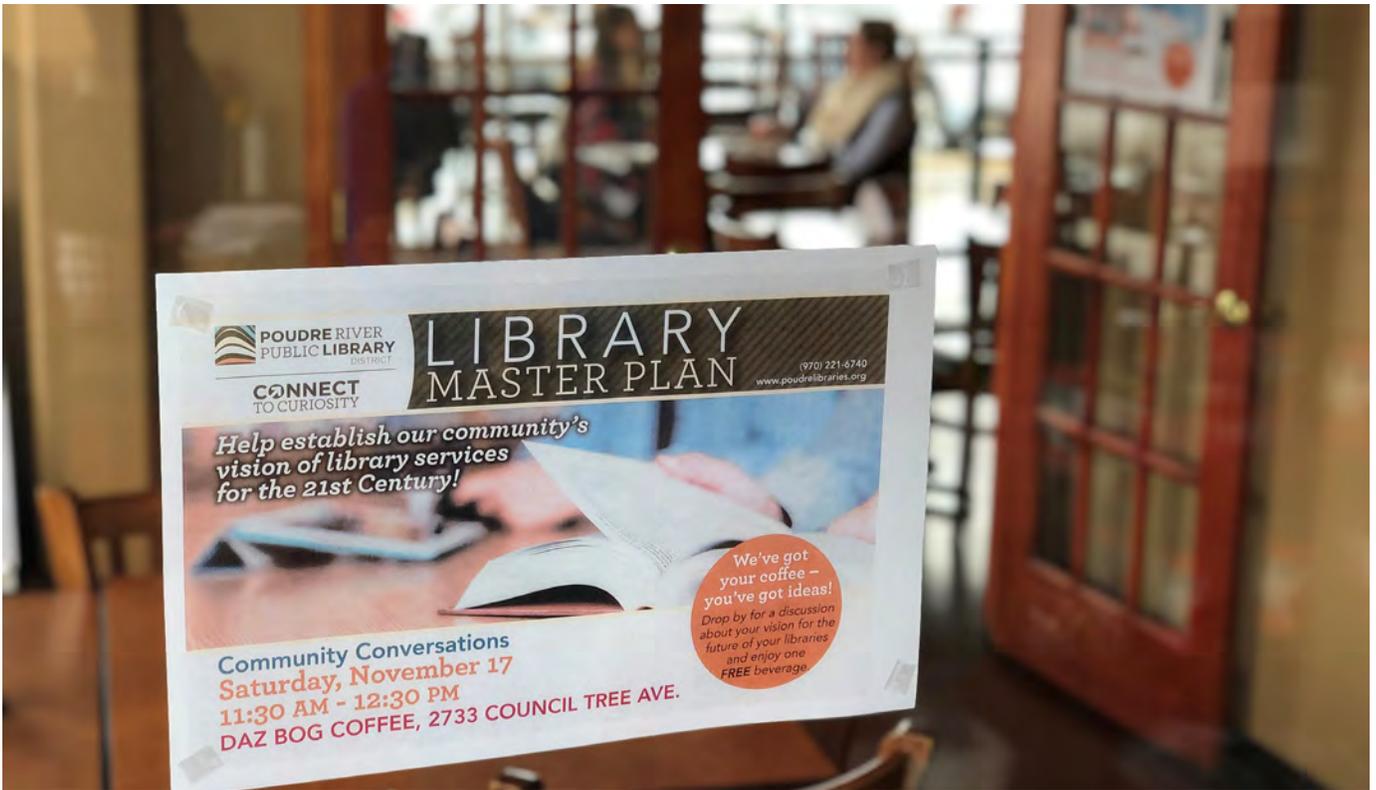


# Poudre River Public Library District Master Plan

FINAL REPORT | January 10, 2019



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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In mid-2018, the Poudre River Public Library District initiated a process to develop a long-range master plan. The goal was to develop an integrated planning framework that addresses each of the “channels” through which the Library District delivers service – within library facilities, out in the community, and through technology. The process engaged more than 1,150 community members in discussions of the role, importance, and vision for library services and facilities within the Library District. The process was facilitated by Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning, Inc., in partnership with Carson Block Consulting.

Overall, the process confirmed that the community values and appreciates the excellent, high-quality services that the Library District provides – including knowledgeable staff and comfortable, welcoming spaces as well as a great collection. However, the community also understands the effects that space limitations in the Library District’s current facilities have on services today, and envisions a future with expanded access to library programs, collections, and technology.

## MASTER PLAN CONTEXT AND FRAMEWORK

This master plan sought to establish a framework for library service delivery in the District over a 20 year timeframe. The framework was developed with the context of significant change and growth, both local and global.

- The community served by the Library District is projected to grow by more than 40% over the next 20 years, mostly within the Fort Collins city limits. The community is expected to become more culturally and socioeconomically diverse during that time, among other anticipated demographic changes.
- Emerging service trends and evolving customer expectations -- such as customers' increasingly fluid use of both brick-and-mortar and digital service channels -- will continue to shape how District residents perceive and access library service.
- Technology continues to evolve rapidly, offering the opportunity for the Library District to deliver new services in new ways as well as to continue building equity of access for the community.

Many public libraries across the nation are facing similar challenges and opportunities, and are demonstrating great creativity in delivering high quality, high impact programs and services to meet their communities' unique needs.

The Poudre River Public Library District master plan framework recognizes the potential for increasing the value and impact of services delivered through all three primary channels:

- "Inside" its library facilities, such as at the Old Town, Harmony, and Council Tree libraries;
- "Outside" in the community, via both staffed and automated strategies; and through
- Technology, such as virtual services accessed through customers' own devices or Library District-provided computers.

This master plan recommends long-range strategies for enhancing each of these primary service channels in order to support improved and expanded library service delivery. Because of the more rapid cycle of growth and change in community needs and expectations, in general this master plan does not make recommendations about library programs and services, which should be addressed through the Library District's strategic planning process.



#### FACILITIES ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

While the Library District’s facilities are attractive and well-maintained, they do not provide enough space to support the full breadth and depth of the community’s needs and vision for services. In general, the interior of each library is dominated by shelving, which already cannot accommodate the quantity and diversity of collection materials needed to meet current demand. The library facilities also lack sufficient space for services and programs – which cannot be expanded without removing shelving.

This master plan estimates that at least 40% more space is needed to serve the Library District’s current population, and that the amount of space needed will continue to grow in proportion to the population. It estimates the need for at least 160,000 square feet of library space for the projected 2040 population (not including space for central services) – or at least double the space currently provided by the Old Town, Council Tree, and Harmony libraries. For optimal efficiency and cost-effectiveness of staffing and operations, the Library District should build on its successful strategy of well-located, full-service destination libraries.



Facility recommendations include:

- Adding a new full-service destination library of at least 30,000 square feet in north Fort Collins;
- Rebalancing the interiors of Harmony Library and Old Town Library to provide expanded space for people and programs;
- Expanding Council Tree Library to at least 40,000 square feet; and
- Developing a new centrally-located “Hub” with space for District-wide destination spaces and programs, as well as space to support systemwide collection growth. Because operating funds are not unlimited, it will be important for the Library District to develop a service model for this facility that can be operated on different hours and/or with a much leaner staff complement than the other libraries.

In addition, it is recommended that the Library District consolidate its administrative and operations services into a centrally-located, right-sized facility that can accommodate future organizational growth (more focused analysis will be required to determine the amount of space needed). Co-location with a public service facility – such as the Hub – would be very beneficial.

Important next steps for facilities will include developing funding strategies and implementation timelines for these recommendations; acquiring suitable sites for new and expanded facilities; and continuing to monitor and update capital budgets as opportunities arise and projects are refined.

## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2019, access to technology is a core component of library service -- and in the right measure is a key desire of the Library District's customers.

The Library District has already harnessed technology in a powerful manner as direct service to customers and as an essential backbone for staff in performing their work for the community. With its current technological health as a solid foundation, the Library District is encouraged to look into the future and anticipate how growth will impact tech needs in the future -- and to be deliberate in assuring that its technological offerings will remain vital and fresh.

A key approach to ensure a proper technological fit is by applying key criteria to guide technology decisions, particularly those that require a substantial investment of time, money and other resources. Suggested criteria are included in the Technology section of this report.

To support this master plan, technology should be viewed as a strategic asset to deliver library services. It is recommended that the Library District consider the following suggestions to ensure its technological capacity matches its strategic aspirations:

- Assume a greater deal of control and ownership of its data network, and in the process look at opportunities to improve its core server and data centers. Such action will allow more opportunities for the library to improve its Wifi networks and create new connectivity opportunities to serve more areas of the District, especially in non-building areas.
- Create more physical spaces for use of technology inside its current library buildings, including more space at public computers.
- Where possible, increase the number of power outlets for customer use in each library.
- Upgrade audio-visual installations in meeting rooms and install more AV/technology to support collaboration in smaller meeting rooms.
- Make improvements to the Library District's website, with the aim of creating a "digital branch" that meets of the needs of mobile and remote users.
- Perform an assessment of the Integrated Library System (ILS). The Library District has been on the same system for many years; while it has performed well, it's a best practice to periodically assess the ILS.

It is recommended that the Library District develop a focused technology plan with specifications and resources for critical devices, support structures, and IT systems required for customer services and staff needs.

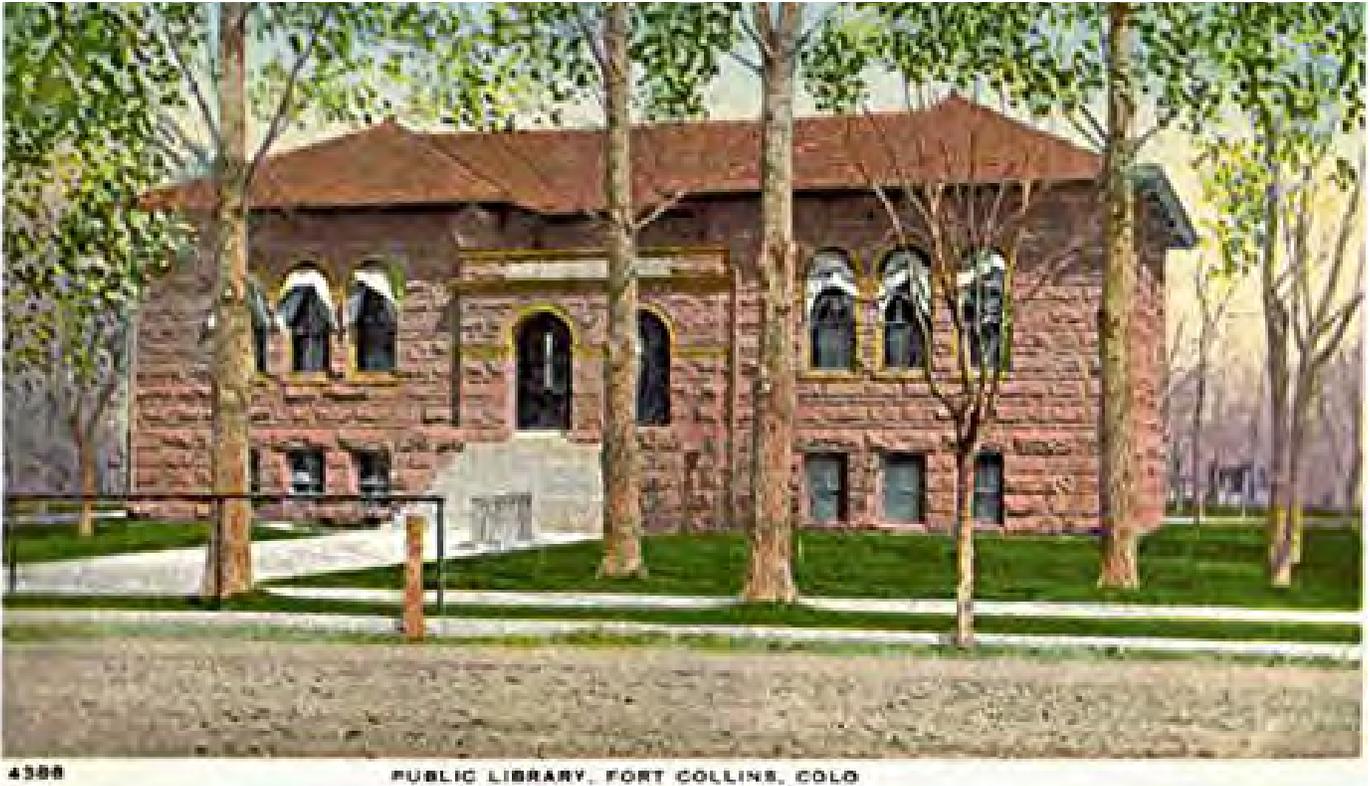
#### “OUTSIDE” SERVICES

Participants in this master planning process confirmed that there is great interest in and support for expanded outside library services to address a broad range of needs. This master plan strongly recommends that the Library District actively pursue opportunities to expand its capacity for programming in non-library spaces. This will be an important interim strategy until library facilities can be expanded. This master plan presents some potential criteria for evaluating and planning for outside service delivery, but specific strategies should be identified and evaluated within the context of the Library District’s upcoming strategic planning process.

#### NEXT STEPS

This master plan establishes a long-range vision for the Poudre River Public Library District, including frameworks, strategies, and recommendations for improved facilities and technology. Next steps include:

- Initiating a broader strategic planning process to develop priorities for service through all delivery channels, as well as for implementation of the master plan recommendations;
- Identifying capital funding strategies for improved technology and facilities;
- Acquiring site(s) for proposed new and expanded facilities; and
- Building community awareness of and support for implementation of the master plan recommendations.



### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The institution now known as the Poudre River Public Library District is one of the oldest public libraries in the state of Colorado. After two decades as a reading room, in 1901 it became an official department of the City of Fort Collins with its own tax levy. In 1903, Andrew Carnegie donated funds toward construction of the first purpose-built library, located on Mathews Avenue along the west side of a park.

The Carnegie building served as the primary library in Fort Collins for more than 70 years. In 1937, the building was expanded to twice its original size with Works Progress Administration (WPA) grant funding. In 1939, the building also became home to the newly-created Larimer County Library, which provided service via bookmobile. The two libraries later merged.

By 1970, the population of Fort Collins had grown tenfold since the turn of the 20th century. In 1976, a new 33,500 square foot Main Library opened on Peterson Street, across the park from the Carnegie Building. But within 20 years, the population had again more than doubled. In 1998, the approximately 30,000 square foot Harmony Library opened as a partnership between the library and Front Range Community College.



*Fort Collins' Carnegie Library (top)  
Main Library, pre-expansion (above)*



*Library District service area*

In 2006, voters approved the formation of an independent library district with its own dedicated tax levy to provide library service to residents of an 1,800 square mile area of north Larimer County. The voters also approved funding for a third library in south Fort Collins, and the 16,600 square foot new Council Tree Library opened in Front Range Village in 2009.

The population continued to grow. A 2009 facilities master plan recommended adding a fourth new library in north Fort Collins as well as expansion of the Main Library. The Library District soon purchased and moved its Administration functions into a former residence-turned-funeral parlor-turned-office building on Mathews Street, across from Library Park. The library building on Peterson Street was subsequently expanded and renamed the Old Town Library. In early 2018, the Library District's Collections Services department moved into leased space in Midtown Fort Collins, which enabled the expansion of Outreach Services at Webster House Administration Center.

Today, more than 200,000 people live in the Library District's service area, and growth is projected to continue – particularly in north Fort Collins. In 2018 the Library District initiated a process to develop a new master plan within the context of the multiple complementary and interdependent channels through which modern library service is delivered to the community.

## PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

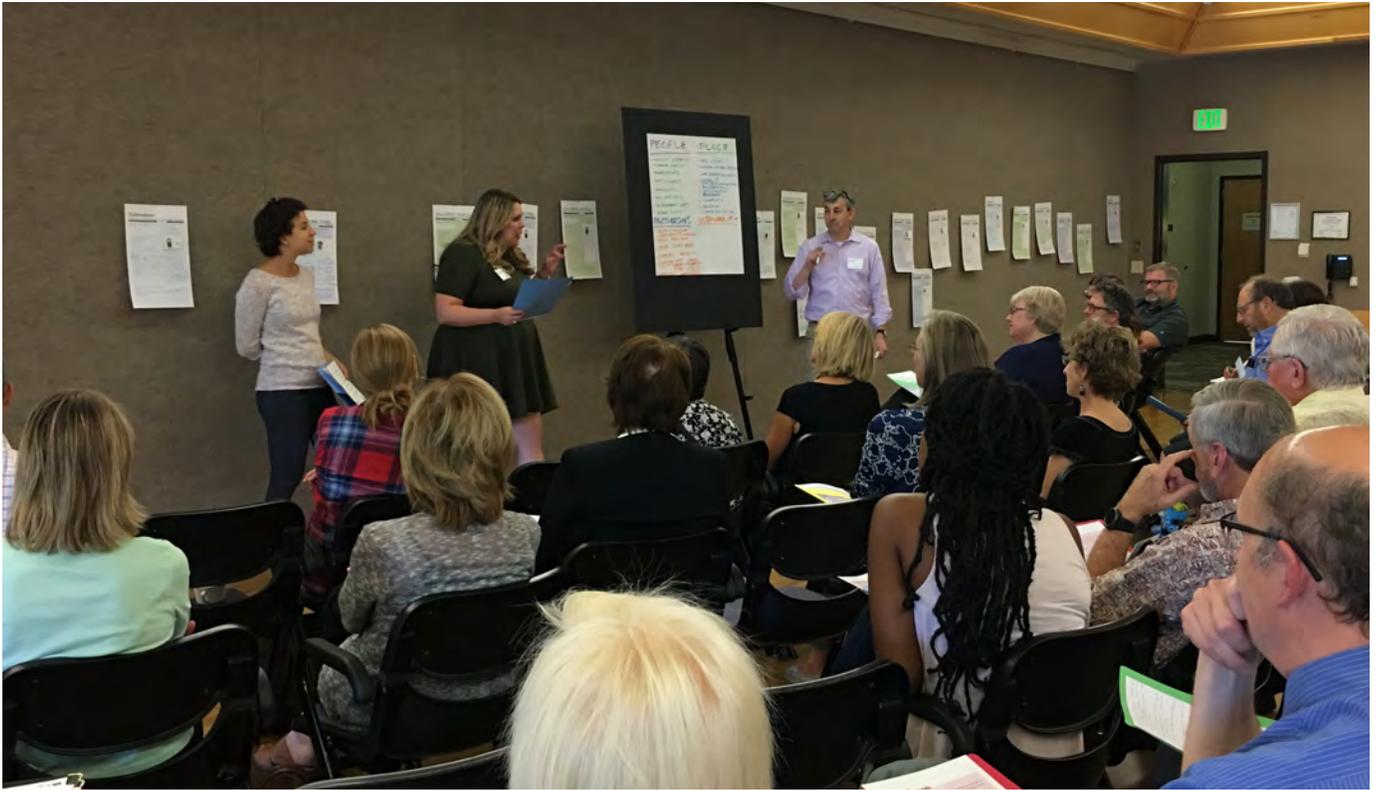
The master planning process was initiated in June 2018. The process included extensive outreach and engagement of stakeholders and community members as well as work with Library District leadership and staff. A partial list of project participants is included in Appendix A.

