

CROOK COUNTY LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2006 THRU 2011

INTRODUCTION

In late 2004 the Crook County Library Board of Trustees decided that in light of the changes occurring within the County, especially the anticipated population growth, a long range plan for the Library was essential. This plan would provide information about the community and library to use in decision-making; to clarify for board, the staff and the community the role of the library in the community. It would evaluate the usefulness and quality of specific services and activities, assist in preparing for change (dropping old services or adding new ones), establish priorities for the allocation of resources and document the need for (better) funding. At their April 2005 meeting, the Board selected 4 primary roles for the library:

- **Popular Materials Library**
- **Children's Door to Learning**
- **Community Activities Center**
- **Independent Learning Center**

Subsequently, the Board authorized a survey of both patrons and those citizens not utilizing the library. The results of the survey confirmed those priorities that the Board had established. A focus group was formed to give ideas and input to the planning committee. The planning committee consisted of members of the library board, Friends of the Library and a focus group of interested patrons.

This long range plan is designed to take the Crook County Library through the year 2011 and will be updated as needed.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees on this date, July 13th, 2006.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Crook County Library is to provide timely access to information and ideas. The Library will promote the enjoyment and necessity of reading, the discovery of knowledge and culture, and the advantages and pleasures of learning.

VISION STATEMENT

Crook County Library will be the recognized information and resource destination for citizens of all ages in the community. We will be the gateway to life-long learning through innovative programming, services, and materials. Our staff will reflect the diversity of our community and promote an accessible, friendly environment. We will fulfill the community's needs and exceed its expectations.

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GOALS

Goal 1

MATERIALS & SERVICES

Provide and promote timely, relevant, current and accessible collection materials, services and programs.

Goal 2

TECHNOLOGY

Develop and maintain technology and communications infrastructure.

Goal 3

FACILITY

Assure a physical environment that is inviting, comfortable, user-friendly and meets the future needs of the county's growing population.

Goal 4

STAFF

Employ a diverse, customer service-oriented staff and provide them with a positive work environment.

Goal 5

OUTREACH

Increase awareness and use of the library collection, services, and programs.

Goal 6

FUNDING

Identify and secure critical resources and funding necessary to implement the strategic plan and meet adequate state library standards.

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Goal 1

Materials and Services

Provide and promote timely, relevant, current and accessible collection materials, services and programs.

Residents place an extremely high value on the library's collection of over 60,000 items. Nearly 87% of survey respondents said they use the library to check out books. They put high priority on popular materials, and bestsellers are in high demand. Current circulation per capita is 10.15 items, the highest of any public library serving a comparable population in eastern Oregon. The current library building has the capacity to accommodate 70,000 items.

Significantly, the library ranks 10th in Oregon for program attendance. Programs range from ongoing storytime for preschoolers to special adult and family programs such as those that are science or humanities-based and continuing education. Most adult program logistics are managed by volunteers while staff handles most of the youth programs. Limited funding is available for Crook County Library programs, despite their popularity.

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Goal 1 Strategies:

- a) Increase the annual collection budget to \$4 per capita within five years.

Action Timeline: within the next 5 years
Responsibility: Staff

- b) Evaluate the library's Collection Development Policy annually.

Action Timeline: annually
Responsibility: Staff

- c) Analyze new formats and when appropriate for the collection, provide access for the public.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- d) Provide collection materials and services for targeted populations; for example, Senior Citizens, Latinos, Early Childhood.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- e) Respond to public requests for new programs; for example, movie night at the library.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Board & Staff

- f) Develop and maintain programs for all ages.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- g) Work with other organizations and agencies to sponsor quality adult and family programs regularly at the library.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- h) Encourage development of programs to be sponsored by the library and held at locations outside of Prineville.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Board & Staff

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Goal 2

Technology

Develop and maintain technology and communications infrastructure.

Computer workstations for the public and staff are outdated. The phone system is at maximum capacity. The library has one of the oldest automation systems in the state and cannot accommodate desired upgrades such as self check-out. As a county department, the library receives troubleshooting, repairs and upgrades as county scheduling and funding allows. Technology infrastructure needs improvement.

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Goal 2 Strategies:

- a. Review the Technology Plan every year.

Action Timeline: annually

Responsibility: Staff

- b. Replace Follett circulation system and add patron self-checkout capability.

Action Timeline: within next 2 years

Responsibility: Board and Staff

- c. Explore and upgrade existing phone system.

Action Timeline: within 1 year

Responsibility: Board and Staff

- d. Explore purchase of fax machine for public use.

