

MONTROSE REGIONAL LIBRARY DISTRICT
2017 - 2021
STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted, Mar. 6, 2017

Introduction

This Strategic Plan is drafted following a difficult financial period for the Montrose Regional Library District, which has experienced a 21% decline in annual property tax revenue since 2010. The planned closures of the Nucla Power Plant and Coal Mine could result in an additional loss of 3 - 5% of the District's budget. Projections are a return to pre-recession levels by 2024 or 2026 including adjustment for inflation. In order to operate within these reduced revenues the District has taken the following measures:

- Staff wages, salaries and benefits were frozen in 2009. The freeze was lifted in 2016.
- Hours of operation were cut in 2013 and again in 2016. The Montrose Regional Library is now open 5 days per week instead of 7 and closes at 7 pm instead of 8 pm M – TH.
- Materials budget was cut by nearly half. The budget for Library Materials is now 7.6% of the budget. The goal is 15%.
- Outreach services were cut by 55%.
- Facility maintenance is being delayed or deferred.
- The District has been budgeting up to \$150,000 out of reserve funds each year to maintain as much service to the public as possible. Reserves are projected to be depleted in 2019.
- District staffing has been reduced by over 14 FTE's due to attrition.
- Contracts have been renegotiated and other cuts made in every area of operations in order to meet budgetary shortfalls. Staff continuing education has been cut by over 65%.

Property taxes were projected to increase by 5% in 2018, but the proposed changes in the Gallagher Amendment residential property tax rates as well as proposed reductions in Business Personal Property Taxes likely will result in flat to a decrease in revenues of up to 10% for the Library District. The effects of the closures in the West End will likely not be felt until 2020 or 2022. These closures and revenue reductions could delay the return to pre-recession funding levels until 2026 or later.

Any revenue increases to the Library District will probably be reduced by half, due to inflation, and the District shouldn't count on increased property tax revenue changing the budget in any measurable way. Even if assessed valuation grows at a very optimistic 7% for each valuation period after 2017 the District won't see a return to 2010 levels of funding until 2024 or later. It is important to note that the level of service provided to the public by the District has been buoyed by the use of its Strategic Reserves Fund, which is expected to drop below the \$300,000 operational threshold by 2020. Without the use of reserves, the level of service currently provided will not be possible.

The District sees two future paths open to it. The first is to seek an increase in revenue through a mill levy increase or another as yet unidentified means. This would enable the District to

provide a level of service similar to that offered prior to revenue decline. The District would implement the following actions as funding becomes available:

- Add service hours.
- Increase staffing levels to accommodate increased services.
- Add to materials budget towards the goal of spending 15% of budget on materials.
- Embark on deferred maintenance projects.
- Add outreach services.
- Add programming.
- Reestablish a culture of innovation among staff.

The second and least-preferred strategic route is to continue to trim operations in order to accommodate existing and projected property tax revenues and the inevitable drop in budget when the reserves are depleted. The District would take the following steps:

- Continue with the pattern of staff attrition in reducing the number of FTE. A reduction of an additional 3 – 5 FTE is necessary. If this goal isn't met by the end of 2020, layoffs will be necessary.
- Switch staffing from programming/administrative positions to front line positions.
- Further cuts in hours may be necessary.
- Further cuts to the materials budget.
- Further reduce/eliminate programming.

Despite these difficult financial truths, the Montrose Regional Library District continues to provide a place where everyone is welcome and has access to literary and informational resources. We provide parents, caregivers, and children with the tools they need to pursue a life-long love of reading and learning. We connect students of all ages and backgrounds with the support they need to pursue formal and informal education. We support community members in achieving their future work and career goals. We connect people with each other in a safe forum for the free exchange of thoughts and ideas. We provide enriching informational and developmental programs which help patrons better understand each other and the world in which they live.

Mission

Promote lifelong literacy, foster learning, and be a center for people and ideas.

