BOYCE DITTO PUBLIC LIBRARY

2300 S.E Martin Luther King Jr. St. Mineral Wells, TX 76067

IDEAS.FOR.THE.SMART.LIFE

FROM HERE TOWARD HAPPY: A FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 22-27

EVERYTHING WE DO IS TO TRANSFORM YOUR LIVES!

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." James Baldwin

I came aboard to manage Boyce Ditto Public Library just after Thanksgiving of 2017. When I arrived, I was met with enormous challenges such as how to express an authentic community identity with incredibly limited resources of all types. I am now so proud of the work we have done here at BDPL. I say it so often, and yet not nearly enough, but I have a wonderful staff who are intrinsically-able, comprehend priorities and necessity versus nice. These people care for their coworkers, learn quickly, are respectful, socially intelligent and desire full self-development. These are the key things one needs to be successful in a self-starter initiative. I have the most valuable resource, amazing people!

In this plan, I will first briefly discuss where the library was when I arrived, then the levels where it must remain to succeed, which are part of our goals, and finally, the main purpose of the guide. I will demonstrate how we can arrive at a proper place to begin purposeful future plans. While we have been working to build an authentic foundation for this library, we have also twice now received the TMLDA Award for excellent performance, recognizing our aptitudes for fulfilling necessary roles with our library scoring among the top ten percent in the state. While this strategically positions our library to move into a bright future, it does not guarantee community support for our value system. Helping people understand our contemporary worth is always at the forefront of our minds and we hope this plan will reveal to others our station in the community.

While we were surveying our community, we had a survey respondent state, "This library completely misses the point of a library." Well, I would like to let that person know, on some level, I completely agree. We need more of everything, books, book clubs, community, digital presence, service hours, staff, quality common and meditative spaces and modern facilities that speak to age audience and talk to local people's language of need and desire. What we do have in spite of all this is a responsible value system about the non-negotiable indomitable place of importance the library should possess in this or any other community. We represent the past, present and future of our citizens to the extent which you and others help make this endeavor possible!

While this guide is chock full of information, I have tried to make it readable from a personal standpoint rather than a dry study that people will not find engaging or provide human context.

This plan includes both a five year strategy for implementing future growth of the library operations personnel, presence, products and services but it also includes the direction our citizens expect in our shortcomings regarding our extreme physical constraints. This plan provides an illuminated path away from the mindset of "building a better mousetrap" and propels us to move forward with authentic values and toward real sustainable initiatives and goals to demonstrate progress and community support for a mutually identified vision!

What we know we have achieved and will continue strengthening:

- **Hours of service that will better serve families and a place or priority to put best serving times first.**
- **Staff who serve as our catalyst to move us forward with aptitude, attitude and willingness to learn and relearn.**
- **Identified successful community roles which must be developed and strengthened.**
- **Identified community needs and overhauled collections to correlate services.**
- **Achieved a fine-free model of library service.**
- **Presently aesthetically updating and offering new services for both minors and adults.**
- **Created digital service enhancements in web presence, premiere databases like Tutor.com and our new self-check technology Meescan.**
- **Moved from no MLIS certified librarians to two full-time as of July 2021.**
- **Overhauled a collection entirely.**
- **As of July, offering two fantastic e-reader content collections.**
- **Increased our marketing efforts and web presence.**

PURPOSE

In order that the library be fully accredited we must possess a five year plan. Our planning document had also outlived its usefulness several years ago, lacked authentic commitment and planned objectives.

Finally, in order that we present a unified vision to the public, we want to know the direction our city and community are headed so we needed to hear from you! This guide will demonstrate how the library can best meet the needs of Palo Pinto County Residents. Yes, strengthening your happiness is indeed our vision!

MISSION

Boyce Ditto Public Library unlocks personal potential and promotes happiness and wellbeing.

VISION

The library promotes happiness and wellbeing through providing these quality of life ideas: cultural development, education, equity, health, prosperity and security.

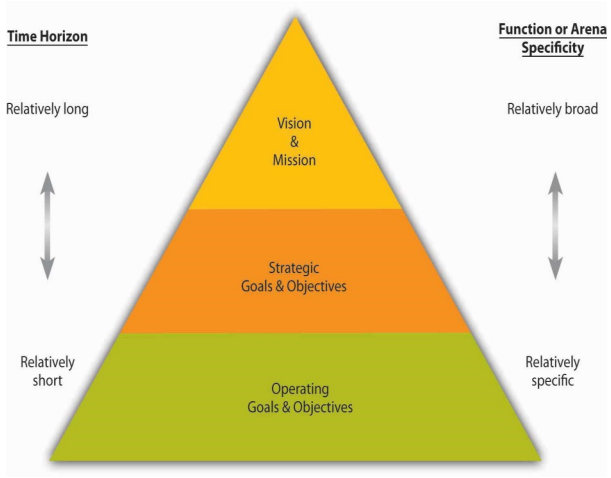
MEASURING SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY PRESENCE

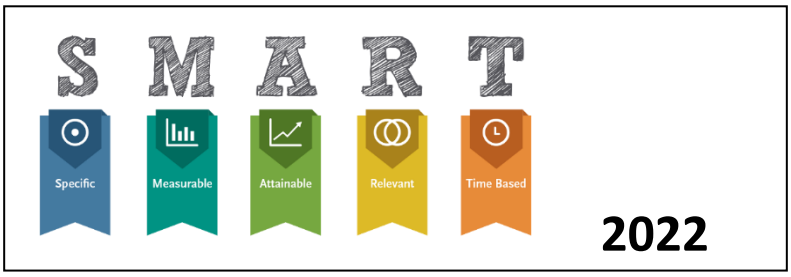
While this document is intended to map our intentions through a five year course, it is intended to serve as a guide for community vision and identify who and what our community aspires to be at its artful, intellectual and spiritual core.

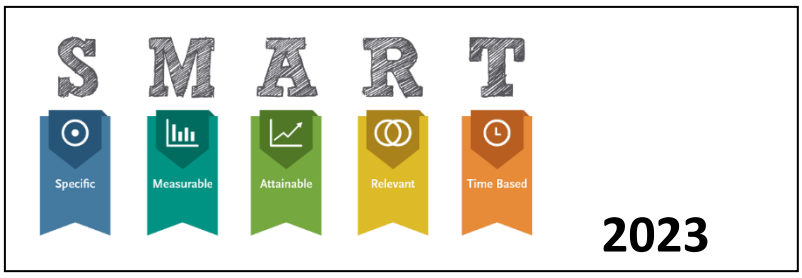
Our strategic plan is a vision of how things should be and from that point, we have also arrived at six areas of focus by weighing input from my intelligent and well-informed staff, my dutiful Advisory Board, Community Stakeholders and our city and county residents. This document should represent those needing a voice who are seeking progressive active, engaged lifestyles where public common goods are purposefully chosen and executed.

