

CITY OF COOS BAY CITY COUNCIL
Agenda Staff Report

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
November 17, 2015	

TO: Mayor Shoji and City Councilors
FROM: Sami Pierson, Library Director
THROUGH: Rodger Craddock, City Manager
ISSUE: Coos Bay Public Library Strategic Plan Approval

BACKGROUND:

The Coos Bay Public Library began the formal process for a Strategic Plan in January 2015. Funding for a library consultant was obtained from the Ford Family Foundation and the Coos Bay Public Library Foundation. Penny Hummel, the library consultant, worked with the library staff, members of the library board, the Friends of the Library, and Library Foundation members to gather information about the library and community. In addition, diverse community members were selected to participate in focus groups and community-wide meetings were held.

The Strategic Plan identifies services the library provides to the community, and how they will be provided. The Plan has been reviewed by the Coos Bay Public Library Board, members of the Foundation, community members, and other stakeholders.

ADVANTAGES:

The Strategic Plan will provide the library with a road map to service implementation for the next three years.

DISADVANTAGES:

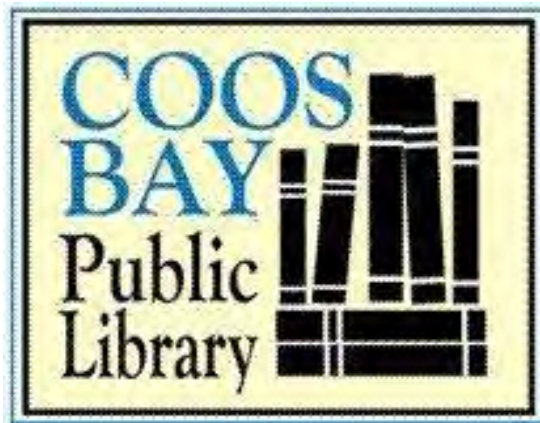
None

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

No impact on the budget.

ACTION REQUESTED:

After careful review, the Coos Bay Public Library Board recommends that the Coos Bay City Council adopt the Coos Bay Public Library Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018.



Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018

DRAFT

A Message from the Library Director

Over a century ago, civic-minded community members gathered together to create the Coos Bay Public Library. Today, the library continues to be a cultural hub, an educational center, and a community gathering place in downtown Coos Bay. No longer just a place for books, your public library has responded to the 21st century digital age by providing a wide variety of services that would have been unimaginable only a generation ago, including Internet access, downloadable books, audio and databases, and more.

As technology evolves, the Coos Bay Public Library will evolve with it, continuing to provide relevant, valuable, and much-needed services to the community. Since thoughtful planning for the future is essential, the library has responded by undertaking a community-driven strategic planning process. Our goal has been to create a dynamic service plan for the Coos Bay Public Library that responds to community needs; establishes priorities for library services, programs and activities; and provides the foundation for the planning of a new library. My thanks go to the members of the Coos Bay Public Library Visioning Committee for sharing their wisdom and insights in this process:

Bruce Bennett
Curt Benward
Michelle Caldera
Rodger Craddock
Linda Farr
Jake Flitcroft
Spencer Gordon

Elena Gleason
Jennifer Groth
Robin McCrerry
Trish McMichael
Al Pettit
Jessica Porter
Patty Sanden

Debbie Shield
Gina Sutherland
Ellen Thompson
Mike Vaughan
Jayson Wartnik

I would also like to thank other community members who attended focus groups and filled out surveys, and extend my appreciation to library staff who also provided input. The strength of our strategic plan lies in its capacity to represent the diverse needs of our community. Using this plan as our roadmap, I am excited to begin the library's next chapter.

Samantha Pierson
Director
Coos Bay Public Library

Strategic Planning Process

In 2014, the Coos Bay Public Library began the process of gathering community input about its future through a series of public forums and a print and online survey. This work formed the foundation for the current strategic planning process, which was designed to ensure that a wide range of community voices informed the future. With support from the Coos Bay Public Library Foundation and a grant from the Ford Family Foundation, the library contracted with library consultant Penny Hummel to develop and implement the planning process.

Work began in January 2015 with the formation of the Coos Bay Library Visioning Committee, a nineteen member group representing a wide range of occupations, interests, and ages. The Visioning Committee met three times between January and June, conducting a SOAR (Strength, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) review of the library and developing a vision of the community's needs that the library could best fulfill. Library staff also completed the SOAR exercise and director Samantha Pierson conducted a focus group with local teens. Since the initial data from the strategic planning process indicated a heightened focus on technology needs, the library also gathered input through the Impact Survey, a tool developed nationally specifically to gather information from public library users about their technology needs.