Core Values

We the Montrose Regional Library District Board of Trustees and Staff Members

1. Choose respect, consideration, empathy and tolerance as our fundamental values, enhancing the community's quality of life;
2. Serve our economic and culturally diverse community as a place to connect people to the resources they need, to solve problems, and to create positive change;
3. Provide free and equal access to information, facilities, services and programming;
4. Provide opportunities and encouragement for all ages to continue life-long education;
5. Serve as a community facility for open communication of ideas and information so our community has the opportunity to experience critical thinking, global awareness, original ideas and technology readiness;
6. Partner with area organizations and citizen groups in order to achieve common goals;
7. Value our patrons and Library team members by responding to all with equal, respectful and friendly service;
8. Plan for the future and work to continually improve services, programming, and collections to ensure we meet community needs;
9. Maintain clean, friendly facilities that keep pace with the changing needs of our community.

Board of Trustees

Purpose Statements

1. Maintain high Library standards and seek ways to improve Library services to meet the needs of the community.
2. Stay current with the public's desires for Library services and be active in promoting the Library throughout the community.
3. Improve Board performance through regular training and evaluation.
4. Seek opportunities to improve revenue.

Board Goals

Funding Fund all aspects of the strategic plan.

Outreach Improve perception of Library relevance in our community.

Staff Appropriately staff Montrose Regional Library to be open 7 days a week.

Collections Spend 15% of budget on materials.

Adopted Mar. 6, 2017

Technology Maintain leading edge in internet/communications.

Facilities Maintain welcoming, safe, comfortable buildings and mobile facilities.

Departments Return to fully operating Children's, Teen and Adult, Reference, and Outreach services

Priorities

Determine how to infill the budget shortfalls

1. Create a timeline for 2017/2018 ballot initiative.
2. Create a signature event that can be used as a springboard for fundraising and outreach ("Beyond Words"- a juried art show, wine and cheese party with auction items).
3. Reinvigorate the donor program in conjunction with the Montrose Library Foundation.
4. Support the Foundation in continuing to organize the annual Foundation events.
5. Define how reserves should be used.
6. Identify funding for capital expenditures.
7. Request local or regional businesses to underwrite capital improvements such as new carpeting for staff workroom and Children's Department.

Continue to hold at least one Board of Trustees meeting per year at Naturita Library. Regularly communicate with Montrose Library Foundation and Friends of the Montrose Library through Board liaison or through attending meetings, activities, or programs.

Director/Administration

Purpose Statements and Goals

1. Research a variety of funding sources.
2. Accurately forecast revenue streams and manage the financial resources of the Library in a responsible manner.
3. Fully staff the Montrose Regional Library District in order to open the library 7 days a week/60 hours per week.
4. Address pay levels and pay structure to coincide with other similar rural Colorado Regional Library Districts.
5. Move collections expenditures from annual 7% of budget to 15% over next 5 years.
6. Expand the Library's role of being a community hub for activities and resources.
7. Ensure that the Board is informed of the needs of the community related to Library services.
8. Increase employee satisfaction and promote open communication among employees.
9. Improve safety and the perception of safety at all Library facilities, eliminate unsafe situations, and ensure proper maintenance and improvement in the appearance of District

property.

10. Expand communication between the Director and the staff of the Naturita Community Library and the Paradox Valley Library.

Priorities

1. Return Montrose Regional Library hours of operation to 60 hours a week including daily hours of operation, and staff accordingly.
2. Evaluate levels of staffing and program provision in light of budget realities.
3. Maintain a six-month reserve fund.
4. Revitalize, maintain, and keep the Library website current.
5. Conduct a facilities assessment and develop a plan and schedule for facilities maintenance and upgrades as warranted.
6. Conduct a wage and salary survey and develop a schedule for adjustments to the MRLD structure as recommended.
7. Conduct a survey to find out how county residents learn about community happenings and adjust publicity strategies accordingly.
8. Facilitate regular communication between the Board of Trustees, Montrose, Naturita, and Paradox.
9. Continue monthly reports from Departments to Board of Trustees.
10. Develop policies and procedures for District's social media presence.
11. Maximize efficiency of current computer library system to benefit patrons.
12. Current staff will be encouraged to broaden the range of responsibility and self motivation with an increase of wages or hours when needed and when budget allows for such increases. Explore performance based wage increases.
13. Encourage each department member to research at least one outside local agency from the business, medical, cultural, educational, technological, or governmental sector and become a partner with that agency or group by attending meetings or otherwise interacting with them.
14. Maintain a consistent style for all District publications.

