Officers</u>	
President	H. James Crow, Ph.D.
Vice-president	Kathleen A. Long
Treasurer	Breck Hitz
Secretary	Angela Koblitz
<u>Directors</u>	Thom Ball, <i>Manager, Pacifica Libraries</i> Caroline Barba, <i>President, Pacifica Friends of the Library</i> William Bradford Harold Cicerone Vickey Johnson, <i>Director of Library Services, County of San Mateo</i> Virginia Lyons Yvonne Lorvan John Maloney
Managing Director	Patricia A. Hudson, MPsSc, CAE
Volunteer Coordinator	James R. Hudson, Ph.D.

Funding for this research was provided to the Pacifica Library Foundation through the generous contributions from local individuals, businesses and community groups.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose of the Report	1
Community History and Profile	1
Demographics.....	1
City Government.....	3
Schools.....	3
Community Organizations.....	4
Library Overview.....	5
Library Funding for Operations.....	5
Pacifica’s Libraries: Sharp Park and Sanchez.....	6
Conclusion: Change is Imperative.....	8
Findings.....	8
Previously Proposed Solutions.....	12
Foundation’s Recommendation.....	13
Site for a New Library: Land Options.....	14
Building a New Library: Funding Options.....	15
Next Steps.....	15
About the Report Sponsor: Pacifica Library Foundation.....	16
Supporting Organization: Pacifica Friends of the Library.....	16
Appendix.....	17

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report proposes a plan for delivering high quality library services in Pacifica, based on a comprehensive study of current library services, as well as information about the community and its residents. It provides decision-makers with information on identified needs of the entire community (not solely current library patrons) based on nationally accepted standards. It is divided into four sections: (1) community history and profile, (2) library overview and challenges, (3) conclusion and (4) next steps. Appendices provide additional reference for detailed and complex information.

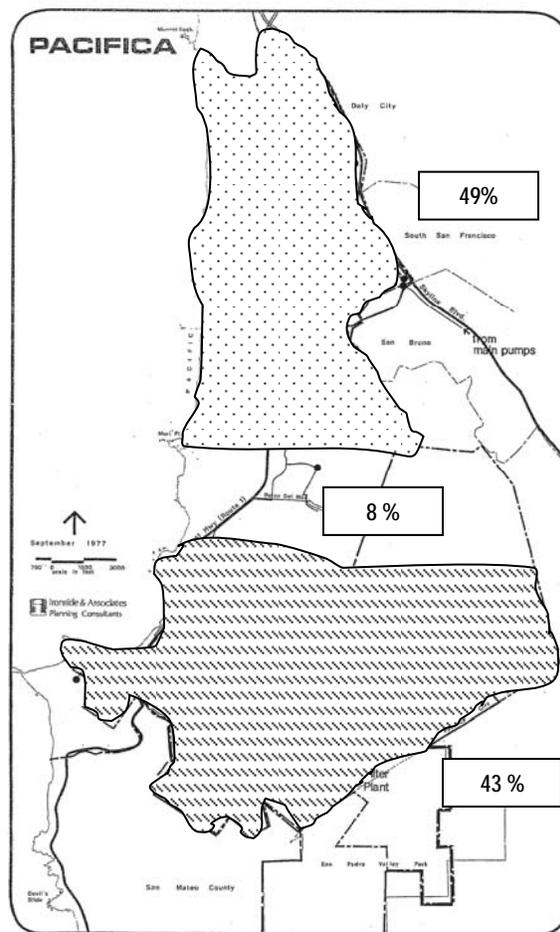
COMMUNITY HISTORY AND PROFILE

Demographics

Pacifica's citizens have a history of responding to challenges. In 1957, nine separate unincorporated coastal districts joined together to create a 12.6 square mile community in order to maintain control of their own future and avoid becoming a garbage dump site for San Mateo County. The founders envisioned a self-supporting city of about 90,000, on the order of a Daly City. But in 1965, when the population reached 35,000, the community mobilized to impose restrictions on hillside development and took other measures to limit further growth; as a result, the population has remained stable at nearly 40,000. Over 50 percent of Pacifica is now dedicated to open space and only 10 percent remains available for future development.

Despite its limited growth, Pacifica has become a richly diverse community with:

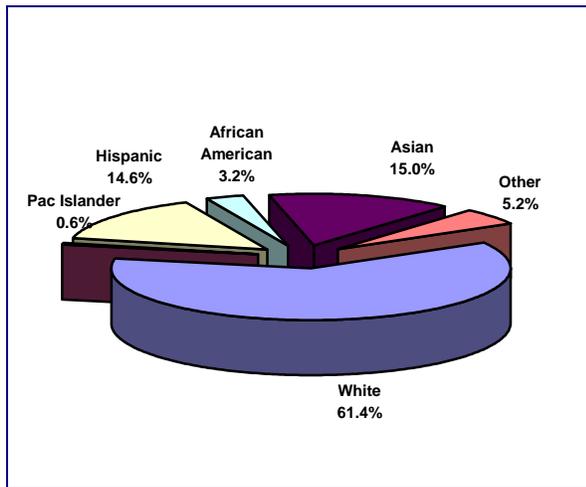
- Several small shopping centers
- Nearly 2,000 businesses (800 home-based)
- Twelve public and private schools
- Over two dozen churches
- A thriving arts community
- Two performing arts centers
- Several historic landmarks
- A community newspaper
- Five recreation centers
- Nineteen city, county and state parks and beaches with coastal pedestrian and bike trails
- Seventy-four environmental, civic and social groups
- Two branches of the San Mateo County Library System



Pacifica's natural boundaries influence the distribution of its population: Nearly half (49 percent) of its residents live north of the Vallemar neighborhood, nearly half south (43 percent), and 8 percent in Vallemar.

From 1990 to 2000, the population increased 4 percent, from 37,670 to 38,390, and the median age increased from 35.3 to 37.6.

