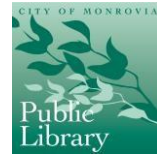




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Community Services
Library Division

MEETING DATE: April 25, 2024

PREPARED BY: Carey Vance, Library Manager

AGENDA LOCATION: AR-1

TITLE: Library Strategic Plan Q2 2024 Progress Report

OBJECTIVE: To provide the Library Board with a progress report on the Strategic Plan as of Q2 2024

UPDATE: The Monrovia Public Library Strategic Plan 2017-2022 was officially recommended by the Library Board on July 27, 2017 and was approved by City Council on August 1, 2017. Quarterly updates to the Library Board on the progress of the goals and activities of the plan are just one way staff are ensuring that this plan is a dynamic and living document that shapes the Library's future far beyond its initial five year timeframe.

The plan originally had a total of 22 SMART Goals and 63 supporting Goal Activities. In April 2021, the plan was expanded to include an additional focus on diversity, meaningful access, virtual services, physical space redesign, and career resources. Adding these elements resulted in new or additional language for 6 SMART Goals and 5 goal activities as well as the creation of 3 new goal activities. As of Q3 2021, the plan now has 22 SMART Goals and 66 Goal Activities.

As of April 2023, there have been 60 goal activities completed, 91% of the total. Staff made great progress in the first few years of the plan and continue to review it to ensure the plan remains effective and compatible with the changing needs of the community. The remaining goal activities are either impacted by the pandemic or are connected to the progress of the Library Park Enhancement Project.

At the February 2021 Library Board meeting, staff presented information on strategic plan expansion items that highlight the changes that have come about over the past few years. These items will help continue the work outlined in the original strategic plan and its role as a "living document" that grows and changes with the needs of the community.

Five focus areas were discussed, including: 1. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; 2. Virtual Services and Programming; 3. Redesign of the Physical Space; 4. Meaningful Access; 5. Job Skills and Career Resources. As of April 2021, these elements have been incorporated into the strategic plan under the appropriate strategic goal areas with language or goal activities modified as needed. The ongoing status of these expansion items have been included with the quarterly updates, starting with the Q3 2021 progress report in July 2021.

Here is a brief snapshot of what has been accomplished as of April 2024 (for a complete list, please see the SMART Goals Worksheet attachment):

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Enhance Experiences

Staff continues to make progress in programming, space planning, and supporting 21st century skills for youth as well as “Active Mind, Active Life” programming for adults, including:

- Staff hosted 148 programs for all ages in the first few months of 2024, including STEAM programs for kids, space exploration with the Sidewalk Astronomers, teen laser tag, and beginning ukulele lessons for adults, for a total of 5,628 program participants (January-March 2024).
- The library hosted a number of events to celebrate Monrovia’s diversity, including monthly bilingual storytimes, a Lunar New Year event and Black History Month celebration in February, local history lecture on Julius Parker & African-Americans in WWII, themed BHM virtual storytimes with introductions from members of the Monrovia Duarte Black Alumni Association, and a Festival of Colors in March. These programs were enjoyed by 536 community members of all ages.
- In response to feedback from patrons, who are looking for ways to socialize after the pandemic years, the library introduced a series of game nights for adults, teens, and youth as well as a game collection that launched in late January 2023. In its first year, the collection’s items, which include Nintendo Switch video games, board games, and card games, have been borrowed 3,165 times by patrons.

Enhance Access

With the continued need for enhanced access to library resources in light of the pandemic, staff is working on ways to ensure new or expanded services are effectively promoted and improved upon moving forward, including:

- Youth Services staff brought library services to local classrooms through school visits for 455 children and welcomed an additional 420 students to the building for class visits before library opening hours, offering special storytimes and their own library card (January-March 2024).
- Staff continue to partner with the Recreation Division, to provide monthly traveling storytimes at local parks, with a total of 105 participants from January-March 2024. They enjoyed nature-themed stories before learning about animals and plants in Monrovia’s local forests from Park Naturalists. Programs like these take library services out into the community and provide access to programming for families that may not be able to easily visit the library.
- The library provides enhanced access to library materials and services via the Monrovia Reads Van, which has served a total of 1,113 people who borrowed 592 books and created 23 new library cards in the first few months of 2024 (January-March 2024).

Enhance Partnerships

All goals for this Strategic Direction were completed as of October 2022. Given the nature of meaningful partnerships, the goal activities will be ongoing and staff continues to expand existing partnerships to enhance services to the community, including:

- In partnership with the Sidewalk Astronomers and Monrovia High School Astronomy Club, the library held a special event in February on space exploration. A total of 83 community members of all ages enjoyed learning about planets and stars while looking at space through large telescopes.

