

Mission:

Inclusion, Connection, Collaboration

Vision:

Empower people to transform their lives and strengthen our communities.

Values:

Lifelong Learning
Intellectual Freedom
Social Responsibility
Respectfulness
Professional Competence

The new Strategic Plan for the Santa Cruz Public Libraries is the culmination of a yearlong examination into the following three critical areas:

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
2. The Santa Cruz County Community
3. Library Services

The Plan aspires to ensure that the Library remains adaptive and continues to provide outstanding service that meets the community's needs. The goals evolved from community engagement and included surveys, organized community conversations, and workshops with the Library's partners, staff, and senior management.

Methodology

The Santa Cruz Public Libraries began the Strategic Planning process in August 2021. The Library convened a team of eleven staff to lead the effort. The group reviewed the existing strategic plan for the Santa Cruz Public Libraries and those of other organizations. The Library collected in-person and online survey questionnaires, then developed a list of seventeen prioritized groups and surveyed and interviewed members of those groups using the Harwood approach. Applied Survey Research coded and analyzed the community data.

The prioritized groups included:

City Staff from Capitola, Santa Cruz, and Scotts Valley

County Government Staff

Educators

Families with young children

Frequent library users and Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries

Infrequent or nonusers of the Library

Library Advisory Commission,

Library partners and their clients

Library staff

Members and partners of the BIPOC community

Members and partners of the disabled community

Members and partners of the Spanish-speaking community

People without housing
Seniors
Teens.

At the Library's All Staff Training Day in October 2021, the Library conducted a strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) exercise with staff. Former San Jose Public Library Director Jane Light led the exercise. Staff also engaged in activities that helped define the organization's values. In addition to the staff exercises, the Library's internal Equity Team began developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan in 2020 with the goal of incorporating its work into the Strategic Plan. Following that work, a Community Partner Dialogue took place in February 2022 to gather additional input from the following groups: The Friends of the Library, the Library Advisory Commission, the County Office of Education, Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz City Schools, the Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation/Rise Together, the Diversity Center, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, NAACP, United Way, and the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office.

After completing the Community Partner Dialogue event, Library Director Yolande Wilburn led the Library's senior management team through a workshop to analyze the information gathered from the staff and community input and the work achieved by the Library's Equity Team. Those workshops resulted in the final goals presented in this report. The Library then sought further input on the Plan from the Library Advisory Commission (LAC) and the Library Joint Powers Authority (LJPA) before seeking final approval from the LJPA.

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1. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

GOAL A: Create an organizational culture of equity and inclusion and provide equitable and relevant services to all.

Strategies:

- Seek approval from the LJPA for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan.
- Initiate the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion three-year goals.
- Apply the newly developed tools for measuring the success of the DEI Plan.

**Please see the entire DEI Plan attached.*

2. The Santa Cruz County Community

GOAL A: Create and support safe and friendly places.

Strategies:

- Ensure library facilities are accessible, safe, and welcoming.
- Promote the Library's spaces and program rooms to all community members.
- Support community resilience.

Objectives

(A) Create welcoming spaces for all ages and ensure that spaces go beyond ADA compliance and achieve universal design at remodeled or new facilities: Provide annual audits of spaces.
(B) Analyze the need for bilingual signage at all branch locations by the end of 2023. Identify the threshold for signage based on demographic changes and increases in languages other than English. The Library will address three branches a year for each of this Plan's three years.
(C) Open Branciforte, Live Oak Annex and Aptos Branch Libraries in 2023.

(D)
Develop and pilot three (3) programs, one each year in a different community that explores at least one of the following: civic engagement, polarization, conflict resolution, cultural awareness and healthy communication.

(E)
Ensure that the Library remains a leader in the County for environmental sustainability:
Develop a plan by 2024 to reduce the Library's carbon footprint by half by 2026.

(F)
Collaborate with the County to provide access to the Library as a Community Resource Center during emergencies.