Points of engagement in the master plan process included:

- Four workshops with the Library Leadership Team (LLT), which brought organizational and operational perspectives to the development of the master plan.
- A full-day Strategic Vision Workshop that brought together community leadership, partner organizations, key stakeholder groups, and library staff. See Appendix B for a summary of the workshop.
- Three meetings with a Plan Advisory Committee (PAC), which included diverse representation from library leadership and staff, stakeholder and community groups, and partner organizations.
- Nearly 1,000 people engaged via two rounds of informal pop-up survey events facilitated by library staff at more than 20 locations throughout the Library District. Refer to Appendix C for summary results of the survey.
- Open meetings (“Community Conversations”) in each library in October 2018, each of which was attended by approximately 15-30 participants. Refer to Appendix D for a summary of these meetings.
- Ten focus groups held in November 2018, with more than 150 participants representing the Latinx community, tweens, teens, millennials/young adults, and mountain/rural communities (including Laporte and Stove Prairie). See Appendix E for a summary of the focus groups.

The project was guided throughout by a Project Management Team (PMT) composed of four Library Leadership Team members and the core consultant team.





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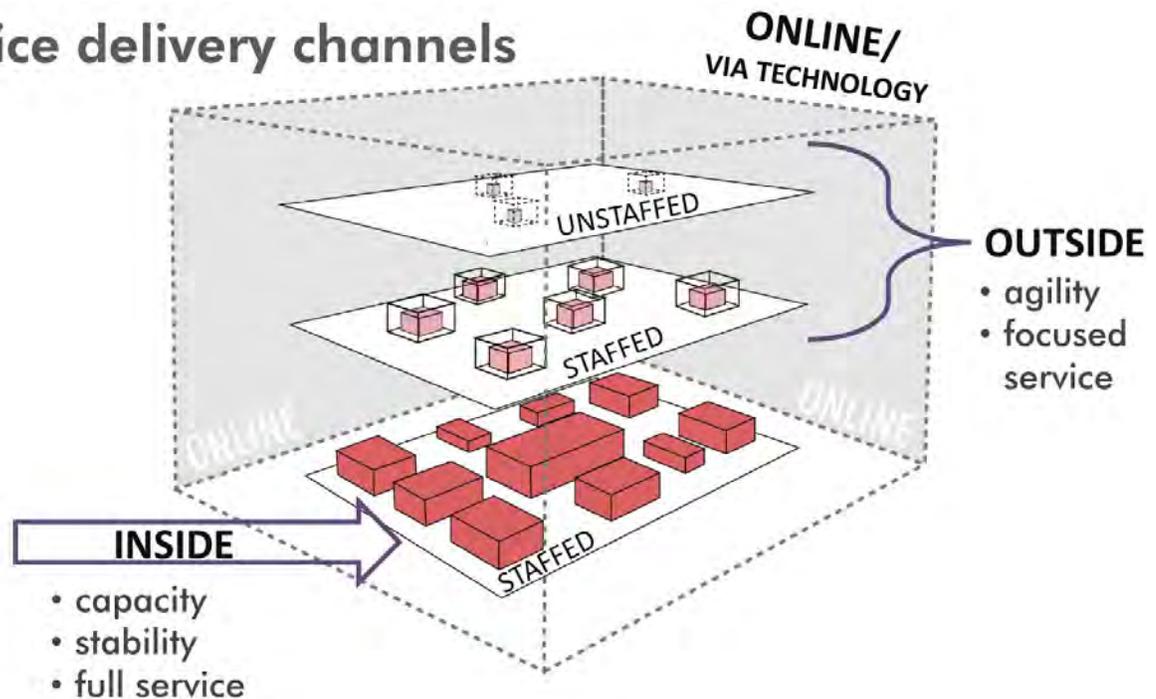
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## Service delivery channels



### SERVICE DELIVERY CHANNELS

With more than 200,000 people living in its 1,800 square mile service area, the Poudre River Public Library District has the ninth largest service population in Colorado. More than 80% of District residents are library borrowers.

The Library District provides service to the community through three primary “service delivery channels,” each of which requires a specialized approach that reflects its distinct characteristics, environment, needs, strengths, limitations, and opportunities.

- The **Inside** service channel encompasses all of the things that happen within the library walls, including collections, spaces for people, programs, and more. Assessment and planning considerations for facilities are generally framed in terms such as the size, type, and geographic distribution of space needed to support service.
- The **Outside** service channel encompasses things that happen outside of the library walls. Decision-making about Outside services is typically framed by criteria that are closely tied to the service needs and priorities of specific target populations and/or in distinct geographic areas.
- The **Technology** service channel is unique in that it serves the other two service channels, and is also an entity unto itself. Technology encompasses a wide range of potential strategies and opportunities for delivering service. As with Outside services, decision-making about Technology strategies is also guided by criteria linked to specific needs and objectives.

### INSIDE SERVICES

Inside services are perhaps the most well-understood and highly-used of the three service delivery channels. Currently the Library District operates three library facilities – Council Tree, Harmony, and Old Town.

On average, each District resident visits a library at least five times per year. On an average day:

- More than 2,800 people visit the Council Tree, Harmony, and/or Old Town libraries;
- People check out nearly 8,000 collection items, including more than 3,500 children’s materials;
- Library staff help more than 300 customers with reference transactions; and
- About 170 people attend programs offered in the libraries, including five daily children’s programs.

PAC meeting participants spoke fondly of how libraries have been iconic places for their communities for generations. Strategic Vision Workshop participants identified “Iconic” as one of the four guiding roles for the Library District in the future.

The Library District’s facilities are the subject of Chapters 4 and 5 of this report.

### OUTSIDE SERVICES

At present, the Poudre River Public Library District’s Outreach team is its primary Outside service strategy. On average, Outreach delivers programs in multiple languages to more than 60 people per day in community locations. The Library District’s Outside service strategies are discussed in Section 7 of this report.

### TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIES

Through Technology strategies, the Library District delivers service both inside and outside of its facilities. On an average day in the libraries, for example, customers sign into the wireless network more than 540 times, and each library computer is used at least twice. The community also accesses library services from wherever they are outside the library, such as through the Library District’s website, which gets more than 4,500 visits per day. Customers also can (and do) access the Library District’s collection of more than 400,000 eMedia items without even needing to leave home; more than 1,200 eMedia items are checked out per day by Library District customers.

Current and recommended Technology strategies are addressed in Chapter 6 of this report.

TRENDS AND DIRECTIONS

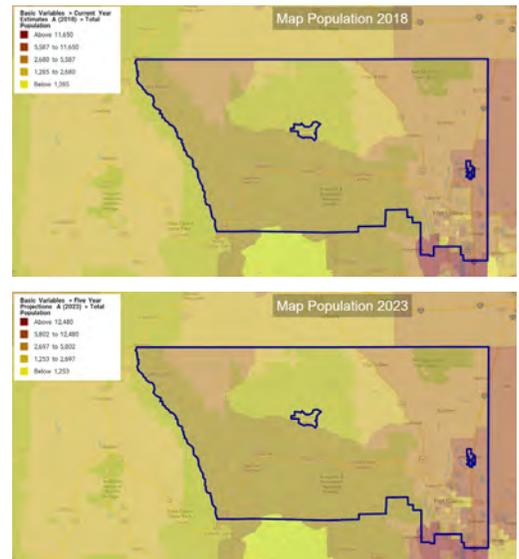
The Library District has undertaken this master planning process in the midst of many changes – including national and global trends as well as local and hyperlocal developments. This section describes some of the considerations, influences, and context for development of the master plan.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS AND DEVELOPMENT

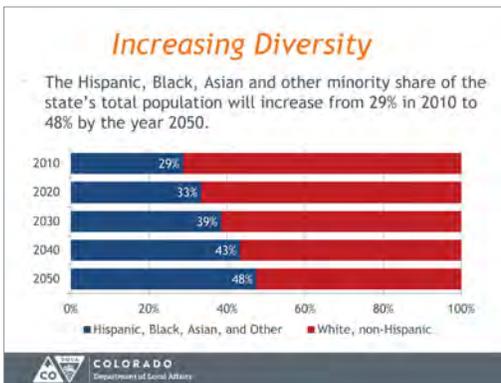
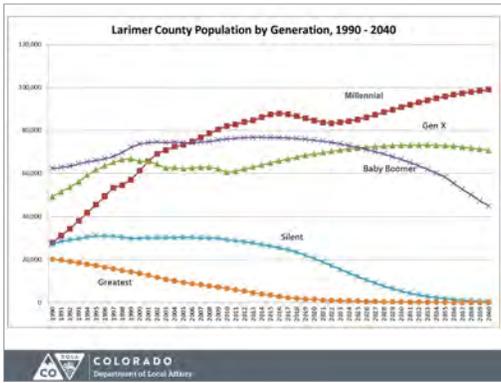
The Poudre River Public Library District’s service area is distinct and unique; no other agency or organization shares exactly the same service population. The Library District’s outer geographic boundary is similar to that of the Poudre School District, but unlike PSD, the Library District’s service area excludes Red Feather Lakes and Wellington. Gale (www.gale.com) aggregates and compiles demographic information for the service populations of Red Feather Lakes, Wellington, and PSD; used in combination, this allows for high-level extraction of some historic and current data for the Library District’s population. Gale also offers projections of selected data to the year 2023, giving a sense of near-term directions in community growth and evolution.

Gale data for the Library’s District’s population suggest that:

- Recent population growth is expected to continue, with an increase of more than 6% within the next five years.
- The current Hispanic ethnic population is current at about 12%, and will continue to grow both in numbers and as a percentage of the population overall.
- Approximately 18% of Asian residents, 24% of the Hispanic/Latino community, and 33% of Black residents are currently living below the poverty level.
- The majority of the population (80%) has achieved some level of higher education after high school.
- Most of the population (96%) has access to at least one vehicle – a level that is expected to continue through 2023, at least.



Maps showing 2018 and projected 2023 populations of the Poudre River Public Library District. Note changes within and around Fort Collins, in particular. Source: Gale (www.gale.com)



### Aging Issues

- Numbers
- Economic Driver - wealthier .... depends  
Impact on occupational mix
- Labor Force
- Housing
- Income - Downward Pressure
- Health
- Disabilities
- Transportation
- Public Finance - Downward Pressure

### Aging and Public Finance

- Ratio of 65+ per 20-64 year olds in CO  
- Becoming more "normal"
- End of the "demographic dividend"
- Public Finance – change in revenue and expenditures.
- Income tax – downward pressure
- Sales tax – downward pressure
- Property tax – downward pressure
- Health services – increasing
- Medicaid – increasing
- Other local services - increasing

Transition

For longer-range trends, this master plan process looked to a 2016 report by the State of Colorado’s Demography Office entitled “Population and Economic Trends for Fort Collins, Larimer, and Colorado.” According to this report:

- Larimer County has been among the fastest-growing counties in the state in recent years, and is expected to continue growing at a rate of up to 1.8% per year through 2040 (approximately 45% total growth).
- Millennials are already the largest demographic in Larimer County today, and will grow over the next 20 years both in numbers and as a percentage of the overall population. Over the same time period, Baby Boomer population will decline.
- The overall aging of Larimer County’s population is expected to put downward pressure on tax revenue (income, sales, and property), while increasing demand for health care, transportation, and other services.
- Other anticipated demographic shifts include increased race and ethnic diversity; smaller household sizes; and reduced employment opportunities, particularly for youth.

Most of the growth in the Library District’s population over the next two decades is expected to occur in and around Fort Collins. Although some densification of existing neighborhoods is anticipated, the largest area of new growth will likely be in the northern part of the city. The Mountain Vista planning subarea is projected to have more than 8,800 homes by 2040 – the majority of which would be within the planned Montava development just west of the Budweiser plant (Ferrier 2018)<sup>1</sup>.

Concerns about the impacts of such growth on community livability arose during both the Strategic Vision Workshop and meetings with the Plan Advisory Committee. Questions arose around topics such as housing affordability, employment opportunities, livable wages, increasing traffic, and conservation of natural resources.

<sup>1</sup> See the end of this chapter for information about referenced sources.

## EVOLVING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

### Customer Experience

Although there are some very big differences between public libraries and for-profit businesses, there are also lessons to be learned from how the business sector is adapting to changing customer preferences and expectations. Particularly in the digital age, successful service providers and retailers are keenly aware of the importance of customer experience – not only for how it influences initial decision-making, but also for how it affects the likelihood of repeat business and long-term brand loyalty. It has been suggested that customer experience (or “CX,” as it is sometimes abbreviated) may even be growing more important than price or product quality in influencing decision-making. One trend-watcher predicts that: “by 2020, customer experience will overtake price and product as the key brand differentiator.” (Shulzhenko 2017)

As options for online services and shopping have continued to expand over the past 20 years, doubts have arisen about the future viability of brick-and-mortar retail and place-based services. Similar predictions have been made about the future of public libraries in the age of Google search and online content. But neither prediction has yet proved true, and the importance of place has continued to be fundamental for providing many customers with a positive experience. One trend-watcher notes that: “There are certain purchases that are still better made in-person.... And the fact of the matter is that some people simply enjoy the act of shopping in a store. The in-person shopping experience will never go away; it will simply become better.” (Fram 2018)

Booksellers like the Tattered Cover in Denver, Powell’s Books in Portland OR, and the Strand in New York City are great examples of the persistent importance of place. These retailers offer little that customers cannot purchase online fairly easily, and perhaps even at lower cost. And yet, these businesses not only survive, but thrive. One participant in this master plan process enthusiastically described a recent visit to the Tattered Cover, and how the space itself contributed to the experience:

*“It is warm, organic, and inviting from the moment you walk in. It welcomes you with coffee, people sitting and talking, gathering, relating. It feels open and inviting, not cramped and confining. The layout causes a sense of curiosity, wonder, excitement. Seating is comfortable, and everywhere! I love how they have a little church bench for the seating in the religion section. How cool is that?”*



Powell’s Books in Portland, Oregon



Tattered Cover, Denver



## Omni-Channel Service

“Omni-channel” is an increasingly prevalent concept in discussions of customer experience trends. Customers value and use both brick-and-mortar and online service delivery channels, moving fluidly between the two rather than using just one or the other. As one trend-watcher suggests: “[Omnichannel]... creates opportunities to access a customer not once, but twice... and interplay between online and in-store offers can encourage that increased engagement.” (Fram 2018)

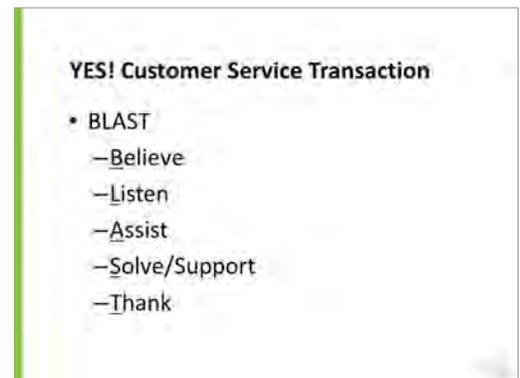
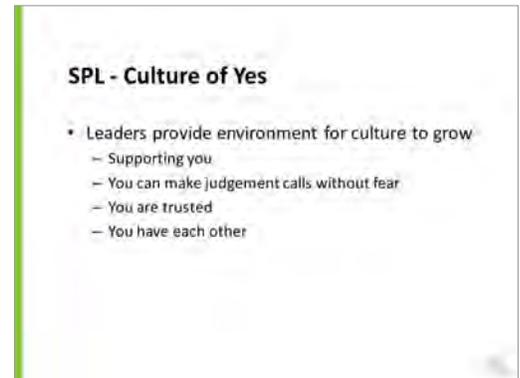
Public libraries are taking note of this trend, and investing in strategies to create a richer and more seamless experience across their service delivery channels. One library making a strong investment in its online experience is the Lexington Public Library (KY), which operates a “digital branch” in addition to its six brick-and-mortar facilities. LPL’s digital branch offers access to unique content such as podcasts by LPL librarians on popular topics. It is a portal to the “LPLtv” channel on YouTube, which offers hours of video-recorded library programming – including children’s storytimes, author readings, art lectures, music concerts, and town hall meetings. It also offers readers’ advisory services and book recommendations as well as access to the library’s collection of digital books, AV media, and online magazines. The digital branch can be accessed from wherever customers are – including from within library facilities as well as through customer devices and home computers. In the years since its launch, LPL’s digital branch has seen the strongest growth in customer use of any Lexington library; as of late 2018, circulation through the digital branch has rivaled the circulation of physical materials at LPL’s brick-and-mortar facilities.