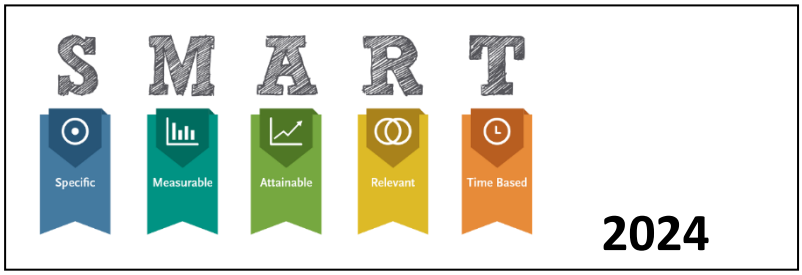
In our methodology, we gave equal weight to staff, Advisory Board, Stakeholders and Community Survey tools and then chose five top focus decision areas while utilizing the other areas to design ten roles the library feels are most important to assume at this time in the community.

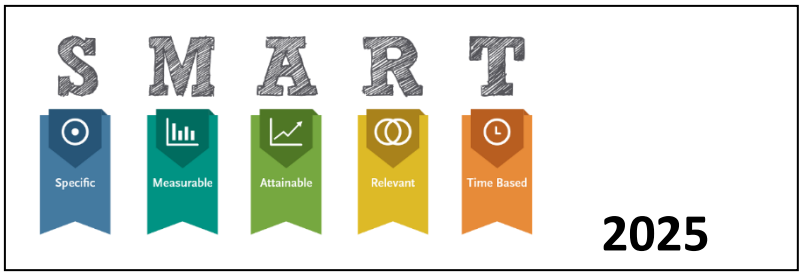
You will find near the end of this report our findings measured and highlighted areas of focus. You will find our summary report which explains a narrative and my experiences as Library Manager in evaluating our methods and community expectations. You will also find a timeline which realistically imparts a balance between areas of focus and ability to achieve focus within time frame. This document additionally serves as a vision guide to support goals that are highly desirable by this community which have not been completed or addressed.

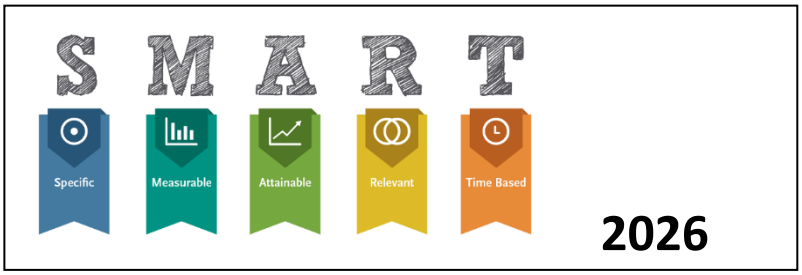


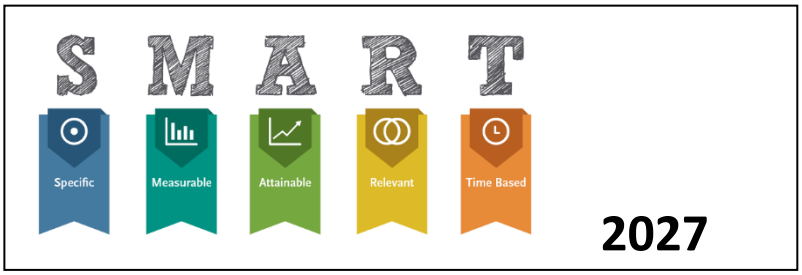












METHODS EMPLOYED

Staff helped to examine the following community documents to help establish and identify needs and goals for our five year plan.

- Envision Mineral Wells
- Mineral Wells Annual Budget 2020-21
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan 2019
- Downtown Mineral Wells Assessment Report
  Discover Downtown: A Redevelopment Plan for Historic Mineral Wells
- Downtown Mineral Wells Assessment Report
- Community Tourism Assessment

We extracted relevant data based in conjunction with data collected from other demographic data listed below in order to demonstrate the narrative analysis which is based in fact and community experiences.

- Texas State Library and Archives Peer Comparison Data
- Zip Who-School Data
- NACO-National Association of Counties
- City Data- Income Distribution
- American Community Survey-Factfinder
- Broadband Now – Internet access, distribution and strength

GAINING CLARITY

Based on the facts of these documents, staff identified needs of the community that are within the scope of the library to address and outside of the scope of library issues to address. We also addressed needs that may be within city/county scope but cannot be addressed at this time and asked the question, is this something the library can address?

Our Advisory Board participated in a one day assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. From all of these findings and a Community Survey for Strategic Responses, we were able to identify areas we believe reveal clarity and focus. In order to identify most intense needs, we defined three areas in our survey.

PHYSICAL PRESENCE OF LIBRARY
DIGITAL PRESENCE OF LIBRARY
SERVICES AND PROGRAMS OF LIBRARY

We then placed items within those groups in order to provide information about input/output and weight of need.

COMMUNITY NEEDS: HOW DO CITY PLANS TAKING SHAPE EFFECT THE LIBRARY?

These were needs the Library Manager and staff identified from the documents we reviewed.

PUBLIC WORKS

Streets and sidewalk repairs

Code enhancement

More side-walks and bike-friendly areas

More public infrastructure for departments such as the City and Courts to function

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

More retail- grocery stores

New development and redevelopment of old and run-down buildings

Existing housing is inadequate

BUSINESS SUPPORT

More information support for business

Promotion of local business

Makerspaces

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

More entertainment for adults and particularly children

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION

Improvement of downtown aesthetic

Emphasizing existing parks and improvements

Focus on arts and culture

Emphasizing wildlife

Make the city a tourism destination while embracing historic aspects of the city

EDUCATION

Finding a qualified workforce for industry and retail purposes

Increasing progressive education focused on digital skills and progressive technological advances rather than mostly supporting under-developed children and adults

Incubator programs for teaching adults how to be business owners and retain gainful business

Justifiably, most of the available city documents satisfy urgent needs to develop a tax-base and much greater income structure. The staff and I also identified some additional areas of concern and asked the question, are these areas of concern that the library can provide deliverables or are these too far outside the scope of the library? If they are inside the scope, can we justify expense and time to make library representation better or do we need to plan accordingly to make them a reality over a ten year span?

