

# Melbourne Library Service

## strategic plan

2008-2018



**Introduction** The Melbourne Library Service is many things to many people: It is a place, a space, a partner, a virtual world, a source and a facilitator.

Libraries are not only physical facilities and places to borrow material. They are community hubs and places where people can meet for recreation, information and to foster a love of life long learning.

Melbourne Library Service currently delivers services and programs from three facilities including, City Library, North Melbourne Library and East Melbourne Library, as well as a virtual, online library service.

A highly visible and responsive public library service within the City of Melbourne is critical to ensuring that Council can meet the information, recreational and education needs of the residents, workers and visitors in Australia's fastest growing capital city.

#### **City Library**

The City Library is situated in the heart of Melbourne. Its remarkable architecture, concept and design saw an historic 19th century warehouse building converted into a dynamic space reflecting and supporting the dual image of a bustling street and a welcoming environment for the entire community. It is Victoria's busiest public lending library with usage levels increasing every year.

#### **East Melbourne Library and Community Centre**

The East Melbourne Library and Community Centre – reopened in August 2006 – is a new space for the City of Melbourne. It is an excellent example of Council's commitment to ecologically sustainable design.

The environmentally-friendly centre is a fantastic resource for people wanting to lighten their environmental footprint and make a difference as well a meeting and gathering space for the East Melbourne community.

#### **North Melbourne Library**

North Melbourne Library was built in 1882 and opened in 1884 as a Mechanics Institute and library. It is the City's oldest free public library service. It is located next to North Melbourne Town Hall Arts House and is a drawcard for people from a variety of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

#### **Docklands Hub Library Access Point**

Opened in 2008 as a conduit between the new Docklands community and the new Melbourne Library Service, the Hub offers a convenient drop-off and collection service to help residents and workers save time when borrowing and returning library items.

#### **South Yarra Library link Internet Access Point**

Operating in the popular Cafe Domain this service point provides a free Internet service for Melbourne Library Service members in South Yarra who wish to access the library catalogue and the virtual library service.

## Principles and objectives of the library strategic plan

Principle	Objective
Free access to information	All people residing, working, visiting and studying in Melbourne should have access to all available printed and electronic information.
Access and equity	All members of the community should have access to a range of library and information services.
Choice, range and quality	Residents should have access to a range of services, collections and programs to meet their educational and recreational needs. Services are provided through personal, telephone or via electronic means.
Vital and supported neighbourhoods	Working together with other agencies, Melbourne Library Service plays a vital role in connecting with and supporting the community.
Innovation and technology	Melbourne Library Service uses technology and other innovative ways to enhance customer service and increase community's use of these.
An integral City of Melbourne service	Melbourne Library Service is one of the most highly visible, direct customer services delivered by the City of Melbourne. The libraries will continually work to investigate opportunities to promote and deliver other Council services. Through strong marketing and communications it will be instantly recognised as part of the City of Melbourne.

### Establishment of Melbourne Library Service

Melbourne Library Service was established within the City of Melbourne in March 2007.

It incorporates two service points previously in the Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corporation with the separate Corporate Library and City Library.

### Incorporating Melbourne City Council objectives

The creation of a single library service within the City of Melbourne is already providing greater capacity to respond to community needs within a lifelong learning framework and integration with other local services.

### A library service experiencing growth and change

The library service is experiencing a period of sustained increases in usage at all library locations and through the virtual library service (online usage from home or work).

### A city experiencing growth and change

The City of Melbourne is the fastest growing city in Victoria and with this brings many challenges for service providers. Melbourne Library Service already offers significant services to young people, especially international students at City Library, and families and older residents at East Melbourne and North Melbourne.

## Key strategic directions

The strategic review of the library service has highlighted a broad range of projects that will improve and enhance library services to the Melbourne community. They are grouped under three main areas:



### Powerful systems – Issues and proposed initiatives

The best possible library systems create the basis for other initiatives including:

- Implementing a new library management system
- Improving library collections and streamlining the purchase of materials
- Implementing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) solution across all libraries to reduce manual handling, improve stock control and increase security
- Developing a new and more interactive library website
- Increasing opening hours
- Addressing issues with the buildings themselves and investigating locations for additional libraries

### Partnerships – Issues and proposed initiatives

Forging links and relationships with a variety of agencies, organisations and service providers will help to deliver concrete benefits to the community, especially those with the greatest need.