Outside services are an essential omni-channel strategy for the Multnomah County Library (OR), which sees itself as “in the community business, not the library business.” MCL delivers thousands of programs and classes each year outside of its branches in partner and community locations, with an emphasis on services to older adults, new immigrants, adult learners, people with disabilities, and people who are institutionalized or homeless. Outreach services account for nearly 30% of MCL’s total annual program attendance countywide, and for more than 10% of MCL’s total annual circulation – all on less than 10% of the operating budget of MCL’s branch libraries.

## Customer-Centric Service

In the Strategic Vision Workshop held at the Fort Collins Senior Center in September 2018, participants engaged in a brainstorming activity that used local and national destinations, brands, services, and organizations as metaphors for service. Among the metaphors that resonated with the group were companies that are widely recognized as “customer-centric,” such as Southwest Airlines (Jaiswal 2017), REI (Webb 2016), and Trader Joe’s (Anderson 2013). Although these three companies provide very different services and products, there are notable commonalities among them – including ease of use, quality products at an affordable price point, and friendly, engaged staff who are committed to customer success.

Public libraries with a commitment to customer-centered service recognize how essential staff are to achieving positive outcomes. The Sacramento Public Library (CA) has built its customer service approach around its “Culture of Yes,” with the goal of creating personalized interactions and positive experiences for each and every customer. This “Yes” approach to customer service has implications for all levels of the organization. Support services see public service staff as their customers, providing them with the tools and resources they need to ensure high-quality customer interactions. Management empowers and trusts staff to think independently and creatively in providing service – even if it means bending the rules occasionally – so that even the most challenging customer interactions can lead to “Yes!”





*Technology demonstration at the Northwest Library in Dayton, OH*

## TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Technology – as described in the Omni-Channel model above – is a library service delivery strategy that not only supports inside and outside experiences, but also creates unique experiences that only technology can provide. When many people think of technology, “shiny objects” often come to mind. Libraries indeed have many visible manifestations of technology, but what is often missed is that most modern library functions – from direct customer service to back-of-house activities – are facilitated in some manner by technology. Therefore, both the visible and invisible aspects of library services are crucial in every library’s ecosystem.

Technology trendspotting in libraries can be both a fruitful and frustrating experience. On one hand, the ALA’s Center for the Future of Libraries publishes a collection of societal, technological, and other trends and offers examples of how they might apply to libraries. As fruitful of a resource as this is, frustration can kick in when the hyper-local nature of libraries enters the picture. When considering how these trends might affect an individual library or library system, it becomes clear that the adoption of technology in libraries often has less to do with “wow” and more to do with how technology can help the library as a strategic asset in its service mission.

This concept – of matching the technological response with the actual service need – allows for the most powerful and effective use of resources invested in technology. This concept can also make it difficult to compare libraries in their technological approach. While all modern libraries do have some vital tech things in common (such as a need for excellent Internet connectivity and WiFi, access to public computing and printing, and back-end computer systems to support lending), there are some trends that require more scrutiny.

One example is makerspaces, which reflect the trend of the library as a place of creation instead of just a place of consumption. Some libraries take a high-tech approach to makerspaces in responding to community needs and interests; the high-tech approach is exemplified by the Chattanooga Public Library (TN), New Castle County's Route 9 Library (DE), and the Madison Public Library (WI), as well as the Boulder Public Library and Pikes Peak Library District in Colorado – all of which offer an inventory of 3D printers, laser cutters, routers, and/or other special equipment.

Because of the diversity of community needs and possible library service responses, makerspaces were one of the technology-related trends explored with the Library District's Leadership Team during this master plan process. Other examples of technology-related trends and possible services discussed with the LLT included:

- 24/7 or “**extended hours**” library spaces (which was one of the ideas proposed in the Library District's 2015 Needs Assessment process)
- True “**virtual branch**” library online
- Enhanced **customer self-service**
- Improved **digital/information literacy** for customers
- Assisting customers (especially young people) with **communication skills**
- Showcasing new and emerging consumer technologies

These discussions with LLT explored potential concerns as well as opportunities and benefits of each idea. However, more detailed analysis and decision-making should be included a strategic planning process within the context of goals and objectives for service, available resources for implementation, and other considerations.

**Topic**  
Makerspaces

**Opportunities**

- Helping with prototyping for businesses
- Sound options for musicians

**"I like this because..."**

- New use for the library – allows us to interact with non-users
- Access to "tools" ... recycling and expense
- DIY learning
- Great social communication

**Concerns or Worries**

- Community redundancy
- Library identity?
- Behind the trend?
- Capital budget?
- Risk factors?
- How do you decide?

**Topic**  
24/7 Extended Hours Making

**Opportunities**

- Limited 24/7 to extend hours/keep up with
- Like idea of having machines in already open places like grocery stores, Super Target
- More book drops
- Drink-up book drops

**"I like this because..."**

- Flexible for varied activities
- Less extended hours – biggest community concern
- Any why you can make it convenient for people to use the library

**Concerns or Worries**

- Security issues for outside people and/or users (what if users get too rowdy?)
- Do people really want this?
- Harmony - extended hours during breaks are really slow
- Market very small for machines and they are expensive

**Topic**  
Virtual Library (online)

**Opportunities**

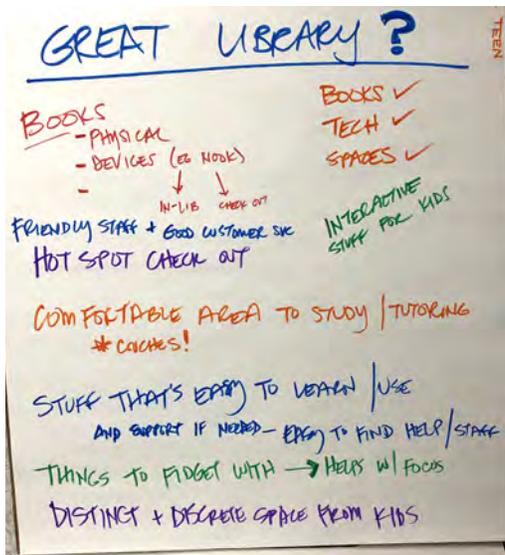
- Look @ "generic" of materials "shame" - does everything need to be checked out?
- process library
- partnerships
- associate library role - build support/relationship

**"I like this because..."**

- Have a small area to cover
- inclusive (people who can't make it to the physical)
- digital as well physical presence in community
- be in the community, not expect people to come to the library

**Concerns or Worries**

- cost
- staff time
- weather
- coverage risk



Input from November 14 teen focus group at the First Presbyterian Church in Fort Collins

## LIBRARY FACILITY TRENDS

### Best Practices for Library Spaces

Modern library facilities are as diverse as the communities they serve; a library that suits one community perfectly might underperform in another. Nevertheless, there are some emerging best practices in the design of modern libraries to maximize service and value. These include:

- **Flexibility.** Libraries are designed to facilitate a range of activities and services, recognizing the changing patterns of use and users over the course of each day. Features that tend to support a high degree of flexibility include moveable partitions (such as at the Old Town and Council Tree library meeting rooms), effective acoustics, and well-zoned HVAC. Copious, well-located storage facilitates changing furniture and equipment to meet the needs of different activities within each space.
- **Adaptability.** Whether they are newly constructed or converted from previous uses, library buildings use high quality systems and materials to provide long-term service and value. Modular, scalable systems – structural, mechanical, electrical, and technology – facilitate changing spaces to support evolving services over the life of the building.
- **More choices.** “Space to read and study” was identified as a priority for more than 60% of respondents in the Library District’s community vision survey. Community members of all ages, shapes, sizes, and abilities want to find a place to sit (or stand!) in their library that meets their needs and preferences during each visit – in individual, collaborative, and social settings. Acoustic zoning supports both quiet and active uses at the same time with minimal conflict. Every seat provides access to power for charging at least one customer device.



*Above: children's discovery area at the Northwest Library in Dayton, OH*

- **More space for children.** Modern libraries allocate significantly more space for children than many of their 20th century predecessors. In some cases, libraries dedicate the same amount of floor area to children as they do for their teen and adult customers. This not only increases the flexibility of the space for programming, but also celebrates the enthusiasm and exuberance of the youngest library customers. In a survey of nearly 1,000 Poudre River community members about priorities for the Library District, space for learning and discovery was most popular response, selected by more than 67% of participants.
- **Shelving for browsing and discovery.** Shelving should be lower height, more widely spaced, and more flexible, with table and lounge seating opportunities provided throughout. Face-out display is encouraged to promote deeper exploration and discovery of the library's diverse collection.



*Flexible creative space in the Northwest Library in Dayton, OH*

Many libraries are also developing non-traditional spaces to support new services and high-impact programs. Some examples include:

- Creative spaces.** Out of nearly 1,000 community members surveyed for this master plan, nearly two-thirds responded that creativity and innovation should be a priority for the Library District. Over the past decade, libraries across the nation have increasingly recognized the wide range of benefits that creative and maker programs can have for their communities. One recent study discusses the range of benefits and impacts of such programs, including improved learning outcomes for children and teens; incubators for new product innovations and small business ventures; skill-building to prepare workers for jobs in emerging industries; and enhanced social networking for connected societies (Hartnett 2016). Boulder Public Library's BLDG 61 is a local example of an award-winning makerspace offering a variety of tools, equipment, and technology; BLDG 61 collaborates with non-profit and private industry partners to reduce duplication and increase positive impacts. Another notable Colorado example is the Pikes Peak Library District's Library 21C (<https://ppld.org/library-21c>), which has placed an emphasis on high-tech and low-tech "make" activities; a large computer training facility; large and small meeting rooms (with full A/V support); and gaming for adults and teens provided alongside more traditional library services and collections.



*Black box theater at the Main Library in Dayton, OH*

- **Large program/event spaces.** Many libraries are seeing the value of providing their own large-capacity spaces that can accommodate high-interest programs. The expanded Main Library in Dayton OH includes both a black box theater and a “forum” with stepped seating; both of these spaces are flexible and can be used for informal activities and casual seating in between scheduled events. The Spokane Public Library (WA) cleared out much of the fixed shelving from the top floor of its Downtown Library to create a highly flexible program and performance space overlooking the falls; events in this space include SPL’s award-winning Lilac City Live, an all-ages monthly variety show featuring live music, poetry, sketch comedy, and more (see [www.spokanelibrary.org/blog/lilac-city-live](http://www.spokanelibrary.org/blog/lilac-city-live)). Some libraries – such as the Fort Vancouver Public Library (WA) and the Cedar Rapids Public Library (IA) – have even seen their attractive, well-supported event spaces become popular destinations for weddings and other community events.
- **“Undesigned” space.** In 2013, the Chattanooga Public Library (TN) cleared out decades of stored equipment, old furniture, and archived materials from the top floor of its Downtown Library, and opened the 12,000 square foot space to the public. Rather than designing the space for a specific purpose, CPL left the 4th Floor as an unfinished space with an eclectic mix of furniture that customers can move and use as needed. In addition to drop-in uses, the 4th Floor hosts diverse library programs and community activities, including movie screenings, writers fairs, zine festivals, business round tables, and more. A more local (but non-library) example of a low-design, highly-flexible space can be seen in the ground floor of CSU’s Powerhouse Energy Campus at 430 North College Avenue in Fort Collins.



81st Avenue Library, Oakland CA

### Partnerships for Facilities

An increasing number of public libraries across the nation are developing partnerships for building and operating facilities. The reasons for pursuing these partnerships are as diverse as the partners themselves, and often the positive outcomes have exceeded expectations. The Poudre River Public Library District's own Harmony Library and Council Tree Library are excellent examples of partnerships for facilities. Other examples include:

- **Mitchell Park Library and Community Center.** The Library and Community Services departments of the City of Palo Alto CA came together to design and build a new joint-use facility to replace their respective outdated buildings. Integrating these two complementary services in a single facility has had significant positive impacts for the community – far beyond what these two departments would be able to do separately. The Mitchell Park Library and Community Center was recognized as a New Landmark Library by the Library Journal in 2015.
- **81st Avenue Library.** The Oakland Public Library (CA) partnered with the Oakland Unified School District to build a joint public-school library on the campus of two charter elementary schools. This partnership enabled OPL to develop a much-needed branch within the underserved community of East Oakland, which has embraced the new library as a destination for civic, cultural, and social life.
- **Otay Ranch Branch Library.** The Chula Vista Public Library (CA) was offered a 3,500 square foot space in the food court of a destination shopping center; in addition to very affordable lease terms (\$1 per year), center management also gave CVPL an allowance for fitting out and furnishing the space. The new branch was an instant success; circulation out of this location is now comparable to that of Chula Vista's two larger libraries, and CVPL reports that it is one of the busiest passport sites in the country. Although it originally envisioned the library as a temporary solution, shopping center management has realized the value that it offers. Management not only extended the lease on the original space, but later gave CVPL an additional unit and development budget to create a community program space.



Otay Ranch Branch Library and Community Space, Chula Vista, CA

## COMMUNITY VISION AND PRIORITIES

The Library District has a long-standing commitment to engaging the community in dialogue about its needs and vision for library service. The 2015 Needs Assessment process facilitated by Slate Communications is an example of a recent focused effort, but Library District leadership and staff are continually listening to their patrons and the community as well.

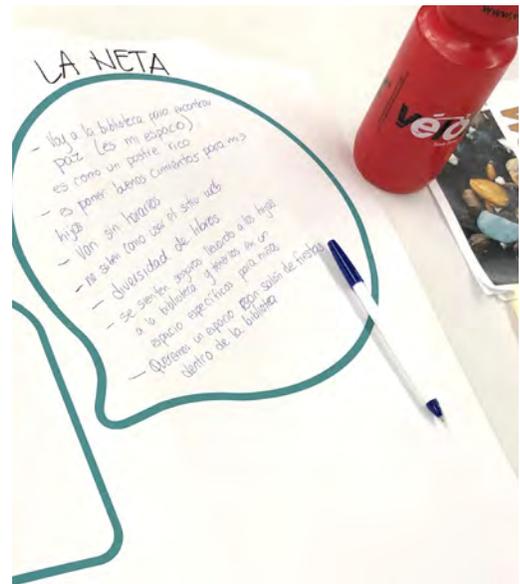
The stakeholder and community engagement for this master planning process was intended to build upon, rather than duplicate, this extensive foundation. Through a variety of methods, the Library District engaged staff, stakeholders, and the community in a conversation about the vision, needs, and priorities for library space and services. New methods included: a Strategic Vision Workshop; community meetings at each library; informal pop-up surveys in the libraries and other community locations; and focus groups with special populations.

Overall, participants in master planning process expressed deep appreciation for the Library District and the services it provides:

- They recognize and value the Library District's ongoing adaptability to changing demographics and needs of the community.
- They are enthusiastic about the Library District's role as a place for community and community-building.
- They appreciate the Library District's rich physical and digital collection, as well as its participation in Prospector in order to significantly enhance access to materials.



Excerpt from the Poudre River Public Library District Needs Assessment Final report (2015)



Input from Latinx focus group at First Presbyterian Church in Fort Collins, November 14, 2018

### COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INTERESTS

In focus groups convened for the Library District's needs assessment process in 2014-2015, participants were asked a series of questions about their current and anticipated library use patterns, community library needs, and opportunities for the Library District to improve services and facilities.

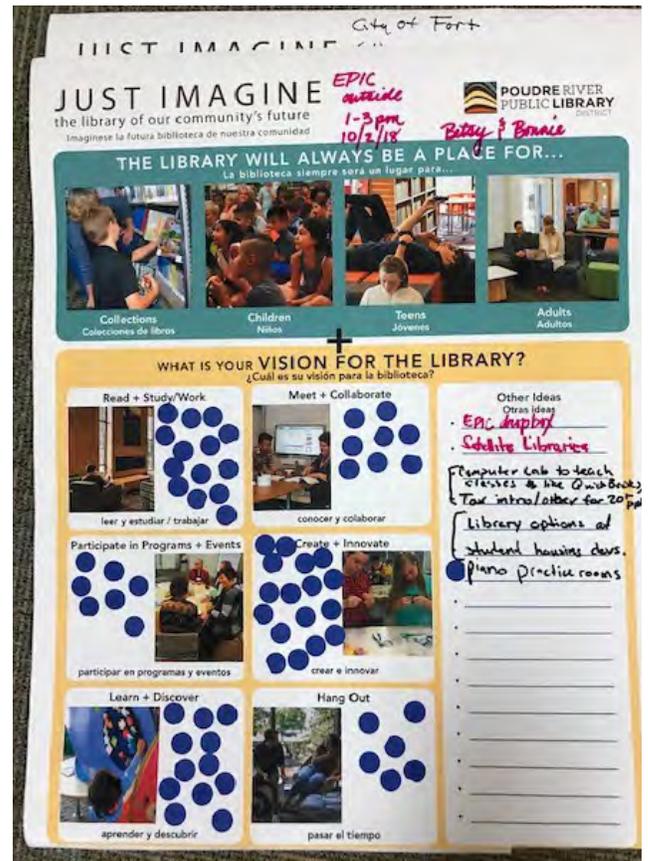
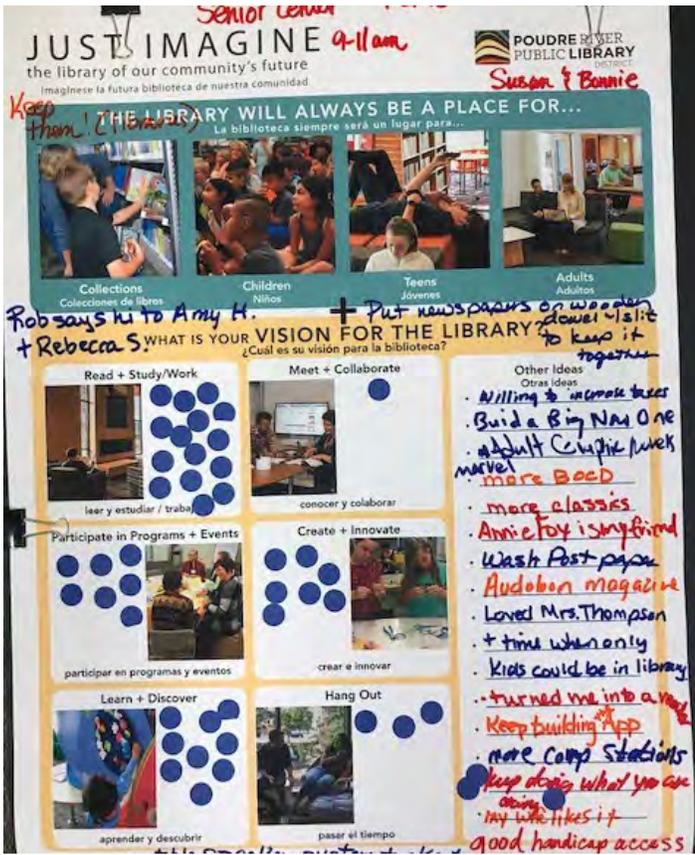
To complement the needs assessment input, focus groups for this master planning process used an emerging technique inspired by the Harwood Institute. Participants in these focus groups were asked what was important to their lives, families, friends, and communities so that the Library District could better understand needs and consider possible service responses.

