



2014 – 2017 STRATEGIC PLAN

STOCKTON
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

PUBLIC LIBRARY





MISSION

The Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library inspires learning and discovery by providing community access to resources in both traditional and innovative ways.

VISION

We are the community catalyst sparking curiosity, igniting the pursuit of knowledge, and fueling the exploration of endless possibilities.

VALUES

Service Excellence ▶ Respect for All ▶ Teamwork and Collaboration ▶ Community Engagement ▶ Stewardship of Public Assets ▶ Innovation

A MESSAGE FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

We are pleased to present the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library Strategic Plan. This three-year Strategic Plan 2014-2017 reflects our commitment to service excellence in meeting the changing needs of the community. This is an exciting time for the library as we sharpen our focus on our customers and extend our reach into the communities we serve.

This plan is important for a number of critical reasons. First and foremost, it is a public declaration of our priorities and the principles we stand on. Second, it is a statement of accountability. We expect the communities we serve and our stakeholders to hold us accountable for achieving the goals outlined in the plan. Third, it provides direction for the future. As the plan was developed a vision of the future was formulated. Our strategic priorities and goals were determined with this vision in mind. While we worked to provide a focused and clear direction for the library over the next three years, we remained steadfast in our commitment to provide excellent library services and outstanding customer services that our community has come to expect. At the same time, we also recognized the need to continually evolve in order to remain responsive to the 21st century needs of our community.

A great library system is vital to the continued development and enrichment of San Joaquin County and its residents. The strength of the library system lies in our ability to adapt to changing needs and demands. As such, we are committed to being more customer centered and more responsive to change, including increasing staff efficiency, customer self-sufficiency, and access to our resources.

This plan is the result of hard work by the strategic planning team and input from staff and a diverse group of community stakeholders. The realization of our goals will require the continued work of our staff, the support and collaboration of our stakeholders, and the commitment of leadership. The plan is designed to be dynamic in nature. Throughout the next three years, we will revisit with the community to evaluate the degree to which the plan is meeting expectations and adjust it accordingly. We anticipate looking back at this plan three years from now with a sense of pride in what can be accomplished through dedication, collaboration, innovation, and hard work. Through our combined efforts we will succeed.

Strategic Planning Team: Chris Freeman, Peaches Ehrich, Debra Furtado, Tara Gallegos, Rebecca Hill Long, Susan Johnston, Bushra Khan, Anne Stevens, Chris Rose, and Laurie Montes

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2013, the library received a grant from the California State Library to undertake a strategic planning process to develop a comprehensive plan *geared specifically toward the diverse communities served by the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library (SSJCPL)*. During the past seven months, the SSJCPL worked to develop this strategic plan. This document describes how, over a period of three years, the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library—along with SSJCPL staff, partners, and residents—will move into the future.

This plan focuses resources to maximize results by ensuring accountability for performance and delivery of exceptional services throughout the library system. The plan is aligned with community needs that will be met through collaboration with existing community initiatives and ensuring resources and services reflect community needs and priorities. The premise of the strategic plan is that the library is more relevant today than ever before due to fundamental changes in how people access and use information and the tools and capabilities required to function effectively. As such, the library is ideally positioned to meet the widely disparate needs of a diverse community.

This plan challenges SSJCPL to optimize its resources and utilize strategic approaches to achieve greater effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness in providing quality library services. It is aggressive and focuses on strategic priorities which are critical in maintaining a high quality customer-centered and community-focused library system.

WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN

The primary objectives of the plan are to:

- ◆ To meet the library services needs of the diverse communities served by SSJCPL.
- ◆ Establish goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes for the future.
- ◆ Identify actions necessary to achieve goals, objectives, and outcomes.
- ◆ Provide the flexibility to take advantage of changes in our environment that are critical to meeting the needs of residents.

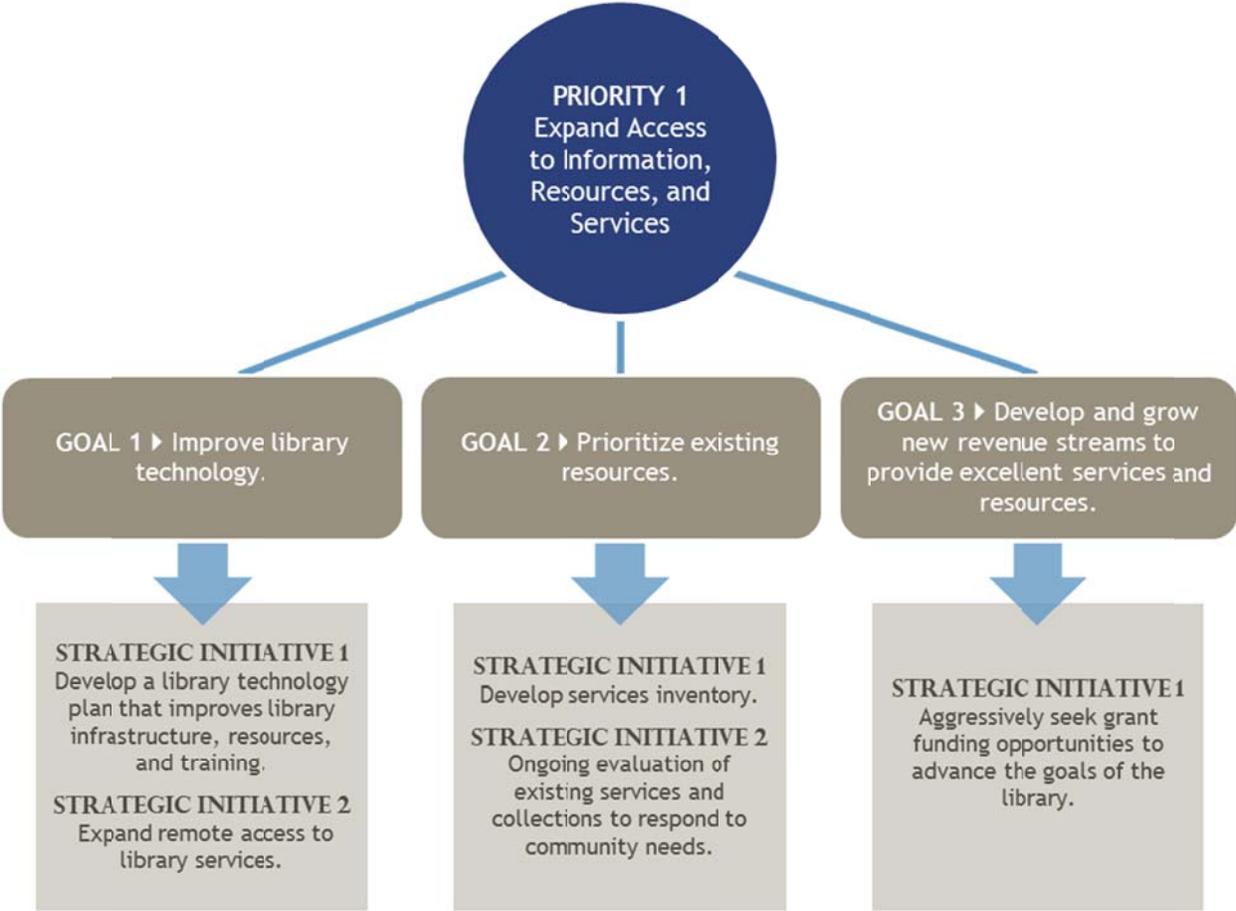
The Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library Strategic Plan is a plan that prioritizes the work library staff will do in the coming years. It was developed with careful consideration of the feedback we received from the community. The plan is shaped with the understanding that change is a fact of organizational life, and the library will remain flexible and adapt its goals as warranted. In such a rapidly evolving and changing world, we presume our action steps may look different from year to year. At the same time, we remain steadfast in our mission and vision and will maintain our core values. As we move forward, we will measure everything we do against our mission and remain focused on serving our community and customers. As you