At least 350 older citizens reside in one of four senior housing facilities (345 living units), three of which are within close proximity to one or the other of Pacifica's libraries. Declining enrollment in the elementary school district over the past several years has leveled off this past year. At least three factors appear to be contributing to this shift: number of newer residents with young children, increased confidence in Pacifica's public schools by parents who previously sought private education, and the number of students from other school districts who attend through the inter-district participation program.



The city's ethnic diversity has changed somewhat, with the number and percentage of whites and African Americans decreasing from 1990 to 2000, and a corresponding increase in the number and percentage of Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and other minorities. The figures for 2000 were: White 23,549 (61.4 percent); Hispanic 5,609 (14.6 percent); African American 1,219 (3.2 percent); Asian 5,765 (15.0 percent); Pacific Islander 247 (.6 percent); Other 2,001 (5.2 percent). A large percentage of the Asians and African Americans live in the northern part of the city, while Hispanics are distributed more evenly throughout the community.

In 2000, nearly 9 percent more adults reported having completed some level of college or professional education than in 1990. Residents and business professionals have observed that newer property owners tend to be move-up rather than

first-time buyers, and work in jobs that require some level of higher education.

The median family income as reported in the 2000 US Census was \$78,183.

Nearly 70 percent of Pacifica's adults are registered voters: 54.8 percent Democrat, 19.2 percent Republican, 5.7 percent other parties; 20.3 percent do not state a party affiliation.

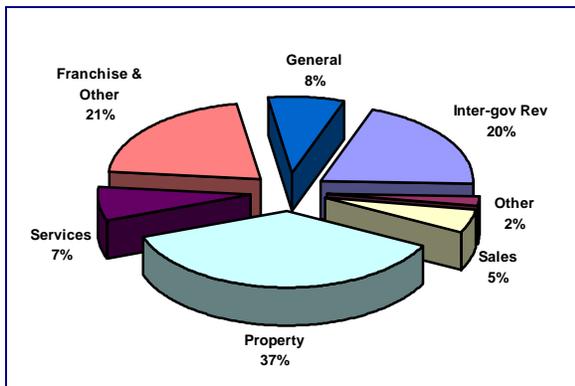
Pacifica currently has approximately 14,000 dwelling units, 49.1 percent in the northern section, 8.4 percent in Vallemar, and 42.5 percent south of Vallemar. Nearly 69 percent of residents own their own homes. More rental properties are found in the north than in the south. Fewer than 300 parcels are available for future development, assuming no residential units in the Rockaway Quarry. The number of parcels will not change unless the city annexes land to the south (e.g. Shamrock Ranch) where an additional 200 parcels could become available.

Housing values have risen substantially in recent years. The median home price reported in 2003 was \$469,500. In January 2005 that had increased to \$690,000, and in June 2006 to \$730,000, with some homes valued at more than \$1 million.

Pacificans readily mobilize to address community issues. Several years ago, a group of mothers lobbied successfully to enhance Frontierland, a park and playground in the southern part of the city. This effort prompted others to push for the revitalization of other city-owned parks and playgrounds. Citizens supported the building of a skateboard park for youth. In response to several teen deaths in the past few years, concerned residents, community groups, and the high school district formed the Partnership for A Safe and Healthy Pacifica to develop strategies to minimize the risk of substance abuse among adolescents. In 2002 and 2006, citizens vigorously debated the inclusion of residential units in proposed mixed-use development projects in the Rockaway Quarry.

City Government

Pacifica is a city rich with promise but financially constrained. The city's tax revenues are quite limited, making it difficult to fund some of the most basic and necessary municipal services. Only 5 percent of its \$24,933,820 operational income is generated from sales tax, 37 percent from property taxes, 21 percent from franchise and other taxes, 7 percent from charges for services, 8 percent from other general revenues, 20 percent from intergovernmental revenue, and 2 percent from use of money and property.



The city's general fund is budgeted to support the following: 55 percent is allocated for fire and police services; 4 percent for the planning and building department; 6 percent for the public works department, 12 percent for the parks, beaches and recreation department, and 13 percent for the internal operations of the city government (including city council, city manager, city attorney, etc.). The 2006-2007 fiscal year is the first time in many years that the city is not experiencing a structural deficit; monies are being allocated from the general fund to help support the current level of library services and to address road repairs and maintenance of city-owned buildings.

Pacifica has a council-manager government. The city council is also the Redevelopment Agency. The city employs approximately 195 full-time staff and 86 part-time/seasonal staff. Community members are appointed to serve on four commissions (Cultural Arts; Emergency Preparedness and Safety; Parks, Beaches and Recreation; and

Planning) and on various committees. In addition to operating with limited revenue, the city has been embroiled in a number of lawsuits over the years which have diverted resources from other priorities. Most of the lawsuits have been resolved in the city's favor, reducing the fear of additional financial burden.

The city has also recently developed a strategic plan to set a direction for its future. One of the strategies within the plan is to "work with the Pacifica Library Foundation on providing services within the community as well as to determine feasible sites for future library facilities." The plan is considered a reference guide; no steps have been reported as yet regarding its implementation.

The city owns at least eight major parcels of land:

- The current city hall site
- Community center site
- Police station
- Current wastewater treatment plant site
- Previous wastewater treatment plant site
- Sharp Park Library site
- Sanchez Library site
- Sanchez Art Center and Performing Arts Center site

Schools

Most students in grades K-8 attend one of six schools in the Pacifica School District (PSD); a few in the northern end of town live within the Jefferson Elementary School District. Those in grades 9-12 attend schools in Jefferson Union High School District (JUHSD). Some students attend private schools, including two located in Pacifica, and a few are home-schooled.



Each public school district is governed by an elected board of education and funded as provided by state law. PSD had enrollment of 3,101 in 2005. JUHSD's enrollment comes from a larger geographic area, as the district includes Daly City, Pacifica, Brisbane, and Colma. Both districts have open enrollment, but neither provides bus transportation, except for special education students and where no options are available.