By design, the focus groups engaged people who may not use library services very often, if at all. It was not unexpected, therefore, that some of these participants would suggest ideas that the Library District is actually already providing (such as convening community conversations around current topics; helping customers differentiate between credible sources of information and "fake news"; and creating safer community spaces through a better understanding of the social challenges faced by some library users).

But the focus groups also revealed new territory that the Library District should consider in its next strategic planning process. Some of this input echoed needs and trends that are also emerging for other public libraries such as the High Plains Library District (CO) and the Bellevue Public Library (NE). Ideas included:

- **New learning opportunities** – including space (and sometimes materials) to learn new skills/create
- **Socialization opportunities for tweens/teens** – including peer-to-peer and mentoring support, especially during crucial phases of life – as well as opportunities to both teach and learn from others.
- **Positioning technology** in a proper measure with other aspects of life – especially in not elevating technology at the expense of "old fashioned" life skills.
- Helping young adult customers **develop "adulting" skills** that were not formally taught elsewhere, including topics such as taxes, insurance, balancing a checkbook, and navigating federal and state agencies for assistance.

Although some libraries in the US have taken nascent steps in these areas, results are not yet conclusive. All of the needs voiced should be given consideration for new or improved library services as the Library District embarks on its strategic planning process planned for 2019.



PRIORITIES FOR LIBRARY SERVICES AND SPACES

In the informal “pop-up” surveys held throughout the District in September and October 2018, nearly 1,000 participants weighed in on their vision and priorities for the library, offering six high-level options for priority ranking using dot stickers. There was strong support for each of the six options offered: learning and discovery; creativity and innovation; space for reading and work; participating in programs and events; a place to meet and collaborate; and a place to hang out. The community was also offered the opportunity to add their own ideas for the Library District, which they were generous in sharing (it should be noted that the Library District already offers some of these services):

- Many of the ideas were related to **expanded and enhanced programs** and services; examples included citizenship classes, programs on how to repair things, tech classes, history talks, more opportunities to read to pets, tax help, and even “date night.”
- There were lots of suggestions about **collections** – including the growth in the Library District’s physical and digital collections, lending tools, “gadgets,” museum passes, graphic novels for adults, and more.
- Participants also contributed ideas about ways to **increase access** to library services. Having a library presence and increased programming in Laporte was a popular concept, along with earlier and extended branch library hours.
- People saw opportunities for **improved library spaces**, such as maker/creative spaces, more space for meetings, space for showing movies, art displays, and the ability to purchase and enjoy refreshments.



*Writing workshop at Old Town Library*

### POTENTIAL FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Libraries and partnerships go together like, well, bread and butter. Most libraries in the US partner with other libraries, schools, governmental entities, community organizations, businesses and others to better serve people in the communities shared by the partners.

While much has been written about the qualities of successful partnerships, many agree that at the core should be shared goals and objectives among all partners; mutual – and often complementary – benefits for those participating in the partnerships (often in libraries measured in how effectively the partnership serves the needs of people); and work and risks that are equitably shared among all involved.

The Library District has a long history of partnerships for service. It partners with other libraries throughout Colorado via a consortium (called Prospector) to expand available materials for customers. It partners with the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, the Poudre School District, Colorado State University, and many other agencies for services and outreach throughout the Library District’s service area. The Library District has also partnered with local organizations to host two increasingly popular events: the Fort Collins Book Festival and Fort Collins Comicon. Even so, community participants in this master planning process saw additional opportunities for the Library District to build on this foundation of success, such as strengthening relationships with neighboring library systems, and forging new partnerships with rural schools to increase library service delivery.

In fact, the Library District has already been exploring opportunities such as these. In 2018, the Larimer County Public Library Directors group was formed, bringing together leadership from the Poudre River Public Library District, the Estes Valley Public Library, the Loveland Library, the Berthoud Public Library, the Red Feather Lakes Public Library, and the Wellington Public Library to discuss issues of mutual interest. This has already led to collaborative development of programs between the Library District and other partners, including business programs with the Loveland Public Library, and a non-profit development workshop with Loveland and Estes Valley.

Whether through continued development of the Larimer County Public Library Directors group or other means, one key area of interest for the Library District is the potential for stronger partnership with the two independent libraries that are surrounded by the District boundaries: the Wellington Public Library and the Red Feather Lakes Public Library. Continuing to pursue opportunities for cooperation, mutual service, and collaborative support could increase the Library District's institutional capacity while also expanding library services for people throughout northern Larimer County.

Another area ripe for a new partnership is in Stove Prairie. During a focus group held at the Stove Prairie School for this master planning process, the school principal was eager to discuss possibilities to host the Library District in some manner (with possibilities including programming in school spaces as well as materials drop-off/pick-up. Stove Prairie community members enthusiastically supported the idea of such a partnership. Clearly this has the potential for further exploration and evaluation by the Library District.



*Teen program at Old Town Library*

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## 4. LIBRARY FACILITIES

### FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

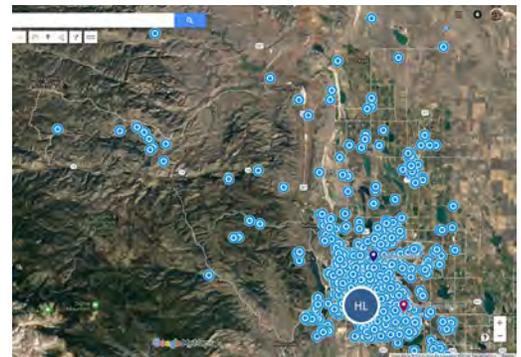
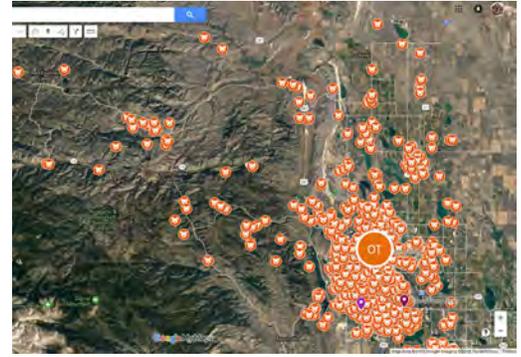
#### ACCESS TO LIBRARY FACILITIES

As part of the assessment, this master planning process developed data-based maps of patterns of use of current Library District facilities. The Library District subscribes to the Savannah analytics platform maintained by OrangeBoy. In early August 2018, sample data were downloaded from the Savannah dataset “Cardholders by Last Activity Location,” which identifies the last library at which each cardholder completed a circulation transaction (check-out or return of materials).

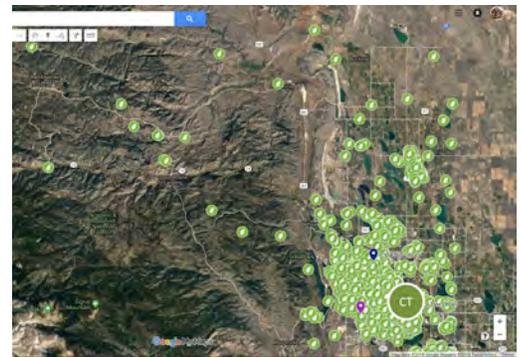
Mapping of this sample data showed significant community cross-use of all of the Library District’s facilities. While there was some clustering of use around each library by customers living nearby, all of the libraries were used by residents throughout the District. Residents in the mountain communities visited Council Tree, people living in north Fort Collins visited Harmony Library, and community members from south Fort Collins visited Old Town Library.

This cross-use was confirmed in each of the Community Conversations facilitated in October 2018. Most participants said that they have visited at least two, if not all three libraries in Fort Collins. Many agreed with the statement, “everyone uses every library.” From this perspective, it appears that proximity to home is not the only consideration for District residents in choosing which library to visit.

That said, mobility within the District varies widely. Not every District resident has access to a vehicle – including children, teens, home-bound seniors, etc. PAC members and Community Conversation participants discussed how population growth has caused increased traffic and longer drive times. Suggestions to compensate included home delivery options, remote materials pick-up and drop-off options, and a new library in north Fort Collins.

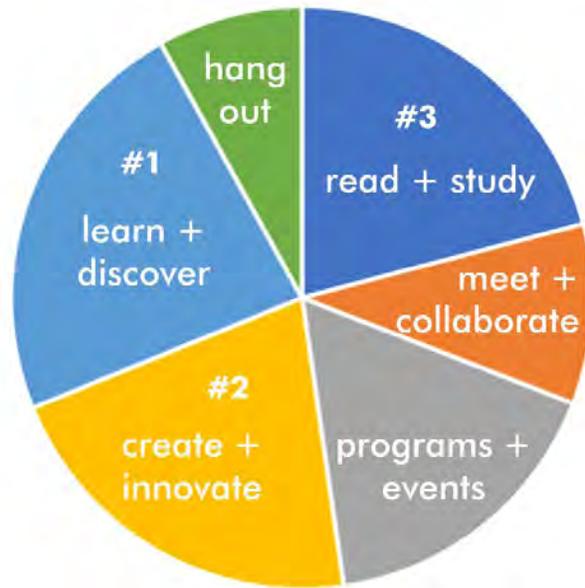


Maps of visitors to Old Town Library (top);  
Harmony Library (above); and  
Council Tree Library (below)



## Libraries facilities today

- ✓ space in libraries is weighted toward traditional services
- ✓ more space is needed for future community growth
- libraries don't provide enough space for people
- libraries lack space for new services



Shown above: Library District community responses to the question "What is your vision for the library?"



Harmony Library

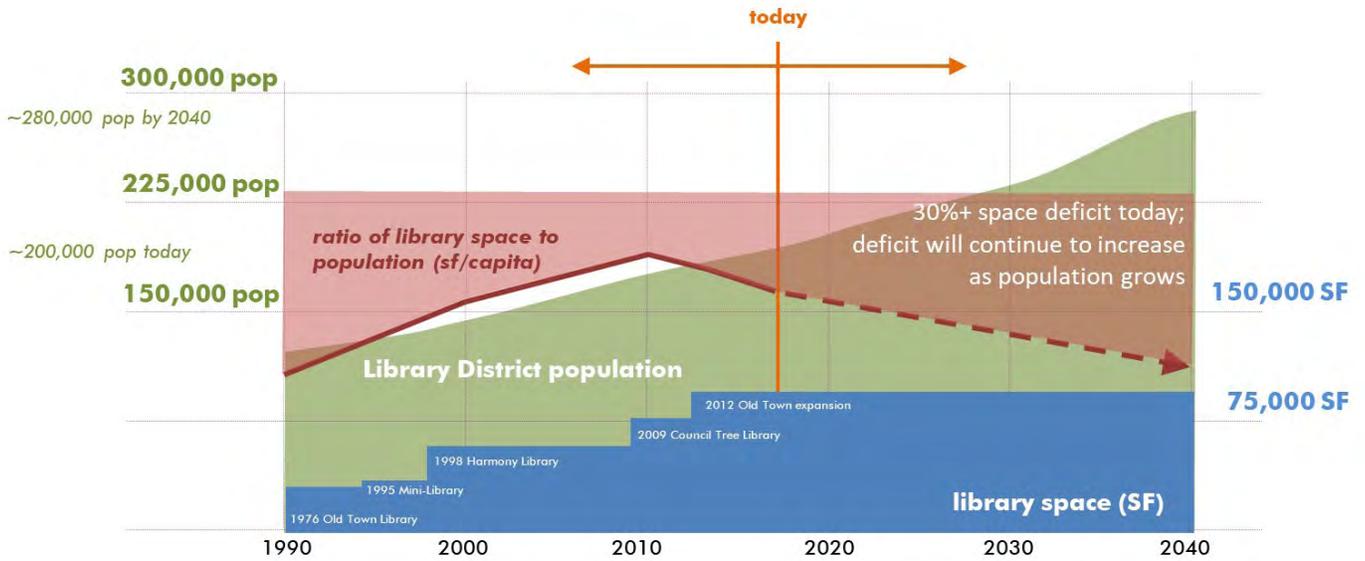
### LIBRARY FACILITIES TODAY

Overall, the Library District's facilities are well-maintained and in good condition. Two of the libraries are relatively young buildings – Harmony Library (1998) and Council Tree (2009) – and Old Town underwent a major renovation in 2012. The Library District proactively budgets for capital maintenance, and addresses needs as they arise (such as upcoming elevator upgrades and chiller replacement at Old Town).

Where the facilities fall short of community expectations is in the amount of space they provide. Shelving – much of it tall and narrowly-spaced – is the dominant element in each of the facilities. The Library District actively manages its physical collection so as to not exceed shelf capacity. For each item acquired, one must be removed from the collection – even if that item is still in demand. This problem will only get worse as the population grows and demand increases.

Space for people in the libraries also in high demand. Community members participating in this process saw the need for adding more space for people – not just for reading and working alone (which was requested by participants in the 2014-2015 needs assessment process), but also for collaborative activities and creative programs. But because of the density of shelving, space for people cannot be expanded without reducing the footprint of the physical collection.

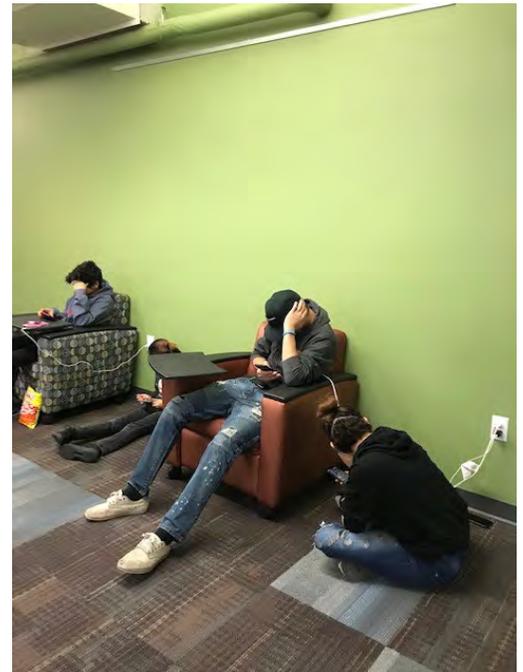
# Capacity for public service



More space is needed for public service in order to meet the community’s vision for service and align with best practices for library space planning and design. Together, Old Town, Harmony, and Council Tree libraries are estimated to provide only 60% to 70% of the space needed today.

Because the demand for library service tends to grow proportionate to community growth, the amount of library space needed to support service is often planned relative to service population. The most common metric for evaluating and tracking capacity for public service in library buildings is the simple ratio of space to population – aka “square feet per capita.”

Using this metric, the Library District’s three facilities provide about 0.43 square feet of space per capita relative to the current District population. As the community grows, that ratio of space to population will continue to decline to 0.3 square feet by 2040 – representing at least a 50% deficit of the space required to support modern library service.



Power outlets are in high demand at the Old Town Library.



Three Library District staff share this workspace at the Webster House Administrative Center.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES TODAY

In addition to its three public service locations, the Library District also maintains two facilities for administrative and central services.

- The **Webster House Administrative Center (WHAC)**, located across from Library Park at the corner of Olive and Mathews, houses most functions except for Collections Services. There also is some space for collecting and sorting donations for the Poudre River Friends of the Library. The building has gone through many phases during its long life; originally built as a residence in 1892, it was later used as a funeral parlor before being converted to office space. The WHAC has a variety of drawbacks associated with older buildings – including inconsistent heating/cooling, accessibility barriers, and increased maintenance needs. The building, which has been altered and expanded over time, also is not optimal for modern, collaborative work. It is too small to house all administrative functions even today, and will not accommodate organizational growth that may be needed to support increased community demand for library service.
- **Collections Services** (Collection Development, Technical Services, and ILL) occupies leased space in Midtown. In terms of space and function, this is a big improvement over the previous cramped quarters these divisions occupied in WHAC and Harmony Library. However, decoupling Collections Services from the other administrative functions is not ideal for communication and collaboration. The current lease expires in 2021, with an option to renew for three years; subsequent availability and affordability of this space is unknown.

**FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING LIBRARY SPACES**

**PUBLIC SPACE PLANNING TARGET**

As described earlier, the Library District’s three public facilities do not provide enough space to fulfill the community’s vision for more – and more diverse – library services. It is estimated that 160,000 square feet of space for public service will be needed to serve the District’s projected 2040 population – at least double the space provided in the Library District’s three current libraries. For the purposes of tracking facility capacity over time relative to the Library District’s service population, this target represents approximately 0.6 square feet of library space per capita.\*

With more space, the Library District will be able to:

- make the physical collection more browsable and user-friendly, while providing capacity for future growth;
- expand and enhance programs, materials, and technology for all ages;
- offer a more diverse selection of seating to suit different needs and preferences, from quiet space for individual work to acoustically-appropriate space for group collaboration and social connection; and
- provide more program and meeting spaces in a greater range of sizes, including space for District-wide destination events.