review the plan you will note our goals and strategic initiatives for the next three years contribute directly to addressing our strategic priorities.

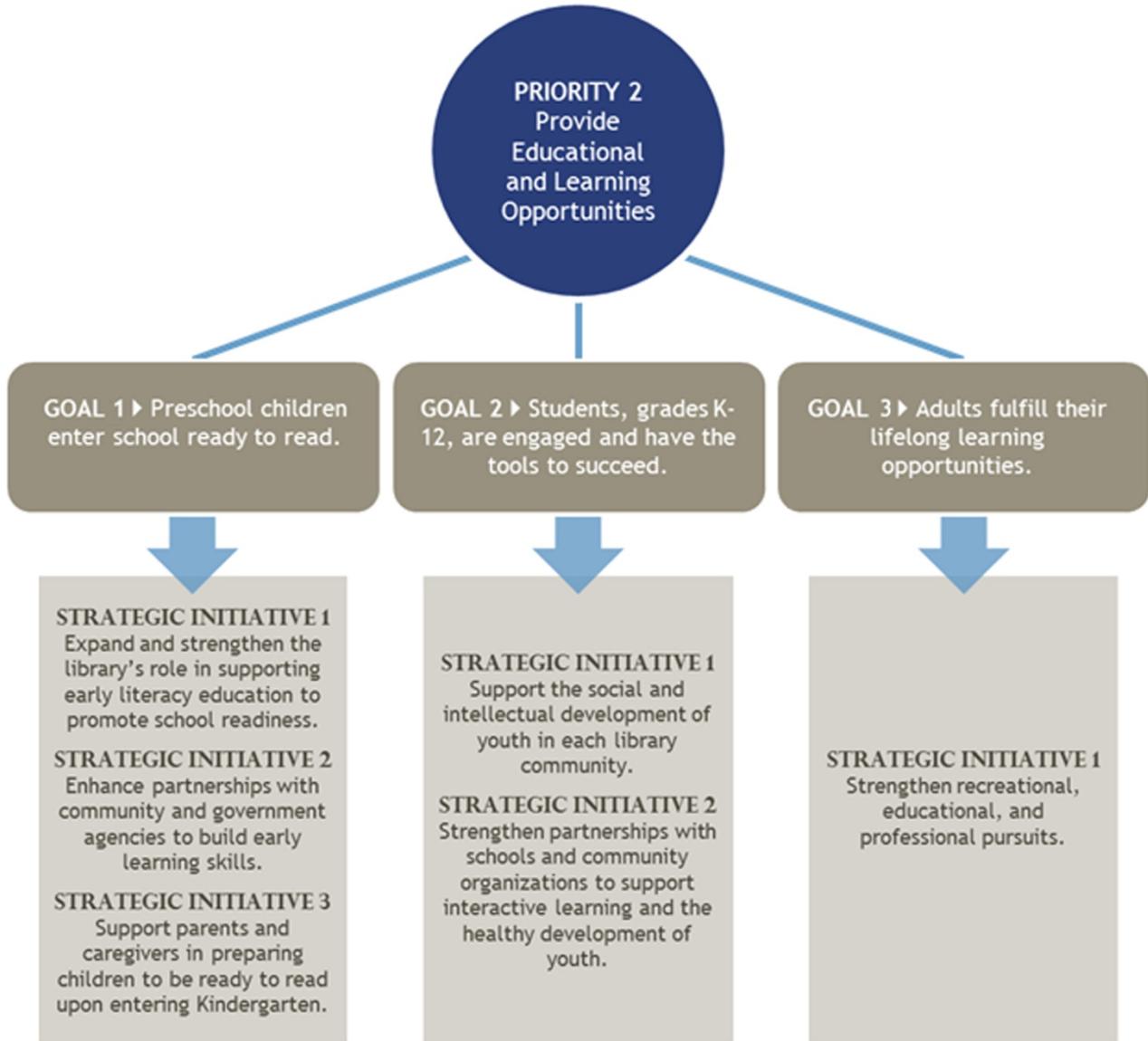
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND INITIATIVES