While the Pacifica School District has recently modernized its buildings and maintains a fine reputation, it continues to operate with insufficient general fund revenue. The state funding formula provides \$6,320 per student, the lowest funding level in the county for elementary schools. Shortage of funds has forced the district to reduce expenditures by \$1.2 million in the past five years, and this year the district is facing a \$350,000 deficit. The PSD Board of Education is planning to ask voters in May 2007 to authorize a parcel tax to avoid cutbacks in its academic program. Resources for the district's music program are supplemented by generous donations of benefactors.

PSD recognizes the value of planning. One of the goals in its strategic plan is to "develop and implement a district-wide program involving school libraries and media centers and explore partnerships with city libraries." Collections in the libraries in the elementary schools have been updated along with other improvements but will require continued funding to maintain. A San Mateo County Office of Education librarian guides the staff and volunteers who manage the elementary school libraries. Students have access to these facilities during and immediately after school hours.

Adequate funding is also an issue for the Jefferson Union High School District. Voters recently approved \$136.9 million general obligation bond for capital improvements to upgrade high school facilities. Terra Nova, one of Pacifica's two high schools, has had to further crowd its already limited library facilities in order to add a needed computer lab.

Alma Heights Christian Academy, with a long history in Pacifica, has approximately 350 students (85 percent from Pacifica) in kindergarten through grade 12. Its newly-built library has computers and Internet access; its collection of donated materials is in the process of being organized.

Good Shepherd has approximately 300 students (most from Pacifica) in kindergarten through grade 8. It has both library facilities and a tech lab, and reports no difficulty in delivering library services during school hours.

Pacificans have access to adult and continuing education through the Jefferson Union High School District and the many colleges in the area.

Community Organizations

More than 70 social and civic groups varying in size and scope meet in various public spaces and private homes throughout the city. Only a few are able to use the limited space at the library for meetings or educational activities. Some groups have found space at Pacifica's Community Center, elementary school buildings, and religious institutions.

Many residents are passionate about preserving the community's natural beauty. Several community groups, including the Pacifica Ocean Discovery Center, the Livability Project, Pacifica Beach Coalition, and others, provide education in specialized topics (e.g. environment, marine life). These groups utilize some of the limited meeting space in town to conduct sessions but would be able to expand their activities if adequate space were available.

Pacifica's active arts and entertainment organizations (Sanchez Art Center, Pacifica Performances, Spindrift Players, and others) provide a remarkably wide range of art, theatre, and music events for the public. This year, Pacifica Performances, a nonprofit volunteer-run organization that brings world-renowned musicians and artists to the community, celebrated its 30th anniversary. Despite their tenure in the community, these groups are always looking for opportunities to expand participation at their events.



LIBRARY OVERVIEW

Library Funding for Operations

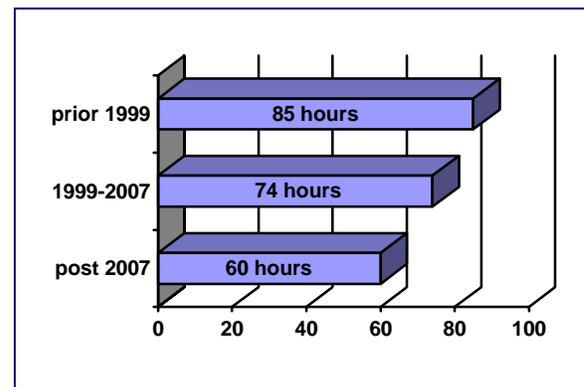
Pacifica's libraries are funded and operated by the San Mateo County Library (SMCL) which was established in 1912 as a Special District Library supporting the unincorporated county areas and cities choosing to participate as member libraries. A dedicated property tax collected from the areas served is the SMCL's primary source of income.

The Public Library Fund, established by the state in 1983 to replace some of the monies lost as a result of the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, has never been fully funded (SMCL receives less than \$200,000 annually). The Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF), established in 1992-93 as a response to severe state budgetary shortfalls, has had a much more serious impact on library funding. ERAF redirected over \$4 billion of property taxes from cities, counties and special districts to schools and community colleges to help meet the state's funding obligation for K-14 schools. The resulting loss of 20 percent of the county library's property tax revenue created a fiscal crisis within the county library system for delivering library services. The loss of property tax revenue also placed added burdens on cities and counties.

In 1999, a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agreement was established as a means of managing library services by the SMCL for its member communities within San Mateo County, overseeing revenues and expenditures, and seeking

long-term funding solutions. Eleven cities are members of the SMCL: Atherton, Belmont, Brisbane, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, Pacifica, Portola Valley, San Carlos, and Woodside. The SMCL is managed by the County Library Director and governed by a twelve-member board consisting of representatives from each participating city and a representative from the Board of Supervisors.

Based on Pacifica's population of more than 10,000, its libraries received approximately \$1.6 million for 60 hours of operation in 2005-2006. Under the JPA agreement, the city is responsible for the maintenance of buildings and grounds; the city contracts with the SMCL for performance of that maintenance.



Prior to formation of the JPA, Pacifica's two libraries were open a combined total of 85 hours per week. Under the terms of the JPA, Pacifica's hours were reduced to 60 per week. Because of the significant difference, the San Mateo County general fund supported an additional 14 hours through 2004, to give the city time to find other ways to fund hours in excess of 60. In 2004, Council member Jim Vreeland (as a JPA board member representing Pacifica) requested that the JPA governing board recognize that Pacifica's unique geography justified continued financial support for existing hours of operation for its two libraries. The JPA board agreed to provide up to \$50,000 per year for three years to maintain the 14 additional hours of service—if the city made a general fund matching contribution of \$100,000 per year. That commitment is scheduled to expire June 30, 2007.