It should be noted that this target does not include space for Library District administration and centralized services, which is based on anticipated organizational growth rather than population.

**Capacity for public service**

**Expanded space will enable the Library District to:**

- ✓ Increase systemwide capacity for:
  - collection growth + enhanced browsability
  - high-interest programs + services
  - strategically-located high-impact spaces
  - service innovation + partnerships
- ✓ Expand space in libraries for people + programs:
  - learning + discovery for children + teens
  - reading, study, and collaborative work
  - social gathering + community connections



\*Although square feet per capita is a common library facilities planning metric, this target is a customized recommendation for the Library District.

MAXIMIZING ROI IN LIBRARY FACILITIES

This master planning process developed a set of considerations and criteria for maximizing return on the Library District’s investment (ROI) investment in expanded facilities. These include strategies that have proven successful for the Library District in the past, as well as relevant best practices for developing library facilities in other communities. Strategies for achieving higher ROI – both capital and operational – in the Library District’s facilities include:

- **District ownership and/or a strong, long-term partnership** for facilities (such as at the Harmony Library).
- **High-quality, attractive, and sustainably-designed facilities.** The Library District’s facilities should be built to serve the District for many decades, with the flexibility to adapt to changing community needs and library services over time.
- **Strategically-located facilities.** Library facilities benefit from proximity to other community destinations, accessibility by multiple transportation modes, and shared parking with complementary uses.
- **Full-service destination libraries.** Libraries should be at least 30,000 square feet in order to maximize operational efficiency as well as support diverse programs and services.

## Framework for high-ROI library facilities

	LOWER SUCCESS / ROI	HIGHER SUCCESS / ROI	WILD CARDS
<b>Control</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>District ownership</b> of buildings (e.g., OT, CT)</li> <li>▪ <b>Strong partnership</b> (e.g., Harmony)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shared facilities</li> <li>▪ Condo model</li> </ul>
<b>Lease</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lease as a long-term strategy</li> <li>▪ Where lease is very expensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lease OK for small / temporary / test applications</li> <li>▪ Where leases are affordable</li> </ul>	
<b>Capacity + Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small expansions</li> <li>▪ Inflexible / single-purpose spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High-quality construction</li> <li>▪ Highly flexible space + furnishings</li> <li>▪ Sustainable/efficient design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adaptive reuse of appropriate building</li> <li>▪ Iconic architecture</li> </ul>
<b>Service Access + Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited services (e.g., grab ‘n’ go model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Strategically located</b> services/ spaces                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Space along public transit lines</li> <li>▪ Co-location with other destination services; adjacency/ proximity to other community services (e.g., school)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Well-designed for public service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robust core services</li> <li>▪ Merchandising for browsing + discovery; efficient service model</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Shared parking</li> </ul>	
<b>Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small / neighborhood branches</li> <li>▪ Many branches</li> <li>▪ Poor visibility/ space that’s difficult to manage</li> <li>▪ AMH @ lower-circ locations (HL)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Big / destination branches</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Limited number of branches</b></li> <li>▪ Design that supports efficient service</li> <li>▪ Well-designed staff work + support spaces</li> <li>▪ AMH @ high circ locations – CT, OT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Central sorting</li> </ul>
<b>Systemwide Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funky/ crowded spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Co-located / consolidated</b> is better if space is well designed</li> </ul>	

## System plan

### ● Core network of full-service destination libraries

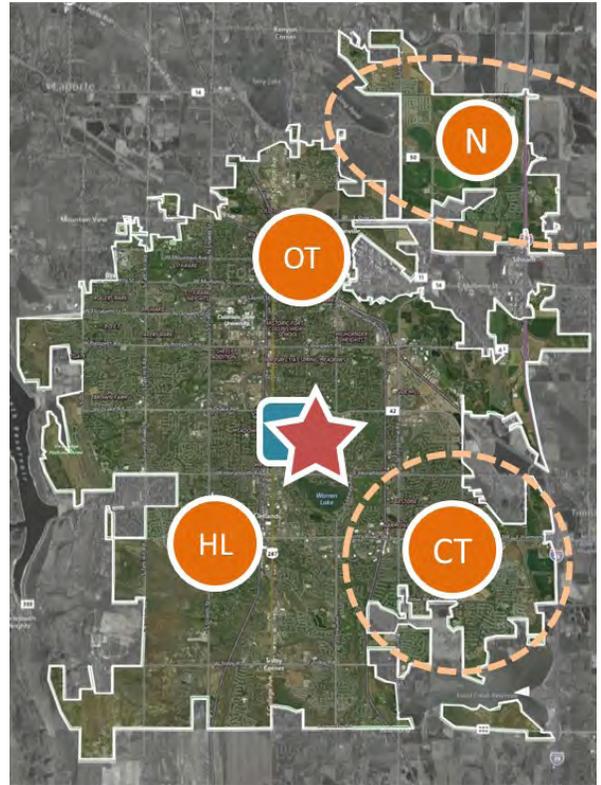
- Sustainable: maximum of four full-service libraries
- Modernize service at Harmony + Old Town
- Look for opportunities to:
  - expand Council Tree to 40,000+ SF (location TBD)
  - add new North branch 30,000+ SF (location TBD)

### ★ Add new “Hub” with high-impact public spaces

- Central location (TBD)
- Flexible space for high-interest programs and services
- Sustainable staffing and operational model

### ■ Relocate Administration/Operations

- Move out of Webster House and Midtown; consolidate in central/accessible location
- Include with public service location



## LIBRARY FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

### FULL-SERVICE LIBRARIES

The Library District should build upon its successful network of full-service destination libraries. It should:

- **Continue to operate Harmony Library** in partnership with Front Range Community College. Through a renovation planning and design process that engages FRCC faculty, staff, and students as well as the community, the Library District should evaluate opportunities to rebalance collection space with expanded people space and new high-impact programs.
- Look for opportunities to **expand Council Tree Library** to at least 40,000 square feet in order to expand core library services, allow for collection growth, and support high-impact programs and spaces. It is likely that the library will need to relocate in order to expand, as the current second floor condo space cannot reasonably be expanded. The Library District may be able to find a larger space within or near Front Range Village, which is still considered an ideal location.
- **Continue to operate the Old Town Library.** Given its relatively recent renovation, this building may not be ready for its next major upgrade for a decade or more. In the meantime, the Library District should consider non-structural opportunities to adapt interior spaces to rebalance space for people, programs, and the collection. The Library District should also continue to collaborate with the City of Fort Collins and the Old Town business community on integrated solutions for shared parking challenges.
- **Build a new full-service destination library** of at least 30,000 square feet in north Fort Collins.

Each of these projects should be developed through a community-based planning and design process to ensure maximum alignment with community vision and priorities.



*The new Indian Creek Library in Olathe, KS is a destination for creativity, collaboration, and community events as well as library programs and services.*

#### NEW CENTRAL HUB

In addition to the network of full-service libraries, the Library District should look for opportunities to build a “Hub” facility with at least 30,000 square feet of space for public service in a central community location. This facility is envisioned to have a distinctive mix of destination spaces and programs that may not be available in all (or any) of the other libraries, such as large program/ event space. It can also provide much-needed system capacity for the physical collection, including for materials relocated from Harmony and Old Town as well as for future collection growth. For maximum long-term sustainability, the Hub should leverage design and technology so that it can operate with a much smaller complement of staff than the other libraries require.

A Hub also can provide opportunities for new methods of managing and distributing the collection. In the Community Conversations facilitated for this process, citizens voiced an interest in an “Amazon-like” on-demand collection that could be summoned much like the current hold system. For this possibility, the Hub could be a location with high-density shelving designed for frequent circulation via direct pickup at the Hub or through the current holds system. This on-demand collection – if facilitated efficiently – could be viewed as both a future-forward innovative service, and also help create more physical space in the full-service libraries for other demands and priorities.

See the next chapter for potential inspirations for this type of facility.

#### CENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION + OPERATIONS

Consolidating central services – including Library District administrative functions, the call center, the collections department, IT, facilities maintenance, etc. – in a single, right-sized facility will support improved organizational communication and collaboration. Co-location of these functions with a public service facility would also provide opportunities for closer observation of public service, particularly prototyping and development of new programs and technology prior to systemwide rollout. The proposed Hub could provide an ideal opportunity for co-locating these centralized functions.



*Flexible collaboration and training space at the Miami Township Library in Dayton, OH*

## FACILITY IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

This section includes information, considerations, and potential next steps for the Library District as it works toward implementation of the recommended projects.

### PROJECT SEQUENCING CONSIDERATIONS

Specific project sequencing or timelines for design and construction were not developed as part of this Master Plan. Considerations in developing the sequence and timing of these projects include:

- **Building capacity.** Building the proposed central Hub as an early project can provide capacity for materials, services, and staff while subsequent projects are taken offline during construction, mitigating or avoiding the need for temporary facilities.
- **Mitigating escalation.** Depending on the implementation timeline, construction market escalation could significantly increase the cost of larger projects. Prioritizing projects with larger budgets (e.g., Central Hub, new North Library, expanded Council Tree) for earlier implementation could help mitigate the biggest impacts of construction market escalation.
- **Maintaining geographic access.** The Library District should sequence projects to avoid simultaneous closure of multiple libraries.
- **Maintenance needs.** It may be logical to schedule library interior renovations with needed life cycle maintenance improvements that may interrupt library service, such as roof replacement, interior finish replacement, mechanical system upgrades, etc.

Other considerations include community support, timing and availability of funding, and taking advantage of opportunities as they arise.

### CAPITAL PROJECT BUDGETING

This master plan is intended to provide a long-range vision and framework for developing improved and expanded Library District facilities. It was developed during a period of significant volatility and escalation in the regional and national construction markets. For that reason, capital budget information associated with the recommended facility projects is included in a separate technical memorandum that can be more easily updated over time. The Library District is encouraged to revisit and update capital budgets regularly to reflect changing construction market conditions as well as evolving project opportunities.

## SITE SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS + CRITERIA

The master plan recommendations include finding two to three additional sites in Fort Collins for expanded library facilities. Site acquisition can be one of the most challenging steps in developing new libraries in high-growth communities. The Library District should begin its search for new sites for these projects as soon as possible. Considerations and evaluation criteria for potential new sites include:

### Location and access

- The site is well-located within the community.
- The site is prominent and highly visible.
- The site is accessible via public transit, by bicycle, and on foot as well as by personal vehicles.

### Capacity and characteristics

- The site is large enough to accommodate the proposed library size, and proportioned to accommodate a building floor plate that supports modern library service and efficient operations. Generally speaking, libraries smaller than about 40,000 square feet should be single story, if possible, given site development opportunities and constraints. Multi-story libraries should strive for as few floors as possible.
- Site topography supports universal access for people of all abilities.
- The site offers access to sufficient parking for the public and staff.

### Compatibility

- Site zoning supports development as a library.
- Adjacent uses are compatible and complementary with a library.
- A library is compatible with the community's development plans and expectations for the site.

### Acquisition and development

- Site acquisition cost.
- Costs to improve/expand utilities and infrastructure (e.g., water, power, sewer, access).
- Costs to remediate poor soil, hazardous materials, or other unique conditions
- Potential for high-value partnership for acquisition, development, and/or ongoing operations.

It should be noted that sites need not necessarily be undeveloped. There are many examples of communities that have acquired existing facilities for successful conversion into modern, high-performance libraries. The Library District should consider such opportunities for creative transformation of an existing facility as well.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS BY FACILITY

### Library District facilities – current and planned

#### Full-service destination libraries

-  Council Tree Library (relocation TBD)
-  Harmony Library
-  Old Town Library
-  New North Library (location TBD)

-  **New Central Hub** (location TBD)

#### Central services

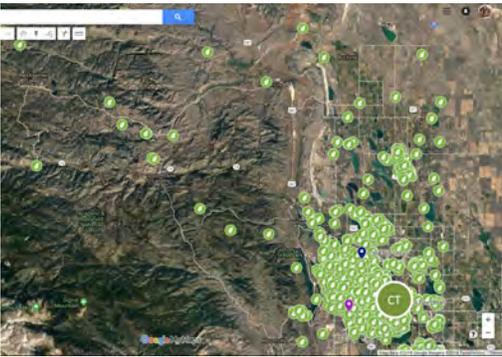
-  Webster House Administrative Center
-  Midtown Center
-  Consolidated Administration/Operations (location TBD)



### FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY FACILITY

This section provides information about current Library District facilities and recommended improvement strategies.

# COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY



## COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

2733 Council Tree Avenue, Fort Collins, CO

The Council Tree Library opened in 2009 in Front Range Village in southeast Fort Collins. The Library District owns the second floor condominium space in the building as well as the ground-level library entry. Parking and site circulation are shared with other retail tenants of the shopping center.

Although the Council Tree Library is the smallest of the three libraries, it does brisk business. Council Tree is open more hours per week than either of the other two libraries – partly to compensate for its smaller size in the face of community demand, and also in recognition of the longer hours of its retail neighbors. Fully one-third of Library District checkouts are from Council Tree. Attendance at children’s programs a Council Tree is particularly high.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

Most of the approximately 16,600 square foot library is located on the second floor of the building. It is an attractive, dynamic, and colorful space with large windows and views from all sides of the building. It has been well maintained and is welcoming, tidy, and comfortable.

The original program concept for the Council Tree Library was as a convenient “grab and go” location emphasizing materials browsing, pick-up, and drop-off. However, spaces and services have been modified over time to reflect the community’s expectations and use patterns of Council Tree as a full-service facility – including more reading and working in the library.

That said, the interior of the Council Tree Library is still heavily collection-focused. At nearly 5 volumes per square foot, it has the highest collection density of any Library District facility. Further expansion of space for people and programs – such as enclosed consultation spaces, which were suggested in community meetings – within the existing space would require displacement of some of the collection.

## COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

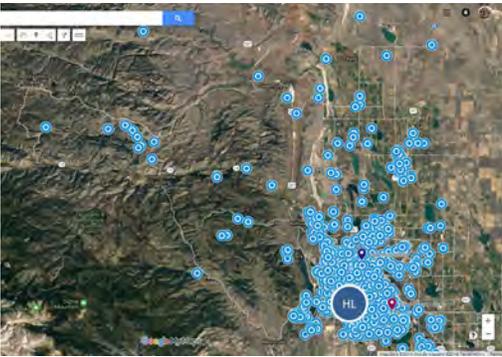


### RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Due to strong community growth and increasing demand for service, it is recommended that the Library District look for opportunities to expand the Council Tree Library to at least 40,000 square feet. A library of this size would support expansion of core library services and collection growth as well as the potential for higher-impact programs and spaces.

Because the current building does not appear to offer expansion opportunities that would be efficient or cost-effective to operate over time, it is likely that the library will need to relocate in order to expand. Front Range Village is still considered to be a good location, and the Library District may be able to find a larger space within the shopping center.

## HARMONY LIBRARY



### HARMONY LIBRARY

4616 South Shields Street, Fort Collins, CO

The Harmony Library opened in 1998 as a partnership with Front Range Community College. The Library District provides library staff, services, collections, and technology, while FRCC owns and maintains the building, site, and parking.

Unique program elements in the Harmony Library include a business and non-profit center as well as a computer lab. Harmony Library hosts the only real “store” operated by the Poudre River Friends of the Library, which is described as “small but adequate.”

Harmony Library provides a particular emphasis on teen and adult programming, reflecting its dual academic-public library role as well as evolving community demographics. About 30% of Library District checkouts are from Harmony Library.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

The approximately 30,000 square foot Harmony Library building is attractive and well-maintained. In plan, the intersection of three axes creates a dynamic central space that can be used for programs as well as for highlighting new and popular collection materials. Copious windows bring pleasant natural light into each of the building wings. Enclosed study rooms in a range of sizes are distributed through the interior.

One-third of the Library District’s collection is housed at the Harmony Library. Tall, narrowly-spaced stacks dominate the space within the library’s main east-west axis. Public seating and technology are largely relegated to the perimeter; while they provide great views to the outside, they can be difficult for staff to easily observe from inside the building.

The meeting room is located outside of the main library space and can be operated independently, which people appreciate. Due to insufficient storage, chair dollies are stored within the space – thereby reducing the effective capacity of the meeting room. Environmental controls are not fully effective in maintaining a comfortable temperature in the meeting room; supplemental fans have been added in the space, and the shades on south-facing windows do not adequately prevent solar heat gain transfer.

# HARMONY LIBRARY



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The master plan recommends that the Library District continue to operate the Harmony Library in partnership with Front Range Community College. It is recommended that the Harmony Library be renovated and modernized to increase space for people and programs within the existing envelope. As other Library District facilities expand and can absorb more of the collection, space in the Harmony Library can be recaptured for new uses. That said, the community continues to value its access to a rich, diverse collection at this location.

Opportunities to support higher-impact services at Harmony Library could include more flexible spaces for both formal programming and informal activities. Participants in this master plan process specifically mentioned the opportunity to provide places for civic conversations and increased community connections at the Harmony Library.

Expansion of the Harmony Library is not considered to be the most cost-effective strategy for building system capacity for the Library District overall. However, opportunities to achieve other specific goals through expansion may arise through a collaborative planning and design process with FRCC and the community, and the Library District certainly should consider the costs and benefits within that context.

# OLD TOWN LIBRARY



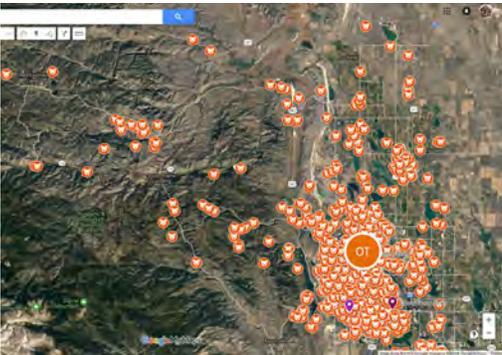
## OLD TOWN LIBRARY

201 Peterson Street, Fort Collins, CO

In 2016, the Old Town Library celebrated its 40th anniversary of community service. It is just a short walk from the shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues in Old Town. It shares Library Park with its predecessor – the original Carnegie building, which served as the community’s only library for more than 70 years.

