



# THE SILVER CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY: STRATEGIC PLAN

---

2016-2019

June 15, 2016

Prepared by Renee T. Despres, MPH, PhD under contract with the Nonprofit Resource Group

## Introduction by the Chair of the Board

On behalf of the board, staff, and volunteers of the Silver City Public Library, it is my honor to introduce this strategic planning document. This plan is the culmination of more than a year of intensive work by staff, board members, and volunteers. During that time, we conducted a comprehensive community survey, focus groups, interviews, held management and staff meetings, made numerous presentations to our library board, and assessed the results of our research. Our board and staff members have devoted a tremendous amount of time and effort to this process.

Our discussions have been at times serious, comic, frustrating, contentious, and engaging. Yet we have always centered on one critical question: How can the Silver City Public Library best serve the community?

We have evaluated our strengths and learned from our experience. As a result, over the next three years, we have decided to focus our efforts on five areas of organizational competence: 1) balancing our digital and print resources throughout our collections; 2) building and diversifying our resources; 3) engaging youth, young adults, working adults, and the underserved; 4) making the best use of our current facility while planning for a future state-of-the-art facility; and 5) strengthening our internal management systems.

We are committed to a vision of the library as a gateway to information and resources for all community members.

Thank you for your interest in the Silver City Public Library.

Sincerely,

Ted Lynn  
Chair, Library Board

# Mission, Vision, Values Statement

## Mission

The mission of the Silver City Public Library is to:

- Provide access to information and ideas
- Foster literacy, life-long learning, and creativity
- Connect people to each other and the wider world
- Strengthen our communities

## Vision

The Silver City Public Library is a gateway to the knowledge and information needed to sustain a healthy, thriving community.

## Values

- **Accountability:** We are honest and responsible stewards of our resources.
- **Service:** We assist everyone with courtesy, kindness, patience, and respect.
- **Equality and inclusivity:** We provide free and equal access to services, resources, and programs. We believe in equality of access and opportunity.
- **Knowledge:** We believe in the importance of curiosity, access to information, and learning for personal and community growth.
- **Place:** We believe in the importance of providing a welcoming place for people to connect with each other and explore independently.
- **Essential Resource:** We believe that libraries are integral to our communities.

## Organizational History and Profile

The Town of Silver City Public Library was founded in 1952, the result of one woman's dream. Lucile Gray, with Ruth Curtis and Frank Light, saw the need for a public library in our community and were granted an ordinance by the city to establish one. Gray's dream became a reality when the original library opened in an old barracks building on D Street. A grand opening was held April 12, 1953 and the library officially opened April 14th with 1200 books, no budget, and an all-volunteer staff.

The library quickly outgrew the facility, and in response to the need, Mr. and Mrs. John S. Hamilton of the Hamilton Foundation built a new facility as a gift to the community on a centrally located site provided by the Town of Silver City. The property was purchased in 1958 and the building was completed in 1960. The new building officially opened May 1, 1960. By this time the library had 8000 volumes, circulated about 5000 items, and had four paid employees.

In 1969 the library had again outgrown its space, and construction began for an addition. The new addition was dedicated on November 8, 1970. A second addition was completed and officially opened September 17, 1987. In 2012, the library underwent a major renovation that included upgraded electrical capacity, lighting, ceiling system and insulation, heating and cooling system, carpeting, roofing, and repairs.

In FY 2014-15 the library had 10,017 registered users, a collection of more than 49,000 items, and a circulation of 75,489. The library presented 336 programs during the year with a total program attendance of 5,761. Our librarians answered 4,311 reference questions and the number of uses (sessions) of our public Internet computers was 22,689. The number of wireless sessions provided was more than 4,800.

The library's total operating income in FY 2014-15 was \$459,547 with 7.25 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) staff and a core of 25 volunteers. The majority of the library's funding comes from the Town of Silver City. In FY 2014-15 the library received \$420,131 from city government, \$18,410 from the State of New Mexico, and an additional \$21,006 from other sources including the Friends of the Library, private donations, and grants.

The Public Library is committed to providing strong collections, technology, and quality services and programs to the community.

## Critical Issues

*Advances in technology and digital information are transforming libraries in challenging and exciting ways.*

We find ourselves caught between two worlds. How can our library keep up with dramatic and constant change in digital information resources while meeting the needs of our patrons, a large proportion of whom face barriers to accessing electronic resources? Survey, focus group, and interview results all suggest that print materials are also important to our patrons. Strategies selected to deal with this issue are:

- Invest in both digital and print resources
- Continue to offer digital literacy training to the community
- Identify additional funding sources for staff, maintenance, and repair costs associated with technology programs
- Collaborate with regional libraries to license or purchase technology and electronic materials

*Inadequate funding for the services and programs we provide and the population we serve.* Our state funding is based on our legal service area population of approximately 10,000, while we serve a regional population of about 30,000. In addition, the majority of the library funding comes through the Town of Silver City's Gross Receipts Tax (GRT). The Town is projecting a significant decrease in GRT over the next several years as the Hold Harmless funds are phased out. Strategies selected to deal with this issue are:

- Pursue partnerships with other government and community agencies to leverage available funding
- Increase support from individuals, foundations, and corporations
- Identify other sources of funds, including public and private
- Develop a comprehensive investment strategy through the Library Foundation to ensure ongoing operational support for the library