COMMUNITY NEEDS OF THE LIBRARY EXPLAINED

After consulting documents and having discussions with staff, staff were encouraged to exhibit individuality in needs determination using their awareness of our community, individual and professional needs and knowledge of other community libraries.

They were also encouraged not to confuse existential threats to the library such as basic staff levels to manage open hours with short-term and long-term developmental goals.

The following represent their own views of what is most important for library growth and sustainability. The most agreed upon priorities rank in our top three.

PHYSICAL LIBRARY

- More staffing
- Access to privacy and video-conferencing and study rooms with equipment
- Adults need larger community and theatre Spaces with adequate kitchens and preparation spaces
- Access and space for more technological and hands-on education for children and adults

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

- More outreach presence, community relations and partnerships
- Open more evenings
- More expense on all collections

LIBRARY SCOPE

If we don't change, we don't grow. If we don't grow, we aren't really living. **Gail Sheehy**

- More access to social services
- More support for education and literacy
- Other important needs include:
- More programs and services for immigration, ESL, Diversity and Inclusion
- More coordination, partnerships and relationships between the library and other city/county governmental departments
- More support for incubator programs, business entrepreneurship, grant support business intelligence, retention and expansion

We also discovered other focus areas where we could provide more systemic programming where intractable problems seem to exist

- Existential loneliness for bullied and/or unique teens Providing more health information and programming and working on partnerships with medical community
- Providing more programs that directly deal with mental health challenges and utilizing attractive marketing
- Connecting people with all types of community resources especially needs-based while maintaining their dignity
- Partnering more strategically with the Chamber to support tourism and destination locations with finding aids

OTHER NEEDS STAFF CITED THAT AFFECT STAFF'S ABILITY TO DO THEIR JOB BETTER AND SERVE COMMUNITY BETTER

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Better tools to support small business and provide support while the city finds professional incubator solutions to develop both individual leader ability and idea-sphere.

Tools include:

- Assisting with marketing
- Tax information
- Strategy support
- Leadership and networking tools
- Programs that teach them about low-cost and free software to enhance business
- Knowledgeable staff member available to help support their learning and using business databases

TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

- Helping people evolve to understand how technology can make life easier and better
- More funding for wireless printing, hot spots and e-content tablets
- More online content and better organization of content
- Better funding to support makerspace equipment and accessories

BEAUTIFICATION

- Better library appearance both indoors and out of doors. Beautification with trees, shrubs, benches and sprinkler system

OTHER DIFFICULT ISSUES IDENTIFIED AS BARRIERS TO EQUITY AND SERVICE

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND FAMILY UNIT ISSUES

- Existing income inadequacy and disparities that create barriers to education and interconnectivity between people and technology
- Weak family unit due to mental health, drugs, divorce and parental education
- Emotional and mental health inadequacies must be replaced in early and middle life stages by positive places and experiences beyond just sports entertainment. Prevention begins prior to troubled children in courts and public safety routinely being utilized beyond their intended expertise as majority reliance rather than minority reliance
- Food and clothing insecurity
- Language proficiencies and cultural barriers and boundaries
- Experience of local homelessness

HEALTH AND MEDICAL ACCESS, AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Adequate access to health services but inadequate knowledge of need and pathways to affordable access
- Depression related to both medical and environmental circumstance
- Drug use both of prescriptive and non-prescriptive type

COMMUNITY SURVEY TOOL:

INFORMATION WE GATHERED TO STUDY

From this study residents were asked to choose eight top priorities only.

PHYSICAL LIBRARY

- Downtown/main street destination with programs that bring families in from surrounding areas and technology that attracts citizens and businesses to explore hobbies, utilize the space for work, (and niche craft markets) while naturally furthering education with learning like a children's garden and outdoor theatre for children
- More space for bigger and better divisions of sections by age, digital and social needs
- Access to privacy and video-conference, study rooms
- Natural spaces for our kids to associate Adults need larger community and theatre spaces with adequate kitchens and preparation/storage stations
- Better access to technological and hands-on education like Makerspaces for both adults and a location more suitable so that people can find the library and explore its progressive usefulness
- Access to a bike path, parks and/or a retail areas

DIGITAL LIBRARY

- Access to increased online content from databases and e-content providers
- Access to a better webpage design that is more accessible and holds more content and simple location

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

- Open with more evenings
- Open longer on Saturdays
- More adult programs
- More teen programs
- More children's programs
- More expense on a particular collection
- More outreach presence, community relations and partnerships
- More staffing
- More expense on all of the collection
- More professional staffing to support services
- More access to social services
- More support for education and literacy
- More services and programs for immigrants, ESL, diversity needs and inclusion
- More coordination, partnerships and relationships between the library and other city/county departments
- More support for business, entrepreneurship, grant support, business intelligence data gathering, business retention and expansion

ADVISORY BOARD AND STAFF REVIEW OF COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The board and staff asked themselves what are the main things the community is trying to say about the library and its atmosphere. While the Advisory Board and staff still think the library is an amazingly useful tool at present, we completely agreed with the assessments of the community and believe we have interpreted these results in a way that will be beneficial to all concerned.

The following portion of this document reveals the results laid out in terms of comprehensive planning for a future that makes sense without unnecessary compromises and the spending of monies that will not significantly improve the use of the library even as the library's services and programs do significantly continue to improve.

The remainder of the document details a comprehensive vision of Mineral Wells' future library needs. The plan defines the overall expectations of the citizens in order to feel like evolved citizens who have a motivating library experience to anticipate.

At the end of this document, we will delineate our goals for the next five years. Our aim is to aspire rather than merely exist and our goals will reveal these elements of expectations. We strive to be realistic but also to commit to not reliving the experiences of past times where library strategic solutions regarding long-term trajectory were lacking due to being driven by limited funds and inevitable silos of scarcity thinking. In determining what we can and must do, we have also set aside an area for goals that can be completed based on other support avenues getting involved in our process. Our goals are realistic if they are properly supported by the leadership, both the private and public sector of Mineral Wells and surrounding county.