Action Timeline: within 1 year

Responsibility: Board and Staff

- e. Promote public use of the video conferencing unit for distance learning and virtual participation.

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: Staff

- f. Promote wireless Internet capacity.

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: Staff

- g. Upgrade computer workstations for patrons and staff on a regular basis. (*Hardware and software should always be current enough to be supported by the manufacturer.*)

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: County Court and Staff

- h. Provide technology training to staff and patrons.

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: Staff

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Goal 2 (continued)

- i. Consider hiring a contractual technician for computer repairs, upgrades, and troubleshooting.

Action Timeline: within next 5 years

Responsibility: Board and Staff

Goal 3

Facility

Assure library facilities that meet the future needs of the county's growing population.

The attractive, comfortable library is extremely popular with residents and out-of-county patrons. However, it is likely to outgrow its present space due to exploding county population growth. Consensus is that new space will be needed within next 10 years, possibly as early as within the next six years. Therefore, it is desirable to secure plans for eventual library expansion.

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Goal 3 Strategies:

- a. Explore securing a viable site for library expansion.

Action Timeline: within next 5 years

Responsibility: County Court, Board and Staff

- b. Explore options for expanding library services, including:

- kiosks
- increased bookmobile service
- branch libraries in outlying areas (Juniper Canyon, Powell Butte, Paulina)
- virtual branch

Action Timeline: within next 5 years

Responsibility: County Court, Board and Staff

- c. Establish a building reserve fund.

Action Timeline: within next 5 years

Responsibility: County Court and Board

- d. Initiate dialog with Oregon foundations regarding long term plans for library expansion.

Action Timeline: within next 5 years

Responsibility: Board and Staff

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Goal 4

Staff

Employ a diverse, customer service-oriented staff and provide them with a positive work environment.

The Board should prioritize budget allocations to keep an appropriate balance between staff costs and collection development costs, using state and national statistics for guidance. The Library Board encourages staff to take advantage of professional development opportunities; few have done so. Volunteerism is strong; customer service is exceptional.

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Goal 4 Strategies:

- a. Continue to emphasize customer service skills through training and performance evaluations.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- b. Designate and/or encourage staff to take advantage of professional development.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Director

- c. Continue recruiting for library volunteer program.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- d. Evaluate operations in each area annually.

Action Timeline: annually
Responsibility: Staff

- e. Explore hiring a degreed children's librarian.

Action Timeline: within next 3 years
Responsibility: Staff

- f. Analyze staffing needs annually.

Action Timeline: annually
Responsibility: Board and Staff

- g. Work with county commissioners to fund adequate staff to assure effective, efficient operation of the library.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Board and Staff

- h. Update job descriptions.

Action Timeline: annually
Responsibility: Director

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Goal 5

Outreach

Increase awareness and use of the library collection, services, and programs.

A recent competition to develop a logo and slogan for the library received much attention and now affords the library an even larger role in marketing. The recent completion of the library's public relations plan by the assistant librarian can be used as a basis for marketing by library officials and the library's public relations committee. The Board needs to evaluate and adopt elements of the PR plan. One area where further marketing would be beneficial is in keeping residents informed regarding the EBSCO electronic database, a service the library offers with access to more than 1,000 periodicals. According to the state library, in 2003-04 the Crook County Library provided 1,500 reference services, which is much lower than comparable libraries. This is another service that could be marketed. The library's meeting rooms are in constant use but often public awareness of library services is low.

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Goal 5 Strategies:

- a. Improve signage in the stacks.

Action Timeline: within 1 year
Responsibility: Staff

- b. Redesign the library website.

Action Timeline: within 1 year
Responsibility: Staff

- c. Use new logo and slogan in all new printing and on the website.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- d. Conduct patron surveys.

Action Timeline: biennially
Responsibility: Staff

- e. Submit articles to local media on a regular basis.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Staff

- f. Expand bookmobile service.

Action Timeline: within 5 years
Responsibility: Board and Staff

- g. Explore development of after-school programs for youth.

Action Timeline: within 3 years
Responsibility: Staff

- h. Expand outreach storytelling program to first and second graders.

Action Timeline: within 3 years
Responsibility: Board and Staff

- i. Promote the library through public presentations.

Action Timeline: ongoing
Responsibility: Board and staff

Goal 6

Funding

Identify and secure critical resources and funding necessary to implement the strategic plan and meet adequate state library standards.

The library's budget is included in the County's general fund. The annual budget increased 5% this year over last year, but shortfalls remain. Current funding level for the library indicates an average of \$22.50 spent annually per capita, based on county population, as compared to the state average of \$41.05.