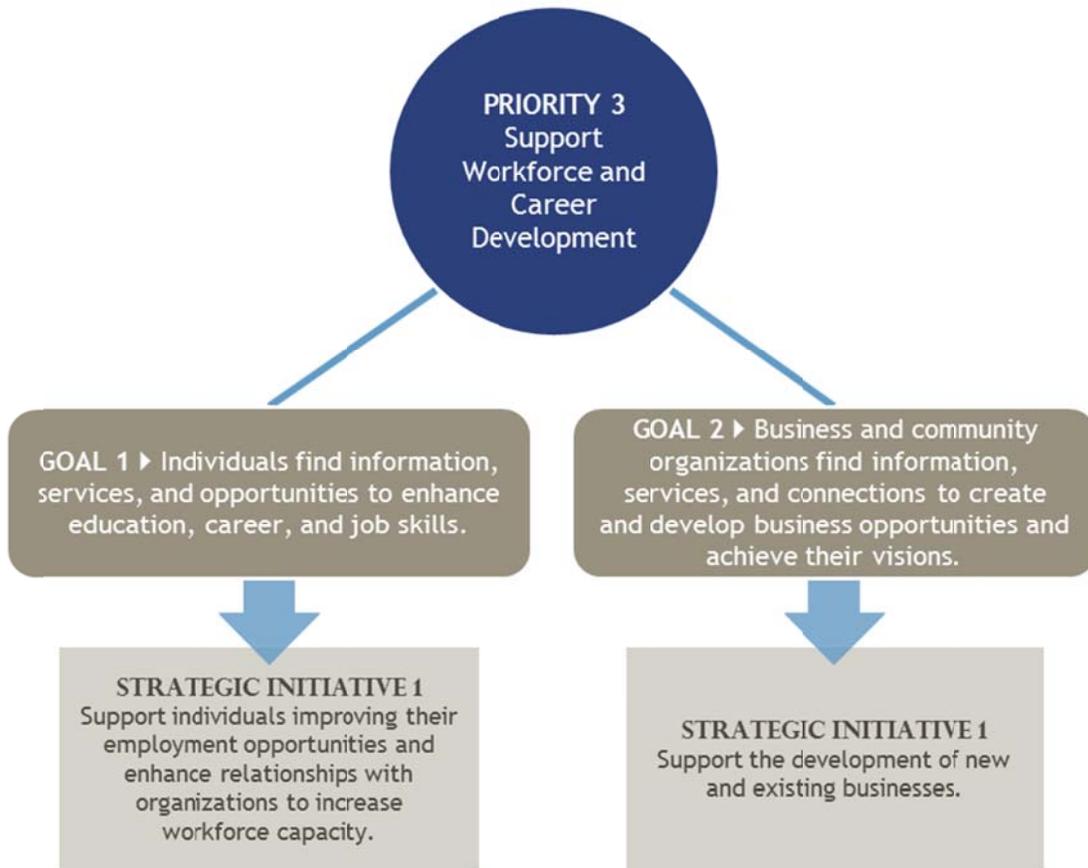
Four strategic priorities emerged from the input gathering and feedback during the development of the strategic plan. These four strategic priorities serve as the organizing framework for the strategic plan. For each priority, one or more strategic initiatives were developed and actionable items or actions steps were identified for the each strategic initiative. Taken on the whole, the strategic priorities, goals, and initiatives are the foundation for the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library 2014-2017 Strategic Plan.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY







IN CLOSING

This strategic plan is the result of a commitment by library management and staff and is intended to provide direction and serve as a dynamic, living document that evolves as SSJCPL adjusts and adapts to emerging challenges and opportunities. Ultimately, the plan is designed to ensure SSJCPL remains visible and accessible to people of all ages, income, and education levels, cultural backgrounds, and abilities.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

Public libraries are on the cusp of tremendous change and a fundamental shift in their mission and how they do business. As a result of changes in how people access and use information and interact with each other, libraries are evolving into a vital, multiservice hub for all generations. Public libraries have become much more than quiet places surrounded by books. Rarely has such a valued and uniquely American institution been called upon to redefine its mission as the public library in the 21st century. How information is gathered and used is continuously evolving. Fundamental changes in how people access and use information and the tools and capabilities needed to function effectively require new approaches to the services and resources that the library provides. To remain relevant, the library must evolve in ways that track both the pace of change and the diversity of users, ensuring all members of the San Joaquin community have access to library services.

This plan recognizes and capitalizes on the library system's legacy of serving communities in San Joaquin County. One of the major objectives of the strategic planning process is the establishment, communication, and execution of the library's fundamental purpose. It is the lens through which challenges and opportunities are examined and analyzed, strategic priorities framed, and strategic goals articulated. The strategic plan will enable the library to adapt, take advantages of its opportunities, and manage the strategic priorities and goals that are critical to achieving its vision.

This plan is the result of a vigorous and often-times passionate series of conversations and discussions about the future of the library and how to best respond to changing needs for library services. The plan is our roadmap for the next three years and a public declaration of our priorities and is intended to provide vision and direction, while staying true to core library values. The plan is intended not only to provide vision and direction, but to be a bold, dynamic, living document that evolves as the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library adjusts and adapts to emerging opportunities and challenges for the benefit of our customers and all San Joaquin County residents.



INTRODUCTION

PLANNING PROCESS AND INPUTS

In 2013, the library received a grant from the California State Library to undertake a strategic planning process to develop a comprehensive plan *geared specifically toward the diverse communities served by the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library (SSJCPL)*. In August 2013, the SSJCPL issued an RFP to identify and select a consultant firm to assist with the strategic planning process. Following the completion of a very thorough consultant selection process, in December 2013, the SSJCPL awarded a contract to MGT of America, Inc. (MGT), a national management consulting and research firm with a Sacramento office, to facilitate the development of the SSJCPL's strategic plan. To provide strategic direction and guidance in leading the seven month strategic plan process, the SSJCPL created a strategic planning team to work in partnership and collaboration with MGT throughout the strategic plan process.