More than one-third of Library District checkouts are from the Old Town Library. Adult programs are especially well-attended at Old Town, which also draws a significant number of children and teens for programming as well. Among the things that they like about the Old Town Library, community meeting attendees mentioned the collection size and variety of resources, such as the seed swap.

The Poudre River Friends of the Library operate a self-service kiosk and shelves at Old Town, which is reported to be a successful model at this location.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building was renovated and expanded in 2012. About 6,000 square feet of space was added to the overall building size by enclosing exterior patios; additional interior space was also gained for public service after Library District Administration moved out. The expansion project added a new suite of group study/collaboration spaces as well as an expanded children’s library with dedicated program space.

Orientation and wayfinding within the library building can be a challenge. On the first floor, the building core (elevator and restrooms) blocks visibility of some of the public areas, making it hard to “read” the overall layout. Also, because the Old Town Library houses nearly 45% of the District’s print collection, it still has relatively large blocks of tall stack shelving that also reduce visibility. (Some community members mentioned that it can be difficult to find particular items on the shelves at Old Town Library.)

Library Park is busy with people throughout the day – some of whom are passing by or through, and others who are settling in for a longer stay. Participants in meetings held for this master plan process reported that they sometimes feel uncomfortable when they visit the Old Town Library because of other park users.



# OLD TOWN LIBRARY



A number of people mentioned the challenges of finding parking when visiting the library during popular times. The library does not have its own dedicated parking, but shares street parking in the surrounding neighborhood as well as municipal lots serving the Old Town commercial district.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Old Town Library is a valued asset, and the Library District should continue to operate and maintain it. Further expansion of the building is not considered to be feasible, nor is it recommended. Rather, the Library District should continue to adapt interior spaces over time to respond to changing community interests and needs over time.

That said, it will not be easy to make more space available for people and programs at Old Town Library while it continues to serve as the Library District's primary location for the print collection. When other library facilities are brought online that can absorb more of the collection, additional space at Old Town Library can be recaptured for new, higher-impact uses.

The Library District should continue to collaborate with the City of Fort Collins and the Old Town business community to develop integrated solutions to shared parking needs.

## NEW CENTRAL HUB

### NEW CENTRAL HUB

In addition to the network of full-service libraries, the Library District should look for opportunities to develop a new “Hub” facility in a central community location. This is envisioned as a distinct new public service typology for the District, providing destination spaces and programs within a highly efficient and sustainable operating model. This facility also has the opportunity to significantly boost system capacity for current and future collection growth.

Options to explore during a community-based planning and design process include:

- higher-capacity program and event space than is available in the other libraries;
- a suite of learning and collaboration spaces;
- spaces for creative programs and activities;
- space to host service partners and community organizations (short-term or seasonal);
- high-density shelving to support increased system collection capacity; and/or
- unstaffed, self-service resources (e.g., holds pick-up, materials drop-off).

It is recommended that the Library District plan for a Hub facility that includes at least 30,000 square feet for public service. A site that supports access via multiple modes of transportation, including public transit, is ideal – along with sufficient parking.

This central Hub could also provide an ideal opportunity for relocating Library District administrative and operations functions from Webster House and the Midtown facility. More focused planning is needed to understand the amount and type of space that will be needed for these services over time. In the interim, for the purposes of assessing opportunities, a placeholder of 15,000 to 20,000 square feet (in addition to space for public service) could be used for these functions.

### INSPIRATION: Downtown Library — Spokane, WA

At the heart of the Spokane Public Library’s system is the 126,000 square foot Downtown Library, where collection growth over time had crowded out space for people and programs. In 2015, SPL cleared out a significant amount of shelving on the top floor of the Downtown Library.

With stunning views of the Spokane River and falls, the newly flexible space is used daily for programs, casual seating, and informal collaboration. It is also used for large events, including SPL’s award-winning Lilac City Live program which draws hundreds of community members for live music, comedy, skits, poetry readings, and more.



# NEW CENTRAL HUB

## INSPIRATION: Library 21c — Pikes Peak Library District

In 2011, the Pikes Peak Library District purchased a former office building that had been vacant for nearly a decade. PPLD transformed it into Library 21c, which was hailed as the “library of the future” when it opened to the public in 2014.

Although the collection and other core services are still on offer, they are a complement to a rich array of spaces for people and programs, including large event/performance space, creative spaces, a business center, audio and video production labs, and a suite of collaboration and community gathering spaces.

PPLD also co-located its district administrative offices into the 112,000 square foot building.



## INSPIRATION: Indian Creek Library — Olathe, KS



The City of Olathe purchased a former grocery store building for conversion into a library to replace an existing branch that was heavily damaged after flooding two years ago.

The 45,000 square foot new Indian Creek Library will feature a suite of flexible and technology-rich spaces for creation, collaboration, and library programming. The vibrant children’s library is designed with copious space for programming and discovery as well as enhanced collections and technology.

The new library is expected to open in the summer of 2019.

# NEW NORTH LIBRARY

## NEW NORTH LIBRARY

The Library District should develop a new full-service library of at least 30,000 square feet, which is about the size of the current Harmony Library. Although the specific space program for this facility would be developed in collaboration with the community, it is envisioned that a new North Library would provide diverse spaces for people and programming as well as a healthy collection. The Library District could also explore opportunities to create unique services and programs at this library, depending on both community and library system needs.

It is recommended that the District look for a destination site that is particularly accessible for the populations of and beyond north Fort Collins. One opportunity to explore is the proposed Montava development, just west of the Budweiser plant. See Section 4 for site selection criteria.

## INSPIRATION: Northwest Library — Dayton, OH

The 30,000 square foot Northwest Library is one of the largest branches in the Dayton Metro Library system. Materials, resources, and staff from three smaller facilities were consolidated into a new, state-of-the-art facility that supports modern service and more efficient operations.

The new library features a spacious children's area with dedicated program space; dedicated teen space with gaming and recording studio; multiple flexible "opportunity" spaces for library and partner use; group study and conference rooms for up to eight people; large, divisible community room; and a quiet fireside reading lounge.

The Northwest Library was one of the first projects in DML's "Libraries for a Smarter Future" initiative. This citywide capital campaign for improved library facilities is funded through a successful \$187 million voter measure.



# WEBSTER HOUSE

## WEBSTER HOUSE ADMINISTRATION CENTER

301 East Olive Street, Fort Collins, CO

The Webster House Administrative Center is located across from Library Park at the corner of Olive and Mathews. The building has gone through many phases during its long life; originally a grand residence, it was later expanded to become a funeral parlor, and then eventually converted for office use.

The Library District purchased the building in 2011 and relocated all of its central services there – including Administration, Collections, IT, Facilities Maintenance, Communications, Outreach, and the Answer Center. (Collections Services later moved to the Midtown Center, allowing other functions in Webster House to breathe and grow.) The Poudre River Friends of the Library also has some donations and sorting space at Webster House.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

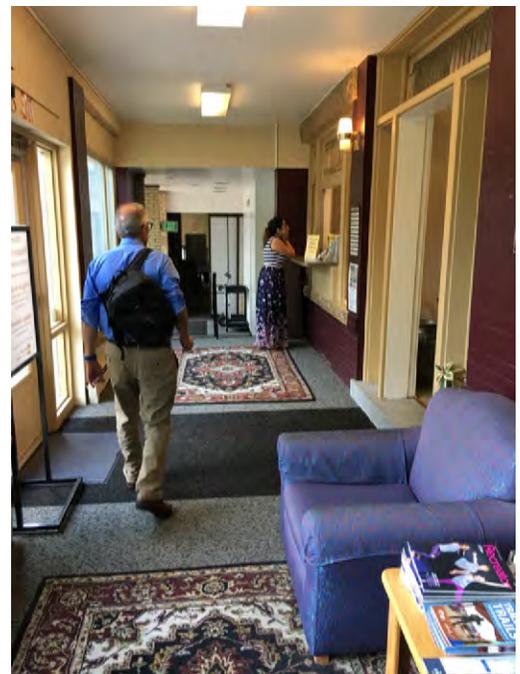
Webster House is an older facility, originally built in 1892 with residential quality materials and systems. None of the rooms used as offices was originally designed for that purpose, and most are shared by multiple people. For example, Webster House’s original porch – now enclosed – houses three members of the Library District’s Communications team; the space is not only extremely crowded, but also difficult to heat and cool effectively. Two small rooms are reserved for meetings and collaboration, but neither can accommodate the entire Library Leadership Team; the larger of the two rooms doubles as overflow storage for supplies and equipment.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Webster House was a great opportunity for the Library District as a near-term strategy for accommodating growth of both central services and public service at Old Town Library. However, it cannot adequately serve the Library District’s needs today, nor will it be able to accommodate future organizational growth and change.

The Library District should look for alternate space for its administrative and central services to support improved operations, communications, and collaboration. Estimating the actual amount of space needed will require more focused analysis, including consideration of long-range projections of staffing and organizational growth. That said, it is very likely that more space will be needed than what is currently provided by Webster House and Midtown.

Co-location of central services with one of the Library District’s other facilities would be an optimal strategy, both for reconnecting administrative functions with public service as well as for minimizing the number of facilities it needs to operate and maintain.



# MIDTOWN CENTER



## MIDTOWN COLLECTIONS CENTER

In 2018, the Library District acquired lease space in Midtown Fort Collins in order to relocate its Collections Development and Technical Services functions out of Webster House. The Library District also took the opportunity to relocate Inter-Library Loan here from the Harmony Library.

The future availability and affordability of this space after the lease expires is unknown (the current term ends in 2021, and there is an option to renew through 2024). As a long-term strategy, the Library District should co-locate Collections Services with other administrative functions (see the recommendations for Webster House Administration Center) in appropriately-designed space.



## 6. LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY

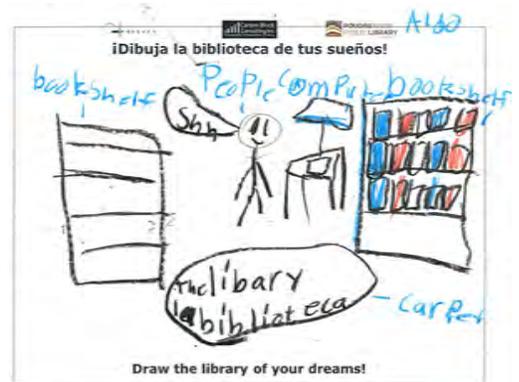
This section includes an assessment of the Library District's technology, suggestions for criteria to make decisions about technology and recommendations for the master plan and implementation.

### TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

It could be argued that, for many customers, access to technology in 2018 is as important as books, programs, and other library services. According to community members engaged in this master planning process, technology in the right measure is an essential library function – especially to serve the access and learning needs of people across the demographic spectrum. This may be best represented in the drawings from children in a focus group who, when asked to draw their “dream library,” showed – in equal measure – shelves of books in English and Spanish, along with robust Wifi and computers in the mix.

For many years the Poudre River Public Library District has placed a key importance on technology, including technology access for customers at all library locations; partnership with the City of Fort Collins to provide strong Internet connectivity; early adoption of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) for seamless check-ins and checkouts of library materials; and development of the Library District's websites (including the library's physical materials, digital holdings, general information, and more).

Since technology is both ever-changing and key to library service delivery, it's important to ensure that it remains fresh and vital over time. While the Library District has kept its technology offerings reliable and fresh, it has opportunities to grow, particularly in its core network (wired and WiFi) and digital offerings to customers through its website.



Children participating in a focus group on November 14 drew their ideal libraries. Technology was a prominent feature of many of the drawings, including wifi and computers.

## FRAMEWORK FOR TECHNOLOGY

First and foremost, technology in libraries is an essential support service for public service goals and objectives – it can be thought of as the service channel that helps facilitate the strength and success of the Inside and Outside service channels. This role is often invisible to users – yet is vitally important.

As well, library technology is also a highly visible component of library services, with computing devices, audio-visual systems, mobile technologies, the Library District's website, digital collections, virtual services, makerspaces and others coming to mind when many people think of "library technology."

When making decisions about technology, simple criteria can be helpful. In this model, it's generally not a question of "yes or no" (technology like data networks, Internet access, the Integrated Library System, public and staff computing, and other areas are all certainly a "yes" today and for the foreseeable future) but "how does the library get the most benefit from its technological investment?"

Criteria should be applied to the major technology systems in the library:

- Enterprise (major systems serving the entire organization, including the data networks and the Integrated Library System)
- Public/Services (all technology used by library customers)
- Staff/Support (all technology used by library staff)

Key questions include:

- Is this technology or technology service mission-critical for library operations?
- What is the cost-per-use of this technology?
- Is this technology unique to libraries, or is it a common commodity?
- Does this technology/service/platform scale or is it limited?
- What is the value? (i.e. high value/low cost; low value/low cost; low value/high cost; low value/low cost)
- Are there alternatives that perform better and/or are less expensive?
- How is current and future technology evaluated?

## TECHNOLOGY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Library District is encouraged to look at technology as a strategic asset, and take steps to ensure greater control and responsibility in how technology – particularly connectivity – can scale to meet the needs of facilities and remote locations into the future.

The Library District currently has a cooperative agreement with the City of Fort Collins to provide certain IT services, including connecting each library location with fiber. This agreement was created when the Library District first formed (it was formerly a department of the City of Fort Collins). In the early days of the Library District, it made a great deal of sense to maintain certain relationships with City IT, including providing connectivity. As both have grown, needs are beginning to specialize, and the Library District sometimes does not have timely access to network data or to make changes in the network to improve services. For the Library District to make the best strategic use of connectivity, it should begin to provision, design, and maintain (either from library IT staff or through outsourcing) its own data networks.

Further, taking ownership of its data networks will allow the Library District to take greater advantage of the federal Erate program which offers discounts for certain data services and equipment (<https://www.usac.org/sl/>). Because of the Library District's technology arrangement with the City, it currently does not participate in Erate in all eligible areas. The Erate program allows many libraries in the country to fund significant improvements to network hardware, software and services on an annual basis, leveraging federal dollars allocated for connectivity purposes to augment local funds.

If the Library District is able to take control of its network, it should consider changes to current facility resources allocated for technology support. Of its five major locations, only one facility has a properly-designed IT room. This area has adequate capacity to serve as a Network Operations Center (NOC) for the facility, and through greater use of remote management tools this location could also be used to house core server and network hardware that is currently located in the other library facilities (and in less than ideal IT environments). Further, if the Library District is able to create a new Hub location, that may prove as an ideal location for the primary NOC, with the current facility serving as a secondary site for network and service needs, data backups, and other elements of modern IT network and service design.

If the Library District has control over its networks, it will also have the opportunity to innovate in creating connections for library services throughout the District, including non-building locations. It may leverage possible partnerships with others (including the Poudre School District, the town of Wellington, and the Redfeather Library District) or commodity data connections such as cell-data services, but this could also include expanding connectivity to unserved locations through point-to-point connectivity created by the Library District, including common wireless technologies such as microwave or special wireless spectrum often referred to as "TV White Spaces" (<https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=whitespace-project-could-grow-rural-broadband-access>).

Further, with more control over its network the Library District would have the option to address a current challenge in its WiFi network. Currently, WiFi is designed to serve customers only (with access to the Internet); by re-designing the networks, the library would have the option to offer staff secure wireless for staff functions – further supporting current district service models (such as roving staff to serve customer needs) and increase options for placement of computing devices that either require or would benefit from wireless access to the staff data network.

In additions to changes to the core infrastructure, the Library District also has the opportunity to improve its digital services to customers in several areas:

### **Physical/Inside Technology**

- In its offerings to library customers inside of buildings, the Library District may consider offering more physical space for customer items at computer workstations wherever possible. More space allows for greater comfort and productivity for customers, many of whom require other materials (including books, papers, and other technology devices) to perform work. It's true that many customers are doing simple web browsing (and do not require extra space); in cases where its possible, the Library District may consider a mix of space options.
- Where possible, the Library District should increase the number of power outlets for customers to charge mobile devices throughout the library. At best, anywhere a customer might sit should include a standard and USB power outlet. While making power available at the Old Town and Harmony Libraries is challenging, the raised floor and underfloor power grid at Council Tree offers options to more easily (and inexpensively) improve power options for customers.
- The Library District is considering upgrades to its Audio-Visual support for its meeting rooms. The Library District should indeed upgrade projectors in each of its large meeting room, but should also consider adding display devices (such as large-screen monitors) to many of the smaller meeting rooms throughout all library buildings. Connections to such monitors should be designed as an easy self-service option for customers, and when possible support both wired and wireless video connection options.

## Online/Technology

The Library District may consider further developing its digital offerings to act as more like a “digital branch” with the aim of optimizing digital offerings to serve the specific needs of online customers – especially those using mobile devices, as well as those with adequate connectivity when not using services inside a library building. Such an undertaking is much more than a simple website redesign. It would involve ongoing assessment and improvement of all of the Library District’s digital offerings (including the Integrated Library System, digital materials, library information, opportunities for interaction, mobile device optimization and others) from both a customer perspective (especially around creating excellent customer experiences and ease of use) and a staff standpoint (as a powerful tool for staff to use – as well as a platform for staff contributions to the Library District’s digital efforts). This recommendation would require a substantial amount of effort and perhaps funding – and may be considered as an objective in the Library District’s strategic planning process scheduled for 2019.

The Library District has used the same Integrated Library System (the ILS – also known as the “electronic card catalog”) for a number of years. While the system is a leading ILS in the market and seems to be performing well for the Library District – and there are indeed operational and efficiency advantages to having intimate knowledge of the system – it is a best practice for any library to periodically evaluate its ILS compared to other options on the market. Even with consolidations and mergers in the ILS market (resulting in fewer choices) the Library District may consider formally evaluating its current ILS to ensure it is up to the task of the library master plan as well as an anticipated strategic plan in 2019.