Key initiatives include investigating partnerships to assist with providing services to areas of Melbourne currently lacking a library; enhancing library and educational services by linking up with organisations in a similar way to the existing arrangement with CAE; seeking the right resources to help the library to maintain a community information database on behalf of the City of Melbourne that results in 24-hours-a-day online information.

### Reaching the community – Issues and proposed initiatives

Key goals in providing library services out of its walls and into the neighbourhoods, hub and communities with the greatest need include identifying individuals and communities in need and encouraging them to use the library spaces and services; assisting disadvantaged communities to overcome the 'digital divide' and researching the lifelong learning needs of communities in need such as Carlton residents.



## Proposed actions – General

To develop closer links with other City of Melbourne departments in order to deliver programs.

To implement the new Integrated Library Management System and library catalogue.

To implement a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) solution across all libraries to reduce manual handling, to improve stock control and security and enhance customer self-service.

To determine appropriate target groups for library outreach programs.

To investigate the partnerships that will help libraries to provide new and better services.

To investigate alternative funding and income sources to support service growth, including corporate sponsorship and other potential funding and service opportunities.

To develop closer relationships with higher education institutions to increase access to their library services and collections to residents, who work, visit or study in Melbourne.

To research alternative, cost-effective methods of delivering services and programs, and to develop a marketing and communications plan for the Library Service.

### City Library

These include redesigning City Library spaces to improve access, introducing designated zones and investigating ways of securing funding to increase weekend opening hours.

### North Melbourne Library

Reviewing the adequacy of the current facility, including investigating either a new purpose built library or extensions to existing building and investigating ways of securing funding to increase weekday opening hours.

### East Melbourne Library

These include investigating ways of enhancing existing facilities; continuing to promote environmental sustainability through East Melbourne Library and investigating ways of securing funding to increase weekday and weekend opening hours.

### Docklands area

Goals here include marketing the City Library and Docklands Hub Library Access Point to people who work and live in the Docklands areas; developing closer links with the Residents Association to ensure the needs of Docklands residents are met; working with VicUrban to cost and concept design a full service library.

### Southbank area

These include promoting the City Library as the local library for the Southbank area; developing closer links with the Residents Association to meet the needs of Southbank residents and researching how to establish a neighbourhood level library facility together with other community services at the Boyd High School, City Road site.

### Kensington area

Investigating what Kensington residents need and how to meet these through North Melbourne Library, the Home Library Service, library outreach programs and the virtual library.

### Carlton area

Delivering a range of outreach initiatives through the Carlton Family Resource Centre; participating in the development of a multi-purpose facility in Carlton through the Community Infrastructure Plan, and ensuring that South Carlton residents are catered for at Carlton Library by continuing to work with the City of Yarra.

This includes investigating establishing a neighbourhood level library along with related community services in South Carlton

### South Yarra area

The main initiatives include investigating different ways of providing library services to South Yarra, such as a joint service with the City of Stonnington, re-locating and expanding LibraryLink to a more accessible facility to provide a service in line with the Docklands Hubs Library Access Point.

### Virtual Library Service

Designing an exciting new interactive website for the Library Service and investigating the provision of down-loadable resources; utilising Web 2.0 technologies such as RSS feeds to communicate targeted information to library customers and allowing library members to create their own content.

### Home Library Service

Council together with Council's Aged Care Services Team will be looking into alternative methods of delivering a home library service, to help foster inclusion and interaction for the community.



## Appendix 1: Current Library services and resources for target groups

	Fiction	Non-fiction	Picture Books	Large print books	Magazines/newspapers	Cassettes/CDs	Talking books	CD-ROMs	Videos/DVDs	Computer games	Reference Collection	LOTE collections	Language kits	ESL/Literacy collections	Local history	Genealogy	Computer training	Home library service	Story time	Holiday activities	Library tours	Outreach activities	Internet	Online resources	Adaptive technology	Study facilities	Word processing	Photocopiers	Display areas	Notice areas	Meeting rooms	Gallery/exhibition space
Unemployed	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•									•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Youth	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•									•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Homeless/living independently	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•													•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Students – local/international	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•					•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
CAE including students/teachers	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•					•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
People with a vision Impairment				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•												•	•	•	•					•	
Preschoolers			•		•	•	•	•	•	•										•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Children	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•						•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Parents		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•					•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
CALD groups	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•									•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
People with a hearing impairment	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•													•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Local arts community		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•													•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
People with lower literacy levels			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•										•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
People with an intellectual disability		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•													•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Housebound	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•							•														
Family/Local studies researchers		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•						•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Council officers	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•									•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Community Groups		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•										•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Older people	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•									•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Adults	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•									•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	

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