The strategic planning process started in December 2013 with a series of meetings between the SSJCPL and MGT to finalize the scope, parameters, and expected outcomes of the strategic planning process. Over a period of several months, MGT worked in partnership with the SSJCPL to complete the strategic planning process, which was organized around the major components described below.

Within each of the components, a series of activities and tasks were completed by the strategic planning team and MGT. Starting in December 2013, SSJCPL launched a process to gather staff and community input regarding the library's future direction. The input gathering was designed



to test assumptions about stakeholder perceptions and to develop a deeper understanding of the community's opinions and perceptions about the areas where the community most wants to see the SSJCPL focus resources. Input for this plan was gathered over a seven-month period through a series of community forums, staff forums, community survey, and key informant interviews. During this same period, the strategic planning team conducted several strategic planning sessions to review the results of the input gathering and to address mission, vision, values, strategic priorities, and other components of the strategic planning process.



COMMUNITY FORUMS

December 2013 and January 2014 - The feedback process began with a series of public community forum sessions held at branches throughout Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library system to solicit opinions and perceptions of community residents. The community forums were facilitated by MGT and attracted library customers, neighborhood residents, and community stakeholders. In total, 85 individuals participated in a community forum session and provided answers to the following questions:

- ◆ What are we doing well?
- ◆ How can we improve?
- ◆ What aren't we doing that we should be doing?
- ◆ What should our priorities be over the next three years ?
- ◆ What else should we focus on?



Each forum was structured to engage attendees in discussing their opinions and perceptions about the above issues as well as strengths, challenges, and future needs for library services.

The input from the community forums resulted in a working document that was used by the strategic planning team, in conjunction with other input gathering, to help identify strategic priorities.

STAFF FORUMS

January 2014 - Library staff were asked to participate in two staff forums to respond to a similar set of questions and to share their opinions and perceptions about challenges and opportunities related to meeting current and future needs for library services in San Joaquin County. Staff who participated represented almost every branch in the system. The input from staff was invaluable and used in conjunction with other input by the strategic planning team to help address mission, vision, and values and to formulate strategic priorities.

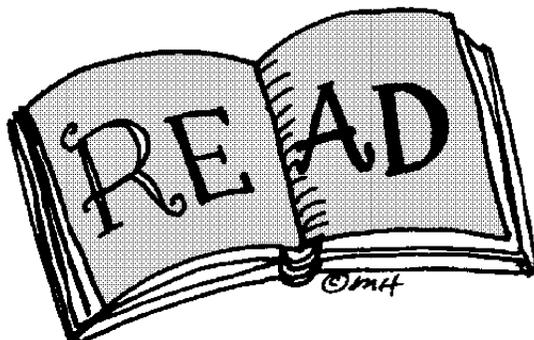
COMMUNITY SURVEY

April and May 2014 - Concurrent with the community forums and staff forums, the library asked stakeholders to respond to a telephone survey related to customer satisfaction, future priorities and services, and usage. The survey was conducted county-wide in both English and Spanish. Almost 400 community residents answered questions about their current use of library resources, the importance of library services to their lives, and their views regarding future priorities for the library. Input from the community survey clearly indicated the library is viewed as a vital community resource that plays a key role in the quality of community life.



KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

February 2014 and March 2014 - Key informant interviews were conducted with community members and leaders to solicit opinions and perceptions about current and future needs for library services and the role of the library as a community resource. The results of the key informant interviews were used, along with other input, to help shape and formulate strategic priorities and other strategic plan components.



The word cloud below was generated from comments collected from participants during the community forums, staff forums, and key informant interviews. The larger the word, the more frequently it was mentioned.



Word Cloud Generated by Jason Davis Word Cloud Generator.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSIONS



January 2014 through June 2014 - Throughout the planning process, the strategic planning team met regularly to review the results of the input gathering and to delve into the specifics of many topics, including the library’s purpose, community building, effective partnering, resource needs – all of which was used to help shape consensus on mission, vision, values – and strategic priorities. In between meetings, the strategic planning team completed a variety of tasks related to these key elements. The final series of strategic planning team meetings were dedicated to finalizing strategic goals and the finalizing the strategic plan document.

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

June 2014 - The strategic planning team used the results of the community input gathering and other strategic planning activities to work in partnership with MGT to develop the strategic plan document. A strategic plan draft was developed that was used by the strategic planning team as the basis for preparing the final strategic plan document. Following revisions to the draft document, the strategic planning team and MGT prepared the final strategic plan document that will serve as the library's roadmap for the next three years.



Similar to other communities in California and the nation, as the Baby Boom generation ages, San Joaquin County is expected to have a rapidly increasing population of persons age 65 and older. As of 2011, the oldest boomers turn 65, but the greatest impacts on all types of human services will occur beginning in 2026 when the boomers reach age 80.

This growth, along with shifting economic and social conditions, presents challenges and opportunities for the library, including the need to remain visible and accessible to people of all ages, income and education levels, cultural backgrounds, and disabilities.



THE COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY

LIBRARY OVERVIEW

LIBRARIES

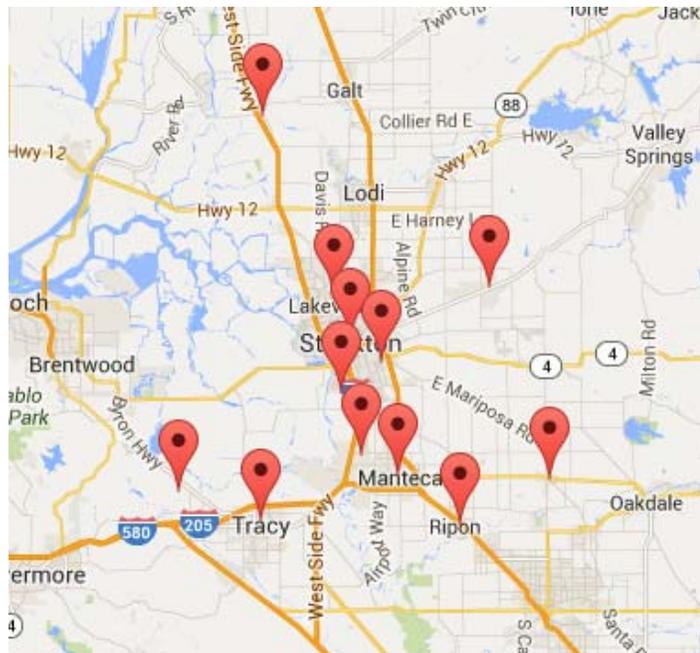
STOCKTON LIBRARIES

Cesar Chavez (*Central Library*)
Troke
Angelou
Weston Ranch

SAN JOAQUIN LIBRARIES

Escalon
Lathrop
Linden
Manteca
Mountain House
Ripon
Thornton
Tracy

The Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library system serves a 1,400 square mile area and is comprised of four city libraries, eight county branch libraries, and a bookmobile.