BDPL ADVISORY BOARD'S ANALYSIS OF OUR VALUE SYSTEM INTERNAL & EXTERNAL LIBRARY STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

THE WATERSHED MOMENT!

This past Spring, my highly esteemed Advisory Board helped to charter a value system that will serve to bolster the foundation and underpinning of all of our choices moving forward as we address how to best serve this fun, incredibly challenging and diverse community. We believed it important to delineate some of these in this document.

Questions were asked:

1. Do people still understand why the library is a vehicle of added value in their information and recreation lives?
2. Who is naturally drawn to our values?
3. What do people look for when considering moving to any community?
4. What are the underlying conditions that facilitate people not appreciating and understanding the library culture for both its traditional values and offerings and the progressive roles it is assuming?

Of course, we asked many more questions of these sessions but these are some of the crucial issues we addressed in our discussions of why it is important to possess a value system so that you can speak with others of the same mind.

VALUES AND BELIEFS WE ADOPTED TO FACILITATE PLANNING FOR LIBRARY RESULTS

1. We play a large role in creating a culture that produces great people as a rule, not an exception.
2. We look out for the protection of our community so that a sense of culture and community will not further erode but instead develop around a common purpose of shared identity.
3. We believe the library provides a bedrock of trust for the advancement of our personal lives, our families, our communities and our society and species.
4. Inherent value lies in early adoption and acceptance of change and innovation, recognizing the values of ideas, innovation and putting that into action.
5. The library seeks first to serve those who they wish to serve its ideals but wishes to serve with complete equity as we in turn receive full support for our values.
6. Those who serve the library best recognize the value of its inherent worth. Ambassadors for the library understand the library's why.
7. Our services and products are capable of making profound impact. They provide solutions for a better community but it is up to us to promote the values behind them.

A NATURAL COMMUNITY CENTER WITH CULTURAL VITALITY SERVING AS THE MOST NATURAL CONDUIT FOR ARTS, BEAUTIFICATION, CULTURE, CONNECTIVITY AND EDUCATION

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

GROWING

From Here to Happy

BEAUTIFICATION AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We collectively recommend a new building that flows with the natural human desires and environmental resources of beautiful Palo Pinto County. The constituents express a need for a place that merges the indoors and outdoors successfully creating a calming inviting space. Survey respondents overwhelmingly voted for a natural environment from which to learn! The library staff and Advisory Board objective is to position the library for a community center of happiness and a blue zone meditative quality lifestyle and in so doing, accentuate and highlight our beautiful natural environment in the city of Mineral Wells and surrounding Palo Pinto County.

Add cultural and musical programming that makes downtown and the surrounding environment a family destination and brings both entertainment and family visits from the North Texas surrounding area

Technology: Energy saving and producing state-of-the-art building that attracts both business access and citizens while creating a space for art, hobbies and utilizing space for work endeavors and natural and technical education.

THINK BLUE

EDUCATION

Social Services: Highlight local social services organizations to provide public information for improving quality of life in areas such as transportation, health care, food and safety

Technology: Increase knowledge and encourage embracing of convenience technology and life empowerment

Collection: Increasing physical and digital resources to support income equality, better education, digital divide and resources to pertinent civic information

Programming: Outsourcing and building partnerships to support top-shelf educational and recreational programming. Promoting liberty with information about how to debate and utilize civil discourse.

CONNECTIVITY

A PLACE OF CONNECTION & HAPPINESS

Building a place that more naturally supports social services and positive relationship-building

Social Services: more fully develop to appreciate the vast cultural and socioeconomic diversity of Palo Pinto County and utilize it to create a larger sense of community

Technology: Increasing hot spots, technology and laptops available for circulation

Natural Connector: A connection that supports seniors, city services, city/county events and public awareness campaigns and events that positively impact people's lives and truly increase quality of life.

SO WHAT FACTORS MOST INFLUENCE OUR LIBRARY AND ADVISORY BOARD DECISIONS WHEN CONSIDERING AVENUES, ROLES AND LIBRARY PLANS FOR COMMUNITIES?

HOW MANY OF THESE CHALLENGES CAN BE AND SHOULD BE ADDRESSED BY BOYCE DITTO PUBLIC LIBRARY ACCORDING TO OUR OWN EXPECTATIONS OF IDENTITY?

What are our best known and unknown challenges?

OUR SERVICE GOALS:

LITERACY OBJECTIVES: OUR ENTERPRISE

- **BE AN INFORMED CITIZEN, BUILD SUCCESSFUL ENTERPRISES, CREATE YOUNG READERS, LEARN TO READ AND WRITE, MAKE CAREER CHOICES, SUCCEED IN SCHOOL, WELCOME TO THE U.S.A.**

INFORMATION OBJECTIVES: OUR ENTERPRISE

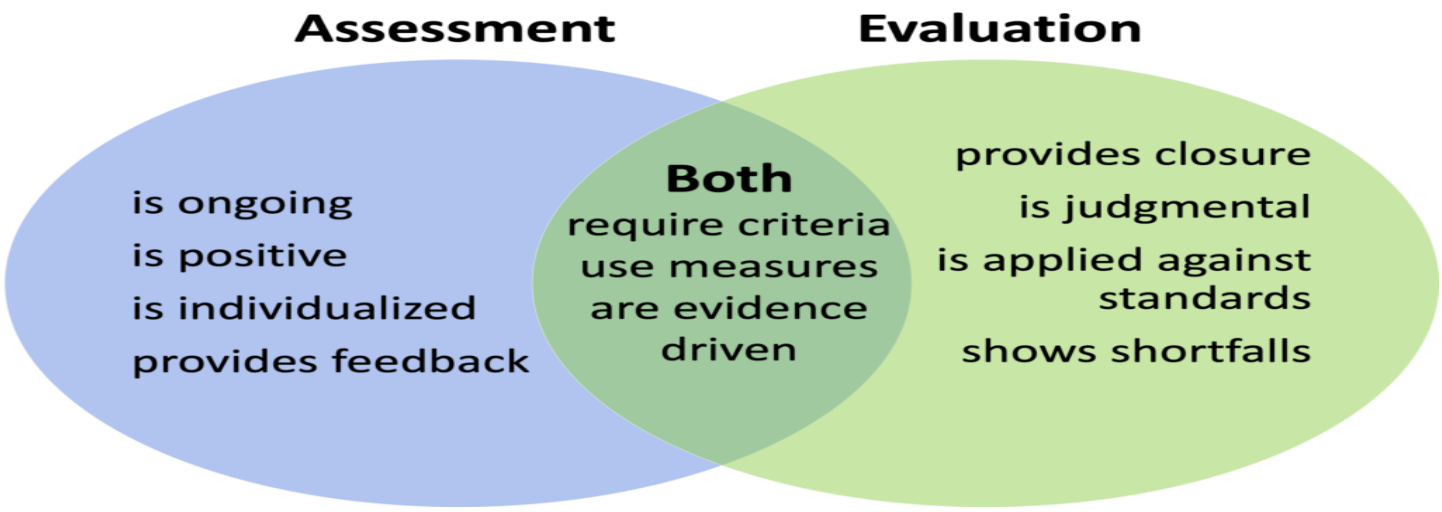
- **GET TRUSTWORTHY FACTS FAST, KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY, MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS, UNDERSTAND HOW TO EVALUATE AND USE INFORMATION, MAKE SOUND FINANCIAL DECISIONS, SUPPORT HEALTHY BODIES AND MINDS, SUPPORT CONSUMER FINANCE AND BUDGET KNOWLEDGE AND PERSONAL SUSTAINABILITY**

TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIVES: OUR ENTERPRISE

- **CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD, SUPPORT MODERN TECHNOLOGY KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING, OFFER DIGITAL ALTERNATIVES THAT SUPPORT THIRD-WAVE TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**

HAPPINESS OBJECTIVES: OUR ENTERPRISE

- **VISIT A COMFORTABLE & WELCOMING SPACE, STIMULATE IMAGINATION, SATISFY CURIOSITY, EXPRESS CREATIVITY, CELEBRATE DIVERSITY**



ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND EVALUATION FINDINGS

The board participated in a highly thorough assessment of our internal and external strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats as it pertains to the library in conjunction with the city. We considered both how our choices effect the individual as well as large groups and how to maximize potential plans for both categories. In assessing our strengths, we identified what we can currently change regarding opportunities, threats and weaknesses and then too considered how we can minimize threats in conjunction with maximizing opportunities. This method known as TOWS determined our final decision process.

We believe a number of issues associated with the library regarding staffing and financial support will always be a challenge of varying degrees but the following document addresses how we as an Advisory Board still intend to address these issues to bridge the divide between reality and expectation.

INVESTMENT IN LIBRARIES

HOW?

In the final summary, you will find our evaluation of issues that require some support outside our abilities. These issues are mainly of a physical plant and facilities nature and require taking advantage of the best strategic opportunities in a timely manner since several building grant opportunities on a state and federal level may present themselves within this year and the next. It is incumbent on our willingness to seize the moment in these opportunities since state and federal library building support only comes around about once every thirty years and this is how our current library was created.

Other methods of achieving a physical plant include what is referred to as a P3 Development opportunity. Public/private partnership development opportunities bring together public institutions and private firms and the P3 developer who carries the debt on their financial statement rather than on the city. Rates are low right now and the Dallas firm I mention maintains they carry debt up to 35 years. This method also allows the municipality to circumvent the need to pass a referendum of any type. There are convention centers and libraries now being built utilizing this method and one company exists in Dallas. See website: https://www.publicfacilities.com/ Since the Chamber of Commerce has achieved their Envision 501c3 non-profit status, we will be able to provide write-offs for personal donations, which increases the likelihood of investment. This particular method is also most effective since it allows supporting the physical square footage assessment costs of a space and the benefactor then has the opportunity to memorialize the space with his own name of choice. We believe this is the fastest method to take advantage of offsetting some of the cost of building rather than traditional methods with tax support particularly as requisite abilities for support are lagging. While our study indicated a healthy family annual wage, the relationship between who engaged with the survey versus the annual family income of the residents are diametrically opposed and must, therefore, be considered.

SOURCING FUNDS FOR DEBT REPAYMENT

Leverage resources against debt

While it has been undetermined what we will precisely do with the existing property location, the possible sale of these three properties should also be included in evaluation of ability to repay a debt:

CURRENT OWNERSHIP	PROPERTY ID	LEGAL DESCRIPTION
1) Boyce Ditto Library Trust -00-0	R000002501	Legal: Acres: 1.950, AB 322 TR 11A FULLER MILLSAPS G#10322-00-0011A-000
APPRAISAL 2021: $822,500		
2) City of Mineral Wells 00-0 Location	R000002502	Legal: Acres: 0.923, AB 322 TR 11 FULLER MILLSAPS G#10322-00-00110-000-
APPRAISAL 2021: $25,000		
3) City of Mineral Wells LIBRARY) G#10322-00-00110-001-00-0	R000002502	Legal: Legal: Acres: 0.366, AB 322 TR 11-1 FULLER MILLSAPS (LOC EAST OF
APPRAISAL 2021: $10,200		

The subsequent sale of the entire property for another type of business would likely bring at least $857,700. A possibility for use of this property with its atrium-style natural lighting and open areas might include a funeral home. Residents and business owners have expressed a need for more funeral service options.

OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME AND OPPORTUNITY TO HELP CREATE LIBRARY AND CITY INCOME INCLUDE THE BUILDING OF A LEED CERTIFIED LIBRARY SPACE.

According to the U.S. Green Building Council, LEED buildings saved $1.2 billion in energy costs from 2015 to 2018, $715 million in maintenance costs and $54 million in waste savings. We would like to create an energy producing income stream for the library.

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION REGARDING COST SAVING AND CREATING INCOME HERE:

The Assistant Director of the largest green libraries in Arlington, TX reported to our North Texas Public Library Administrator Membership that they had saved enough from solar-panels to repay the debt of their building within a seven year period and he did not mention any other sources of income. These are two of several award winning library projects produced from green initiatives.

https://www.arlingtontx.gov/news/my_arlington_t_x/news_stories/arlington_sustainability

https://environment.arlingtonva.us/energy/green-building/government-green-building/

A building which produces income is more likely to be supported by private investors if they see the library can generate income from their investment. This type project also lends itself to green building grant opportunities. These grants in conjunction with library building grants from state and federal grant opportunities like these below would additionally help offset costs.:

HB 1381 https://capitol.texas.gov/billlookup/text.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=HB1381