Pacifica benefits greatly from its membership in the JPA. Revenue generated by property taxes in Pacifica accounts for less than half of the cost required to operate its libraries; the balance comes from taxes on other property in San Mateo County, including the airport and unincorporated areas.

Pacifica's Libraries: Sharp Park and Sanchez

Pacifica's first library opened as the Salada Beach Branch in 1932 in the San Pedro Valley Elementary School building. In 1948 it moved to a commercial space on Francisco Boulevard and remained there until 1961, when Highway 1 displaced it. It operated in rented quarters for a few years on Palmetto under the name Mori Point Library while a new library was being built. It moved to its present location on Hilton Way in 1965. While originally dedicated under the name Pacifica Library, this facility is now referred to as the Pacifica-Sharp Park Library.

What is now the Pacifica-Sanchez Library opened in May 1960 at a storefront in the Linda Mar Shopping Center. Proposition 13 forced its closure in 1978. Volunteers lobbied the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to open a branch in 1979 at the San Pedro Valley Elementary School. Volunteers managed the location until the space proved inadequate to house its 30,000 items. When residents learned that land was allocated on Terra Nova Boulevard for a library, volunteers lobbied successfully to have a second library built at what is now the Sanchez site. Neither library when built met anticipated needs.

Today, the two libraries are staffed by four full-time certified librarians (including the branch manager), a circulation supervisor, seven library assistants, and six part-time library aides. Approximately 20,000 library cards are issued among Pacifica's 39,390 residents, distributed to 12,000 of the 14,022 addresses in the city, suggesting that at least 85 percent of Pacifica's households have at least one library card.

The two libraries, combined, have only about 10,000 square feet of space. This is inadequate for a community the size of Pacifica. Other, smaller



communities in the San Mateo County Library System have larger libraries (see Appendix 1).

Pacifica's libraries do not have enough space for public-access computers, for collections to be properly displayed (adult, children's audio-visual), for students to study without causing disruption to others, for library staff to respond to information inquiries, and for adequate scheduling of special programs and learning opportunities for children and adults.

The space is also inadequate to install some of the self-service technology that would free library staff to give greater personal attention to patrons. There is not sufficient meeting space for social and civic groups or for other educational support the libraries could provide to the community.

While the two libraries are funded for a total 74 hours per week, those hours overlap; consequently patrons have access to library services for only 47 hours per week. Although Pacifica-Sharp Park is open more hours, Pacifica-Sanchez has more traffic and circulates more materials.

In order to operate two libraries, thirty percent of Pacifica's 84,783 items must be duplicated: both have similar collections of new titles, popular fiction and nonfiction for adults, children and youth, reference materials and current magazines and journals. In 2004-2005, over 330,000 items were circulated, a 28.9 percent increase since 2000. The greatest increase in circulation occurred in the juvenile and youth categories, a demand that is expected to continue. Pacifica-Sanchez provides more children's services than the Pacifica-Sharp Park Library; parents bring children to programs at either library, not just the nearest one.

Inadequate space, overlapping hours and duplication of materials mean that our current libraries, with their dedicated and knowledgeable staff, cannot provide the full range of services that could be provided if the limited funds currently available were used to deliver services in one location. This inefficiency must be weighed against the perceived convenience that two buildings provide for those who live near them.

In addition to the problems of space, the library buildings and grounds are in poor condition. Lack of maintenance, because of limited resources, has resulted in continued deterioration. The \$80,000-\$85,000 annual city allocation for routine maintenance each year does not address this problem, but merely keeps the buildings open and functioning.

CONCLUSION: CHANGE IS IMPERATIVE

As demonstrated above, operating two libraries in Pacifica is not only an inefficient use of limited resources, but also an obstacle to delivering the level of quality library services a community of this size requires. Residents have adjusted without complaint to the city's distinctive geography, heading mostly northward for many services. A single larger library, with dedicated spaces for quiet study rooms, children's services, research and general reading, educational programs, and meeting space sufficient for library staff and community use, would draw residents to wherever it is located. These needs were identified in a report to the city council in June 2001: the **Library Needs Study and Building Program Report** (known as the Page Report) submitted by the city's Library Task Force.

The San Mateo County Library guarantees funding for 60 hours of library services per week, with the city responsible for maintaining the library buildings and grounds. The cost of the remaining 14 hours of operation is shared by SMCL and the city. The city has been meeting its obligation under this agreement, which expires in June 2007. At that time, the JPA does not intend to continue paying a share of the cost of the additional 14 hours. To maintain that level of operation, the city will need to cover the entire cost of the 14 hours plus maintenance. In each of the last two years, the city has allocated approximately \$165,000 for maintenance and its share of the cost for the extra hours. In future years, that cost could rise to \$225,000 or more. Even if the city maintains this level of support, these resources would still be delivering duplicate services and under-serving the community. And without this support, library hours will be further reduced.

In order to identify and begin addressing possible objections to the consolidation of library services in one location, the Foundation has been meeting with various groups to hear concerns and explore possible solutions.

Interviews with a sampling of seniors revealed that access to books and audio-visual items (cassettes, CDs, etc.) was the primary reason for visiting the

library; Pacifica-Sharp Park Library is hard for some to navigate because of the steep incline outside and the steps inside. Many who avoid driving Highway 1 because of the speeding traffic and refrain from night driving find evening programs unappealing. The noise generated by children's programs such as Story Time and the congestion caused by students after school has discouraged most seniors from extended visits. The seniors living near Pacifica-Sanchez Library are willing to accept its limited hours because they value its proximity.

Interviews with families with children indicated that parents recognize the value of the services and programs offered by the library; most drive there on their way to or from other activities; families participate in programs at either library regardless of where they live; for some, the congestion caused by limited space and large number of participants at children's events inhibits their participation.

Findings

This report has presented facts about the community, the libraries and the limitations that prevent them from providing the level of service that Pacifica needs and deserves. The following findings summarize the facts presented above. The recommended solution will enable this community to provide a library that will be not only a vibrant learning center, but also one that will enhance the quality of life for its residents.