Through an agreement between San Joaquin County and City of Stockton, the City operates the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library system, which serves the cities of Escalon, Lathrop, Manteca, Ripon, Stockton, and Tracy as well as the unincorporated areas of the County. The County's funding base for library services is comprised primarily of property taxes, while the City's funding is from general revenue. In recent years, the overall increase in home prices and fewer foreclosures resulted in a four percent increase in the County's property tax collections for library services. The library's total operating income is slightly over \$10 million, a majority of which comes from local government.

More than 75 percent of the library's staff members work in direct customer service at one of the branch locations providing services and assistance to over 280,000 borrowers. Library patrons and customers make well over one million

THE COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY

visits each year to various library branches. Though days and hours vary by branch, library service is available in at least one library from 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. seven days a week. The libraries provide a variety of events and programs for all age groups including:

- ◆ Book Clubs
- ◆ Reading Workshops
- ◆ Computer Training Classes
- ◆ Toddler and Pre-School Story Times
- ◆ Zumba Classes
- ◆ Movie Nights
- ◆ Arts and Crafts
- ◆ Homework Assistance



Staff provide a variety of assistance to those seeking to use library services.

The library's collection includes eBook and eAudiobook selections. Branches provide quiet study room space and access to meeting rooms for large group collaboration. Meeting rooms are available to the public, some even before/after normal library hours. All branches provide public Internet workstations and access to Wi-Fi.

LIBRARY SNAPSHOT

- ✓ More than 1.6 million people visited a branch of Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library borrowing over 280,000 items
- ✓ Over 200,000 people use the library's public access computers
- ✓ Library staff conducted over 2,000 programs for children, young adults, and adults
- ✓ Nearly 53,000 non-English materials are in circulation
- ✓ Annually the library is open over 16,000 hours

The library's support services department includes collection services and cataloging services and is responsible for selecting and cataloging a wide range of materials, including books, periodicals, audiobooks, etc. Digital materials such as eBooks, ePeriodicals, and eAudiobooks are a growing area of purchase in a rapidly changing publishing environment. Cataloging services provides bibliographic access to, organizes, and physically prepares library materials so customers can find what they are seeking.

STOCKTON LIBRARIES

THE COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY

THE CESAR CHAVEZ LIBRARY

The Cesar Chavez Library, which opened its doors in 1964, is named after the Mexican American civil rights and labor leader who was responsible for unifying and unionizing California's migrant farm workers.



The largest library in the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library system, the Cesar Chavez Library is conveniently and centrally located in downtown Stockton. The library features a dedicated children's space, a local history room, and two floors for adult and teen use. The Cesar Chavez library is also the location of SSJCPL's Administrative offices.

The Cesar Chavez Library houses a circulating collection of library materials in English, Spanish, Chinese, Hmong, Khmer, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Filipino. The library maintains an extensive reference collection as well as local history and genealogy materials. Newspapers and magazines are available for browsing.

The library offers computer workstations available for printing and general use. The library offers free Wi-Fi throughout the building as well as internet on public workstations. Computers designated for children's use are available in the children's room. Study and conference rooms as well as a public meeting space are available upon request. The library offers a variety of programs and special events for all ages. A coffee shop operating independently from the library is located on the second floor.

Special features in the Cesar Chavez Library include a mural by Cuauhtemoc Moreno and two quilts by Peig Fairbrook in the Children's Room, a mosaic by Jean Varda in the main foyer, and two permanent displays: the Sister Cities Exhibit and the Card Wall. A tribute to Stockton native Harriet Chalmer, first female author in National Geographic is located on the landing of the stairs.

THE MARGARET K. TROKE BRANCH LIBRARY

The Troke Library was dedicated on October 13, 1979. The library's namesake is the late Margaret Klausner Troke, who served as the Director of the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library from 1946 to 1974. She was tireless and successful in her efforts to improve and expand library services in the county and state.



The Troke Library is the only branch located in north Stockton and serves the largest patron base of all the Stockton branches. The branch offers a circulating collection of library materials in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Cambodian, Lao, and Khmer and maintains permanent and non-circulating reference collections. Newspapers and magazines are available for browsing.

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The library offers computer workstations for general use, including printing, as well as free Wi-Fi throughout the building. Computers designated for children are available in the children's area. A public meeting space is available upon request. A book magnifier and copy machine also are available. The library offers a variety of regularly scheduled programs for all ages and features dedicated children's and teen spaces.

Special features in the Troke Library include a public mural by Anita Young in the meeting room as well as a quilt by a local quilter and a suspended stuffed animal exhibit in the children's area.

MAYA ANGELOU BRANCH LIBRARY

The Maya Angelou Southeast Branch Library/Biblioteca opened its doors in 1996 following an inauguration ceremony and speech delivered by its namesake, the late Dr. Maya Angelou, world renowned poet, artist, and civil rights activist.



The Angelou Branch Library is a neighborhood library located in southeast Stockton. The library offers a circulating collection of English, Spanish, and Hmong materials and maintains a non-circulating reference collection. There are specialized materials on African-American History and other social sciences. Newspapers and magazines are available for browsing. The library features a dedicated area for children and teen library use.