About the City of Coos Bay

The largest municipality on the Oregon Coast, the City of Coos Bay is located where the Coos River enters Coos Bay on the Pacific Ocean. For centuries, the Coos, Lower Umpqua, Siuslaw, and Coquille Indians inhabited the region. In 1853, the permanent settlement of Marshfield developed at present day Coos Bay. With abundant natural resources, the town developed a profitable timber industry, eventually becoming one of the largest timber exporters on the West Coast. The area also became a major shipping hub with a deep-water port on the Oregon Coast. The City changed its name to Coos Bay in 1944 by vote of the residents. Later, the communities of Empire and Eastside merged with Coos Bay, making the City over 10 square miles in size.

The past thirty years have been a challenge to commerce and industry due to environmental restrictions, technologically advanced production methods, and corresponding shifts in demographics. The dramatic decline in timber, commercial fishing, and waterway shipping industries has transformed the City from a busy industrial center to a struggling community. As the table below indicates, when compared to Coos County and the State of Oregon, the City of Coos Bay has higher rates of poverty, lower household income, and lower education levels. The City also has a higher percentage of residents 65 and older, and a smaller percentage of minority residents than the state.

	<i>Year</i>	<i>City of Coos Bay</i>	<i>Coos County</i>	<i>Oregon</i>
<i>Population</i>	2010	15,967	63,043	3,831,074
<i>5-Year Unemployment Rate</i>	2008-13	7.2%	6.8%	7.1%
<i>Poverty Rate</i>	2008-13	21.2%	17.8%	16.2%
<i>Child Poverty Rate</i>	2008-13	25.3%	22.1%	21.7%
<i>% Minority Population</i>	2010	16.6%	13%	21.5%
<i>Median Household Income</i>	2008-13	\$34,870	\$37,940	\$50,229
<i>% < High School Education</i>	2008-13	11.5%	12.0%	10.6%
<i>% Bachelor's Degree or Higher</i>	2008-13	21.9%	18.0%	29.7%
<i>% Under age 5 years</i>	2010	6.3%	5%	6.2%
<i>% under 18 years</i>	2010	20.3%	18.5%	22.6%
<i>% 65 or older</i>	2010	19.1%	23.3%	13.9%

Source: U.S. Census

About the Library

Coos Bay Public Library is the largest public library on the southern Oregon coast. It is operated by the City of Coos Bay and is a member of the Coos County Library Service District, which supports eight public libraries in the county with a permanent tax rate of \$.7289 per thousand of assessed property value. The district tax revenue is dedicated to operational expenses and City of Coos Bay provides and maintains the library building and acts as fiscal agent. The Library Board of Trustees is appointed by the City Council as the library's policy-making body.

2013 - 2014 Statistics

Oregon State Library Designated Service
 Population: 24,837
 Circulation: 300,780
 Library Visits: 191,966
 Reference Questions Answered: 39,880
 Public Computer Sessions: 32,662
 Number of Programs: 219
 Program Attendance: 7,752
 Number of Open Hours a Week: 48
 Staff (FTE): 11.6
 Volunteers: 86
 Physical Collection Size: 139,940

The library's 1966 building has had two major additions and is currently 25,872 square feet.

As an integral member of the Coos County Library Services District, the Coos Bay Public Library coordinates and cooperates with seven other public libraries in the district, Myrtle Point School District Libraries, and Southwestern Oregon Community College library to share materials freely with all county residents. In 2011-2012, participating libraries checked out 923,531 items and filled 153,284 hold requests for over 43,000 patrons.

Staffing and Services

With 11.6 FTE staff and 48 service hours per week, Coos Bay Public Library provides materials, programming, computer use, and reference services. In addition to the physical collection of books, periodicals, music, DVDs, and audio books, the library provides electronic access to over 30,000 titles in downloadable audio and ebook format. Traditional reference services are still widely used, though the nature of the assistance is increasingly technical in nature.

The library offers programming for children, teens, and adults. Regular programs include story times, infant time, Lego Club, film programs, board games, computer classes, and book clubs. Special events such as author presentations, historical lectures, and science workshops are offered throughout the year to a variety of age levels.

The Library maintains a website (<http://coosbaylibrary.org/>) to provide 24-hour services for patrons. This includes access to the shared online catalog *Coastline*, databases, downloadable content, and more.

In 2013, users logged in to the library's 23 public access computers over 32,000 times. The library also offers 24-hour wireless internet to users with their own laptops, tablets, and other devices. In a recent survey, 81% of community respondents said it was important or very important to have these resources available; 27% of the library's public access technology users are low income; 32% of survey respondents indicated that they had used the public library's computers or wireless network for educational purposes, while 27% had used this access for job seeking activities.

