

Wake County Library Commission
FY 2018 Wake County Budget

Request: Provide \$276,137 to open and operate 13 Community Libraries on Sunday

Overview

There are 22 libraries in Wake County but only seven of these – our Regional Libraries – are open on Sunday. Historically, Sunday hours in libraries experience higher visitation per hour and this is certainly the case for Wake County. Our Regional Libraries are 37% busier in people visits and handle 64% more volume in circulation per hour on Sunday than on weekdays.

However, Sunday is the one day of the week that our 13 Community Libraries are closed. The Wake County Library Commission asks that we make all libraries equally accessible by opening our Community Libraries on Sunday, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

As Wake County grows, it's important to keep up with our changing population. In 2014, the Board of Commissioners added library hours on the weekday and on Saturday. These expanded hours are popular and help to make the library a widely-used resource. The more than 3.3 million visitors to our libraries last year stands as a testament to that, and we thank the Board of Commissioners for their critical support in making this earlier expansion possible.

We also know the value of our libraries in Wake County – surveys show that 97.3% of library customers rate their Wake County Library experience as excellent or good. Our libraries provide access to millions of books, to the internet, to digital services, to job search assistance and so much more – all in a safe, comfortable and nurturing environment. Combined with innovative and popular programs for children and adults, our libraries clearly support Wake County priorities of education and maintaining quality of life.

Based on these three key factors -- the high-traffic experience on Sunday at our Regional Libraries, the success of previously expanded hours, and the value of our library services -- we believe Sunday hours – 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. – should be implemented at Community Libraries. This step will help make a vital community resource consistently available to all residents in Wake County, and more fully and efficiently use the libraries we already have.

Cost

Our request to open and operate 13 community libraries on a Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. only requires funding for one part time (.5) library assistant at each facility. Using FY18 staffing costs, the total budget needed is \$276,137 for 6.5 FTE.

Additional Benefits to Expanded Hours

Improved Consistency and Equity of County Library Service

Community libraries are stationed throughout the county. Sunday hours will make library services more available to those municipalities. It also means operating hours for all libraries will be consistent, increasing equity of service.

Full Leverage of Existing Assets

Instituting Sunday hours at Community Libraries will fully utilize assets – buildings, materials, equipment – that already exist and have been paid for by Wake County residents. Otherwise they stand unused one day a week.

Expanded Programming

Sunday hours are particularly beneficial to at-risk populations and working families who cannot use or attend library programs during the traditional work week. Many Community Libraries participate in the new ***Every Family Read to Achieve*** (EFRA) initiative, a project that provides additional services to populations in need in the eastern and southern parts of Wake County. Adding hours to these locations will help EFRA implementation and allow for supplementary programming options (e.g. Kindergarten Readiness Program).

Bonus

With the funding of this request, the library will also be able to open one hour earlier (9:00 a.m. instead of 10 a.m.), Monday through Thursday, at seven of the smallest community libraries: **Fuquay, Southgate, Zebulon, Wendell, Wake Forest, Duraleigh, and Athens Drive**. This means all Community and Regional Libraries would be on the same schedule, making it easier for customers. *(Note: ratio of staff hours for every public service hour at these libraries is smaller, and since the library does not hire less than .5 FTE, there would be enough financial capacity to cover the additional 4 hours per week).*

We know you have tough budget decisions, but we appreciate your continued support and investment in a vital community service that is highly valued and beneficial to us all. Thank you.

Graph of Current and Proposed Hours at Community Libraries

LARGE COMMUNITY LIBRARIES 8,000 Sq. Ft.	Mon-Thu	Fri & Sat	Sun
Current Hours →	9-9	10-6	Currently Closed on Sunday
Cary Community	No Change		Proposed 1-5
Holly Springs Community			Proposed 1-5
Green Road Community			Proposed 1-5
Leesville Community			Proposed 1-5
Richard B. Harrison Community			Proposed 1-5
Middle Creek			Proposed 1-5
Athens Drive (hybrid school Lib)			Proposed 1-5
COMMUNITY LIBRARIES 5,000 Sq.Ft.	Mon-Thu	Fri & Sat	Sun
Current Hours →	10-9	10-6	Currently Closed on Sunday
Wake Forest	Proposed 9-9	No Change	Proposed 1-5
Southgate	Proposed 9-9		Proposed 1-5
Zebulon	Proposed 9-9		Proposed 1-5
Fuquay Varina	Proposed 9-9		Proposed 1-5
Wendell	Proposed 9-9		Proposed 1-5
Duraleigh	Proposed 9-9		Proposed 1-5

Correction: Athens Drive is a 5,000 Sq Ft. Library and would also benefit by opening an hour earlier Mon-Thur.

Funding Options to open Community Libraries on Sunday, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Option 1:

Fully fund this proposal in FY18 by providing **\$276,137** to open all 13 community libraries. By doing so, all libraries in Wake County will have greater equity of service and consistent hours. Funding for future years will be submitted as part of the Wake County Library annual budget request.

Option 2:

Provide **\$127,447** in FY 18 to open all Large Community Libraries – six in total -- in Wake County. These 8,000 square foot libraries are situated in key geographic areas and serve diverse populations. They are: Cary, Holly Springs, Green Road, Leesville, Richard B. Harrison and Middle Creek Community Libraries.

This option, while not as expansive as Option 1, achieves significant impact while lessening the immediate larger financial need. It will:

- Increase equity and consistency of library service for many Wake County residents
- Expand accessibility to diverse populations, including those at higher risk
- Increase programming potential (including EFRA sites, Kindergarten Readiness)
- Fully leverage existing assets which otherwise go unused on Sunday
- Provide meaningful support to BOC priorities of education and quality of life

This option provides for the six .5 (or 3 FTE) library assistant positions needed to open our Large Community libraries for 4 hours on Sunday. Funding for the other seven libraries – six small community libraries and the Athens Drive hybrid – will be submitted as part a future Wake County Library annual budget request.