

Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Lincoln City Libraries

Lincoln, Nebraska

Community Needs, Library Goals, Objectives

SUCCESS, ACCESS, ACHIEVEMENT, OPPORTUNITY

GOAL 1

SUCCESS - The resources of Lincoln City Libraries will reflect the community's value for education and support our community's ongoing success.

GOAL 2

ACCESS - Library services will engage people when they are available and where they work, shop, and participate.

GOAL 3

ACHIEVEMENT - Library services will promote literacy, learning and success for young people.

GOAL 4:

OPPORTUNITY- Library services will respond to the particular needs of people living in poverty.

Prepared by
Julie Beno, Bennett Martin Public Library Public Services Coordinator
Jodene Glaesemann, Walt Branch Library Manager
Adopted by Library Board September 16, 2014



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Success, Access, Achievement, Opportunity

This Strategic Plan provides cohesive direction for Lincoln City Libraries for the next three years. We thank all of the people in our community who participated in our surveys and meetings in preparation for this plan. The plan propels us from community needs to library goals and objectives, and then to specific library actions.

The first specific action listed in this plan is to build a new main library on the Pershing site. A separate report describes how this new facility will support all areas of community need described here.

Lincoln City Libraries' Strategic Plan begins where all sound plans do—based on ample knowledge of our community and its needs. Library staff held meetings with community stakeholders and completed online surveys of the public and library staff, to seek their sense of our community. Fortuitous good timing came into play when the Lincoln Vital Signs report was issued in early 2014 (lincolnvitalsigns.org). We realized that this remarkable combination of information and direction provided a detailed picture of the community and its needs. It also paralleled input from stakeholders and staff in regard to children, poverty, and education. We have thus written this strategic plan in concert with the Vital Signs documents, using that report as our foundation of community information.

The public library is the community center for education, promoting literature, literacy, and learning. As such, the library is indeed more than books. In considering the library's response to community needs, we seek those places where our expertise, access, spaces, staff, and resources offer special value to the community response to the Vital Signs report.

We realize that the library alone can't solve the problem of poverty or raise the graduation rate, but we can indeed boost community efforts to provide effective opportunity in areas that relate to literature, literacy, and learning. The Library will continue partnerships with community organizations including Lincoln Public Schools, Community Learning Centers, Center for People in Need, and Community Action Partnership to meet community needs.

This plan identifies these four areas of need and related library goals:

- **Success**—Lincoln does many things exceptionally well and these successes should be nurtured. Our library goal is that the resources of Lincoln City Libraries will reflect the community's value for education and support our community's ongoing success.
- **Access**—Lincoln has a much higher percentage of all adult family members in the workforce than the national average, but this does not fully overcome Lincoln's low per capita income. Our goal is that library services will engage people when they are available and where they work, shop, and participate.
- **Achievement**—Lincoln's racial and ethnic minority children and children living in poverty have lower educational achievement than do white children or middle class children. Our goal is that library services will promote literacy, learning, and success for young people.
- **Opportunity**—Lincoln's poverty rate has increased dramatically over the past ten years and is now higher than the national average. The library's goal is that our services will respond to the particular needs of people living in poverty.

Over each of the next three years, the library will develop and complete prioritized actions that support these goals and their related objectives. Our actions have three primary approaches, to strengthen what we already do, to collaborate ever more deeply in our community, and to innovate by finding new ways to address community needs through library services.

The Library Board and staff of Lincoln City Libraries are proud of the good work our libraries do to support education throughout our community. We believe that this plan upholds our community's deep value for literature, literacy, and learning.

--Pat Leach, Library Director

→COMMUNITY NEED 1:

Lincoln does many things exceptionally well and these successes should be nurtured. (Vital Signs)

- Lincoln has grown 16% since 2000 largely attributable to people moving to the community. (Vital Signs)
- Lincoln ranked first in overall well-being in the 2012 Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index®. (Vital Signs)
- Lincoln has a high graduation rate. Overall rates of student proficiency are strong in standardized national testing at the third, fourth, and eighth grades. (Vital Signs)

GOAL 1

SUCCESS - The resources of Lincoln City Libraries will reflect the community's value for education and support our community's ongoing success.

LIBRARY OBJECTIVES:

1. Build a new main library on the Pershing site.
2. Strengthen library facilities system wide.
3. Strengthen library collections including books, eBooks, music, movies, and DVDs, etc. to reflect customers' changing needs and interests.
4. Strengthen library virtual services (website, online catalog, etc.)
5. Collaborate with event sponsors to promote and celebrate community successes.
6. Innovate new ways to provide services that support literacy, learning and literature.
7. Innovate and use creative planning to make buildings flexible and responsive to customer priorities, including upkeep and maintenance.
8. Acknowledge and celebrate diversity in our community.

