



Jackson County
Library
Services

Jackson County Library Services

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–2021



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*The only thing you absolutely have to
know is the location of the library
- Albert Einstein*



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Strategic Plan

Libraries are on the cusp of a great transformation. Changes in how people access and use information, interact with one another and changes in the resources, tools and capabilities needed to operate effectively in today's society require new approaches to library services and resources. The library must evolve in ways that keep pace with this kind of change, and the diversity of library users. All members of Jackson County must have equal access to the world of ideas.

The Jackson County Library System (JCLS) is now under the governance and leadership of the Jackson County Library District Board of Directors, elected in May of 2014. For the first time in Jackson County's history a five-member elected board is responsible for the stewardship of library resources in fifteen communities. The Board of Directors launched a strategic planning process in October of 2015 to chart a future course.

This strategic plan will guide the library during a period of transition. The plan is intended to provide a cohesive vision and direction for the next five years and beyond. Staying true to core library values, the Jackson County libraries will adapt thoughtfully and boldly to emerging challenges and opportunities for the benefit of the people of Jackson County.

Planning Process

Many individuals and groups shared their ideas, insights and passions in the development of this plan. Jackson County Library District is a public institution, funded by the public for the public. A great deal of effort went into consulting the public about what it needs from our libraries .

The planning process began in November, 2015 with twenty community meetings held across all library branches. An additional six meetings were held off-site in community locations. During weeks that followed the meetings, more feedback was solicited in each branch through a "sandwich board" holding Post-It note suggestions. More than 1,000 community voices provided input about the desired Jackson County Library Services priorities.


In December, 2015 nine focus group sessions with 122 community leaders from a wide range of sectors including; education, arts, business, social services, Friends of the Libraries and the Jackson County Library Foundation provided vital feedback about how the library system can help these leading organizations meet their community goals. All library staff shared their ideas in meetings, and as the final plan evolved staff were involved in identifying key strategies.

Key themes emerged to guide the development of the 2016 - 2021 Jackson County Library District Strategic Plan. Our libraries must:

- play a central role in the education of members of our community from preschoolers through seniors;
- build a collection that meets community needs;
- be focal points and resource hubs for individuals and communities;
- team with the public, community and business organizations to expand the library system reach through partnerships;
- support a love of reading, personal growth and learning
- build an informed citizenry.

A Blue Ribbon Committee composed of community leaders, staff and Jackson County Library District Board members Carol Doty and Maureen Swift was convened. This committee considered the input from the community and staff and crafted the major components of the plan for Library District Board consideration and final adoption.

Conclusion

The Jackson County Library Services Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021 is a guide that prioritizes the work of library staff and the District Board. It was developed with careful consideration of the feedback received and the data studied. The plan is shaped with the understanding that change is inevitable, and that our library services will adapt as warranted. At the same time, we will maintain our core values  measure all we do against our mission, and remain focused on serving the community.

From the President of the Board & Strategic Planning Executive Committee



Monica Weyhe,
Board President



Maureen Swift,
Board Vice President



Carol Doty,
Board Member



Susan Kiefer,
Board Member



Jill Turner,
Board Member



Tammy Westergard,
MLS, Director

Just two years ago, you, the voters created an independent special library district and elected this Board of Directors. During our second year we have been focused on involving you, our community, in a new strategic planning process. On behalf of the Library District Board, I am so pleased to present the Strategic Plan 2016-2021 that we all created.

Our vision is that through Jackson County Libraries, individuals reach their potential and communities thrive. How? We've created a strong base with you, and created new partnerships during this process and renewed the old. We will Learn, Connect and Grow with you as we accomplish specific objectives to fulfill our mission to connect everyone to information, ideas and each other.

Libraries= Education: whether self-directed through our collections in our libraries and online; or together through research help, instruction, and classes; and education through enriching experiences with others in partnerships and events.

We've heard stories about how Libraries Change Lives. By supporting early learning and educating all for digital literacy, we and our partners will promote school success, job growth and directly contribute to the economic vitality of our valley. We want to hear your library story, so please tell it to our wonderful staff.