The library has actively sought outside grants for special projects, such as the bookmobile, programs, collection development, etc. but does not maintain a regular grant writing cycle. The library is unable to accommodate significant needed capital expenditures such as library expansion, new computer workstations or new automation system without outside funds.

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Goal 6 Strategies:

- a. Achieve a per capita annual spending level for the library equal to at least 80% of the state average.

Action Timeline: within 5 years

Responsibility: Board and Staff

- b. Create a Foundation.

Action Timeline: within 1 year

Responsibility: Board

- c. Continue to work collaboratively with Friends of the Library for funding support for special needs.

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: Board and Staff

- d. Encourage library staff to apply for grant funds.

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: Staff

- e. Explore district formation for purpose of informed decision-making.

Action Timeline: within 5 years

Responsibility: Board

- f. Maintain focus group by meeting annually.

Action Timeline: annually

Responsibility: Board

- g. Partner with regional library association for programs / shared resources.

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: Board and Staff

- h. Actively seek opportunities to partner with community organizations.

Action Timeline: ongoing

Responsibility: Board and Staff

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Goal 6 (continued)

- i. Evaluate strategic plan annually and revise as needed.

Action Timeline: annually

Responsibility: Board, Staff, Focus Group, and Planning Committee.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Crook County currently ranks first among all Oregon counties for population growth, with an increase of 9.33% in population in 2005. The county's population increased 36% between 1990 and 2000. Population projections set the percentage of senior citizens between 20-23% total population over the next four decades.

There are currently 12,964 registered borrowers – including residents from Deschutes, Jefferson and Wheeler counties. Last year the library had 162,600 public visits, an average of more than 3,000 persons visiting the library each week.

The 17,500 sq. ft. library facility was built six years ago. The annual operating budget of approximately \$518,000 for fiscal year 2006-07 comes primarily from the county government budget. Small amounts of supplemental funds come from the Oregon State Library (Ready to Read program), donations and the nonprofit Friends of Crook County Library organization.

The library spent \$24.07 in 2004 per capita for operational expenditures, compared to the state average of \$41.05.

The current household median income in Crook County is \$35,186. The county is listed as economically distressed by the Oregon Economic & Community Development Dept. Nearly 6% of the county is Hispanic.

In Appreciation

The Trustees would like to thank all of those people who have contributed their time and energies in making this plan possible. This list includes the Friends of the Library, the Focus Group, Lyn Craig of the Libraries of Eastern Oregon, those that filled out the survey, and the Planning Committee.

The Friends: Tim Pilcher (President), Deb Mafera (Vice President), Linda Evans (Treasurer), Barb Marshall (Secretary), Leslie Bjorvik, Steve Bucknum, Gordon Gillespie, Jim Haggerty, and Denise Reinhart.

The Focus Group: Denise and Bill Steffenhagen, Gayle and Tom Casselman, Pat Lee, Margaret Green, Jim Haggerty, Patti Norris, Pat and Bob Cunningham, Kim Kambak, Judy Elkins, Betty Howard and David Sowerby.

The Planning Committee: The Board of Trustees; Rick Chrisinger, Library Director; Cheryl Hancock, Assistant Library Director; Tim Pilcher, Friends of the Library; and Jim Van Vlack, member at large.

The Trustees: Keith Seaber (Chairman), Jim Carpenter (Vice Chairman), Sandy Campbell, Craig Oehlschlaeger and Donna Whitcomb.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

Board & Staff	1e, 1h, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2i, 3d, 4f, 4g, 5f, 5h, 5i, 6a, 6c, 6g, 6h,
Board	6b, 6e, 6f,
Staff	1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1f, 1g, 2a, 2e, 2f, 2h, 4a, 4c, 4d, 4e, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5g, 6d,
Director	4b, 4h
County Court & Staff	2g,
Board, Staff & Focus	
Group, Planning Comm.	6i
County Court, Board, and Staff	3a, 3b, 3c

TIME LINES

Ongoing	1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1g, 1h, 2e, 2f, 2g, 2h, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4g, 5c, 5e, 5i, 6c, 6d, 6g, 6h,
Annually	1b, 2a, 4d, 4f, 4h, 6f, 6i
Biennially	5d,
Within 1 year	2c, 2d, 5a, 5b, 6b
Within the next 2 years	2b
Within the next 3 years	4e, 5g, 5h
Within the next 5 years	1a, 2i, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 5f, 6a, 6e,