

# Benbrook Public Library Strategic Plan 2011-2015

Approved by the Benbrook Library District Board of Trustees,  
Date: July, 2010

## About Benbrook

The City of Benbrook has a geographic area of 12 square miles located just Southwest of and adjacent to the City of Fort Worth in Tarrant County. Benbrook is bisected north and south by HW120/820 and is also divided east and west by HW377. Benbrook is primarily a residential community with few major retail businesses. The 2009 population of Benbrook was 23,900. Benbrook had 8,914 housing units in 2000.

Relevant demographics as of 2008 per CityData.com:

	<u>Benbrook</u>	<u>Fort Worth</u>
Median house value	\$158,320	\$148,431
Median age	39.2	30.9
Ethnicity:		
White	84.6%	45.8%
Black	4.4%	20.3%
Hispanic	7.0%	29.8%
Other	4.0%	4.1%
Median family income	\$62,097	\$48,870
Per capita income	\$32,893	\$23,208
Persons living in poverty	4.4%	16.6%
Education:		
High School grads	92.1%	72.8%
College degree	32.6%	22.3 %
Advanced degree	10.0%	7.3%

## About the Benbrook Public Library

The Benbrook Public Library (BPL) was created as a volunteer-operated library in 1989 and was located in an unused City of Benbrook building on HW377. In 1997, the Texas legislature provided for the creation of library taxing districts. The Friends of the Benbrook Library obtained sufficient support to call for an election which passed by a large margin, creating a library taxing district for Benbrook in January, 1999. The district is governed by a five-member board of trustees who are popularly elected for staggered terms of two years each. The District is financed by a half-cent of the local sales tax.

The Library District obtained a \$550,000 loan and purchased a 4,000 square foot building at 1065 Mercedes from the City in 2000 and renovated it for a library which opened in January, 2001. In October, 2001, the District contracted with the City of Fort Worth to join MetrOpac, a consortium of six local libraries sharing the Fort Worth Public Library's Dynix automation system. This allows BPL customers to borrow materials from the MetrOpac libraries free and to have them delivered to BPL within a few days of ordering. As a member of MetrOpac, BPL is able to offer its customers free, convenient access to over 2 million items rather than just the 35,000 items owned by BPL.

The Library District's sales tax revenue grew from about \$400,000 in 2000 to about \$750,000 per year as of 2009. The Library's expenditures have been kept well under revenues throughout the district's history, allowing the district to accumulate a surplus to so as to maintain services in case of temporary revenue decline and to allow for expansion of facility and services as needed. The original loan on the 4,000 sq ft facility was paid off several years early in 2004. In 2006, with a \$500,000 surplus, the district obtained a \$1 million loan from Frost Bank to finance an expansion of its library facility. This expansion to 12,000 square feet was opened in April, 2008.

As of 2010, Benbrook Public Library has a staff of three full-time masters degreed librarians including the director, one full-time administrative assistant, three half-time library assistants, and one half-time page, for a total of 6 FTE. The library also has a strong volunteer program that provides over 2,000 volunteer hours per year.

BPL increased its public hours from 39 to 42 per week in 2010. In FY 2009/10, BPL had over 50,000 visitors; it circulated over 112,000 items; staff answered 7,000 reference questions; 20,000 PC uses were logged on the Library's 15 public PC's. Ten wireless laptops were added in 2009 for public use in the library. The library has a collection of about 37,000 items in 2010. In addition to its participation in the MetroPac Consortium, Benbrook Library participates in the NTRLS Overdrive Consortium that purchases downloadable audio books and e-books for use by consortium clientele. In April, 2010, the library did a public survey to help determine public needs and desires for library services in preparation for writing this strategic plan. As an immediate result of the public survey, public hours were increased to 42 per week in July, 2010.

## Library Mission Statement

The Benbrook Library District will enhance our clients' quality of life by providing a safe and comfortable facility and resources that meet informational needs, encourage lifelong learning, provide cultural enrichment, and support responsible citizenship.

## Services To Be Emphasized 2011 – 2015

In conformity with the Library's mission statement and public desires, as expressed in the 2010 Benbrook Public Library public survey, the Benbrook Public Library Board of Trustees has chosen to continue to emphasize the following three major library services from its previous strategic plan in response to the needs of the Benbrook community:

1. **Enhance Provision of General Information and Lifelong Learning**, offering appropriate materials and professional information services to help individuals acquire information needed for work, school, civic responsibilities, and personal well being.
2. **Enhance the Library's Role As A Community Commons** where people can meet, interact amicably with each other, become better informed, and participate in discourse about public issues.
3. **Enhance Cultural Awareness** by presenting information and programming to stimulate the community's interest in the arts and to make the Library a cultural venue that will help attract business and tourism to Benbrook.

### **Library Service Goals and Objectives Based On the Above Mission and Services**

Goal 1. Benbrook residents of all ages will view the Benbrook Public Library as a comfortable, convenient, welcoming venue for reading, conversing, using computers, and attending public programs.

Objective A: Additional comfortable seating and laptop stations will be provided as needed while maintaining an uncluttered, aesthetically pleasing environment.

Objective B: Library hours will be increased to at least 50 hours per week, and additional staff will be hired as appropriate to provide adequate service during all public hours. One librarian and two library assistants are the minimum staffing necessary during all public hours. A third library assistant and a page during all public hours is desirable for better than minimal service.

Goal 2. Library clients will be able to easily obtain resources to meet their general information needs, including print, audio/visual, and electronic formats.

Objective C: An information desk will be placed near the front doors to provide immediate assistance to clients who require assistance in finding or using the library's resources. Staffing this desk adequately will require the addition of at least one half-time library assistant.

Objective D: Additional on-line services available both from library computers and by remote access will be added if deemed useful to library clients, while continuing to acquire print and audio/visual materials that respond to the needs and desires of the community.

Objective E: The library will provide portable electronic devices such as ebook readers and MP3 players for checkout in order to increase the use of downloadable materials the library provides.

Objective F: The library will provide one or more PC stations designed for ease of use by handicapped patrons.

Goal 3. Benbrook residents and non-residents will benefit from a variety of library sponsored cultural events throughout the year, including exhibits, artistic performances, lectures, etc. provided free or at low cost.

Objective G: Library staff will continue to program high-quality performances, exhibitions, etc. by local and non-local artists, performers, and presenters.

Objective H: Local residents will be recruited as volunteers to organize and facilitate various public programs such as forums, book discussion groups, and other community involvement programs. This will allow for more programs to be planned and presented and will increase community involvement.

Objective I: The library will do more to involve teens in the library by increasing the number of teen-oriented programs, encourage teens to establish and maintain a Benbrook Library Facebook page, and provide other opportunities for local teens to utilize library resources and to be involved in library programs.

Goal 4: The citizens of Benbrook will be fully aware of the programs and services provided by the library for their benefit.

Objective J: The library will increase its public relations/marketing efforts so as to increase public awareness of the library's programs and services.

Goal 5: Library facilities will be expanded as needed to adequately serve the needs of the residents of the Library District.

Objective K: The Library Board of Trustees will collaborate with the Benbrook Economic Development Corp. and with City of Benbrook staff to analyze needs for Library facility expansion and to consider cooperation in acquiring additional land for Library facilities.