Facility Needs

A recent geotechnical study and structural assessment of the library facility revealed several major issues. The existing piles in the library foundation are inadequate and appear to be deteriorating, resulting in global settlement of the building with substantial settlement in certain areas. Several aspects of the building were also identified as non-compliant with current code, highlighting inadequate seismic load bearing in the roof and inadequate concrete columns. In addition, the building has other deficiencies, including an aging HVAC system and a leaking roof. Given that the estimated cost of repairs approximates the cost of constructing a new facility, the City of Coos Bay Council has agreed by consensus to proceed towards building a new facility. A Steering Committee consisting of members of the Library Board, Library Foundation, Friends of the Library, Library Staff, and City Council has been formed to shepherd the planning process.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Coos Bay Public Library will:

- Support the intellectual freedom of all by offering open access to a broad range of information and ideas
- Serve as a dynamic community hub that welcomes all residents to connect to information and to each other
- Advance lifelong learning for residents in all phases of life
- Provide excellent, customer-focused services
- Embrace new and innovative ways to respond to the community's changing needs, particularly with respect to 21st century technology
- Form partnerships to support and advance these values

MISSION

The Coos Bay Public Library exists to provide library materials and services, and guidance to those materials and services for Coos County residents

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 1: IMPROVING FACILITIES

Goal: Maximize capacity of current facility to meet community needs, and develop a plan for a new library that will provide a welcoming and well-functioning physical space for a wide range of community uses.

Strategies:

- Review suggestions from SOAR exercise to make whatever improvements are possible in the existing building, such as an improved teen space
- Develop a pre-design plan for new library, including components, cost, size, and site requirements
- Develop funding plan for new library in collaboration with the City of Coos Bay and the Coos Bay Library Foundation

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 2: FOSTERING CURIOSITY, CREATIVITY, AND CULTURE

Goal: Support local and cultural expression; build the library's role in providing original cultural programming; and offer materials, services, and programs that stimulate curiosity and creativity.

Strategies:

- Partner with local cultural organizations and events
- Enable the library to become a cultural hub for local artists, authors, and performers
- Engage community members of all ages with programming such as DIY activities, local history, craft programs, and Makerspace activities
- Maintain a diverse collection of materials in a variety of formats that support creativity and cultural expression

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 3: SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING

Goal: Cultivate knowledge creation and lifelong learning for individuals from babies to seniors.

Strategies:

- Ensure kindergarten readiness by offering early literacy activities such as storytimes, parent trainings, and family resources
- Collaborate with local schools to enhance primary and secondary education
- Offer a safe and welcoming space for teens and tweens
- Provide resources for homeschooling families
- Develop programming and services targeted to the unique needs and interests of young adults, families with growing children, and older adults, and market them effectively
- Develop programming and services targeted for the unique needs and interests of adults

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 4: PROVIDING ACCESS TO 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY

Goal: Ensure that Coos Bay residents are well connected to the information they need by utilizing efficient service technologies, providing reliable Internet access, offering library resources in a variety of digital formats, and providing training.

Strategies:

- Ensure that the library's existing public access computers and Wi-Fi are maximally effective in meeting community demand
- Provide training opportunities so that residents can improve basic computer skills and be effective users of personal electronic devices
- Monitor emerging library technologies to ensure that the library's daily operations continue to be efficient and cost-effective

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 5: ENHANCING THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE COOS BAY COMMUNITY

Goal: Provide opportunities for Coos Bay residents to improve their lives socially, economically, and professionally.

Strategies:

- Provide support and resources for jobseekers, small business owners, and post-secondary students
- Extend partnerships with local social service agencies to address the information needs of vulnerable community members
- Provide literacy resources and opportunities for both ESL and native learners
- Support local networks, projects, and events by providing access to library space for community activities

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 6: EXPANDING MARKETING AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Goal: Increase awareness in all demographic groups of the wide variety of resources, services, and programs available through the Coos Bay Public Library to our community of library users.

Strategies:

- Strengthen existing community partnerships and build new relationships to cross-promote the library to new and existing users
- Target outreach to underserved populations to increase understanding of the library's offerings
- Utilize social media as well as traditional public relations activities to manage ongoing communications with the public about the library

Appendix A: Implementation Strategies

Strategic Initiative 1

Maximize capacity of current facility to meet community needs, and develop plan for a new library

Review suggestions from Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results exercise (SOAR) to make whatever improvements are currently possible

Review SOAR results with staff and identify improvements that can be made within current budget

Create more programming space in Children's Department

Merge Non Fiction collections

Rearrange elementary and beginning reader collections

Evaluate current space and growth of DVD, audio, and music collections

Create more personal computer use areas

Merge Index Tables in computer area

Rearrange tables and other furniture for maximum outlet access

Evaluate size of individual collections and growth rate for change of location

Develop pre-design program for new library including components, cost, size, and site requirements