Finding #1:
Pacifica's geography creates natural boundaries. Pacifica's natural geographic boundaries will always pose challenges. The city cannot expand to the east or west. It is a long and narrow group of neighborhoods linked and divided by a state high-

way. Pacifica is a community of homeowners: twice as many families own their homes as rent (9,604 to 4,418). The Vallemar neighborhood is a natural midpoint between the north and south. More residents—and more renters—live to the north than to the south. More developable land lies to the north (with the exception of the quarry, which is not expected to have residential units).

The population will not increase significantly in the next decade. Pacifica will continue to be a community of approximately 40,000 residents. With very limited professional, commercial, or industrial employment available in Pacifica, most residents commute to work elsewhere. The community remains a series of neighborhoods divided naturally by its geography. Newer residents refer to themselves as Pacificans, while many older residents continue to refer to their specific neighborhoods first when identifying where they live. Pacifica remains largely a white community, but the trend is toward greater diversity, particularly in the north.

Because the natural boundaries create separate living clusters and interests, neighborhood advocacy groups form periodically to lobby for their particular needs; as a result, neighborhood concerns sometimes trump those of the larger community. It will be important to understand local concerns as they relate to the library, and to find citywide commonalities so that recommended solutions will benefit and improve the quality of life for all Pacificans. The Pacifica Library Foundation will be available to secure and provide accurate and relevant information so that decisions will be made with confidence.



**Finding #2:
Pacifica's profile
and residents'
expectations are
changing.**

Approximately 350-400 homes are sold each year, a nearly 3 percent turnover of residents; in the past five years, nearly 15

percent of the community has changed. Housing prices have increased significantly. An increasing number of residents have completed some level of college or professional education.

The number of students entering elementary school now equals the number graduating from eighth grade. Officials from both school districts believe they can easily absorb any increase in population from proposed residential expansion. The school districts provide no home-to-school transportation for students other than for special education.

A prevailing negative attitude about Pacifica appears to be waning. Residents talk about being part of the community with a sense of pride and a desire to see positive changes. Despite the “bedroom community” profile, many residents are involved in a wide range of civic, social and community activities. And they recognize the importance of supporting the community’s infrastructure. They voted in favor of securing a bond to modernize the elementary schools. More recently, Pacificans voted, by a 60.6 percent majority, in favor of last year’s proposition for a state bond to fund library construction and remodeling. Though the measure failed statewide, the local outcome suggests that this community would support a reasoned proposal to fund library construction for Pacifica.



**Finding #3:
Operating two libraries is inefficient.**

The library staff, while delivering quality services within the limited resources that are available, cannot provide the full functions of a modern library. They are limited also in their ability to serve as research and information specialists because of the limited space and equipment.

The SMCL supplemental funding that has helped maintain a minimal level of library operation will soon end. No assurance can be given by the city that it will allocate the additional funds required

simply to maintain the current status, or even to continue the current level of expenditure for libraries once the matching grant has expired. Since library budgets are not expected to increase significantly, the community must continue to manage its resources wisely while at the same time finding creative ways to ensure that needs are met.

The library staff struggles with finding a balance of providing a sufficient collection within the limited space. The crowding that results often makes browsing difficult and unappealing.

Operating two libraries is a waste of the funds available for library services. If dedicated to one library, these dollars could deliver services seven days a week (see Appendix 2), allow for a more robust collection, and permit the staff to provide the full range of services that is now lacking.

Finding #4:
Resistance to change is partly due to emotional attachments to a nearby library, but concerns about convenience can be met in other ways.

The reasons given by Pacificans who prefer to keep the familiar two libraries are distance, convenience and transportation. Yet most of the same respondents admit driving longer distances for other necessities (food, clothing, medical attention, etc.). A small percentage of the population does not have access to personal transportation; children require transportation to and from school. This problem has greater implications than access to a library. To meet this need, the city in cooperation with a special county agency (Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance) is piloting an inner-city shuttle bus service to augment existing mass transportation services, with the hope that it will provide transportation to seniors and students at non-peak yet critical hours.

In response to the needs of the senior community, the library has already developed a special outreach program that includes: advice and support in refreshing existing private libraries located in senior living facilities; instruction to seniors on how to reserve items electronically; routine visits and support at the Community Center; and a special program for those who are truly homebound because of age or illness.

The Foundation is committed to ensuring that no resident will be marginalized by a change. It has

begun identifying strategies (e.g. travel vouchers for eligible residents) should other alternatives not prove fruitful.

Finding #5:
The existing libraries do not serve the whole community.

The community has come to accept the limited services offered by our two libraries. As a result, many who could use the library do not. Yet, patrons often report attending other, newer libraries in the county system, to enjoy their broader range of services.

Most community groups are unable to even consider using the library for meetings or programs because the one meeting space available, at Pacifica-Sharp Park Library, is fully booked by a few groups. The lack of adequate meeting space prevents groups from providing, with library support, supplemental resources and references for their educational efforts.



Businesses, especially those that are home-based, do not have an affordable place to meet clients or work with mentors to brainstorm business development tactics. Of the leaders interviewed who represent business and community groups not currently using the library, few were fully aware of how the library (other than providing items for circulation) could support their efforts in educating the public or provide businesses with such assistance as guidance on conducting research. Not having a natural community gathering place—as other libraries have become—these groups must capture the awareness of the community and cultivate an appreciation for their services on their own. With a single library, the library staff could support these groups in gaining greater exposure within the community.

Public library professionals in other communities are increasingly providing consultation to schools that do not have certified librarians. Research suggests that academic performance improves where students have access to that kind of library guidance and support. The working relationship that currently exists between Pacifica's public library professionals and the Pacifica School District can be expanded further to provide an even greater impact among students.

Managing limited resources between the two libraries has inhibited the ability of the staff to reach out, orient and serve all sectors of the community. For years, many Pacificans have been willing to accept less. As a result, our two libraries have been able to offer only a small fraction of what a 21st century community library is designed and committed to provide.



