

# STRATEGIC VISION WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 15, 2024

JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES



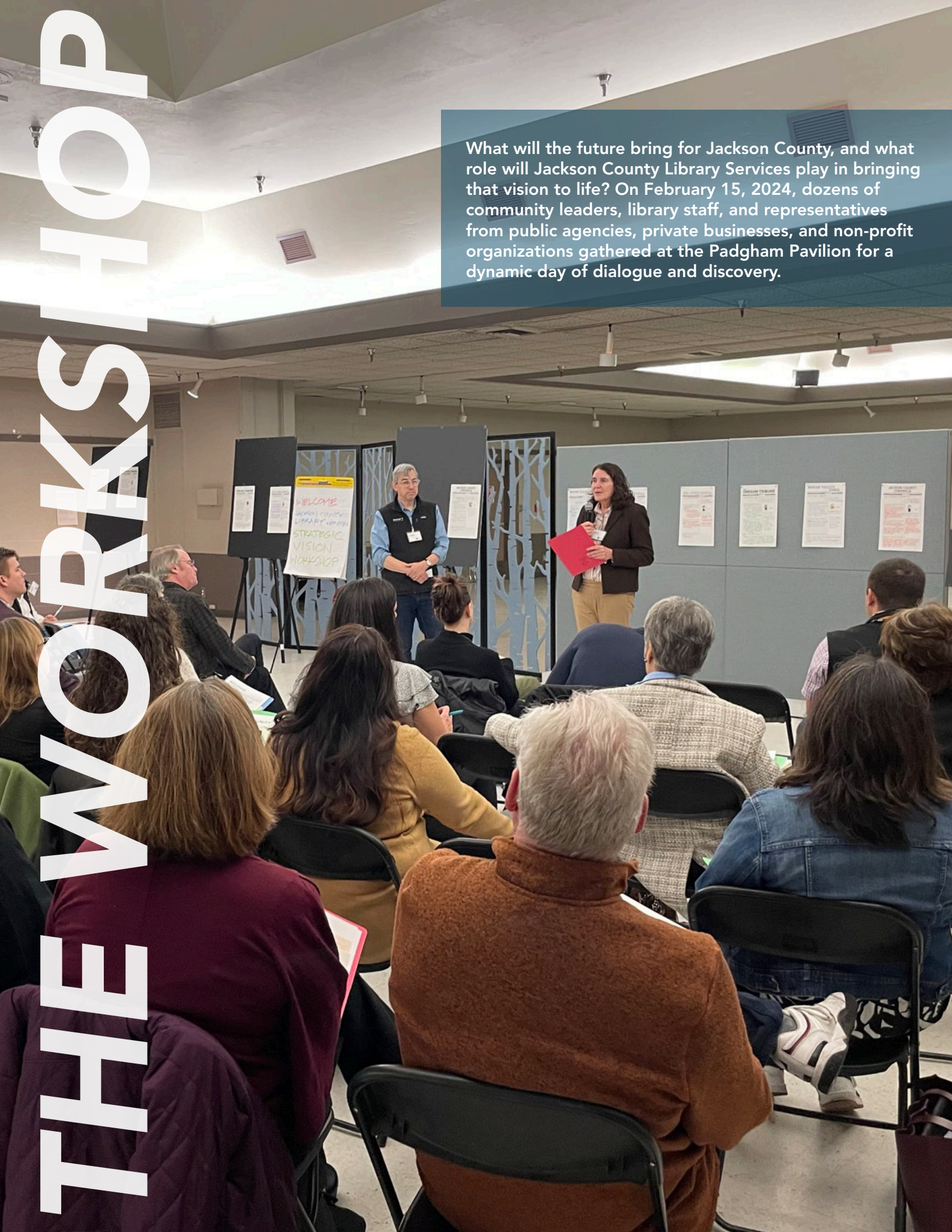
# THE WORKSHOP

What will the future bring for Jackson County, and what role will Jackson County Library Services play in bringing that vision to life? On February 15, 2024, dozens of community leaders, library staff, and representatives from public agencies, private businesses, and non-profit organizations gathered at the Padgham Pavilion for a dynamic day of dialogue and discovery.

**“A library is a place for making sense of the world.”  
– Thor Muller**

The Strategic Vision Workshop was led by Group 4 Architecture Research + Planning, Inc. Throughout the event, workshop participants collaborated on a series of focused activities to generate ideas and inspire visionary thinking about the future of Jackson County Library Services. They were encouraged to approach each activity through four lenses: Community, Connection, Renewal, and Inclusion.