GOAL B: Foster inclusion.

Strategies:

- Deepen relationships with partners to collaborate on programming and services and improve health outcomes.
- Create opportunities for diverse groups to connect, have fun, and gain understanding through art, history, literature, humanities, and civic engagement.
- Work with the schools to improve math and reading outcomes for children.
- Support the socio-psychological wellness of youth and teens through partnerships and programming.
- Collaborate with community partners to connect people to job training, veterans services, housing, and mental health resources.

Objectives:

(A)
Continue to collaborate with schools to invest in programs that focus on underserved children. Identify and develop programming to support school readiness. Provide annual reports to the LAC and LJPA on any changes or proposals that resulted from the collaboration.

(B)
Invite participation and feedback about library services, programs, and collections from community members. In collaboration with partners, provide annual community conversations with prioritized groups. Provide an annual report to the LAC and the LJPA on the feedback and recommended actions.

(C)
Develop programs with partners that support the socio-psychological wellness of youth and teens and provide ongoing feedback. The target number of programs will be developed within the first year of the plan.

(D)
Establish a partnership with the County by the end of 2023 to bring social workers into the Library. Seek input and best practices from across the industry for other social work programs and best practices that support mental health for patrons using the library.

(E)
Create/support programs that bridge cultures, generations, lived experiences, and communities. The number of annual programs will be identified during a planning process in the first quarter of the plan. This work could include some community led programming.

GOAL C: Support all members of society.

Strategies:

- Develop communication strategies that connect the community to needed resources.
- Continuously gather feedback and evaluate processes, programs, and policies to reduce barriers and increase access to Library resources.
- Develop programs that support incarcerated and decarcerated individuals.

Objectives

(A)
Ensure that the yearly milestones within the DEI Plan are met.

(B)
Develop a Communications Plan dedicated to marketing, event coordination and public information in order to expand reach and to streamline the Library's communication.

(C)
Develop an assessment of current services for incarcerated and recently decarcerated. Identify current impacts and a plan for potential impacts if resources are increased or reorganized for the Library's County Correctional Facilities (CCF) program in FY 24-25.

(D)
Strengthen partnerships to ensure the library continues to serve as a bridge for patron access to social services. Develop more robust measures for identifying how many and how well patrons are referred and served by partners through the library's work.

(E)
Develop annual marketing campaigns, including rebranding, to raise awareness of library programs and services.

3. Library Services

GOAL A: Curate a relevant and engaging collection of materials diverse in content and format to satisfy the community's reading, listening, viewing, and learning preferences and bridge the digital divide.

Strategies:

- Conduct diversity audits of collections to be reflective of the community.
- Promote diverse collections, including local history, music, and art, through programming and exhibits.
- Identify and digitize objects and collections for genealogical and historical information of importance to Santa Cruz County.
- Launch and promote an integrated content and digital asset management system for local history and genealogical content.

Objectives

(A)
Develop an audit plan for the Library's Collections utilizing an equity lens.

(B)
Establish a more robust process for cataloging in other languages, involving affiliates such as Pacific Library Partnership.

(C)
Utilize an equity lens in the revision of the Collection Development Plan by 2024.

(D)

Explore augmenting the collection through alternative resources such as Link+, and ZipBooks to better meet patron needs. Develop annual patron feedback on the accessibility of the collection.

GOAL B: Strengthen and support learning and measure the impact.

Strategies:

- Facilitate community conversations and conduct regular surveys to identify the service and programming needs within Santa Cruz County.
- Identify opportunities and best practices for nurturing curiosity and community connection.
- Strengthen and support digital literacy access and training.
- Develop and apply meaningful measurements to determine the library's impact.
- Strengthen Library staff's network with community organizations through participation in local events and locations outside the library's walls.