**Finding #6:
Most individuals
and groups are
unaware of the full
extent of library
services available
to support their
needs.**

Many in the community, thinking about library services from the perspective of their own use as a child, see the library as

the place where books and other materials can be borrowed. Few recognize the changes that have taken place that make the library, through both on-site and online visits, a much more valuable information source. Few understand how to access the reliable proprietary information sources that are available only through the library website. Leaders of community groups that we have talked with have been unaware of how the library staff can provide guidance and support in accessing a wide range of information and reference materials.

Some residents believe that libraries are not needed for services like high-speed Internet access because they are available within the home. But not all residents have computers or Internet access from their homes. The constant demand by adults

for the few terminals available at our libraries is evidence enough.

**Finding #7:
Two existing library buildings cannot meet
Pacifica's present and future needs.**

The existing library buildings, both inside and outside, are physically deteriorating. Some of Pacifica's citizens, especially the handicapped and some seniors, find it difficult to get into the libraries and to get around in them. It is not wise to dedicate precious resources to repairing and maintaining these buildings when it is clear that the buildings themselves are too small to serve this community.

The Pacifica-Sharp Park site is not large enough to support an expanded library, and while the Pacifica-Sanchez location has room for expansion, it is remote for more than half of Pacifica's residents.

While addressing other priorities with its limited financial resources, the city's attention to its libraries has been defined primarily as keeping the two existing libraries open. While library patrons have appreciated this support, it has not addressed the larger challenges. The needs of the community will remain unmet if we continue to divide the allocated funds between two buildings.

One concern in making a change is that those who live near an existing branch will object to losing a neighborhood library. This response is to be expected if the citizens do not know what they will gain rather than lose in this transition. We believe that this concern can be overcome when citizens understand how the alternative will vastly improve the quality of life for them and for all Pacificans.

Previously Proposed Solutions

Over the years, various groups have proposed possible solutions for improving library services. The PLF has reviewed these proposals relevant to the larger goal of serving the needs of the community while making the most of limited resources. This analysis, summarized below, has been valuable in shaping our conclusions and recommendations.

1. Improve both libraries and maintain the current level of operations.

Repairing and remodeling would be extremely expensive but would not change the fact that the libraries are not large enough and do not contain the tools necessary for a community of this size.

2. Expand Pacifica-Sanchez Library and reduce the size of Pacifica-Sharp Park Library.

While the land is available, the Sanchez site is not a suitable location for a community library. The location is considered remote by more than half the residents who reside from Vallemar north. The site would also not be deemed appropriate by grant-awarding institutions which generally require a more central and accessible location.

3. Expand Pacifica-Sharp Park and maintain Pacifica-Sanchez as a virtual library.

The Sharp Park property is unsuitable for expansion of the building or parking to the recommended size. But the land is an asset that can be applied to the construction of a community library, consistent with the intent when the San Mateo County Library System deeded the land over to the city. Virtual libraries may sound like an innovative solution, but where introduced, they have not proven successful. In some cases, having a virtual library has created expectations for a separate library.

4. Build a community library and operate Pacifica-Sanchez Library as a satellite library operated by volunteers.

A single library is more economically viable, but we are not aware of any form of volunteer-managed library being successful over an extended period of time. Recruiting, training, managing and maintaining a volunteer cadre requires a great deal of time and resources, which could better be used for other operations and services.

Foundation's Recommendation

Build a 21st Century Modern Community Library that Operates as a Learning Center with an Expanded Outreach Program

We should expand the limited role our libraries have had thus far and provide residents with all the services and opportunities associated with a 21st century modern community library. Such a facility can become a center for information management, exchange and dissemination, for individuals, community groups, businesses, and academics. It can develop relationships with individuals as well as city officials and community groups to achieve mutual goals and provide information access, exchange, and dissemination. The library can recapture its role as the learning center in the community for citizens of all ages. Staff can guide a larger number of individuals and groups on how to use the library to gain greater personal or professional advantage.

As a learning center, the library can become a partner with organized groups in the delivery of education by : (1) providing adequate space for a variety of educational purposes, with flexibility of size and time available; (2) offering guidance and support for research and course development; (3) ensuring that specific books, reference materials, and other items are made available for those who participate in the learning opportunities; and (4) providing a rotating display space where residents gain greater awareness of these groups and their programs and services.

We have discussed with several groups their willingness to explore this approach including: Pacifica Chamber of Commerce, Pacifica Ocean Discovery Center, Livability Project, City of Pacifica Senior Center Program, Pacifica Historical Society, the arts community, local eco-tourism initiative groups, and the performing arts community. Each responded with positive enthusiasm. Efforts are now underway to bring these groups together to begin identifying areas of commonality and shared goals that could be pursued.

Additionally, a community library can reach out to small business owners and students to provide space for meetings and group work and guidance on conducting effective research: for business owners, a place to support business development; for students, a space to work on projects and complete assignments.

In anticipation of the concern that some may be marginalized because of the change, steps are already underway to support individuals and groups considered at greatest risk. The library staff has established an expanded outreach program, primarily for seniors, providing access to library holdings without having to make a personal visit. The staff is also working with site managers at the senior residential facilities to find ways of refreshing the collections in their in-house libraries. They are also working with the Senior Services Program to reinforce with seniors the ease of using technology to benefit from current library services. This program is in its pilot stage and if successful could be expanded with the support of the Foundation to ensure that seniors continue to have access to the services offered by the library.

Other outreach efforts have demonstrated to the Foundation and the library staff that many institutions, organizations and individuals are unaware of how the library can provide support or supplement their efforts. In the past several months, the library staff and Foundation volunteers have identified new and different ways that the library can be a source of greater support to teachers, professionals delivering social services, and individuals leading civic and social groups. This trend can only continue with a new community library and learning center.