We Welcome You into our Libraries For All!

Monica Weyhe,
President, Jackson County Library Board of Directors

On September 10, 2015 the Jackson County Library District Board authorized the formation of a county-wide Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) to oversee the creation of a thorough and authentic planning process, which resulted in this strategic plan. The plan will guide the Jackson County Library staff in carrying out library service goals from 2016 through 2021.

The BRC developed a vision, mission and values, which were adopted by the Library District Board, and recommended long-term goals prepared by the library staff. Support from the Jackson County Library administrative staff was at all times professional in facilitating this extensive process.

An effective and impartial third party consultant, Margot Helphand, was available throughout the process to guide conversations with over 1,000 voices in reviewing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the Library District, collecting and

summarizing data, and effecting a high-degree of community support for the plan. She brought integrity to the planning effort. At its last session on April 14, the BRC requested and was assured receipt of continued involvement as the plan is implemented.

The next step is for the Library District Board to approve the plan and each year, with its Budget Committee, to examine and approve how library resources will be used to best meet needs, impact our 15 communities and build library capacity.

Undertaking this process has been exhilarating and highly educational for those of us who served on the executive strategic planning committee. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve and believe the future is bright for Jackson County Library Services.

Onward,
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MISSION, VISION and VALUES

MISSION

Our mission statement reflects the commitment we are making to the community.

The mission of the Jackson County Library District is to connect everyone to information, ideas, and each other.

VISION

Our vision statement describes what success will look like in the future.

Through the Jackson County Libraries individuals reach their potential and our communities thrive.

VALUES

To fulfill our mission and realize our vision, the following ideals shall direct us in our service to the community and interaction with each other.

RESPECT

Our libraries welcome everyone. We honor diversity, individual perspectives and the right to privacy and confidentiality.

ACCESSIBILITY

We champion free and open access to ideas, information and content.

INTEGRITY

We are responsible, honest stewards of public resources and trust.

INNOVATION

We encourage creative ideas and solutions.

COLLABORATION

We foster an environment that inspires building relationships and working together.

*When I got my library card,
that's when my life began.
– Rita Mae Brown*



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

LEARN

Jackson County Library Services advance Jackson County's education priorities.

1. Support early learning to promote school readiness.
2. Help people develop the skills to search for, locate, evaluate and effectively use information to meet their needs.
3. Provide information and tools needed for the academic success of students in public, private, home schools, trade schools and higher education .
4. Support personal growth and lifelong learning through high-quality programs and materials .

CONNECT

Jackson County Libraries are open, thriving spaces where people link to the universe of possibilities that enrich their lives.

1. Provide safe and welcoming spaces for people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds to connect with others and to engage in individual pursuits.
2. Customize hours, spaces, services and collections to meet community needs.
3. Build public awareness and engagement through strategic marketing.
4. Implement new models and collaborate with others to improve information access and delivery.

GROW

Jackson County Library Services contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.

1. Emphasize 21st century literacies such as information, finance and health in library programs.
2. Educate for digital literacy and marketable workplace skills to improve prospects for employment.
3. Leverage partnerships to develop and promote job growth and business success.

AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

LEARN

Jackson County Library Services advance Jackson County's education priorities.

Learning occurs in every stage of life . The Jackson County Library District supports learning with early literacy programming, promoting student success and enhancing self-directed learning. Cumulatively, the objectives and strategies of this goal position the Library District to play a key role in advancing education achievement in Jackson County.

1. Support early learning to promote school readiness.

- a. Support early learning by providing parents and caregivers with quality story times, training, and materials which encourage them to talk, sing, read, write and play with their children.
- b. Develop comprehensive training for staff that reinforces the library's early learning strategies.
- c. Provide easy access to early literacy materials, websites, information and support for parents and caregivers.
- d. Expand the library's outreach to childcare to include services delivered in both English and Spanish.
- e. Continue to investigate and invest in technology, resources and tools that support early literacy.
- f. Provide easy access to early literacy materials, websites, information and support for parents and caregivers.