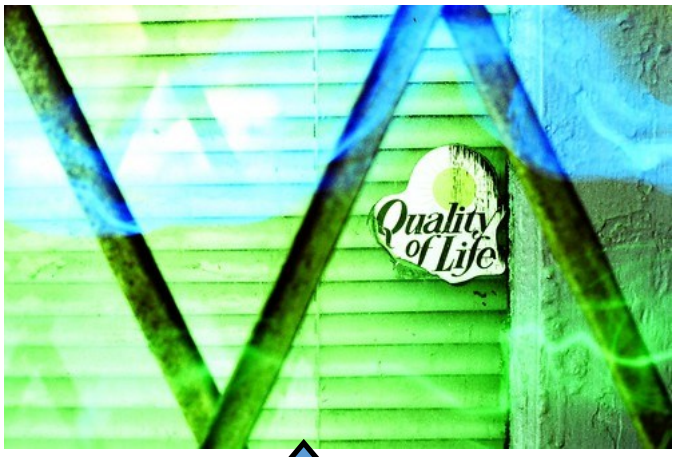
HR 1581 https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1581?s=1&r=13

Other ARPA Funding opportunities are becoming available through the state library and the state library will choose for what purposes that money is allocated based on input from public library administrators.

FEDERAL $11,938,821.00 STATE $6,150,301.73 FEDERAL & STATE FUNDS TOTAL $18,089,122.73

The importance of seizing grant funding for these in a timely manner cannot be over-emphasized.

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION REGARDING SITE ASSESSMENTS AND POSSIBLE REUSE OF EXISTING STRUCTURES



As a general rule, guidelines regarding public library space planning dictate having 1 sq. ft. per serving population. The existing structure is 10.5 sq. ft. Although this is no longer a strict ALA standard, it is still widely used. Not only do we recommend moving to a location that will accommodate a 30,000 sq. ft. development plot and adequate parking, it is also imperative that we find a place that will sustain growth and development over time to manage expectations. If we then increase to a 45k population, we will avoid outgrowing the building too quickly and be able to plan future spaces. For this reason, in looking at both downtown and existing main street buildings available for reuse, the recommendation is to build; however, it is possible that one of these structures could serve as a satellite branch or a full branch such as the old high school located adjacent to the Senior Center in the future. We feel this would be an excellent small location to pick up requested materials for the citizens and to also accommodate some local history, museum-like qualities and particularly to host Genealogy as some point in time as we are able to grow to address the needs of more thoroughly hosting our rich history in books and artifacts.

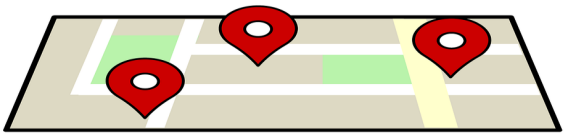
OPTIONS FOR AMENITIES AND PROGRAMS

Fitness/nature trails
Play equipment
Literacy and educational activities
Community gardens
Performance areas
Rentable pavilions that can be used to host events like birthday parties and fundraisers

The citizens of Mineral Wells have spoken with their clarity and confidence about what they expect in a physical location and their number one expectation is that the library extend its traditional space to become an outdoor space of learning and they are not alone in this assessment.

Once more, their own expectations are precisely on point with what current library literature indicates. The demand for outdoor use spaces actually preceded the Pandemic but has only increased since then.

PRELIMINARY SITES FOR CONSIDERATION



We looked at land owned both by the county and land owned by the city. The county land did not seem to lend itself to a proper location but a few city-owned properties possess possibilities and should be fully assessed for their strengths and weaknesses. As some point realities must take center-stage and given the expense of land clearance and reasonable access to facilities, water, electricity and the like, the purchase of land is not likely.

Questions we are posing and will continue to consider for site assessment.

1) **Will the new site serve its intended purpose?**
2) **Is this location a place people will desire and on what basis will they find fulfillment? What needs does this site serve that are not served now and not possible at our existing location?**
3) **Will this location be able to provide adequate facilities in the future to support its location? Will it support proper drainage, gas, water and electricity and what is the cost of creating this in this location? Will this location create a stream of development that would justify its expense?**
4) **Will our zoning and other government laws significantly impact the choice?**
5) **Condition of terrain and ground soil?**
6) **Aesthetics such as natural lighting, water features, existing land use, do the man-made and natural environment create the best quality of life statement about the library being a sanctuary and safe space?**

There are a few other sites that offer some possibilities such as the old high school adjacent to the senior center. It is possible this could offer some possibilities being close to downtown but it is likely not enough space to manage needs assessment and parking.

The following information includes four locations to further investigate:

SITE ONE: NAME: "IF YOU BUILD IT"

The strongest possibility for creating both aesthetics and space accommodation for future expansion is what we call, "If you build it…". While this location has been designated landfill space, this space has the best possibility of hosting the rural agrarian beauty that Mineral Wells has to offer. This area also is located just a couple of miles from all medical facilities and could be used by those seeking quality meditation. Ironically, this site rests on a landfill, which causes many concerns. This article discusses how frequently landfills are being commercially repurposed. https://www.constructiondive.com/news/landfill-of-opportunity-why-builders-are-turning-dumps-into-new-developm/421988/.

The Fossil Park, the natural beauty of the adjacent properties, farm-style ponds and bridges, the natural rolling hills and the large space of the foot of the hills make an excellent location to build all other features of the library and other quality of life structures into the destination. The size of this acreage and the shape and size of the space for development make it a stellar consideration!

INDIAN CREEK RANCH

SITE TWO: NAME: "RECREATION CENTRAL"

The second best possibility is relocating is the park area adjacent to ball fields and swimming facilities. For obvious reasons, this location has some redeeming qualities. Although it may not provide room for growth, quietude, sanctuary and areas for sprawl such as an outdoor theatre and butterfly garden due to the mixed area of housing and park development.

SITE THREE: NAME: "LIONS PARK"

The third best possibility is relocating to this area since it is closest to downtown while also allowing for sprawl and quietude. This area may provide what is necessary but may also be just as expensive to provide utilities and other facilities. The other disadvantage is that this location is headed out of town and away from our Palo Pinto neighbors as well. It still does not offer any of the amenities that would be associated with a downtown library and is not a central or best aesthetic destination.