These recommendations require a new way of thinking about library services in this community. We are confident that Pacificans will understand and enthusiastically support such a vision for a 21st century community library and learning center.

Creating a unified vision is the first step. The Foundation is also examining where such a facility might be located and how it might be funded.

Site for a New Library: Land Options

Determining the location of a single community library requires analysis of numerous critical factors, including but not limited to the topography, population distribution, transportation patterns, availability of land, alternative uses. Because of its shape and size, Pacifica has no geographic center. Business clusters are scattered throughout the city and no one area is considered the community's "town center." To add to the existing natural challenges, motorists also experience traffic problems along the Highway 1 corridor—the only continuous north-south route through the city—particularly at the Vallemar and Pacific Manor intersections during the morning and evening rush hours. Congestion is compounded by parents driving their children to and from school. Efforts to widen the highway at key locations have been stalled. Residents have additional concerns about the likelihood of increased traffic when the Devil's Slide tunnel is completed or when any development project along the highway is proposed.

The Foundation has identified several potential sites, most of which were considered by the Library Task Force, including:

- Pacifica community center
- existing city hall site
- Sharp Park Old Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Sharp Park Library
- Pacifica School District central office site (on Reina del Mar Ave.)
- Rockaway Quarry
- Property adjacent to Sea Bowl
- Sanchez Library site

We are continuing to gather information on potential sites as a basis for making an informed recommendation, and we are utilizing the library staff's definition of the services that can be provided by a modern library.

Of the sites mentioned, some are either not available or not suitable for a library. Those that seem worth further consideration are near Highway 1 (see Appendix 3):

- Santa Maria Avenue city hall site
- Sharp Park Old Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Rockaway Quarry
- Sea Bowl area
- the Pacifica School District central office site

These have been selected from the larger list for the following reasons:

Santa Maria Avenue City Hall Site (city-owned)

May or may not provide the space required; access for residents heading north is fairly direct; northern residents can access with or without using Highway 1; recommendations to revitalize the Palmetto area are currently being developed by a city council-appointed committee.

Sharp Park Old Wastewater Treatment Plant (city-owned)

May or may not provide the space required; access for residents similar as stated above; current plans for renovation on site for city purposes could produce a municipal center including a library.

Rockaway Quarry (private)

Location is equally accessible from north and south via Highway 1. Availability for public use uncertain.

Sea Bowl Area (private)

Appears to provide space required; access via Highway 1. Property owner may be open to explore possible options.

Pacifica School District Central Office Site

The property is near the police station and an elementary school; equally accessible from north and south via Highway 1.

As part of the evaluation of these sites, the distance from each of the senior living facilities will be considered to ensure that transportation access to library services will be available.

Additionally, the Foundation is monitoring the outreach programs for seniors currently being piloted by the library staff, as these efforts may indeed supplement ways to provide services to this segment of our community.

Building a Community Library: Funding Options

Two statewide efforts have been made in recent years to address the need for building or remodeling libraries. Proposition 14, passed in 2000, allocated \$350 million to communities that successfully met specific criteria. Pacifica was unable to prepare a grant application for consideration. Last year, Proposition 81 would have provided \$600 million in funds that would be split between previously submitted highly rated proposals and new applications. Though the measure was defeated, a majority of voters in the Bay Area supported it and 60.6 percent in Pacifica voted yes.

Cost estimates for building a 40,000 square-foot community library are between \$15 and \$20 million. The Foundation recognizes that the city is responsible for determining and establishing the appropriate funding mechanism and educating the public to gain support.

Possible sources include general obligation bonds, parcel taxes, levies in a Mello-Roos community facilities district, revenue bonds paid off with tax-increment revenues from a redevelopment area, proceeds from the sale of existing library land, a state library grant (no funds available at this time), a major benefactor, or any combination of the above.

NEXT STEPS

This initiative seeks to bring closure to a 17-year effort. It cannot be accomplished by any one group but requires an integrated approach that examines existing use as well as projected need by those currently unable to benefit from the libraries' services.

To this end, the Foundation is moving forward in the following manner:

1. Build Coalition

Building a coalition of leaders representing civic, social and community groups who will assist in identifying and examining how a new community library can serve the broad needs of this community from their perspective.

2. Examine Possibilities

Exploring with these leaders and organizations how the library can assist them in achieving their goals and those of the community.

3. Increase Awareness, Understanding and Appreciation

Informing the library's current patrons as well as the rest of the community on the limitations of the present libraries and the vision of how a 21st century modern community library will contribute to their quality of life.

4. Partner with Key Leaders

Continuing to work with the city's leadership to identify a site that will best serve the community, along with an efficient funding approach.



**About the Report Sponsor:
Pacifica Library Foundation (PLF)**

The nonprofit Pacifica Library Foundation was established in 2003 to determine and help meet the community's long-term library services needs.

The Foundation is the primary representative to the city on library issues. Its fifteen-member board and a core group of volunteers are dedicated to identifying the community's needs and expectations for library services and taking the necessary steps to accomplish them.

**Supporting Organization:
Pacifica Friends of the Library (PFOL)**

Established in the 1960s by the American Association of University Women, the first Pacifica Friends of the Library waxed and waned before being reconstituted in 1978 as Friends of the Sanchez Library. It experienced the typical challenges of a volunteer-driven organization.

The current PFOL was reinstated in 1991. It has been active since that time, with members providing volunteer support and raising funds for immediate needs (including the Children's Summer Reading Program, other special library programs, needed equipment, and the Homework Center). PFOL currently has nearly 200 members.