The library offers computer workstations for general use, including printing, and free Wi-Fi throughout the building. A public meeting room with Wi-Fi capability is available for rental. The library has designated computers for homework use. A book magnifier and copy machine also are available. The library offers a variety of regularly scheduled programs and special events for all ages.

The library features displays and special artwork which include: a suspended wooden boat sculpture by artist Scott Runion, a tribute to authors, artists, and playwrights; a Hmong tapestry memorializing the journey and struggle of Hmong refugees; and several framed posters and mementos donated and signed by Dr. Angelou.

WESTON RANCH BRANCH LIBRARY

Opening in 2007, the Weston Ranch Branch operates as a joint effort of the City of Stockton and the Manteca Unified School District. It is the only public library in the south Stockton neighborhood of Weston Ranch and is located on the New Vision Educational Center campus.



THE COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY

Available for patron use are a circulating collection of materials in English and Spanish and a non-circulating reference collection. The library features a dedicated area for children and teen library use.

The library offers computer workstations for general use, including printing, and free Wi-Fi throughout the building. A public meeting room with Wi-Fi capability is available for rental. A book magnifier and copy machine also are available.

Friends of the Library: The Friends of the Stockton Public Library was formed in 1957 to support bond measures to help build the Cesar Chavez main branch. The Friends and its many volunteers began selling discarded books at the Margaret Troke Branch when it first opened and have expanded to their current bookstore at 1724 West Hammer Lane in Stockton. They also have many members who support them through generous donations. The funds generated are then used to fund library materials and programs, author appearances, and in supporting other community literary events.

SAN JOAQUIN LIBRARIES

ESCALON BRANCH LIBRARY

In its current location since 1991, the Escalon Branch Library originally opened in 1910 in its former location just across the street. The library is located near Main Street Park in the historic downtown district of the city of Escalon, a small agricultural community in southeast San Joaquin County.



Patrons may borrow from Escalon’s circulating collection of English and Spanish materials or use the reference collection in the library. A selection of magazines and newspapers are available, including *The Escalon Times* dating back to 1924.

The library branch offers computers for general use and black and white printing as well as free Wi-Fi throughout the building. A book magnifier and copy machine also are available. Study rooms and a public meeting space with Wi-Fi are available upon request.

The Escalon Branch Library offers programs and special events for patrons of all ages. The library features a children’s section with puzzles and activities to encourage children to play and learn. Additionally, the library displays rotating artwork by local artists in the community room.

Friends of the Library: The Friends of the Escalon Library was established in 1992. There is a Friends book sale located in the library foyer. The group supports the Escalon Library’s programming and materials through monetary support, and advocates for literacy and library services in the Escalon area.

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LATHROP BRANCH LIBRARY

The Lathrop Branch, originally located in a smaller building, opened in 2005. In 2014, the branch moved and reopened at its current west Lathrop location at The Lathrop Generations Center, a cutting-edge community center for recreation and community activities. The Center features a community garden, an outdoor amphitheater, walking paths, and separate park and skateboard areas.



The Lathrop Branch offers a circulating collection of English and Spanish materials. The library features a designated area for children's materials and activities.

Patrons may utilize one of the many public computers at Lathrop for printing and general use. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the building. A copy machine also is available. The library offers programs and special events for patrons of all ages.

Friends of the Library: The Friends of the Lathrop Library group was started by Lathrop civic and community leaders in 2010. The main purpose of this local non-profit organization is to focus public attention on library services and facilities.

LINDEN BRANCH LIBRARY

The Linden Branch Library originally opened in 1910 and the current library building was dedicated to Frank DeBenedetti on January 29, 1993. DeBenedetti was an outspoken advocate for library services in Linden.



The Linden Library is a small branch located on Main Street/Highway 26 in downtown Linden, a small agricultural community in east San Joaquin County.

Available for patron use are a circulating collection of English and Spanish materials. Newspapers and magazines also are available for browsing, including *The Linden Herald* dating back to 2007. An area of the library is devoted to children's materials and activities.

The library has public computers for general use and printing as well as free Wi-Fi throughout the branch. A designated children's computer can be found in the children's area. The branch also has a typewriter and copy machine for public use.

The Linden Branch offers regularly scheduled programs and special events for patrons of all ages. Children's artwork for the Linden Cherry Festival - an important event for the Linden community - is displayed throughout the library year-round.

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Friends of the Library: The Friends of the Linden Library contribute a substantial amount of support to the Linden Branch Library for materials and programs. There is a Friends book sale located on site in the branch program room and is open during business hours.

MANTECA BRANCH LIBRARY

In operation since 1962, the Manteca Branch Library serves patrons in the city of Manteca in south San Joaquin County. The library is located in Downtown Manteca adjacent to Library Park.



The library offers circulating materials in English and Spanish as well as non-circulating reference materials. Magazines and newspapers are available for browsing, including copies of *The Manteca Bulletin* on microfilm from 1910 to 2005 and print copies from 2005. The library features special areas for children and teen library materials and use.

Patrons may use the library's public computers for printing or general use. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the building. The branch offers a copy machine and typewriter for public use. Designated children's computers can be found in the children's area. The McFall community room is available for public use on request. The library presents regularly scheduled programs and events for patrons of all ages.

Artwork from the Manteca Art Guild is featured in the branch on a regular basis. The library also displays a book quilt from the Manteca Quilters' Guild. Permanent artwork includes paintings by Jean Ramey of the Ideal Bookshelves of author Louise Moeri and former librarian Barbara Hildebrand.

Friends of the Library: Friends of the Manteca Library is a group of local volunteers who supports the Manteca Branch Library by providing funds to purchase materials and for programs.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE BRANCH LIBRARY

In its current location since 2014, the Mountain House Branch Library opened its doors to the public in 2007. The current neighborhood branch is located near Central Park. The library serves the Mountain House Community Services District. Mountain House is a growing community located at the base of the Altamont in southwest San Joaquin County.



Patrons may borrow from Mountain House's circulating collection of materials in English, Spanish, Hindi, and Punjabi or use the non-circulating reference collection in the library. A selection of magazines and newspapers are available. The library features designated areas for children and teen materials and use.

