

MEMORANDUM
Placer County Library

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mary George, Director of Library Services *Mary G. George*

DATE: November 6, 2012

SUBJECT: Receive an update on the Library's strategic planning process and potential future strategic initiatives.

ACTION REQUESTED

Receive an update on the Library's strategic planning process and discuss the proposed Draft Strategies.

BACKGROUND

The previous Library Service Plan expired in 2010. A new strategic direction was sought by Library Administration to help progressively evaluate current Library resources, guide future services, and plan for fiscal sustainability.

In December 2011, your Board approved the acceptance of a \$50,000 Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) Grant for the purpose of conducting strategic planning for the Library. LSTA is a federal grant program managed by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and administered by the California State Librarian. The grant was competitively awarded to the Library for the purpose of creating a successful and comprehensive strategic plan outlining future services and priorities by:

- Reaching out to Placer County communities to ask residents to share their aspirations and expectations for themselves, their families and their community.
- Developing a dynamic working document that would help guide future Library services and fiscal decision-making.
- Uniting Library staff, County officials, communities, and stakeholders toward the common goal of a strong, relevant, and sustainable Library.
- Imagining creative and lasting collaborations among Placer County communities and Placer County agencies.
- Conducting a data analysis to ensure that the Library is gathering and analyzing the correct data for accurate measure of goals, objectives, service needs, and public service efficiencies.

Library Administration prepared the grant application and has been managing the process. In February 2012, the Library hired consultant Joan Frye Williams and her associate George Needham to conduct a Strategic Reality Check of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the Library. Additionally, Joan and George conducted a community conversation and stakeholder's meeting to solicit input from the community on how the Library could align services to achieve community goals. More than five hundred people have shown their support

to the Library's planning process in meetings or through the paper and online community survey. Many more citizens have been made aware of the Library's strategic goals through the efforts of community partners such as the Literacy Support Council, the Friends of the Library and many other county departments such as Health and Human Services.

Outcomes from these meetings and survey helped to form the following Progress Report-Draft Strategies for the Library:

- Reduce erosion in Library service
- Modernize operations to improve efficiency and expand services
- Build capacity for the future

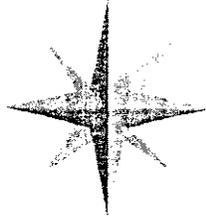
NEXT STEPS

Currently in progress is a fiscal study initiated by the CEO's Office that should assist with aligning future Library services and fiscal strategies. In the coming months, the Progress Report-Draft Strategies will be incorporated into a comprehensive strategic plan and the finished document will be presented to this Board after the first of the year for considered approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

Attachment



PLACER COUNTY LIBRARY
PROGRESS REPORT – DRAFT STRATEGIES
October 30, 2012

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The Placer County Library is currently engaged in a grant-funded strategic planning process. The following draft strategies are based on work to date, including extensive engagement with County residents via community forums, planning workshops, and printed and online surveys. The full strategic plan will be presented early in 2013.

STRATEGY: REVERSE EROSION IN LIBRARY SERVICES

Service: Ensure residents' access to Library resources and provide a venue for community identity and engagement by

- Pursuing opportunities to restore Library hours
- Positioning the Library as the hub of the community, a place to gather and exchange views
- Inviting participation in Library events and offerings via social media and other word-of-mouth channels

Facilities: Provide a welcoming environment and demonstrate good stewardship of the public's investment in library buildings by

- Remodeling existing facilities to replace worn finishes and furnishings
- Establishing a maintenance cycle for refreshing and updating facilities

Development: Help get all of the County's children onto the path towards success by

- Providing materials, programs, and services that focus on reading readiness, school success, and family literacy

Materials: Continually update Library collections to promote reading, free choice learning, entertainment, and individual development by

- Diversifying Library collections to embrace new formats such as eBooks
- Collecting and preserving materials that reflect the unique history and identity of this region
- Collecting and presenting materials that highlight important County issues and priorities
- Establishing a maintenance cycle for refreshing Library collections to maintain an engaging and up-to-date information resource for County residents

Technology: Provide the tools residents need to access information, apply for jobs, use County eGovernment forms and services, and connect with friends and family by

- Ensuring the availability of public access computers, with coaching and assistance, in the Library
- Improving the library's web site to mirror in-building services 24/7
- Establishing a maintenance cycle for updating Library technology, including thoughtful pilot projects for introducing new tools and equipment, and merciful phase-outs for retiring outdated tools and equipment

Staffing: Train, equip, and deploy Library staff to deliver service effectively by

- Using professional staff to design services centrally, and support staff to deliver those services locally
- Using volunteers to supplement paid personnel where appropriate

Funding: Diversify revenue sources by

- Seeking grant funds and donations
- Establishing a library foundation

STRATEGY: MODERNIZE OPERATIONS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND EXPAND SERVICES

Service: Reduce the unit cost of routine customer transactions by

- Anticipating residents' needs by pre-mediating services to provide quick responses to frequently-encountered requests and situations
- Making self-directed service the first choice for checkout, checkin, registration, catalog look-up, fine and fee payment, and holds placement, with assistance from Library staff as needed

Facilities: Increase usable space at existing facilities without expanding the building footprints by

- Increasing flexibility of existing interiors so that all spaces are usable throughout open hours
- Rebalancing floor plans to provide more people space
- Developing outdoor areas

Materials: Optimize materials handling by

- Implementing new statistical tools for collection monitoring and management
- “Floating” more materials between branches

Technology: Improve ease of use for customers and ease of maintenance for staff by

- Preferring mainstream consumer technologies over library-only tools, where feasible

Staffing: Improve customer service at the point of need by

- Replacing a fixed, desk-based service model with a more mobile, zoned deployment of staff
- Cross training all Library employees to be “first responders” in all areas of basic customer service

Funding: Leverage Library resources in new ways for greater return on investment by

- Pursuing new partnerships and in-kind exchanges of service with other agencies and coordinating services to shared audiences

STRATEGY: BUILD CAPACITY FOR THE FUTURE

Service: Realign Library services with changes in the way people live, work, and learn by

- Extending hours to match the needs of working families
- Extending services beyond supplying information to helping residents apply information

Facilities: Create Library spaces to house 21st Century Library services by

- Working with the County Capital Improvements Division, Facilities Services Department, to develop a long-range facilities master plan that identifies future space needs
- Exploring opportunities to co-locate Library services with other high-use destinations

Development: Leverage Library resources to enhance the economic climate in Placer County by

- Offering spaces, tools, materials, and programs that support small business creation
- Offering classes and computer resources that support workforce development and job seeking
- Providing a competitive quality-of-life amenity to attract new businesses to locate in Placer County

- Developing destination libraries that attract visitors and encourage tourism

Materials: Keep pace with rapid changes in how information is published and disseminated by

- Increasing the proportion of the collection that is held in electronic formats
- Creating a repository for new e-content that is being created here in Placer County

Technology: Increase the Library's ability to offer electronic materials and services by

- Partnering with other agencies to extend broadband connectivity

Staffing: Work across traditional boundaries to leverage Library expertise by

- Exploring opportunities to co-staff services with other County agencies
- Positioning the Library as the research department for County government
- Partnering with community groups and volunteers to extend library-designed services using non-library providers

Funding: Insure against shortfalls in traditional revenues by

- Identifying new revenue sources
- Building prudent reserves