The workshop was one part of a multi-faceted community and stakeholder engagement effort toward developing a new long-range facilities plan for JCLS, a process that began in September 2023. Other community engagement strategies for the facilities plan will include public meetings, focus groups, and surveys.



# INTO THE FUTURE

Upon arrival, participants were asked to imagine themselves in the year 2035, and to write about the value and impact that their organizations have had for the community since 2024. Participants then snowballed in small groups to discuss the trends that shape how their respective organizations deliver service and benefit to the community. Representatives of each group reported out highlights of their discussions about how these trends will influence and shape their organizations and the community in the future.

Several common themes and threads were woven through the report-out discussion:

- Connecting with customers outside of an organization’s facility – meeting them where they are
- Building staff skills and capacity
- Understanding and celebrating the community’s shared history and culture
- Supporting and empowering community members with disabilities
- Engaging the private sector in developing comprehensive solutions
- Positive and proactive outreach to marginalized populations

Following the report-out of this exercise, Jesse Jackson of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians performed a blessing through spoken word and song, accompanied by traditional musical instruments. Library Director Kari May briefly welcomed participants and thanked them for being part of the workshop.



# ALTERNATIVE FUTURES

After the opening activities, participants took part in a “metaphors” brainstorming exercise. Working in small groups, participants discussed how the attributes of local and national destinations, brands, services, and organizations might be applied to the qualities and characteristics of a hypothetical library. Small groups then came together to combine the most resonant metaphors into hypothetical future libraries representing those key attributes. Each alternative future library was named by its creators and presented to all participants.

Multiple groups were inspired by several local and national metaphors:

- **Home Depot** – A strongly-branded company that empowers customers with expansive inventory, knowledgeable help, and a “you can do this!” spirit.
- **Rogue X** – An active, vibrant, and fun environment that builds community connections around shared interests.
- **Science Works** – Hands-on experiences that make learning fun for all ages, designed in collaboration with local schools.

	<b>Vibrant &amp; Fun</b>	<b>Intentional Experiences</b>	<b>Our Place, Your Passion</b>	<b>HELP (Helping Evolve Learning Practices)</b>
<b>Connection</b>	A library offering traditional services and interactive experiences that are fresh, engaging, and entertaining Rogue X SOHS Science Works	A library widely recognized for facilitating community conversations and connections whose staff are always ready to help Walkabout Brewing Co.	Community destination with something for everyone: high-interest programs, expansive resources, and knowledgeable staff Rogue X	A technology-rich, interactive, and fun library providing hands-on learning opportunities and DIY support for all ages Science Works
<b>Renewal</b>	Brand Matters	Goodreads	Britt Fest	Home Depot
<b>Inclusion</b>	Etsy Common Block Brewery	Rogue X	Home Depot	Apple Store
<b>Community</b>	REI Harry + David Whole Foods	Home Depot	Netflix	Lyft/ Uber

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

As the group sat down to lunch, Mark Yaconelli of The Hearth spoke about the importance and power of storytelling in building strong and connected communities. “Relationships are resiliency,” he remarked as he recounted his experience helping children in Phoenix reconnect and re-engage following the Alameda fire. In closing his talk, he asked attendees to consider, “How do we make love visible, accessible, and present in all the work we do?”

Thor Muller of Shift<sup>AI</sup> discussed how tools and technology have supported the creation and transfer of knowledge in the past – and how artificial intelligence (AI) may transform our relationship to knowledge in the future. “AI is a new way to think,” he said, describing different models of AI assistance and integration. About the library’s role, Thor said, “A library is a place for making sense of the world” and emphasized how AI and technology should support communities at the local level.

David Schnee of Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning talked about how new strategic directions and community interests are reflected in public library services and facilities. He showed national and international examples of innovative services and inspiring spaces that libraries are evolving to support high interest and high impact programs and services.



# VISION FOR JCLS

After lunch, participants gathered into groups to brainstorm big vision statements according to the day’s themes: Community, Connection, Renewal, and Inclusion. Groups came together by theme to select the visions they felt best captured their visions for JCLS, and then presented their top 10 visions to all workshop participants. Everyone had the option to select up to six vision statements – from any theme – that most resonated for them. David Schnee facilitated discussion of the results of the top visions, themes, and strategic futures for Jackson County Library Services.

