

**Paul J. Strawhecker, Inc.**

*Resource Development and Counsel for Nonprofits*

**Rochester Public Library – Philanthropic Planning Study Summary**  
*February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016*

It is a pleasure to present this summary report for the Philanthropic Planning Study (feasibility study) conducted by Paul J. Strawhecker, Inc. for the Rochester Public Library Foundation. We would especially like to thank the library staff and volunteers who devoted their time, energy and assistance in providing information and guidance during the study process.

The Philanthropic Planning Study is a part of the giving process and functions as an important tool for donor awareness, cultivation and volunteer recruitment. The final report captures the perceptions, attitudes and recommendations offered by the interviewees and survey respondents. A total of 63 people were interviewed. The interviews were conducted by Scott Larson, CFRE, Lead Consultant. In addition, an on-line survey generated 263 responses.

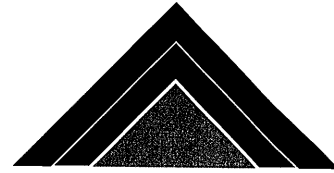
Our findings uncovered several overall themes and perceptions. The library is a link to other agencies involved in education and health; provides a cross-cultural environment; helps to reduce the 'digital divide' between those who have access to technology and those that do not; and enhances the experience of the Mayo Clinic patients and families while they are in the area for medical care.

The interviewees saw common strengths of the library, including how it responds to change; has the ability to bring together and engage diverse groups; provide comprehensive services in a central location; does not duplicate services of others; has a leadership and staff that are seen very positively; and stays current with national library trends and technology.

Interviewees mentioned a few opportunities for improvement. They believed the library should promote programs more to the public; explain the rationale for a single location; address physical accessibility to the building; and explore a relationship with the Destination Medical Center (DMC) for this project.

Overall, the interviewees were very positive towards the proposed project. Over 90% of interviewees said that they would give a gift towards the campaign. Additionally, a number of those interviewed indicated that they would serve in some capacity as a campaign volunteer.

Our conclusions from the interviews and survey responses show that there is a great deal of community support for the library and trust in its administration. While the study did uncover some campaign volunteers, additional recruitment will be needed. Currently there is support for a community-based campaign.



Additional education of the community will be needed as certain questions are still present. Members of the community who do not use the library need to better understand the library's role and impact in the community. The expansion project will address many of the concerns related to accessibility and overall functionality.

We recommend: engaging the City, County, and DMC leadership to help partially fund the project; working with the medical community to continue enhancing the patient and patient family experience; engaging the Chamber of Commerce to understand the economic benefits of the library; articulating responses to the public's questions; continuing to recruit volunteers; developing key donor support for the campaign; and launching a capital campaign based on the additional findings and activities of a pre-campaign.

Paul J. Strawhecker, Inc. recommends conducting a pre-campaign phase that would help set the stage for a successful campaign with a potential goal of \$3 million.