2. Help people develop the skills to search for, locate, evaluate and effectively use information to meet their needs.

- a. Augment the library's learning tools with best in class products such as Lynda.com and Brainfuse.
- b. Ensure public service staff can readily assist patrons in finding what they need to know.
- c. Make "Book a Librarian" a service available to all branches.
- d. Develop a centralized telephone and web managed reference service.

3. Provide information and tools needed for the academic success of students in public, private, home schools, trade schools and higher education.

- a. Regularly attend community school events to promote library services and gain insight into community needs.
- b. Provide and promote online and in-branch homework assistance.
- c. Develop strategies involving staff, technology and space that better support distance learning.
- d. Align a library system digital education plan, with area school districts technology deployment.
- e. Work with school librarians and classroom teachers to foster a love of reading through book talks, class visits to the library and creative programming.

4. Support personal growth and lifelong learning through high-quality programs and materials.

- a. Collaborate with public, private and nonprofit partners to promote reading for pleasure, expand self-directed learning opportunities and provide a variety of cultural experiences for all ages.

AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

CONNECT

Jackson County Libraries are open, thriving spaces where people link to the universe of possibilities that enrich their lives.

The Jackson County Libraries serve a wide range of people and groups in settings that are safe and welcoming. As an institution valuing its role as a steward of public trust, the library leverages resources to provide exemplary services, programs and information related products.

- 1. Provide safe and welcoming spaces for people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds to connect with others and engage in individual pursuits.**
 - a. Solicit patron and staff feedback to assess customer satisfaction and the quality of the customer experience.
 - b. Provide library services and programs for culturally-diverse populations.
 - c. Develop a comprehensive staff training and professional development program.
 - d. Improve library signage to ensure the message reflects the community.
- 2. Customize hours, spaces, services and collections to meet community needs.**
 - a. Apply data analytics, branch by branch, to ensure more relevant collections, programs, services, hours and space utilization.
 - b. Increase the overall visibility of the collection system-wide with an emphasis on promoting it with creative and intelligent displays.
 - c. Evaluate the condition of the collection and move forward with a comprehensive collection maintenance program.
 - d. Expand the library experience to include things such as makerspaces, learning commons and non-traditional materials.
- 3. Build public awareness and engagement through strategic marketing.**
 - a. Develop and implement comprehensive plans to raise public awareness of the resources and services of the libraries.
 - b. Support community relations efforts by developing key partnerships and strategically pursuing opportunities to promote the library at community events.
- 4. Implement new models and collaborate with others to improve information access and delivery.**
 - a. Ensure that web-based and virtual services are customer-focused and intuitively navigable.
 - b. Provide enhanced customer service (in-person and remote) by reviewing current methods and models of delivery.
 - c. Implement methods to enable patrons to access materials in the collection 24/7.
 - d. Continue to develop the Jackson County Library Services website to guide users to library services and resources, partner websites and complementary community resources.



AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

GROW

Jackson County Library Services contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.

The Jackson County Library District is committed to the growth and economic prosperity of our communities. The Library District provides spaces, resources and training in digital and financial literacy, entrepreneurship opportunity, workforce development and adult education, to empower the people of Jackson County to change their lives and improve their communities.

- 1. Emphasize 21st century literacies such as information, finance and health in library programs.**
 - a. Provide library services, materials and programs to assist business owners and entrepreneurs with an emphasis on emerging agricultural markets.
 - b. Develop programs and services to foster innovation and creativity to support science, technology, engineering, arts and math (S.T.E.A.M.) skills.
- 2. Educate for digital literacy and marketable workplace skills to improve prospects for employment.**
 - a. Develop comprehensive plan for digital education and commit resources to support desired outcomes.
 - b. Invest in career and employment resources for job seekers and provide training on how to use them.
 - c. Use data analytics to determine resources needed at each branch to help people develop skills required to find a job.
- 3. Leverage partnerships to develop and promote job growth and business success**
 - a. Identify viable businesses and economic development partnerships which will pave the way for the library to share resources, co-promote programs and services and offer joint training initiatives.
 - b. Establish the role of a business outreach librarian to support economic growth.