## All Are Welcome

- A destination with welcoming, attractive, and inspiring spaces
- A place of “belonging and freedom” for all ages, cultures, and interests
- Invite diversity
- Creative ways to expand access and service in rural libraries

## Connect and Cultivate Community

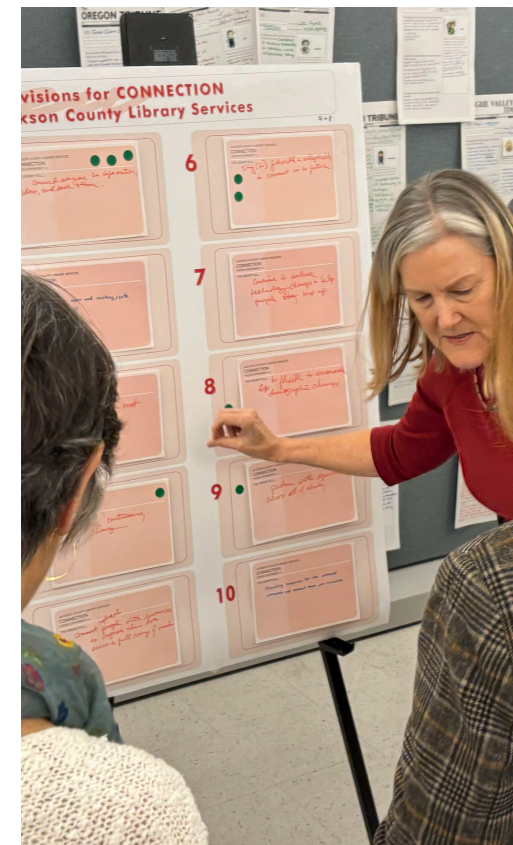
- Connect people through fresh, fun, and interactive programming around common interests
- Curate and synthesize information to help communities make sense of our world
- Celebrate community art, culture, creativity, and beauty
- Be the place the community knows has the answers

## Strong Partners and Champions

- Develop a strong brand
- Build widespread awareness of the library as a center for the community
- Create library advocates
- Nurture mutually-beneficial partnerships for enhanced service and impact

## Future-Ready Library

- Embrace change; learn, evolve, and adapt along with the community
- Stay flexible and adaptable to connect us to the future
- Staff capacity and development



Jackson County Library Services would like to express its gratitude to the many community members, stakeholders, and leaders for the generous contribution of their time and thoughtful participation in this workshop, as well as to the library staff and volunteers whose support and hard work helped make this event a success.

#### ATTENDEES

Amber Robles Myre, Living Opportunities  
Amy Blossom, Jackson County Library Services  
Amy Drake, Oregon Community Foundation  
Ann Marie Alfrey, Rogue Valley Council of Governments  
Annie Jenkins, Downtown Medford Association  
Angela Durant, Gordan Elwood Foundation  
Brian Young, US Bank & Jackson County Library Foundation  
Brynn Fogerty, Jackson County Library Services  
Carl Thomas, Project Youth+  
Crystal Zastera, Jackson County Library Services  
Dan Ruby, RCC Foundation  
Daniel Madrigal, Jackson County Library Services  
David Sours, Jackson County Democratic Party  
Doug McGear, Southern Oregon Historical Society  
Eric Dziura, Jackson County Library District Board  
George Prokop, Jackson County Library District Board  
Ginny Auer, Jackson County Library Services  
Holly Powers, Office of Emergency Management  
Jesse Jackson, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians  
John McCafferty, Umpqua Indian Development Corp.  
Joan Vigil, Jackson County Library Services  
Jonah Liden, Rogue Community College  
Jordan Pease, Rogue Valley Metaphysical Library  
Julie Brown, Rogue Valley Transportation District  
Kari May, Jackson County Library Services  
Kathy Keese, Unete  
Kelda Vath, Jackson County Library Services  
Kelly Madding, City of Medford  
Kevin Keating, Jackson County Library District Board  
Kira Zavala, Chamber of Medford  
Kim Young, Jackson County Library District Board  
Laz Ayala, KDA Homes  
Leona Westdahl, SMART Reading  
Lilia Caballero, City of Medford  
Lily Morgan, City of Gold Hill  
Mark Yaconelli, The Hearth  
Maureen Swift, Friends of Medford Library  
Monica Weyhe, Jackson County Library Services (retired)  
Phil Meyer, Southern Oregon PBS  
Rachel Frison, Medford School District  
Rebecca Molony, KOB NBC 5  
Roger Cox, Diamond Parking  
Ryan Pfeil, Jackson County Library Services  
Susan Keifer, Jackson County Library District Board  
Val Nowak, Jackson County Library Services  
Viki Brown, Jackson County Library District Board

#### WORKSHOP DESIGN AND FACILITATION

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