Finally, when the Library District updates its strategic plan (planned for early 2019), it’s recommended that a separate technology plan be created to identify and provide the specifications and resources for the crucial technology devices, support structures and IT systems required for customer services and staff needs.

## TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION

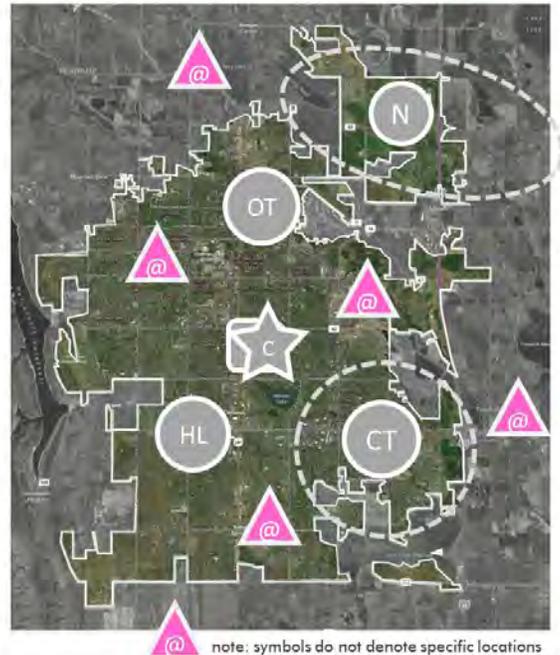
Key facility considerations for technology in facilities include:

- Access to core Wide Area Network (WAN) – usually via a direct fiber-optic connection.
- A power plan design that ensures easy access to power receptacles (in 2019 including both standard and USB power) for customers and staff.
- Option to provide access flooring/raised floor to allow for movement of wire services (including high voltage power and low-voltage data) to create flexibility over time.
- Proper space allocated for Master Distribution Facility (MDF) and any necessary Independent Distribution Facilities (IDF) to provide data services and connectivity for each building to meet specifications for structured cabling for IT and AV applications.
- Observation of industry standards for data networks and distribution (including these design references:
  - **ANSI/TIA-569-C Telecommunications Pathways and Spaces**  
This is the Telecommunications Industry Association’s standard for the design of buildings that host telecommunications systems of all kinds.  
<http://innovave.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/tia-569-c.pdf>
  - **BICSI Telecommunications Distribution Methods Manual**  
This manual is “the definitive reference manual for telecommunications and information communications technology infrastructure design.”  
[https://www.bicsi.org/book\\_details.aspx?Book=TDMM-CM-13.0-v5andd=0](https://www.bicsi.org/book_details.aspx?Book=TDMM-CM-13.0-v5andd=0)
- Considerations for any specialized technology or environmental needs (including, but not limited to, maker spaces).

## System plan – outside services

### @ Service delivery in non-library spaces

- **Near-term** – use outside service strategies to supplement branch space for people + programs
  - partner spaces host library programs and services
  - non-traditional library spaces
  - mobile + pop-up services
- **Ongoing** – leverage outside service strategies in response to specific needs + goals:
  - example goals: reduce barriers to access; increase geographic presence + reach
  - match the strategy to the need/goal
  - confirm options and opportunities through strategic planning process



### OUTSIDE SERVICES

In addition to services delivered in its facilities and through technology, the Library District also delivers service “Outside” in the community. Its Outreach programs are vibrant and high-impact, engaging more than 60 people per day, on average, in programs out in the community.

The Library District has also explored the potential for automated strategies in outside locations to expand access to library services.

- Its 2009 Facilities Master Plan recommended using automated materials dispensers in the mountain communities to boost access to the collection. These were not implemented due to cost as well as concerns about the reliability of equipment available on the market at that time.
- In 2017, the Library District began working with the Fort Collins Senior Center to evaluate the feasibility, costs, and benefits of installing a materials dispenser in that facility (which already has a remote library return book drop). Those discussions were suspended earlier this year due to costs and inability to find a suitable location in the building.



## FRAMEWORK AND CRITERIA FOR OUTSIDE SERVICES

As a category, Outside service delivery strategies generally provide a narrower range of services than are available within library facilities. Therefore, they tend to be most effective when they are selected to address the specific needs of specific populations.

One significant advantage of Outside strategies is that they enable libraries to be highly agile. Some strategies, such as programming in partner spaces, can be designed and implemented in a matter of days; they are relatively simple to refine and tailor to specific needs at each point of delivery, and easy to discontinue once they are no longer needed. Other strategies, such as mobile library service vans, may have longer lead times and higher first costs, but then can be taken out to a wide variety of community locations on either a scheduled or impromptu basis.

There is no one-size-fits-all Outside strategy that is appropriate for all needs and populations. There are literally dozens, if not hundreds, of options – any one of which can be a great idea or a terrible idea, depending on specific community needs and library service priorities. And because community needs and library service priorities tend to evolve more rapidly than facilities, many Outside strategies are more appropriately evaluated within a shorter time frame (e.g., five years or less), rather than within a long-range master planning process.

### SELF-SERVICE: goLibrary @ Olathe Community Center

The Olathe Public Library (KS) has a significant presence in the City of Olathe's new community recreation and aquatics center. The goLibrary is part of the center's spacious lounge, which is easily visible from the main entry and near the recreation staff reception desk. The goLibrary offers materials pickup lockers, a bookdrop for returns, and a computer touchscreen providing access to the Library's website.



Assessment of specific Library District Outreach programs and Outside service strategies was beyond the scope of this master plan. However, this planning process did include some discussions of opportunities to expand Outside services, as well as potential criteria for evaluating specific options. These criteria include:

- The range and type of services that the strategy provides
- The specific goals, objectives, and impacts that the strategy is intended to achieve
- Populations that are likely to use and benefit from the strategy
- Timeline, costs, and other resources to design and implement the strategy
- Ongoing costs of operations – e.g., staffing, maintenance, supplies
- Specialized staff, equipment, and/or spaces that may be required
- Flexibility and adaptability of the strategy over time in response to evolving needs
- Scalability in response to changing use and demands
- Indicators of success – which may be more complex than just metrics/statistics

The above list of criteria is by no means exhaustive. The Library District is encouraged to confirm these criteria and how to apply them through its upcoming and ongoing strategic planning efforts.

### EMBEDDED STAFF: Alameda County Library @ REACH Ashland Youth Center

The Alameda County Library (CA) provides a full-time embedded librarian in the REACH Ashland Youth Center, which is operated by the County's Health Care Services Agency. ACL operates a dedicated, drop-in space in the center, offering a library collection of more than 2,000 books and magazines as well as reference services. ACL also hosts a variety of programs, including a film club, poetry writing classes, author visits, arts and craft workshops, and more.

ACL is not the only partner integral to the success of this vital, award-winning community destination for teens. Many other partner agencies are also engaged in providing programs and services at the Youth Center, including the San Lorenzo Unified School District, the Hayward Area Recreation & Parks District, the Alameda County Deputy Sheriffs' Activities League, and La Clinica de la Raza.



## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OUTSIDE SERVICES

As with the Library District's 2015 Needs Assessment, this master planning process found that there is great interest in and support for expanded Outside services. There is tremendous potential for the Library District to use Outside strategies in a range of ways, such as to "pilot test" services in new locations, expand community access to services in partner facilities, and build broader awareness of library services outside the Fort Collins city limits. The Library District should leverage its upcoming strategic planning process to confirm the needs and priority for outside services, identify appropriate outside service delivery strategies, and address implementation considerations (e.g., capital and operations budgets, timeline for development and deployment, organizational and staff development needs).

However, for the most part this master plan does not offer recommendations for specific Outside services or programs... with one exception. This master plan strongly recommends that the Library District actively pursue opportunities to expand its capacity for programming in non-library spaces – at least as an interim strategy until facilities can be expanded. In the near term, this will help alleviate the current deficit of space for people and programs within the library facilities. It can also provide opportunities for stronger partnerships and increased community awareness of the need for improved library facilities.

### ON THE MOVE: Lookmobile @ San Mateo County Libraries



In addition to a traditional bookmobile, the San Mateo County Libraries also operates the Lookmobile: an interactive mobile library designed in partnership with the Exploratorium art and science museum in San Francisco.

The custom-built Lookmobile trailer features interactive exhibits and hands-on activities emphasizing the unique history, populations, and geographies of San Mateo County. Core experiences include maps and map-making activities, a pinhole camera wall, a camera obscura, and a fog-generating tricycle.

SMCL hosts the Lookmobile at all 12 of its countywide library branches as well as touring other community locations.





## APPENDIX A: PROJECT PARTICIPATION

In all, thousands of people provided insight and input into the development of this plan – far more than can be recognized by name in this document. Below is a partial list of the Library District leadership and staff, stakeholders, and community members who participated in the development of this plan.

### LIBRARY LEADERSHIP TEAM

- David Slivken, Executive Director\*
- Ken Draves, Deputy Director\*
- Jeff Barnes, Finance Officer\*
- Paula Watson-Lakamp, Communications Manager\*
- Tova Aragon, Collections Manager
- Johanna Ulloa-Giron, Outreach Services Manager
- Mark Huber, Information Technology Manager
- Eileen McCluskey, Old Town Library Manager
- Currie Meyer, Council Tree Library Manager
- Sabrina Stromnes, Human Resources Manager
- Cynthia Langren, Executive Administration Assistant

\* Project Management Team (PMT) members

### LIBRARY DISTRICT TRUSTEES

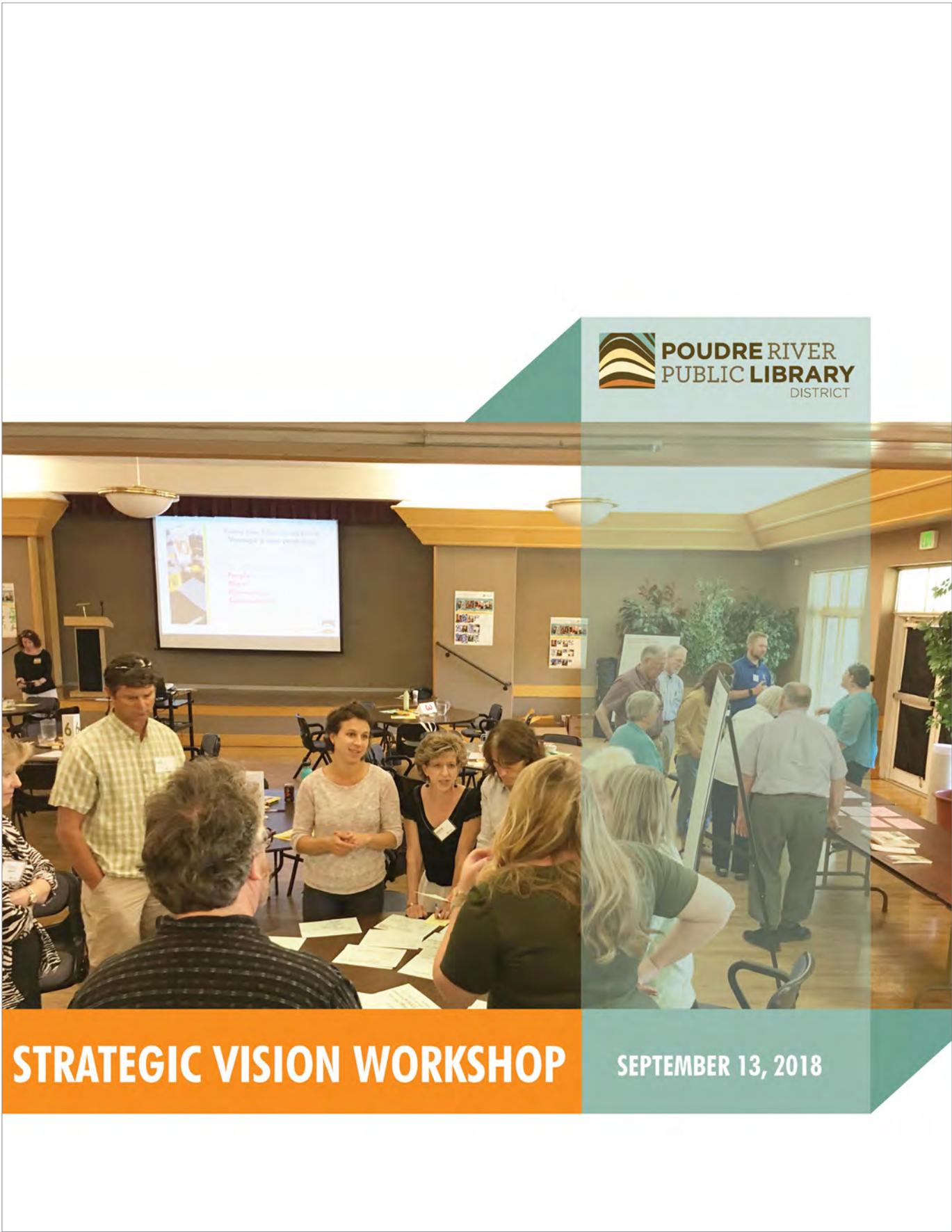
- Amanda Quijano, President\*\*
- Valerie Arnold\*\*
- Becki Schulz\*\*
- Fred Colby\*\*
- Joe Wise\*\*
- Matt Schild
- John Frey

\*\*Plan Advisory Committee members



#### PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Amanda Quijano, Library District Board President
- Anais Dominguez, The Family Center
- Anne Million, Former Boulder PL Board member
- Annie Davies, United Way of Larimer County
- Annie Fox, Front Range Community College Librarian
- Becca Bramhall, Clothes Pony
- Becki Schulz, Library District Board
- Becky Sheller, Library District Collections Services
- Beth Sowder, Fort Collins Office of Social Sustainability
- Bev Thurber, Early Childhood Council
- Bob Viscount, Friends of the Library Board
- Cathy Kipp, Poudre School District Board
- Chris Cortez, Library District Answer Center
- Emily Gorgol, The Family Center
- Fred Colby, Library District Board
- Holly Bucks, Circulation Supervisor, Old Town Library
- Janina Farinas, CSU Human Development and Family Studies
- Jeff Mihelich, Fort Collins Deputy City Manager
- Jenny Thurman, Library District Teen Librarian
- Jennifer Zachman, Library District Children's Librarian
- Jerry Schiager, Fort Collins Police Services
- Joe Wise, Library District Board
- John McKay, Poudre School District Language, Culture, and Equity
- Julie Lechtanski, Friends of the Library President
- Linda Hopkins, Library Trust Board
- Margie Wagner, Front Range Community College Center for Adult Learning
- Mary Atchison, Yellow Wagon Leadership
- Mike O'Connell, Larimer Small Business Development Center
- Molly Thompson, Library District Business Librarian
- Nick Armstrong, WTF Marketing
- Pat Burns, CSU Dean of Libraries
- Peggy Lyle, Creative Ideas
- Richard Alper, Library Trust Board
- Robin Gard, Friends of the Library Board
- Sara Maranowicz, Bohemian Foundation
- Sarah Scobey, Library District Non-Profit Librarian
- Sylvia Garcia, Library District Outreach Services
- Valerie Arnold, Library District Board
- Valerie Mauksch, Fort Collins Reads



 **POUDRE RIVER  
PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
DISTRICT

**STRATEGIC VISION WORKSHOP**

SEPTEMBER 13, 2018

## THE WORKSHOP

On September 13, 2018, dozens of community leaders, library staff, and representatives from public agencies, private businesses, and non-profit organizations gathered at the Fort Collins Senior Center to engage in dialogue about what the future will bring for this community, and the role that the Poudre River Public Library District will play in bringing the vision to life.

The workshop was led by Group 4 Architecture Research + Planning, Inc., a planning and architectural firm helping libraries nationwide develop visions and plans for vibrant and sustainable communities. Participants collaborated throughout the day on a series of focused activities to develop ideas and encourage visionary thinking about the future of the Poudre River Public Library District. Participants were invited to approach each activity according to four themes: People, Place, Partnerships, and Sustainability.

The workshop was a key strategy for engaging stakeholders and the community in the process of developing a new master plan for the Poudre River Public Library District, a process scheduled to be complete in December 2018. Other engagement strategies for the master plan include a stakeholder-based advisory committee, as well as extensive outreach through community meetings, focus groups, and pop-up surveys.



## A CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Upon arrival, participants were asked to imagine themselves in the year 2030, and brainstorm about the value and impact that their organizations have had for the community since 2018.

Participants then snowballed in small groups to discuss the trends that shape how their respective organizations deliver service and benefit to the community. They described a range of trends and key issues around the theme of “culture of sustainability” that will shape and impact their organizations and the community in the future:

- **Environmental** – conserving and protecting natural resources
- **Economic** – community affordability, livable wages, equitable opportunity, matching workforce skills with employment market needs
- **Social** – diversity, inclusion, accessibility
- **Community** – growth, mobility, resilience, connections

## BEYOND-THE-BOX FUTURE LIBRARIES

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 from each of the four themes into hypothetical future libraries representing those key attributes. Each future library was named by its creators and presented to all participants.

There were several metaphors that resonated with multiple groups:

- Blue Apron represents one model for providing high quality, convenient services at the point of need. It also offers its customers an easy way to try new things, build new skills, and share activities as a family.
- Airbnb provides a platform for matching needs with community-based resources, as well as for sharing user feedback.
- Google is a “one-stop shop,” providing 24/7 access to knowledge and information. It uses analytics to provide more personalized services.
- Instagram leverages shared interests to develop new connections and community networks within a “fun, quirky” space. Customers can be both consumers and creators of high-interest content – inspiring and being inspired by other members.
- Odell Brewing is a local model for building social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Family ownership supports strong community relationships and high-quality customer service as well as responsible sourcing and operations. And there’s beer.

Horsetooth Mountain was also identified as a local inspiration and an iconic presence that presents meaningful opportunities for exploration and discovery.

