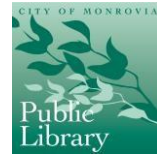




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Community Services
Library Division

MEETING DATE: November 7, 2024

PREPARED BY: Carey Vance, Library Manager

AGENDA LOCATION: AR-1

TITLE: Library Strategic Plan Q4 2024 Progress Report

OBJECTIVE: To provide the Library Board with a progress report on the Strategic Plan as of Q4 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. 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 were included with the quarterly updates, starting with the Q3 2021 progress report in July 2021. 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 October 2024, 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 connected to the progress of the Library Park Enhancement Project.

Here is a brief snapshot of what has been accomplished as of October 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:

- The library hosted a number of programs for all ages in the first few months of FY24/25, including ukulele lessons with Monrovia Music Academy, Mini-Vation Lab for toddlers, teen laser tag, and a Hispanic Heritage Month Fiesta, for a total of 5,576 program participants (July-September 2024).
- The library’s Summer Reading Program had a total of 2,246 people sign up over the course of the program. Patrons loved the programs, bi-weekly contests, and the kickoff party, which welcomed 1,200 people to Library Park.
- At the end of September, staff held a Hispanic Heritage Month Fiesta with folklorico dancers, bilingual storytime, and art activities in Library Park for 150 kids and families.
- Staff have worked with local businesses and community partners to provide a unique variety of programs for veterans and their families, including matinees at Look Cinemas, Starbucks Meetups, Paint & Sip events, and a special treat at the Concert in the Park this summer. From July-September 2024, a total of 381 attended the programs with more planned in the coming months.

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:

- The library partnered with the new Farmers Market at Station square for monthly family storytimes starting in September 2024. 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 hosted three sensory-friendly programs for 29 children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families across the summer and fall (July-September 2024) as well as six Barks & Books programs for 39 children who are struggling with reading and thrive in a supportive, calm environment. Both programs provide library service in a way that meet their unique needs, to ensure all members of the community have equitable access to the library.
- The library returned to campuses in September, bringing access to library materials and services via the Monrovia Reads Van, which served a total of 662 students who borrowed 465 books and created 94 new library cards in the first month of the new school year.

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:

- The library continues its partnership with Starbucks, hosting a monthly Veterans Meetup the fourth Tuesday of the month for local veterans and their families. Since it launched last September, a total of 57 attendees have enjoyed treats and coffee from Starbucks while sharing stories with fellow vets, library staff, and the County Veterans Service Officer CVSO (September 2023-September 2024).
- In partnership with the Recreation Division, the library provided ice cream treats to approximately 300 people while sharing information about the Veterans Resource Center at the Concert in the Park event in Library Park in July.

- Staff participated in the Foothill Unity Center's Back to School Event at Santa Anita Racetrack with a visit from the Monrovia Reads Van in August 2024, interacting with approximately 200 children and parents.
- The library partnered with Recreation staff to co-host booths at the local schools' Back to School Night events in August and September.
- 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. For July-September 2024, the CVSO held 288 appointments with veterans, the VPAN held an additional 101, while staff had 413 interactions for a total of 802 interactions with veterans and their families supported through the program.
- The library partnered with Look Cinemas to host special Veterans Matinees in July and October 2024 for a total of 58 veterans and their guests. This partnership allows staff to provide a fun, relaxing activity for veterans in Old Town.

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:

- The Legacy Project's online historical collection had 16,753 searches in the first few months of FY24/25 (July-September 2024). This is a 467% increase over the same time period last year. The collection has grown significantly, with the addition of new items that have provided more people with an enhanced knowledge of Monrovia's rich history.
- PressReader, the library's online resource for digital newspapers and magazines, provided access to 233 issues (magazines or newspapers) in a variety of languages and formats to meet greater accessibility needs for patrons (July-September 2024).
- The online streaming platform, Kanopy, has had 4,554 visits in its first two years since launching in September 2022. The service offers access to films and documentaries that highlight diverse voices and creators from around the world.

Enhance Image

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

- The library was contacted by Marisa Kanter, a popular YA author, who was so impressed by the library's offerings for teens, which she saw on the library Instagram account that she offered to provide a free teen writing workshop, which will be held in November.
- As of September 2024, the library's Facebook account had 1,700 followers and the Instagram account had 4,237 followers, while the library's YouTube channel had a total of 365 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 2024. An all-day event, staff took the time to share, collaborate, and learn during a variety of activities including an Old Town scavenger hunt, 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 Enhancement Project was temporarily delayed, but work has resumed with it currently in plan check and the city very close to bidding the project. 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 Q4 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 Q4 2024 Progress Report.***

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