Use Request For Proposal (RFP) to engage architect/library consultant team for needs assessment

Identify funding for needs assessment

Develop funding plan in collaboration with city and library foundation

Use RFP to engage fundraising consultant

Develop local fundraising plan/business plan

Identify potential fundraising sources

Strategic Initiative 2

Support local and cultural expression, build library's role in providing original cultural programming, and offer materials, services, and programs that stimulate curiosity and creativity

Partner with local cultural organizations and events

Identify and evaluate current partnerships and participation, evaluate effectiveness of the partnerships

Identify past partners and ways to renew those partnerships

Identify potential new partners

- Enable library to become cultural hub for local artists, authors, and performers
 - Implement space where children and teens can create and display art
 - Implement space where adults can create and display art
- Engage community members of all ages with programming
 - Offer variety both in topic and presentation style
- Maintain a diverse collection of materials in a variety of formats that support creativity and cultural expression
 - Create collection of “things” that can circulate (tools, craft tools)
 - Continually explore digital offerings beyond audio and e-books

Strategic Initiative 3

Cultivate knowledge creation and lifelong learning for individuals from babies to seniors

- Ensure kindergarten readiness by offering early literacy activities
 - Continue to offer early literacy programs such as Mother Goose on the Loose, Preschool Story Time, parent literacy training, and summer reading
 - Evaluate current programming
 - Adjust programming to population shifts
- Collaborate with local schools to enhance education
 - Work with curriculum directors to ensure support materials for classroom projects
 - Continue to offer summer reading program
- Offer a safe and welcoming space for tweens and teens
 - Seek input from tweens and teens for improvements to current space and collection
- Provide resources for homeschooling families
 - Evaluate programming, materials, and resources needed
 - Evaluate current programming to better incorporate homeschooling needs
- Develop programming and services targeted for the unique needs and interests of young adults, families with growing children, and older adults
 - Evaluate current programming
 - Offer programming at diverse times, diverse subject matters, and in diverse ways
 - Develop advertising plans to target audiences
- Develop programming and services targeted for the unique needs and interests of adults
 - Evaluate current programming
 - Offer programming at diverse times, diverse subject matters, and in diverse ways
 - Develop advertising plans to target audiences

Strategic Initiative 4

Ensure that Coos Bay residents are well connected to the information they need by utilizing efficient service technologies, providing reliable Internet access, offering library resources in a variety of digital formats, and providing training

Ensure that the library's existing public access computers and WiFi are maximally effective in meeting community demand

Continually reevaluate broadband service and all equipment

Create and maintain purchase schedule for equipment

Provide software such as graphic design programs, photo editing, and others that are relevant

Provide training opportunities so that residents can improve basic computer skills and be effective users of personal electronic devices

Continue to offer monthly computer skills classes

Develop new classes based on patron suggestions and needs

Explore ways to maintain level of service provided by AmeriCorps partnership

Monitor emerging library technologies to ensure that the library's daily operations continue to be efficient and cost effective

Reevaluate current software and hardware on a regular basis

Review software and hardware used by peer libraries for various functions

Strategic Initiative 5

Provide opportunities for Coos Bay residents to improve their lives socially, economically, and professionally

Provide support and resources for jobseekers, small business owners, and post-secondary students

Continue to offer basic computer classes

Tailor computer classes to employer needs

Maintain current materials and databases

Maintain current software used in businesses

Create a job skills/job fair – allowing employers to share what they are looking for in employees and make employment connections

Extend partnerships with local social service agencies to address the information needs of vulnerable community members

Maintain contact with local temporary housing shelters and homeless service providers for patron needs

Continue to work with Head Start and the families they serve

Provide literacy resources and opportunities for both ESL and native learners

- Provide support for Southwestern Community College classes through materials and study space
- Maintain relevant and current materials
- Support local networks, projects, and events by providing access to library space for community activities
- Continue to provide access to Cedar Room for no charge and Myrtlewood Room at minimum charge.
- Explore opportunities for partnerships for programs and events

Strategic Initiative 6

Increase awareness in all demographic groups of the wide variety of resources, services, and programs available through the Coos Bay Public Library to our community of library users

- Strengthen existing community partnerships and build new relationships to cross-promote the library to new and existing users
 - Identify and evaluate current partnerships and participation, evaluate effectiveness of the partnerships
 - Identify past partners and ways to renew those partnerships
 - Identify potential new partners
 - Identify events for new audience cultivation
- Target outreach to underserved populations to increase understanding of the library's offerings
 - Provide time for librarians to travel to outside locations to promote the library
 - Create specific, targeted programming
- Utilize social media as well as traditional public relations activities to manage ongoing communications with the public about the library
 - Create advertising/pr checklist for consistency
 - Expand monthly email list
 - Create a subscription option online for monthly email