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Mountain House offers public computers for general use and printing as well as Wi-Fi throughout the building. A copy machine and typewriter also are available. The library features regularly scheduled programs and special events for patrons of all ages.

Friends of the Library: The Mountain House Friends of the Library is a non-profit organization founded in 2010. It is dedicated to supplementing public funding to enhance services and programs of the Mountain House Library. The Mountain House Friends of the Library has a hardworking Board of Directors to plan, organize, promote, and carry out activities.

RIPON MEMORIAL BRANCH LIBRARY

Originally opened in 1948, the Ripon Memorial Branch Library relocated to its current location in 2006. The branch is located on Main Street in the historic downtown of the City of Ripon. Ripon is a small but growing community in south San Joaquin County. The library is dedicated to the thirteen Ripon soldiers who gave their lives in World War II, and features a memorial plaque in their honor.



The Ripon Memorial Library offers a circulating collection of materials in English and Spanish as well as non-circulating reference materials. Local newspapers and magazines are available for browsing, including *The Ripon Record* on microfilm back to 1912. There are two study or conference rooms and a meeting room available upon request. A children's area for materials and use is decorated with a castle mural by Peggy Morgan and hand painted turrets by another local artist.

Patrons may use the library's public computers for general use and printing. There is an additional computer lab for research use. The library offers free Wi-Fi throughout the building. A copy machine, book magnifier, and typewriter also are available. The library offers many regularly scheduled programs for patrons of all ages.

Featured in the library are the World War II Memorial, various murals in the children's area, a mural by June Sand on the covered outside patio, an oversized wall map on in the community room, and the Friend's Giving Tree located in the front of the library. The Giving Tree highlights library patrons whose donations made the new library building possible. The library also features framed artwork titled *Written World* by Rob Gonsalves. A sculpture dedicated to the memory of Ched Kolak is located in the children's area. The Soroptomists maintain a display next to a monthly rotating display case dedicated to Violet Fulton, the former Ripon Branch Librarian from 1961 to 1987.

Friends of the Library: The Friends of the Ripon Memorial Library was established in 1974. It is a nonprofit group of literacy minded volunteers who advocate and raise funds for the Ripon Memorial Library. Its mission is to support and advocate for quality library services, promote

THE COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY

community awareness and volunteerism, and develop partnerships with community groups. The Friends book sale is located in the library.

THORNTON BRANCH LIBRARY

The Thornton Branch Library opened in 1986 in the small incorporated community of Thornton in the uppermost San Joaquin County. The branch is one of the remote town's main attractions, often serving as a de facto community center for youth and community congregation. The branch is dedicated to George Barber, former San Joaquin County Supervisor and advocate for library services.



The Thornton Branch offers a circulating collection of English and Spanish materials as well as a non-circulating reference collection. Magazines are available for browsing. There are designated areas for children and teen materials and activities.

The Library provides public computers for general use and printing and free Wi-Fi throughout the building. A copy machine is available for public use. A public meeting room is available upon request. The Thornton Branch presents regularly scheduled programs and events for all ages.

The library features a display case in the front entrance with rotating displays and materials. There is a dedication plate for Mr. Barber on the outside of the building.

TRACY BRANCH LIBRARY

The Tracy Branch Library opened in 1961 and expanded to its current size after a remodel in 1987. The branch is located in central Tracy near City Hall and Tracy High School and is adjacent to Library Park.



The Tracy Branch Library houses a circulating collection of library materials in English, Spanish, Hindi, and Punjabi. The library maintains an extensive reference collection. Magazines and newspapers are available for browsing, including *The Tracy Press* on microfilm from 1909. The library features a children's section with activities and furniture designed to encourage play and development. The library also features a special area for teen materials and library use.

Patrons may use the Tracy branch's public computers for printing and general use. Computers designated for children's use are located in the children's area. A copy machine and book magnifier also is available. A public meeting room is available upon request. The library offers regular programs and special events for patrons of all ages.

Showcased in the children's section is a large wooden dinosaur donated by a library patrons. The library features monthly artwork displays located behind the information desk by students

of local artist Virginia Candelario-Segur. Two display cases in the front entrance exhibit patron collections and special features.

Friends of the Library: The Tracy Friends of the Library was established in 1982. It is a non-profit organization that raises money to support the Tracy Branch Library. Each year, the Friends provide more than \$20,000 for the purchase of books and materials as well as library programs. The group provides advocacy for the library and literacy issues in the Tracy community.

BOOKMOBILE

The Bookmobile is a traveling branch library offering circulating materials in English and Spanish. The bookmobile also offers magazines for browsing. Books may be returned to any branch of the SSJCPL system.



CURRENT STATE

Developing a strong sense of where we are today as an organization ensures the library can chart a strategic course forward. The Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library system currently serves a county with over 630,000 people spread across six cities and several unincorporated communities.

The stakeholder feedback collected through the strategic planning process demonstrated that residents view the library's role in helping them to connect with a variety of library services as extremely important and critical. A majority of telephone survey respondents use one of the branch libraries at least once a month and one out of every ten respondents use a branch library once a week or more often. More than 80 percent of all telephone survey respondents mentioned coming to a library branch to look for books or other materials as one of the reasons they visit the library. Community forum participants and key informants agreed the library should continue to serve as a place that promotes and supports reading and other activities and programs.

Lifelong learning and children's activities emerged as key areas of strategic focus for the SSJCPL. Support for early childhood literacy and youth/teen programming stood out as an important and vital library programming need among telephone survey respondents, community forum participants, and key informants. Additionally, these respondents saw skill-building and workforce development as an important area of focus.



We also heard that our branches are viewed as community hubs, places where the unique needs and interests of the community are not just respected, but reflected in the “feel” of the branch. And, if our branches are hubs, then our staff is the heart. Stakeholders referenced the personal relationships they share with staff. Participants in the community forums and telephone survey respondents responded positively about the library “having a helpful and friendly library staff.” One way to describe the connection to people and place that our community feels for SSJCPL is community engagement. Our branches serve as welcoming spaces where members of the community connect with staff, neighbors, or groups that share similar interests, and they provide a place where individuals can explore new ideas.