Appendix

Appendix 1: A Comparison of Library Services

Library Services: Elements	What Pacifica Should Have to Support Its Population (38,390)	Current Status at Sharp Park & Sanchez	New Millbrae Library (City Population 20,718)	New Belmont Library (City Population 25,123)
Hours of Service	60	74	60	60
Days Open Per Week	7	5 each	7	7
Size (square feet)	40,000	10,524	27,200	20,230
Seating <i>Standard: 5/1,000 residents</i>	200	61	186	124
Collection <i>Standard 2.25/capita</i>	90,000 <i>without dups</i>	84,763 <i>with dups</i>	72,000	75,000
Magazines & Newspapers <i>Recommended: 250</i>	250	140 <i>(50-60 dups)</i>	223	<i>not available</i>
Collection in Alternative Languages <i>(adult & children books/ audio media)</i> <i>Recommended: 5,400</i>	5,400 <i>for Asian/Hispanic population</i>	820	4,200	<i>not available</i>
Audio-visual Items <i>Recommended: 13,500</i>	13,500	2,400	14,800	<i>not available</i>
Meeting Space <i>(large, medium & small rooms for group study/meetings by students/businesses)</i>	<i>tbd</i>	1 large room	2 large 2 small	1 Large (130 seats) 1 Tech Center 1 Homework Room 3 Small Meeting/ Study rooms
Computer Access <i>.75-1.25/1,000 residents</i>	60	20	55	70
Public Parking <i>4/1,000 square feet</i>	120	41	141	54 <i>+ street parking</i>

Standards/recommendations provided by Kathy Page, Library Consultant in 2001 Library Report submitted to Pacifica City Council.

Appendix 2: Hours of Operation

Access at Current Libraries

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total Hours
Pacifica- Sharp Park	Closed	11-8	11-8	11-8	11-6	Closed	10-5	41
Pacifica- Sanchez	Closed	12-8	12-6	12-6	Closed	12-6	10-5	33

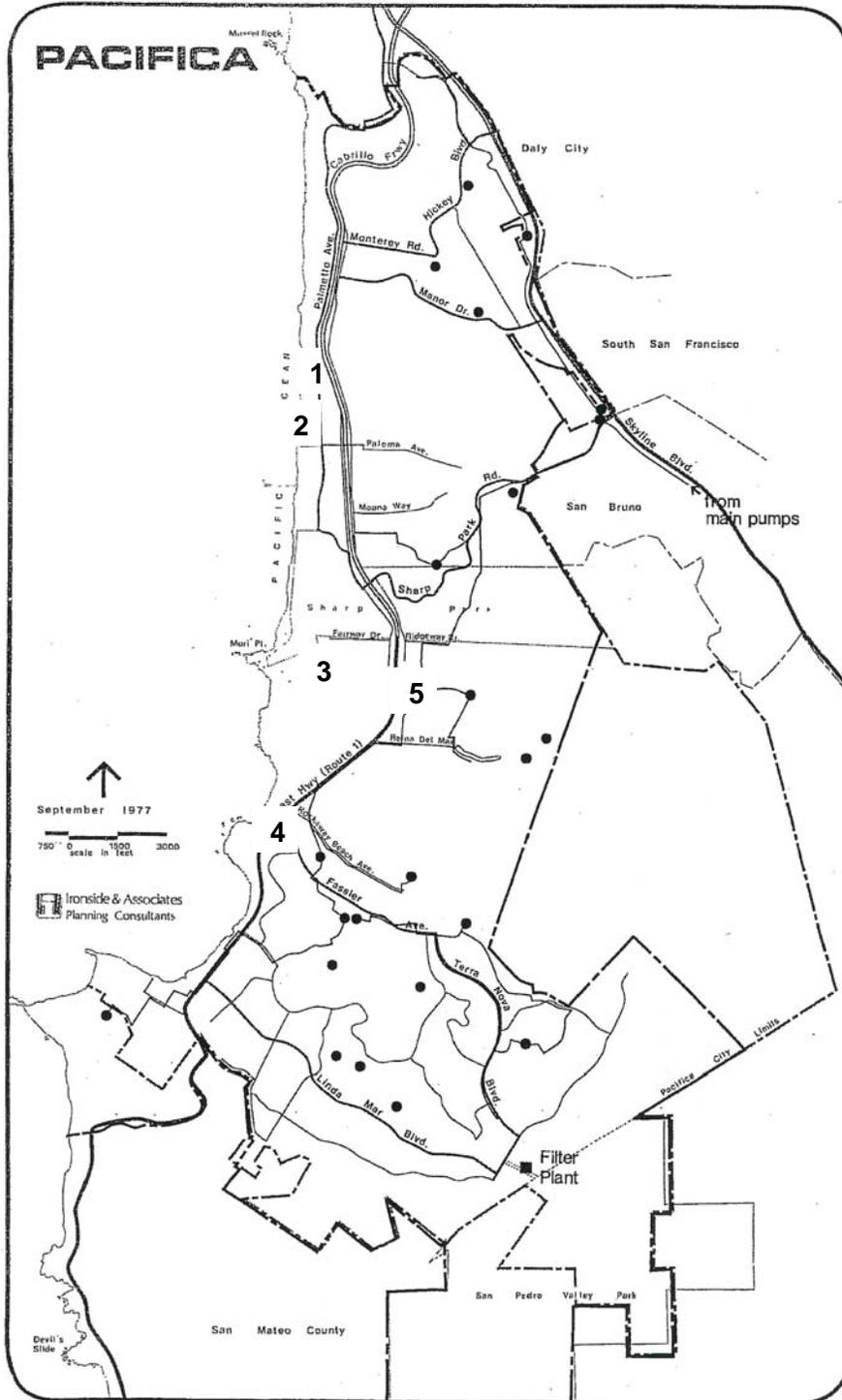
Total Hours of Access: 47

Total Hours of Operation: 74

Proposed Access at a New Community Library (example)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total Hours
1-5	10-8	10-8	10-8	10-8	10-6	10-6	60

Appendix 3: Possible Sites



Site Key

- 1. Santa Maria Ave
Current City Hall
- 2. Sharp Park
Old Wastewater
Treatment Plant
- 3. Rockaway Quarry
- 4. Sea Bowl Area
- 5. Pacifica
School District
Central Office