Objectives

(A) Ensure that key staff have training on measuring impacts and facilitating community conversations. Begin in 2023 for all librarians. Begin in 2024 for all other staff.
(B) Develop and revise measurement tools for evaluating the Library's programs and services by December 2023. By December 2024, provide a dashboard that publicly displays the Library's measurements.
(C) Partner with area museums and historical societies to develop opportunities for nurturing curiosity.
(D) Seek out traveling museum exhibits that can spark conversation in the Library for all ages and develop measurement tools for assessment. The target number for programming will be developed within the first quarter of the year.
(E) Identify key programs that result in positive impacts on economic outcomes. Define these programs and services by the end of 2023. Offer those services by the beginning of 2024.

(F)
Collaborate with the County to end the digital divide in Santa Cruz County by assisting with grants, information sharing and special projects.

(G)
Provide comprehensive resources and services to support public research on the local history of the County.

(H)
Provide research assistance, teach information literacy skills and connect patrons of all ages with materials and information to meet their educational, informational and entertainment needs. Develop customer service surveys that assess these specific services and begin implementing them in 2023.

(I)
Support Santa Cruz County K-12 students with cutting edge digital and physical resources and through collaboration with partner organizations that focus on the socio-emotional health of youth. Develop measurement tools for assessment.

(J)
Expand participation in the summer learning program for all students and identify new avenues for reaching students within the groups identified through the Equity Plan. Develop measurement tools for assessment.

(K)
Utilize the bookmobile to expand outreach efforts for summer learning goals.

GOAL C: Support and prepare staff to meet organizational needs and ensure excellent customer service.

Strategies:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of technology and update the technology plan’s priorities.
- Assess staffing to ensure the organization’s fiscal sustainability and recalibrate public hours and staffing to provide equitable service levels across the County.
- Develop a staff training plan to maximize knowledge and expertise.
- Support staff well-being and career advancement.

Objectives

<p>(A) Complete a new Technology Plan by June 2023 which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrades to the Virtual Private Cloud Infrastructure.• Development of an updated website by December 2024 that is more user friendly for other language users and for people with disabilities.• A technology and computer replacement policy by June 2023.• Migration of the Library's in-house Integrated Library System (ILS) to a hosted solution by April 01, 2023.• Replacement of obsolete hardware Servers at all Branch locations by June 2023.• Installation of occupancy counting equipment at all branches by September 2023 with the exception of Live Oak annex.
<p>(B) Implement Neogov "Onboard" and "Perform" modules by March 2023 to ensure staff training is tracked and performance appraisals are completed on time.</p>
<p>(C) Re-locate Collection Management Services and the Library Information Technology teams to the Headquarters building by June 2023.</p>
<p>(D) Provide ongoing training on Equity Diversity and Inclusion for the Library’s managers and then all staff. Complete a skills and knowledge assessment by the end of the fiscal year 2024.</p>
<p>(E) Expand training to all staff on deescalation. Ensure everyone trains on it once a year.</p>
<p>(F) Ensure high quality training for all staff to support the action steps for the Safe & Friendly focus, specifically to support staff in providing friendly, responsive customer service. Begin in 2023.</p>
<p>(G) Develop and implement measurement tools for evaluating the Library's customer service by December 2023.</p>

(H)
Provide training for all staff to support constructive communication. Begin for all staff in 2023.

(I)
Seek annual feedback on the Strategic Plan from staff.

(J)
Establish meetings between Human Resources, and senior management to meet the goal of developing a recruitment, training and retention plan that addresses any changes needed in the educational requirements, job descriptions and recruitment advertising practices, and process i.e. interviews and how the candidates are vetted.

(K)
Identify staffing needs and the potential creation, conversion or addition of positions which ensure the fiscal sustainability of the organization by the end of 2023.

(L)
Support staff wellbeing by exploring best practices of other Library organizations and implementing pilots in collaboration with the City of Santa Cruz Human Resources Department.

(M)
Continue to develop the volunteer program to work seamlessly between the City's volunteer office and the Library.