- Staff partnered with local dance instructors, John and Katie Watson, to host a line dancing class for veterans and their families in March for a total of 7 participants.
- The library partnered with a local student and “cube expert” to host the Cube Kids Club, a program for school-age kids to enjoy the challenges of Rubik’s cubes and other strategy games, while socializing and sharing tips. A total of 61 attended the program series in the winter and look forward to its return in summer 2024.
- Staff coordinated with the local VFW post in January to start providing mini presentations on the Veterans Resource Center at their monthly meetings. They shared information with a total of 19 members in February and March.
- As part of the library’s Veterans Resource Center, a County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) provides on-site support with office hours on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays while a representative from the Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN) offers on-site service on Tuesdays, supporting veterans as they work with the VA and other governmental agencies. From January-March 2024, the CVSO held 50 appointments with veterans, the VPAN held an additional 51, while staff had 263 interactions for a total of 364 interactions with veterans and their families supported through the program.

Enhance Technology

All goals for this Strategic Direction were completed as of April 2019. Completion of this strategic direction illustrates the importance the library places on providing all community members with access to the most up-to-date technology and devices. This is not only meant to meet their evolving needs as technology changes but also ensure universal access for all, reducing the digital divide within Monrovia for community members of all ages and backgrounds.

The need for technology and online resources has become even more important throughout the years of the pandemic, resulting in the following:

- HelpNow, an online tutoring resource, had 863 sessions, while the Legacy Project’s online historical collection had 4,057 searches from January-March 2024. Both provide access to enhanced resources and support for students, researchers, and community members.
- PressReader, the library’s online resource for digital newspapers and magazines, provided access to 87 issues in a variety of languages and formats, while Kanopy, the online streaming service, had 827 visits from January-March 2024.
- Staff streamlined the process for requesting 3D printing at the library with an online form that resulted in a 20% increase in usage of the service (130 requests in 2022 vs. 155 in 2023). The service’s popularity continues to grow, with even more requests expected for 2024.
- Youth Services staff introduced 6 STEAM Kits late last year that offer families a chance to borrow items and books related to scientific and engineering concepts. These kits have been so popular that staff are currently working on adding 6 more kits to the collection that will be available by May.

Enhance Image

Staff continues to work on marketing and promotion of library services and programs as well as engaging with community stakeholders:

- The Marketing Team has been working with staff to highlight collections and displays, post fun program re-cap pictures, and the upcoming 2024 Summer Reading Program. They also created a

collection of posts highlighting the various programs available at the library for National Library Week in April.

- As of March 2024, the library's Facebook account had 1,600 followers and the Instagram account had 2,884 followers, while the library's YouTube channel had a total of 364 subscribers.

Enhance Staff Development

All goal activities for the Staff Development Strategic Direction have been completed. Continuous growth and lifelong learning are integral elements of Library and City culture and though the goal activities have been completed, progress continues on to this day. Learning Hours remain an integral part of all staff members' schedules.

Annual evaluation goals continue to align with strategic plan elements and ensure professional development remains an important focus for every staff member. The staff development program, Collab Lab, launched in early 2020, was modified due to the closures with virtual meetings among the staff teams. One team, collaborating on grant research, was able to successfully secure a Library Services & Technology Act Grant (LSTA grant) for the remote locker in Recreation Park as a way to expand access to library services for more members of the community. Several staff members also participated in a "Career Building & Advice" breakout session at the 2022 Staff Summit, as collaboration and mentorship continues among those farther along in their careers supporting and advising those who are new to the library field.

Virtual and in-person training opportunities have helped staff expand their skills on a variety of topics, including homelessness, mental health, customer service, leadership, and marketing. They also participated in the annual Staff Summit, which took place in September 2023. An all-day event, staff took the time to share, collaborate, and learn during a variety of activities including Staff Olympics, group activities, games, and staff-led breakout sessions. Staff recognize the importance of continual improvement and see it as one of the key ways to continue to provide premier levels of service to the community.

Conclusion

Overall, much has been accomplished since the plan was introduced in 2017. Several major projects and new services were launched, including: the Monrovia Reads Van, the CENIC Broadband Network, the Marketing Team, the annual Staff Learning Summit, and the book locker at Recreation Park. Due to the effects of the Covid-19 crisis, the Library Park Redesign project was temporarily delayed, but work has resumed with staff presenting updated design plans to the City Council, Library Board, and other key stakeholders over the past few months. With the introduction of virtual programming, remote work, and curbside services, staff was able to keep following the roadmap of the Strategic Plan during the closures and re-opening process in 2020 and 2021 so progress would continue. With the library now open, staff sees this time as an opportunity to continue growing and changing with the needs of the community. Staff looks forward to building upon their successes while moving forward and providing their very best for Monrovia.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Library Board move to receive and file **AR-1 Library Strategic Plan Q2 2024 Progress Report**.

LIBRARY BOARD ACTION REQUIRED: If the Library Board concurs the appropriate action would be a motion to: ***Receive and file AR-1 Library Strategic Plan Q2 2024 Progress Report***.

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