	Innovative, Creative, and Accessible [#Goals]	FoCo Connected	The Source	Something for Everyone, Forever
<b>People</b>	Blue Apron	Airbnb/Instagram	Facebook	Google
<b>Place</b>	Google/Instagram	Blue Apron/ New Belgium	Apple Store	Airbnb
<b>Partnership</b>	Pinterest	Netflix	REI	Horsetooth Mountain
<b>Sustainability</b>	Odell Brewing	Starbucks/Tesla	King Soopers	Odell Brewing



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Over the lunch hour, Annie Davies spoke about corporate social responsibility, and the myriad ways it can benefit individuals and the community. The President/CEO of the United Way of Larimer County provided both local and global examples of how corporations are reducing their environmental footprint while expanding positive impacts through strategies such as ethical sourcing and strategic partnerships. Organizations with strong corporate responsibility also tend to have higher rates and quality of employee engagement and retention, contributing to a strong triple bottom line.



David Schnee of Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning talked about how public libraries are breaking out of their traditional “shh” image, and re-imagining their community role and impacts. He showed national and international examples of innovative services, inspiring facilities, and strong partnerships that libraries are developing to support their vision and mission.



## STRATEGIC LIBRARY VISION

After lunch, participants gathered into groups to brainstorm big vision statements for People, Place, and Partnerships, and Sustainability for the Library District. Out of this exercise, participants created a strategic vision of the Poudre River Public Library District as:

### Interconnected

Poudre River Public Library District has a strategic role in creating strong community connections. People are connected with the information, resources, tools, and spaces they need to learn, grow, engage, and advance. The Library District is a hub for connecting organizations and potential partners to enhance service and community impact. The Library District helps break down silos, bridge gaps, and foster dialogue to support a resilient, democratic, and sustainable community.

### Inclusive

Poudre River Public Library District is a safe, welcoming, and accessible place for all members of the community. Services are not only offered within the walls of library branches, but also delivered out in the community, at the point of need. Access is considered holistically – encompassing time, place, virtual and physical. The Library District communicates broadly about the services and programs it offers, and proactively reaches out to underserved populations and non-library users.

### Innovative

Poudre River Public Library District is constantly evolving in order to meet community needs and exceed expectations; to remain still is to fall behind. Innovation is vital even in delivering core services – including collections and technology – as well as in the development of new programs and resources. The Library District invests in its staff, who are essential for providing agile, responsive, and customer-oriented service. The Library District collaborates with partners to identify and respond to community needs, providing enhanced services that complement – not duplicate – what each organization brings to the partnership.

### Iconic

Poudre River Public Library District is an open, inviting, and inspiring place for the whole community, providing attractive, flexible, and multi-use spaces. Iconic architecture and art-filled spaces reflect and celebrate the community's unique identity and values. Outdoor program spaces and informal use areas celebrate the natural beauty and pleasant climate of the local landscape.

## THANK YOU

The Poudre River Public Library District 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.

- Katherine Acott
- Rich Alper
- Nick Armstrong
- Jeff Barnes
- Matt Benson
- Michelle Bird
- Becca Bramhall
- Alan Braslan
- Holly Bucks
- Patrick Burns
- Jason Chadock
- Fred Colby
- Deana Davalos
- Annie Davies
- Rob Deakin
- James Denton
- Anais Dominguez
- Amy Dondale
- Ken Draves
- Annie Fox
- Sylvia Garcia
- April Getchius
- Karla Gingerich
- Emily Gorgol
- Linda Hopkins
- Cathy Kipp
- Peggy Lyle
- Anne Macdonald
- Laura Mahal
- Bernie Marzonie
- Nancy Mendenhall
- Jeff Mihelich
- Anne Million
- Max Moss
- Bill Mygdal
- Robert Petterson
- Peggy Reeves
- Jodie Riesenberger
- Cal Ripp
- Becky Sheller
- Jeanne Shoaff
- David Slivken
- Alisa Spangler
- Ken Tharp
- Marty Tharp
- Molly Thompson
- Jenny Thurman
- Bill Tucker
- Bob Viscount
- Judy Warren
- Paula Watson-Lakamp
- Joe Wise
- Jennifer Zachman

## WORKSHOP DESIGN AND FACILITATION

### Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning, Inc.

David Schnee AIA — Principal

Jill Eyres — Senior Associate

211 Linden Avenue, South San Francisco CA 94080

650-871-0709 • [www.g4arch.com](http://www.g4arch.com)



**APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY VISION INTERCEPTS SUMMARY**

The table below summarizes the results of the community intercept survey effort in September and October 2018. Each participant was given three green dots to indicate their priorities among six options; the poster used to facilitate the survey appears on the following page. The table below includes a row for each intercept event, and shows the number of dots placed on each of the six options. The right-most column shows the estimated number of participants at each event, which was calculated by dividing the total number of dots by three (the number of dots each participant was given).

**Poudre River Public Library District**  
*Community Vision Intercepts 2018*

		YOUR VISION FOR THE LIBRARY:								
Date	Venue	Learn + Discover	Create + Innovate	Read + Study/Work	Programs + Events	Meet + Collaborate	Hang Out	Dots	Estimated Participants	
		673	629	624	516	295	235	2989	998	<< TOTALS
9/1	Tour de Fat	14	7	14	7	5	2	50	17	
9/4	Old Town Plaza	41	38	36	37	17	23	197	66	
9/5	Oak St Plaza	23	25	24	18	18	6	115	38	
9/5	Collins Aire Park	5	4	2	2	1	1	15	5	
9/6	FC Senior Center	35	25	32	35	19	18	167	56	
9/6	Timber Ridge	15	12	14	3	7	10	61	20	
9/7	Old Town Plaza - Old Firehouse	16	15	20	8	7	13	79	26	
9/8	<i>(location unknown)</i>	44	42	31	17	5	18	157	52	
9/9	Open Streets 12-3	35	43	41	31	22	7	179	60	
9/9	Open Streets 9-12	40.5	42.5	27	33	19	13	176	59	
9/11	Old Town Library	65	64	68	57	23	17	294	98	
9/11	Senior Center	24	19	9	14	15	8	89	30	
9/12	Leap Coalition	20	12	12	15	9	6	74	25	
9/13	Food Truck Rally	27	34	28	23	15	10	137	46	
9/14	Matt de la Pena	12	9	10	10	6	5	52	17	
9/15	Farmer's Market - Courthouse	54	38	40	33	17	9	191	64	
9/18	Oak St Plaza??	24	33	32	17	20	11	137	46	
9/19	Overland Foods	16	11	9	11	7	2	56	19	
9/21	Laporte Pizza	2	4	4	2	0	0	12	4	
9/21	Senior Center	9	7	16	7	1	3	43	14	
9/30	Robin's book clubs and Friends	6	6	10	13	6	3	44	15	
10/1	OTL Bilingual Storytime	22	10	10	16	0	3	61	20	
10/2	EPIC outside	12	17	14	7	8	6	64	21	
10/4	CT Entry	20	22	32	25	11	8	118	39	
unk.	Sylvia + Alice	42	37	41	25	9	17	177	59	
unk.	OLGBT Mtg @ Sr Center	19	12	18	19	10	5	83	28	
unk.	City of FC Health Fair	30	40	30	31	18	11	161	54	
	<b>% of people who chose:</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>24%</b>			

# JUST IMAGINE

the library of our community's future

Imagínese la futura biblioteca de nuestra comunidad



## THE LIBRARY WILL ALWAYS BE A PLACE FOR...

La biblioteca siempre será un lugar para...



Collections  
Colecciones de libros



Children  
Niños



Teens  
Jóvenes



Adults  
Adultos



## WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE LIBRARY?

¿Cuál es su visión para la biblioteca?

### Read + Study/Work



leer y estudiar / trabajar

### Meet + Collaborate



conocer y colaborar

### Participate in Programs + Events



participar en programas y eventos

### Create + Innovate



crear e innovar

### Learn + Discover



aprender y descubrir

### Hang Out



pasar el tiempo

### Other Ideas Otras ideas

- \_\_\_\_\_
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Poudre River Public  
Library District  
Community Conversations  
October 2018



## Poudre River Public Library District Community Conversations

In October of 2018, Group 4 Architecture and Carson Block Consulting worked with the Poudre River Public Library District to share an update on the library master planning progress and to gather community thoughts and feedback regarding the direction and future of the library. Three meetings were held:

- Tuesday, Oct. 16, 6:00 pm -- Old Town Library
- Monday, Oct. 22, 6:00 pm -- Harmony Library
- Tuesday, Oct. 30, 1:00 pm -- Council Tree Library

The first meeting was facilitated by Jill Eyres with Carson Block acting as note-taker, and the second and third meetings were facilitated by Carson Block with the library's Executive Director David Slivken acting as note-taker. Between 15-30 people attended each meeting.

### District-Wide Themes

Throughout the Community Conversations meetings, the consultants collected opinions about the Library District as a whole, including thoughts about current facilities and services, as well as thoughts for the future. Common themes from all groups, in all meeting locations, include:

#### General

- Overall, the stakeholders expressed a deep appreciation for the library district and the services and spaces it provides, but acknowledge there is room to grow and improve services and spaces.
- Enthusiasm for the library's function as a community and community-building space.
- Confirmation from attendees that a user map (showing that patrons from throughout the District tend to use all library locations) rings true; "Everyone uses every library."
- Enthusiasm for the holds process for physical materials and especially the Prospector service.
- Enthusiasm for the digital media offerings from the library - but with some confusion in accessing and using the library's various digital media providers.
- Enthusiasm for fines-free children's and teen books.

Poudre River Public  
Library District  
Community Conversations  
October 2018



### Requested Improvements

- More people spaces, with a variety of uses, with more availability for users.
- More creative spaces - more "make" and "do" type spaces.
- It was noted that staff are present and helpful but not always easy to find in the library.
- Continue the Library's adaptability to changing demographics and needs of the community.
- Improving the catalog searching capabilities - and other digital tools.
- New approaches for "on demand" delivery of physical materials.
- Home delivery options for those who cannot visit the buildings.
- More remote-return drop boxes in the district's area.
- A branch to serve residents north of Fort Collins.
- Parking challenges at all branches were discussed.

## Comments specific to a single library

### Old Town

- Patrons expressed not always feeling safe or comfortable inside and outside the building - citing a growing transient population that tends to linger inside and in the park.
- Finding items at Old Town -- the largest branch -- can be daunting. Better wayfinding methods are suggested.

### Harmony

- General confusion over how and why Harmony has different policies (i.e. meeting room reservations -- patrons would like the ability to reserve two of the bigger study rooms to increase public meeting space).
- Request for a collection of large print books at Harmony.
- The collection should have more readily available items -- patrons don't like to wait for items.

### Council Tree

- More space for the library is desired - it is the smallest branch in the district and occupies the top floor of retail space at the Front Range Village.
- Some stakeholders voiced concerns about the future usability of the current site, citing high demand for a space that has limitations.
- Confusion over why Council Tree has different hours than the other branches in the district -- conforming to hours of Front Range Village.

Poudre River Public Library District  
Focus Groups  
November - December 2018



# Poudre River Public Library District Focus Group Summary

In November of 2018, Carson Block Consulting worked with the Poudre River Public Library District staff to facilitate focus groups with populations around the District area.

The following groups were engaged:

- Populations with Barriers
- Tweens & Teens
- Millennials/Young People
- Residents of Mountain & Rural Communities within the library district

The team sought to include another desired group – “newcomers/non-library users” within the other groups.

We owe thanks to all of the Library District staff who facilitated, coordinated, and scribed for all of these focus groups: Leah Weatherman, Eileen McClusky, Johanna Ulloa, Ludy Rueda, Jennifer Zachman, Miranda West, and Nicole Burchfield.

## Format and Questions

The Tweens & Teens and Residents of Mountain & Rural Communities groups followed the same basic format:

- Approximately 1 hour - 90 minutes
- Target group size: 10 participants (+-)
- Input came from facilitated Q&A with group (using powerpoint slides)
- Each session required a facilitator (to lead the conversation) and a scribe (to capture participant comments on charts)
- After each focus group, the scribe:
  - Worked with the facilitator to transcribe the responses from each question in three categories: positive (+), neutral, and negative (-)
  - Took a photo of the notes (poster sized)

## Poudre River Public Library District Focus Groups

November - December 2018



The Populations with Barriers group had the above core elements but scaled to serve a larger group (50 total). Additional support in the form of bilingual facilitators was put in place for the Populations with Barriers group.

Conversations with the Millennials/Young People group were conducted one-on-one by a Library District staff member.

### Questions

Facilitators asked the following questions (or variations of these questions) to each group.

- Think of your favorite community places to visit. What are they – and what makes them your favorite?
- What do young people today need to be happy and successful?
- What are you concerned or worried about?
- What skills or knowledge do you – or others you know – need today? What new things would you – or others you know – like to learn?
- What roles does technology play in your life? Are there things about technology that you would like to learn more about?
- How do you currently get information about your world? Do you have additional information needs that are not currently met?
- Do you currently use the library? Why or why not?

### Schedule

Focus Group	Attendance	Location & Date
Mountain / Rural Communities	9	11/8 at 11:40am at Stove Prairie Elementary
Mountain/ Rural Communities	2	11/9 at 5pm Laporte Pizza
Populations with Barriers (Adults)	65	11/14 from 5 to 7 pm at the First Presbyterian Church
Populations with Barriers (Teens)	10	11/14 from 5 to 7 pm at the First Presbyterian Church
Populations with Barriers (Children)	40	11/14 from 5 to 7 pm at the First Presbyterian Church
Tweens	1	11/15 Polaris School – Middle schoolers
Teens	12	11/15 Polaris School – High schoolers

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Tweens	15	11/28 Webber Middle School
Teens	4	11/28 Rocky Mountain High School
Millennials/ Young People	2	Individual Interviews

## Themes

This a summary of themes (including general themes and by group) – full reports from each session are in the Appendix section of this document and provided nuance for the conversations with each groups and with individuals. Due to the nature of the questions (about people’s experiences, desires, dreams and concerns in their lives and the lives of loved ones, friends, and the community) the feedback gives the library the opportunity to consider possible services to address the desires and needs voiced.

## General

The themes below were voiced by at least two or more focus groups and show areas of shared interest or concern across focus groups.

- Desire for socialization opportunities for tweens/teens- peer-to-peer, mentoring, support, especially during crucial phases of life, opportunities to both teach others and learn from others
- Desire for new learning opportunities – including space (and sometimes materials) to learn new skills/create
- Desire to position technology in a proper measure with other aspects of life – especially in not elevating technology at the expense of “old fashioned”/life skills. Some areas of specific tech enthusiasm include:
  - Particular interest from youth in music, digital arts (recording videos, animation, blogging), and tactile art
  - Interest in coding and programming
- Desire to help guide young adult patrons through “adulting” skills that were not formally taught
  - Taxes
  - Insurance
  - Balancing a checkbook
  - Navigating federal and state agencies for assistance
- Desire to keep the library relevant

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- Desire for increased public knowledge of library programs and facilities – “People do not know they need a service until they are in trouble”
- Desire for increased library messaging via local outlets (KCSU, KUNC, newspapers, Coloradoan, local TV)
- Notes of technology gaps from many groups – even HotSpots may not work in the hills or in areas without sufficient service
- Concerns about income inequality in Fort Collins and surrounding areas
- Desire for a cafe or other social gathering place with refreshments
- Desire for help filtering information for accuracy
- Services available somehow to outlying areas of the District
  - Books by mail
  - Better e-services
  - Satellite/Branches/Bookmobile visits

### Mountain/Rural Communities

- Value outdoor and community interactive spaces for community (especially for children)
- Distance from larger population centers and limited connectivity in mountain areas is a socialization barrier for some
- Concerns for safety and mental health of kids
- Seeking increased digital citizenship for everyone, but especially kids
- Interested in keeping libraries relevant and helping those who have no/little access to technology and learning opportunities
- Desire to support learning for learning’s sake, instead of result-focused learning (i.e. instruction designed for standardized testing objectives)
- Interested in building local/small communities and joining communities in larger communities
- Concern over Fort Collins livability, including cost of living, transportation in a growing city, climate change, and political happenings
- Reliance on the library in helping users find governmental or volunteer organizations for help

### Millennials/Young People

- Value local art, theater and music – (and non-drinking venues are few in Fort Collins)
- Concern about lack of financial security (wages, job security, cost of living, gentrification of lower cost areas) in Fort Collins
- Seeking reliable sources of news and information

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- Interest in building community
- Seeking resources to help find organizations for assistance

### Populations with Barriers

- Desire assistance in multiple languages (especially for Spanish speakers), especially one-on-one support
- Desire welcoming spaces for families and for family activities
- Gratitude for culturally relevant programs and services and Outreach Services currently provided by the library
- Desire for more Spanish language and cultural-specific services at Old Town Library
- Desire for educational resources, programs and services – focusing on skills, training, arts, after school classes, and academic help
- Desire for free self-defense classes for girls and women – and specific classes about respect and women’s bodies
- Enthusiasm for sports, especially soccer and basketball
- Desire for culturally-focused music and arts experiences
- Desire for technology skills including coding and instruction on new technology

### Teens and Tweens

- Value parks, pools, skate parks – enjoy having fun outside
- Desire spaces with WiFi for kids to hang out or study while eating and drinking – “loose boundaries” places to just be
- Desire safe spaces especially for LGBTQ and at-risk youth
- Seeking support for creative pursuits – from digital to analog
- Desire to learn “Adulting” skills – cooking, taxes, home repair, finances in general, social skills, how to find a job were all cited
- Concern about information and research accuracy, especially for academic pursuits
- Concern about accurate, unbiased local, national, and world news sources, and how to avoid fake news
- Concerns about access to the library buildings because of lack of easy transportation to the buildings from possibly-isolated homes/areas
- Value social support systems like friends and family
- Desire to learn more about safe use of technology and staying in control of technology usage

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- Desire to access to technology that they may not have available at home
- Desire to learn languages
- Desire to learn about mental health and how to get help when needed

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