What is more important in a library than anything else - is the fact that it exists.

- Archibald MacLeish



CALL TO ACTION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A Call To Action

This strategic plan describes the desired future of the Jackson County Library District (JCLD). Accountability of the Library District, its Board, administration and staff ensures successful implementation of the plan. Fostering a sense of ownership and pride, the plan calls on all the individuals in the JCLD community to do their part. This plan provides an opportunity for the JCLD, the Jackson County Library Foundation and Friends groups to come together to help the Library District achieve its mission and vision.

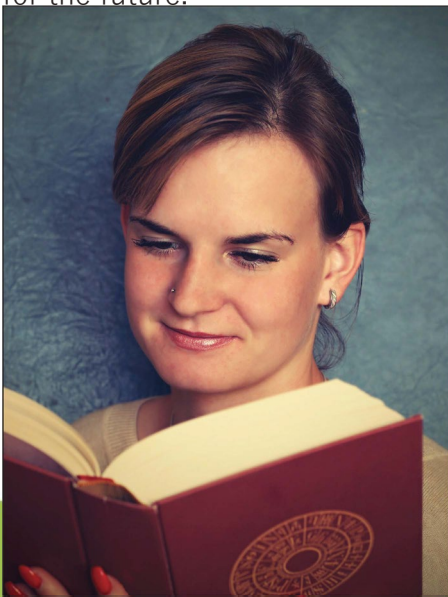
The best plans are dynamic, flexible tools for continuous improvement. With the library district's mission as the primary foundation, its vision as the ideal, and its core values as guides to decision making, the library system will commit to a process that ensures accountability, versatility and rational decision-making. The process begins with the adoption of the plan by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will have the primary responsibility to monitor the plan's goals and objectives and assess overall progress. The library staff will have the responsibility of overseeing implementation and consulting and working with groups directly involved or affected by decisions. In the course of implementation, new issues, challenges, and ideas will undoubtedly emerge. In a cyclical process the Board and staff will measure progress, deploy resources to maximize outcomes and possibly identify new areas that require action. In this way, the plan will be constantly reviewed, evaluated and updated.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the many community members who contributed to the development of this strategic plan. We are especially appreciative of all the members of the community who took the time to attend a formal planning session or provide feedback when visiting a library.

We also thank the entire library staff. All members of the library staff participated in planning meetings. Each staff member will be integrally involved in implementing this plan.

We are especially thankful to the members of the Blue Ribbon Committee who devoted many hours to considering the needs of the community, studying library trends and crafting a road map for the future.



Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest.
– Lady Bird Johnson



APPENDICES

Jackson County Library District

Board of Directors

Monica Weyhe, President

Maureen Swift, Vice President

Carol Doty

Susan Kiefer

Jill Turner



Blue Ribbon Committee Members

Pat Ashley, Director, Rogue Community College, Board of Education

Shelley Austin, Executive Director, Jackson County Library Foundation

Lilia Caballero, Cultural Liaison Coordinator, City of Medford Police Department

Michael Cavallaro, Executive Director, Rogue Valley Council of Governments

Carol Doty, Board Member Jackson County Library District

Mary-Curtis Gramley, Ph.D., Southern Oregon Early Learning Services Director

Carole Levi, Jackson County Library Services Friends

George Pelch, Plant Manager, Amy's Kitchen

Carrie Prechtel, C.E.C., 211 info

Amy Richard, Media & Communications Manager, Oregon Shakespeare Festival

Richard Schaefer, M.D., Retired physician

Rick Smith, President, Ascentron, Inc.

Natalie Smith, CEO, Ascentron, Inc.

Maureen Swift, Board Member Jackson County Library District

Guy Tauer, Regional Economist, Workforce and Economic Research, Oregon Employment Dept.

Tammy Westergard, MLS, Director of Libraries, Jackson County Library Services

Michelle Zundel, Chief Academics Officer, Medford School District

Consultant, Margot Helphand, Helphand and Associates

