



CARMEL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Harrison Memorial Library • Park Branch Library

2020-2022 Strategic Plan

Planning for possibilities

As we contemplate the future of the Library in our community, we are working to re-orient ourselves and be more turned outward to the public; to see and hear our community, to act with intentionality; and to move down a path of making thoughtful, lasting change for our library patrons and the community.

The turned outward approach that we are taking underpins the new strategic plan, which establishes three clear strategic goals: 1. Increase community awareness and engagement, 2. Innovate to support equitable and inclusive access, and 3. Increase operational excellence.

Advancing the organization in this way will empower the Library to be a welcoming place, where reading, learning and imagination thrive; a recognized leader and respected voice in our community; and a model library in our industry. By successfully implementing this plan, we will also be positioning the Library to be a venue for civil discourse and a catalyst for considerate change.

What does the community want?

We conducted community conversations with 6 groups, made up of 57 citizens throughout the community, to better understand their aspirations, concerns, and how they want their community to move forward. Throughout these conversations, we heard several themes coming up again and again: a desire for a connected and inclusive community, concerns about social isolation and community fragmentation, and a lack of communication and follow through.

The sense throughout all the conversations was of an enormous potential for partnerships and collaboration between the Library, the City, community organizations and community members. As the Library continues to engage the community in conversation, we are committed to reshaping our strategic plan based on the new public knowledge that we gain.

In addition to conducting community conversations, we also analyzed national studies and local data about actual use of our Library facilities and programs. Libraries throughout the nation are demonstrating a slow downward trend in visits, circulation, and public-access computer usage. However, they are also seeing an increase in program attendance, and therefore a shift in traditional library usage. Our Library, although performing well above state and national averages, is reflecting the same trends.

Based on community conversations and analysis of Library use data and trends, we have created a new strategic plan for the Library that will guide us to better engage and serve our community.

What do we believe?

As part of this strategic planning process, we have embraced a new mission and vision to inspire us. By putting these beliefs to work every day, we will transform the Library to better serve the Carmel-by-the-Sea community and greater Monterey Peninsula in the years to come.

Our Mission: What we do.

We are an efficient medium for the free and equitable distribution and exchange of books, information, and ideas; and a recognized social center providing the community with a place to learn, interact and gather.

Our Vision: What we aspire to be.

We aspire to be a welcoming place where reading, learning and imagination thrive; a recognized leader and respected voice in our community; and a model library in our industry.

Where do we want to go and how do we get there?

Informed by what we have learned, and inspired by our vision and mission we selected three primary goals to guide the Library's work. For each of these three goals, we developed specific strategies that we will be implementing in a wide range of ways.

Goal 1. *Increase community awareness and engagement*

- Lead the community as a center for learning
 - Provide a variety of interesting and informative programs for all ages
 - ~~Develop and hold two programs to be held during open hours in the gathering place (June 2021)~~
 - ~~Explore passive programs for all ages (ongoing)~~
- Broaden community impact
 - Develop a multifaceted outreach program.
 - Develop a plan to better serve patrons with dementia and Alzheimers and their caregivers (June 2020)
 - Work with Carmel business owners to inform workers of library resources (March 2021)
 - ~~Begin participating in the Farmers' Market monthly (June 2021)~~
 - Explore options for a bookmobile or bikemobile service program (December 2022)
- Invest in thoughtful and purposeful community partnerships
- Tell the library's story
 - Re-brand the library so that it is clear who we are, where we are, and what we do, (June 2023)
 - Develop a plan and strategy for marketing and communication of library services (July 2023)
 - Create a welcome packet for new community members (December 2021)
- Identify patrons' unique needs to shape Library services
 - Add suggestion boxes for ongoing feedback (June 2020)
 - Conduct four community conversations per year and provide annual review of updated Public Knowledge Report
 - Conduct surveys to help inform policy changes (ongoing - quarterly)

Goal 2. *Innovate to support equitable and inclusive access*

- Create welcoming and vibrant spaces
 - ~~Install community bulletin board at Park Branch (Fall 2020)~~
 - ~~Improve signage in both buildings in concert with branding project (December 2020)~~
 - Develop a cohesive strategy around digital resources (June 2021)
 - Appoint an ad hoc committee of the Library Board of Trustees work with City staff to develop a facilities plan for both library buildings that identifies opportunities for

- improvements in both buildings, including ADA access, shelving, modular furniture, and improved catalog access (June 2021)
- Devendorf Park Expansion Project (December 2022)
- Improve days and hours of service
 - Determine if weekend hours for the Local History Department are possible and consider altering weekend hours in the Kids' Library (Fall 2020)

Goal 3. *Increase operational excellence*

- Optimize public resources
 - Work with the Carmel Public Library Foundation to identify projects that could provide opportunities for special donor funding
 - ~~Complete gathering place project (May 2020)~~
 - ~~Reconfigure Park Branch Kid's Library and incorporate moveable shelves and furniture to create flexible space (June 2020)~~
 - ~~Replace and reconfigure furniture and lighting on check-out desk level of Main Library (December 2021)~~
 - Refresh the Main Library Reading Room (December 2022)
 - Review, reaffirm, and amend financial policies and procedures to ensure maximum transparency and efficiency (August 2023)
 - Work with partner libraries to investigate resource sharing between area libraries (August 2023)
- Empower staff for continued exceptional service
 - Develop staff training plan (June 2020)
 - Invest in RFID, new self-check machines, ~~and security gates~~ (Juner 2023)
- Create volunteer job descriptions (March 2021)