*Few teens and young/working age adults use the library.* Teens, young adults, and working age adults are not frequent users of the library. Barriers include perception of the library as a recreational resource, lack of time, transportation, and limited weekend and evening hours. Strategies selected to address this issue are:

- Expand age range for Wildworks and Makerspace programming
- Provide service-learning opportunities for teens
- Offer entrepreneurial programming
- Partner with other organizations to create spaces to help teens and young adults bring books to life

*Our facility cannot be expanded to accommodate our growth, and building a new facility is not feasible at this time.* The library building cannot be significantly altered, but its size, location, and infrastructure limit our ability to expand collections, invest in technology, and serve the community. Strategies selected to address this issue are:

- Update and rearrange spaces within existing facility
- Develop programming libraries (spaces for off-site programming)

- Plan for a future state-of-the-art facility that includes adequate space for both collections and programming

*We need an efficient and integrated internal management system.* Our internal management systems are tied to the Town of Silver City's infrastructure. Individual departments function in silos. There is a critical need for coordinated communications systems, integrated calendars, central shared servers for document storage and backup, and updated accounting systems. Strategies selected to address the issue are:

- Investigate software options for integrated internal management, including paid and free business operating systems (e.g. Google, Zoho)
- Support the town's efforts to update its systems
- Research potential grant and other funding for updating management software

# Strategic Goals and Objectives 2016-2020

## Program Goals

1. **Goal: The Silver City Public Library will continue to provide our communities with a diverse portfolio of services, resources, and programs that meet their evolving needs.**
  - 1.1. Overall: There will be a central, easily accessible point of information for library users
  - 1.2. Collections: Achieve an optimal balance of print and digital materials for our community
  - 1.3. Children's Area: Have more readers engaged in reading and developing literacy skills
  - 1.4. Summer Reading: Continue to strengthen and expand the summer reading program to reach more underserved children and families
  - 1.5. Teens, Young Adults, and Working Age Adults: Increase use of library resources by teens and young/working age adults
  - 1.6. Programming/Events: Increase the reach of cultural programming and events to a larger and more diverse audience, especially underserved children, youth, and adults
  - 1.7. Digital Literacy Program: Build digital skills capacity in the community to allow people to fully participate in community life

## Management and Operations Goals and Subgoals

2. **Develop and maintain the resources, infrastructure, staffing, and internal management structure needed to sustain our services to the community.**
  - 2.1. ***Resource Development: Acquire stable, broad-based, financial and non-financial resources to support the programs and growth envisioned in this strategic plan.***
    - 2.1.1. Diversify our funding base
    - 2.1.2. Develop infrastructure for resource development
    - 2.1.3. Foster partnerships and collaborative relationships to leverage resources
    - 2.1.4. Leverage available funding
  - 2.2. ***Facilities: Provide a safe, comfortable, accessible space that meets the technological and physical demands of a 21<sup>st</sup> century library.***
    - 2.2.1. Existing Facility: Offer the community an accessible facility with flexible space that can accommodate future developments in digital technologies
    - 2.2.2. Programming Library: Provide library programming at different locations throughout the community
    - 2.2.3. Future Facility: Plan for a future, state-of-the art library facility that supports the growth and development of our community
  - 2.3. ***Staffing and Benefits: Attract and retain qualified paid and volunteer staff for all services and activities.***
    - 2.3.1. Recruitment and Retention: Assure that the library has the right number of people with the right skills to fulfill its needs

- 2.3.2. Salaries and Benefits: Provide competitive salaries and benefits to recruit and retain highly qualified staff that reflects diversity of the community
- 2.3.3. Training, Evaluation, and other Support: Staff will have 21st century skills needed to serve the community
- 2.3.4. Volunteers: Use skilled volunteers to support activities and programs
- 2.4. ***Governance: The library will have knowledgeable, diverse, engaged boards and town leadership whose governance, advisory, and support roles help the achievement of the Silver City Public Library's mission and vision.***
  - 2.4.1. Board Membership: All boards will have the optimal number of members with an appropriate range of skills and experience
  - 2.4.2. Board Training: Increase the capability of the boards to assist with policy setting, advocacy, fund-raising, and evaluation
  - 2.4.3. Board Effectiveness: Ensure the board is not only active and engaged but effective
  - 2.4.4. Board Coordination: Effectively leverage the governance resources offered by the library's three boards, town council, and town manager
- 2.5. ***Planning and Evaluation: Assure that we meet the needs of our community and that all programs provide the highest level of service to our patrons.***
  - 2.5.1. Evaluation Process: Establish an ongoing evaluation process for all programs to assess results, quality, and our ability to meet the changing needs of the community
  - 2.5.2. Planning: Identify long-term needs and ensure library has resources to meet these needs
- 2.6. ***Public Relations /Outreach: Maximize public awareness and understanding of our services as essential for individuals and the community.***
  - 2.6.1. Public Relations: Increase awareness of the full range of library services, especially available electronic resources
  - 2.6.2. Outreach: Increase use of the library by teens, young adults, working adults, and underserved populations
- 2.7. ***Networking and Collaboration: Maximize communication and resource-sharing with other agencies to leverage resources and increase coordination and collaboration***
  - 2.7.1. Infrastructure: Develop infrastructure for increased networking and collaboration, including regular meetings, electronic communications, and resource sharing