Funding/Development

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Define budget needed to accomplish all goals.
2. Implement timeline for voter property tax initiative to fund the shortfall.
3. Build a large and diverse pool of Library supporters.
4. Provide excellent stewardship for Library donors.
5. Use grants to fund new initiatives.
6. Build awareness of Library services.

Priorities

1. Develop a plan to gain financial support from the largest number of donors.
2. Use a variety of social media platforms.
3. Develop and implement a planned giving program.
4. Update website in order to facilitate gifts to the Library.
5. Implement a new donor database.
6. Promote the Montrose Regional Library through special events arranged by the Libraries of Montrose County Foundation.
7. Hold a party each year to honor and recognize donors.
8. Research advertising and underwriting opportunities to support capital projects.
9. Research new grant opportunities, especially through American Library Association and Institute for Museum and Library Services.
10. Explore partnerships with other organizations to secure additional grants.
11. Develop a comprehensive advertising plan, based on outreach to desired populations.
12. Explore alternative ways to communicate with patrons and the greater Montrose community.
13. Investigate other libraries' experiences with direct mail and other wide-scale requests for support.

Outreach

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Fund a fully supported Outreach program and staff.
2. Improve the public perception of the relevance of the Montrose Regional Library District.
3. Provide library services to residents of all ages who are underserved by traditional means of access.
4. Collaborate with other community agencies and groups to promote literacy and build community.
5. Create satellite collections throughout the community to increase community access to library offerings.

Priorities

1. Become the center of Montrose for thoughtful examination and discussion of topics of concern to the community.
2. Provide the staff to participate again in the SPELL Project (Supporting Parents in Early Literacy through Libraries) through collaborating with the Montrose Early Childhood Center and other agencies.
3. Improve physical resources of the Outreach Services Department.
4. Fully staff, supply, and maintain reliable and safe Bookmobile.
5. Investigate use of smaller mobile facilities such as vans or bikes.

6. Modernize and maintain technology for use in Outreach Services.
7. Support lifelong learning including offering noncredit learning programs to the community (e.g. Civics 101).

Collections/Circulation

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Provide a well-informed, diverse staff with the skills and resources needed to provide a quality library experience for our entire community.
2. Research different funding sources to revitalize and augment the Library collection.
3. Spend 15% of budget on new and updated materials.
4. Provide more digital content through on-line services.
5. Optimize the effectiveness of the Library team structure to utilize circulation staff members within the scope of their interests, talents, and experience.

Priorities

1. Maintain quality of service to Spanish speakers.
2. Retain excellent part time staff members.
3. Keep the Library fresh, new and inviting.
4. Cull outdated, irrelevant, and items in poor condition.

Information Technology (IT) and Technical Services

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Ensure the District's connections to the internet and internal network are robust, efficient, stable and secure.
2. Keep accurate and updated website.
3. Plan uses and programs for Giga-byte access.
4. Educate and inform Staff and Board regarding appropriate technologies for Library use.
5. Maintain and improve the Library database and physical collection to provide better access to materials.
6. Provide up-to-date computers and tools which meet the needs of the community.

Priorities

1. Keep all website pages active, accurate, and current.
2. Create easy ways to donate money to library through the Foundation or Friends.

Building and Facilities

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Maintain welcoming, safe, comfortable buildings and mobile facilities.
2. Reduce environmental impacts from buildings and grounds.
3. Continue to maintain and improve documentation of facility maintenance needs.
4. Maintain and improve scheduling of annual maintenance events, and inspections.