→COMMUNITY NEED 2:

Lincoln has a much higher percentage of all adult family members in the workforce than the national average, but this does not fully overcome Lincoln's low per capita income. (Vital Signs)

GOAL 2

ACCESS - Library services will engage people when they are available and where they work, shop, and participate.

LIBRARY OBJECTIVES:

1. Strengthen system-wide outreach to allow library staff to participate in the communities and neighborhoods served.
2. Strengthen service delivery at off-site locations.
3. Strengthen programming (youth, teen and adult) to accommodate work and family schedules.
4. Collaborate with new partners to better serve working families.
5. Innovate new ways to better serve working families.

→COMMUNITY NEED 3:

Lincoln's racial and ethnic minority children and children living in poverty have lower educational achievement than do white children or middle class children. (Adapted from Vital Signs).

GOAL 3

ACHIEVEMENT - Library services will promote literacy, learning and success for young people.

LIBRARY OBJECTIVES:

1. Strengthen partnerships to provide crucial early learning experiences.
2. Strengthen programs that address summer learning loss.
3. Strengthen early literacy programs.
4. Create appealing learning spaces for children.
5. Strengthen programs that promote teen leadership and success.
6. Collaborate with youth agencies that foster learning.
7. Innovate new services to promote learning.

→COMMUNITY NEED 4:

Lincoln's poverty rate has increased dramatically over the past ten years and is now higher than the national average. (Vital Signs)

- Lincoln's children fare poorly on many measures: children in poverty have doubled since 2008. (Vital Signs)
- The number of people in Lincoln below the poverty threshold increased 48% since 2005 and the city now has a higher rate of poverty than the nation or Nebraska. (Vital Signs)
- In 2000, Lincoln had no neighborhoods in extreme poverty. By 2010, Lincoln had six neighborhoods in extreme poverty – those with more than 40% of residents in poverty.(Vital Signs)
- Since 2007, Lincoln's number of homeless individuals has risen 41%. (vital Signs)

GOAL 4:

OPPORTUNITY - Library services will respond to the particular needs of people living in poverty.

LIBRARY OBJECTIVES

1. Strengthen computer and Internet access that people need to live their day-to-day lives.
2. Collaborate with community agencies and be a driving force in organizing responses to needs identified through the Vital Signs report.
3. Collaborate with community and government agencies.
4. Innovate new ways for the library to meet the needs of those in poverty.
5. Review library policies for their impact for those in poverty.

NEW MAIN LIBRARY AS IT RELATES TO THE LIBRARY'S STRATEGIC PLAN

Successful completion of the new main library on the Pershing site is key to library's success in achieving its Strategic Plan.

"Build a new main library on the Pershing Site." This is the library's Strategic Plan Objective #1 connecting to Goal #1, "The resources of Lincoln City Libraries will reflect the community's value for education and support our community's ongoing success."

In fact, the new main library will support every aspect of our library's strategic plan.

It certainly applies to how the libraries reflect the community's value for education and its overall success. Recent investment in entertainment and athletics in the West Haymarket area has invigorated a climate of optimism and renewal in Lincoln. Yet the people of Lincoln also have an appetite for culture and education. The successful Lincoln Public Schools bond issue demonstrates community support for excellent education. The new main library will be a Lincoln landmark reflecting the community value for education, and the library's particular educational role serving the whole community. It will provide effective services to people in all walks of life, relating to literature, literacy, and learning.

The Pershing site connects both to the state capitol and University of Nebraska on the revitalized Centennial Mall. In addition, the new main library's placement in the core of Lincoln puts it square in the midst of areas of greatest need in our City. When we consider how best to serve working families, we note that this library will be accessible into the evening, and along transportation routes.

The new main library will have special spaces to support the early learning that prepares children for success in school. Its children's areas will encourage playful learning. Its meeting rooms will welcome families to group experiences that demonstrate how parents can support their children's learning without spending a lot of money. Those areas will create a destination place, in addition to downtown attractions such as the Lincoln Children's Museum and the State Capitol.

The new main library will provide important resources for people who live in poverty. It will offer access to technology as it evolves from computer use to wireless use. That access promotes participation in the job market and in appropriate assistance programs. More and more, connections to the greater world rely on technology access, another reason for strong technology that is open and available to the public, free of charge. In addition, library spaces promote learning, tutoring, and recreational reading.

Many people wonder how libraries will evolve in an era of electronic reading. Even as more reading is done electronically, the need will continue for a community asset that serves all people in their quest to learn and participate. The new main library will be planned to meet continuing needs for reading material whether print or electronic, strong services for children and teens, excellent technology access, and effective spaces for learning and gathering.

Lincoln takes great pride in its quality of life. The new main library will directly support individuals as they aspire to bigger and better things. Those services will happen in a building that will be a Lincoln landmark. Not a musty monument, but an effective, efficient, and engaging place that exemplifies our belief that our quality of life rests on our community's investment in education.

Pat Leach, Library Director
August 13, 2014