SITE FOUR: NAME: "BAKER NEIGHBOR"

This site also offers many possible amenities. The downtown traffic would naturally occur without needing to create a premiere destination that speaks to a quality meditative space for outdoor recreation. This location adjacent the Baker would provide possible traveler foot traffic as well. This is an older building which does not lend itself to outdoor light and particularly the ability to bring the outdoors in since the outdoor aesthetic would not be present. The location also further inhibits the ability to offer outdoor spaces. At 30,000 sq. ft., were the community to grow we would already be maxing out this space. The redeeming quality of this library is that it is doubtful the library would not be used unless it maxed out at 30,000 and offered no spaces for digital endeavors, commercial kitchen and/or community conference/ study rooms and other audience/use destinations. An outdoor patio, even on the roof would also provide some place for musical entertainment but this location is not suitable for outdoor theatre.

https://www.remaxcommercial.com/Listing Details/201-SE-1st-Avenue-Mineral-Wells-TX-

SUMMARY FINDINGS

TOP-TIER RESULTS FROM COMMUNITY SURVEY

- **TECHNOLOGICAL: The library must come to the people to remain relevant. 70.3%**

  PHYSICAL PLANT/LOCATION: Our kids need more natural places to learn like a children's theatre and garden. 55%
- **PROGRAMS/SERVICES: Open More evenings. 52.1%**
- **PHYSICAL PLANT/LOCATION: I think access to technology is most important and I want representation to adult and/or children's makerspaces. 51.8%**

SECOND-TIER RESULTS FROM COMMUNITY

- **PROGRAMS/SERVICES: More outreach presence, community relationships and partnerships. 35.9%**
- **PROGRAMS/SERVICES: More adult programs. 33.8%**
- **PROGRAMS/SERVICES: More support for education and literacy services. 33.8%**
- **PROGRAMS/SERVICES: Provide stronger support for homeschoolers and alternative education styles. 33.1%**

FINAL CONCLUSIONS BASED ON SURVEY, STAFF KNOWLEDGE AND ADVISORY BOARD PARTICIPATION:

1. THE COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONS WERE MEASURED MONTHLY FOR THREE MONTHS. EACH MONTH DEMONSTRATED A RESOUNDING DISSATISFACTION WITH BUILDING FACILITIES DUE TO LACK OF OUTDOOR AMENITIES AND PHYSICAL QUALITY BOUNDARIES IN CONJUNCTION WITH EMPERICAL PERCENTAGES OF DEEP DISSATISFACTION LEVELS. ALTHOUGH WE WILL CONTINUE TO POLL, WE BELIEVE CRITICAL MASS IS ACHIEVED.

2. THE LEVEL FIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE LIBRARY INCLUDED OVER $500K IN STANDARD SAFETY NEEDS. THE ERI CONSULTING COMPANY ALSO CONDUCTED A STUDY INDICATING THAT THE ASBESTOS LEVELS IN OUR INSULATION AND HVAC CLOSETS INSIDE WALLS AND ABOVE THE CEILING ALL SCORED A "D" FOR CONTAMINATION LEVELS WITH OTHER AREAS NOT STRICTLY ACCESSIBLE BY TOUCH WHICH ALSO SCORED A "C". ONLY EXTERIOR WALLS SCORED AN "A". WE HAVE NO PROPER FREIGHT RECEIVING AREAS AND THE EXPENSE OF ADA INVESTMENT IS NOT WORTH THE EFFORT AND FUNDING IN THIS LOCATION.

3. IN ADDITION, THE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT CAN ONLY BE CORRECTED MINIMALLY AND WE CANNOT BOTH BUILD ONTO THIS SITE AND ALSO PROVIDE A GARDEN/THEATRE/HIKING LEARNING DESTINATION COMPLETE WITH MORE PARKING WHILE WE ALSO BUILD ADEQUATE MAKERSPACES, LARGER COLLECTIONS AND FACILITIES FOR PUBLIC USE SUCH AS MEETING ROOMS, CONFERENCE SPACES AND COLLECTION SIZE ENHANCEMENTS.

4. THE IMMEDIATE OUTDOOR AREA IS ALSO A PROBLEM DUE TO SMALL CHILDREN INHALING THE CASTOFF FROM THE NEIGHBORING NEARBY CANTEX PLANT AND THEIR IMMEDIATE PROXIMITY TO MEET OUTDOOR EXPECTATIONS.

5. WHILE ONLY 28% OF RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED DEVOTED SUPPORT FOR THE LIBRARY BECOMING A DOWNTOWN LOCATION, THEY DID EXPRESS NEARLY TWICE AS MUCH SUPPORT FOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION RECREATION SPACES.

6. ALMOST THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WANTED THE LIBRARY EITHER TO BE ON A DOWNTOWN MAIN LOCATION OR DIDN'T KNOW THE LOCATION OF THE LIBRARY AT ALL WHICH TRANSLATES TO LOCATION DISSATISFACTION. THE MESSAGE IS THIS LOCATION AND ITS FUNCTIONAL POSSIBILITIES DO NOT MAKE FOR A REMOTELY SATISFACTORY SERVICE DESTINATION.

BETTER UNDERSTANDING STATEMENT OF NEED USING LIBRARY STANDARDS AND SAFETY STANDARDS

While this section in no way means to point up to a library facilities study, it would be useful to understand need from a professional standpoint and what reasonable access constitutes for the public. In so doing, I will introduce a few term definitions to explain what standards we are meeting versus what a real-world standard should look like.

DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Square Footage: Simple two-dimensional measurement; common tool.

Net Usable Square Footage (NSF): Actual unobstructed usable floor area or square footage assigned to a primary use for a unit. This separates corridors, columns, pipe chases, mechanical and electrical and similar functions.

Net Assignable square Footage (NASF): Includes all net area assigned to a unit, in effect excludes space for exterior walls, mechanical and electrical spaces, shafts and rest rooms.

Building Gross Square Footage (BGSF): This refers to the total area of the building including all net assignable and net spaces plus additional space assigned to exterior walls, utility spaces and rest rooms.

It should be noted that the current library does not meet many ADA standards of accessibility guidelines nor does it include the space to properly accommodate them. Although ALA no longer uses a population per square foot guidelines, they do recommend most usable and desirable components that govern the spaces to be designed. As an alternative, the Whole Building Design Guide produced by the National Institute of Building Spaces recommends 5 seats for every thousand population. Our library currently houses about 42 with at least ten being dedicated computer space chairs, providing us a third of the recommendation.

Additionally, while the net usable square footage for public services is deeply unsatisfactory, so is the net usable square footage assigned for staff. This is true prior to any other needs inferiorities sited by the public survey and/or the staff.