Priorities

1. Complete a thorough facility assessment.
2. Continue following cyclical maintenance plan.
3. Investigate and resolve Naturita flood diversion issues.
4. Maintain appropriate administrative hardware and software.
5. Investigate adding smaller mobile facilities to assist in meeting the outreach goals.
6. Investigate long-term (15-20 years) facility needs.
7. Solve current maintenance needs such as re-carpeting staff work area and the Children's Room.

Departments

Adult Programs
Adult and Teen Services/ Reference
Branches - Bookmobile, Naturita, and Paradox
Children's Department
Volunteers

Adult Programs

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Fully staff adult programming to serve Montrose Regional Library District.
2. Develop an intentional, audience-driven programming model.
3. Reach new audiences, including non-traditional Library users.
4. Reduce age and improve condition of collection.
5. Provide expanded digital content.

Priorities

1. Maintain a volunteer crew to support Library staff.
2. Support lifelong learning through programs, classes, and events.
3. Enhance the Library's function as a center of the community.
4. Build awareness of Library services through a variety of media outlets.
5. Use the newsletter to promote the use and appreciation of the Library.

Adult and Teen Services/ Reference

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Fully fund the Adult and Teen Services/Reference Department to meet the literary, informational, and technology needs of a variety of patrons including teens, adults, and seniors.
2. Expand Interlibrary Loan services and improve communication efficiency using various platforms.

Priorities

1. Research the feasibility of a computer lab.
2. Increase services to the business community and to Colorado Mesa University.
3. Meet regularly with school district staff to determine best collaborative models.
4. Meet with Latino service providers to assess and meet needs.
5. Expand teen services.

Children's Department

Goals/Purpose Statements

1. Fill full-time Children's Librarian Position.
2. Encourage reading and other forms of literacy among the youngest members of the community.
3. Promote early literacy (as defined in the Every Child Ready to Read initiative) through in-library and outreach training, programs, and activities, including the 1,000 books before kindergarten program.
4. Offer inclusive and varied programs that address the needs of all children and the adults who serve them.
5. Use traditional, current, and emerging technologies to engage, inform, and educate children throughout the community.
6. Develop and maintain a broad, useful, and attractive collection of children's materials.
7. Reduce age and improve condition of collection.
8. Provide more digital content.

Priorities

1. Modernize technology in the Children's Department.
2. Fully staff Children's Department to serve all children in the community.
3. Increase Outreach activities for underserved children.
4. Make the Children's Department more visible to the community through enjoyable, intentional programming, and through variety of media platforms.
5. Replace old carpet and furniture, and make improvements to the facility as needed.

Naturita Community Library

Goals/Purpose Statements

Promote lifelong literacy, foster learning, and be a center for people and ideas.

1. Serve the community by promoting lifelong literacy, fostering learning, and by being a center for people and ideas.
1. Partner with area organizations, coordinate with District staff, and use available materials as a source for library learning to achieve common goals.
2. Develop and increase social media and marketing plan to promote Naturita library services, collections, programs, and technology.

Priorities

1. Maintain welcoming, safe, and comfortable facility.
2. Repair damage from 2016 floods, and determine viable solutions for flood water diversion and flood damage prevention.
3. Continue cooperation and partnerships with local community.
4. Strengthen relationships between the Montrose Regional Library and Naturita Community Library.
5. Continue to identify new community members and focus on youth, seniors, and under-served patrons.
6. Maintain, improve and reward quality staff through workshops, webinars, online courses, and library conferences.

Paradox Community Library

Goal/Purpose Statements

Promote lifelong literacy, foster learning, and be a center for people and ideas.

Maintain strong relationship with Paradox Valley School and continue to provide access to the public.

Volunteers

Goal/Purpose Statements

Diversify and expand the ways that the library recruits, trains, and utilizes volunteers.
Value, respect, and promote the pride of being part-of-the-team for volunteers.

Priorities

1. Review and revamp the volunteer program and train and utilize volunteers effectively.
2. Value each volunteer as a member of the Library team.