OTHER TERMS FOR COMMON LANGUAGE

Regional Library: A regional library serves as a full-service facility with collections created for the public and geographic size of region it serves. This type of library is seen as a hub that supplements a small neighborhood library and is usually situated within 12 to 15 minutes drive in its sphere of political service and influence. The resources it should offer extend through the community college level in varying degrees dependent on what other resources it shares its anchor with. Regional libraries normally range between 30 and 50 thousand BGSF.

Community Library: A community library is also a full-service facility whose collection and technologies are shaped by the community and they provide considerable support for school curriculum. They provide fully adequate spaces and collections for children's, teens, adults and seniors.

Neighborhood Library: This type library is far less than a full-service facility. Its collections and technology are somewhat shaped by the community, it is determined only by the local community in that neighborhood. Collections are very limited with a smaller collection of popular materials and large prints books and little to no reference handbooks. The size depends on the neighborhood being served.

Boyce Ditto Library is and has been serving for at least the past fifteen years as a regional library tasked by the state to serve all of Palo Pinto County's 30,000 citizens. We have been serving with the funding and physical plant being relegated to a neighborhood status while serving Palo Pinto County citizens with nearly twice the strength of Mineral Wells residents in the past four years. The current library was federally funded and was never completed past the first phase with construction project phases to implement a 2nd and third completion phase. This library has served in this capacity for more than thirty years. By legal definition of public library standards, we should be considered a de-facto and mandatory regional library while our physical capacity is constrained to a mere neighborhood library no matter what our fiscal abilities are to provide better digital and physical collections.

FIVE YEAR PLAN GOALS

INCREASE MARKETING & ADVERTISING

INCREASE DIGITAL FOOTPRINT WITH STRATEGIC RESOURCES

EXTEND LIBRARY TO BECOME A SPACE OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION AND A LARGER FACILITY

INCREASE PARTNERSHIPS & SOCIAL SERVICES

INCREASE LITERACY & INSTRUCTION WHILE ASSISTING HOME-SCHOOLERS AND BUSINESS GROWTH

FIND SITE AND INVESTORS FOR NEW LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

EXTEND HOURS OF OPERATION

INCREASE PROGRAMMING FOR ADULTS, KIDS AND ESPECIALLY TEENS

WORK WITH ADVISORY BOARD TO STRENGTHEN FRIENDS OF LIBRARY GROUP

INCREASE STAFFING LEVELS

PRIORITY TIMELINE

2022-23

ACHIEVED: BDPL HAS ACCESS TO STABLE SOURCES OF STAFF AND INCOME

2023-24

ACHIEVED: INCREASED DIGITAL ACCESS AND AVENUES TO SUPPORT DIGITAL LIBRARY USERS

2024-25

ACHIEVED: AWARENESS OF LIBRARY VALUES, MATERIALS AND PRODUCTS

2025-26

ACHIEVED: COMMUNITY SATURATION BY INCREASING PARTNERSHIP STRENGTHS

2026-27

ACHIEVED: NEW BUILDING LOCATION AND SERVICES

PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS IDENTIFIED

Before and during this process, staff and Advisory Board member identified partners and stakeholders who would be necessary in support and completion of these goals.

STAKEHOLDERS FOR BOYCE DITTO PUBLIC LIBRARY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

SENIORS

JOB SEEKERS

HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES

MINERAL WELLS ISD

PALO PINTO ISD

COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MINERAL WELLS CITY COUNCIL

LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESSPEOPLE

COMMUNITIES OF: PALO PINTO, GORDON, GRAFORD, MINGUS AND STRAWN

LOCAL CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS AND NON-PROFITS

The mission of BDPL is to enrich the library experience of these citizens. As we look to acquire new resources, we must increase the livelihood of these stakeholders. To that end, utilizing our mission and vision, we will extend the library's presence by acquiring and strengthening partnerships.

PARTNERSHIPS TO STRENGTHEN

Local schools and daycares

Local health organizations

Homeless services

Catholic Charities

North Texas Library Consortium

Friends of BDPL

Senior living facilities

Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission

Texas Workforce Commission

Area Agency on Aging

City Parks & Recreation Dept.

Community Partner Program

Headstart

Kiddy Klubhouse

First Steps Daycare

Center of Life

PPGH

Senior Center

AgriLife Extension

Alzheimer's Association

NTCOG

AARP Tax Aide

Royal Gardens Apt

Downtown Development

Our Community, Our Kids

PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE

Local colleges

Early Childhood Services

Children's Alliance Center for Palo Pinto County

Palo Pinto United Way

LULAC

CONTEXT MATTERS

In conclusion, as your Library Manager, I hope you will read the entire guide, including our appendix in the SWOT Analysis planning document, since it contains so much information. The community will be impressed by the level and type of engaging discussions that my Advisory Board has considered in making decisions on your behalf. I therefore hope you will find this guide to be as useful as possible in providing all the view-points necessary and that my Advisory Board, staff and I have been successful in speaking for both the needs and desires of our community.

What have we tried to provide to you that matters most?

- An honest critical assessment of the library that provides information about what you think is most critical for change.
- An honest critical assessment from the Advisory Board and staff about what we think needs to change.
- A hybrid of the two that demonstrates you have been heard and that we are and have been aware of what should matter for a successful community-minded library.
- An understanding of all our internal challenges in meeting needs and demands and some enlightenment about why we are challenged to serve with adequate identity levels.
- A reasonable map of objectives moving forward that are doable and measurable as we use these objectives to facilitate completion of goals.
- A responsible transparent record of our decision process and how we intend to meet goals.
- The same information available to city, staff, Advisory Board and constituents.
- As much information about financial matters as we can provide in this window of time.
- The realization that, while we cannot change everything immediately, we know that building on a proper foundation is key to providing better, both broad and deeper, services to all of our citizens.
- The information that we want to serve niche and target audiences and that we have a skill base from which to draw for meeting demands. Some bodies we feel a need to provide inclusion for include minorities, culturally and socially-divided citizens, our private sector and public servants. Our most invaluable artists, musicians, non-profits, teachers and local business entrepreneurs are always at the forefront of our service mind.

Even as we have done our best, we know there will be issues we cannot address or navigate at this time, and ones we have also overlooked. Still, we have tried to be both thorough and strategic in our assessment so that we can begin in a place that will meet other needs adequately as we build into our future. It is our fervent prayer this work will find its place into every institution and home that wants to build a great cultural and educational foundation for a shared identity that will create and draw quality people into our town and surrounding county. Finally, a heartfelt thank you goes out to those who participated in our process.