Overall, stakeholders appreciate and see value in the library connecting with special groups (such as young children, seniors, job seekers, etc.), but they felt most engaged with the system when our areas of strategic focus aligned with their personal interests. Within this context, stakeholder input was examined and used to reach consensus on four major priorities.

PRIORITY 1. EXPAND ACCESS TO INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND SERVICES

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Approximately 60 percent of respondents to the community survey use a branch of the library system, and 73 percent indicated the primary reason was proximity to home or work. Participants in the forums and key informant interviews indicated much the same. A common theme in much of the community input and feedback was the need to provide maximum access to library resources, including collections, technology, space, and assistance to use these resources. Based on the feedback, *expanded access* holds a variety of meanings. For some, it means providing safe and clean buildings with adequate hours of operation and Internet access. For others, access means a well-rounded collection of materials reflecting different tastes and viewpoints available

in a variety of formats. And for others, it means staff ready and willing to answer questions, find materials, and explain how to use resources. Expanding access also includes ensuring the community knows what services/programs are available, which has implications for education and marketing. Customers can't use it if they don't know it's there. Expanding customer access to information, resources, and services also means increasing funding and other support. A common perception is the library has suffered in recent years from budgetary cutbacks which have impacted services and affected hours of operation. In fact, among forum participants and key informant interviewees, lack of resources and shrinking budgets was viewed as the most serious threat to the library's ability to meet current and future needs. Input from the forums, community survey, and interviews show that San Joaquin residents have very strong perceptions and opinions about the need for better funding. Forum participants identified "lack of funding" and "deferred maintenance and facilities improvements" as library problems. Many survey respondents mentioned a need to maintain and expand facilities and library materials as well as to hire more employees. In addition, several respondents *encouraged a tax* to support the local libraries.

PRIORITY 2. SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



Over 60 percent of households in the community survey have children in the 5 to 14 age range. When asked to rank the importance of things the library could do, survey respondents clearly voiced the opinion that serving children is very important. Participants in the community forums and key informant interviews also expressed support for programs for children. Most important are reading programs for school-age children, serving as an educational resource for school-age children and teens, and reading programs for children under six. According to *Kids Count* (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013) data, San Joaquin County has one of the highest percentage of three to five year olds in California that do not attend pre-school, nursery school, or Head Start. As such, focusing on programs that help children with reading readiness and sustaining and support school reading programs was viewed as

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critical. Currently, the library offers a wide-range of popular programming for children. County and city residents appreciate these programs as shown in this part of the survey's analysis:

- ◆ All of the highest priorities involve young people: reading programs for school-age children, such as the summer reading program.
- ◆ Serving as an educational resource for school-age children and teens.
- ◆ Reading programs for children under six, such as story hour.



Although these priorities are not much more important than other areas of activity, they do suggest that residents value libraries first and foremost as resources for reading and learning among the area's youth. In addition, focus group participants indicated school outreach and programming for teens and young children help connect families to the library.

PRIORITY 3. SUPPORT WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Unemployment is a problem in the library's service area. In April 2014, the unemployment rate in the San Joaquin County was 11.7 percent, compared to an unemployment rate of 7.3 percent for California and 5.9 percent nationally for the same period. Operating a computer, understanding the Internet, and the basics of using a computer have become a requirement for almost any type of job, yet many adults do not have these skills. The library offers digital literacy assistance to its users and should continue to do so.

PRIORITY 4. ENGAGE AND EMPOWER OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Embodied in the spirit of this priority is promoting the library as a gathering place, serving all communities, and reaching all demographics. Different age groups have unique needs that require specific resources and services. San Joaquin County has several cultural communities. This growing diversity demands resources and services including ESL book clubs and materials in languages other than English. A theme in all the data collection activities was the importance of the library as a community-gathering place or community hub, where people can congregate, learn, create, and have access to high-speed Internet. Many participants in the focus groups mentioned the idea of the library as a community-gathering place. The goal of becoming a community hub includes the following components: addressing community issues and needs through service offerings, engaged partnerships with community and government agencies, consistent and persistent marketing to individuals and organizations.

STRATEGIC ISSUES/PRIORITIES



MAJOR STRATEGIC PLAN THEMES

Sifting through a variety of qualitative and quantitative information gathered throughout this process, the strategic planning team identified key themes that helped to focus their discussions in development of the strategic plan. The strategic priorities outlined in the previous section serve as the cornerstones of the strategic plan. Ensuring information access for San Joaquin County residents remains a library priority. The library's collection is very important to customers. While guaranteeing customers have access to material in formats they are comfortable using, the library will continue to expand digital resources and technological capabilities. There is no question libraries play a vital role in neighborhoods and communities. To strengthen this bond, the library will increase strategic partnerships and community engagement to actively reach out to customers and communities by listening to and connecting them with information and resources where they are. Going forward, an even greater emphasis will be placed on children's programs in recognition that the library is ideally positioned to play a vital role in early learning.

Throughout the strategic planning process, there was an emphasis on being strategic about pushing boundaries and stretching them – not just sustaining. There was consensus that the

focus cannot remain on how well we are doing right now, but on where we should be heading. This is the context which shaped the priorities, goals, strategic initiatives, and action items that follow – the *heart* of the strategic plan. In addressing priorities and goals, this strategic plan assumes the library will:

- ◆ Provide customers maximum access to library resources, including collections, technology, space, and assistance to use these resources.
- ◆ Provide a working environment conducive to staff delivering library services to customers efficiently, with confidence, and trained to create a first-rate customer experience.
- ◆ Continue the transition from a print environment to a digital environment.
- ◆ Continue implementation of self-service features in order to free staff to manage collections, serve customers, and expand the library’s reach into the community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1

ACCESS TO INFORMATION,
RESOURCES, SERVICES

2

EDUCATIONAL AND LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES

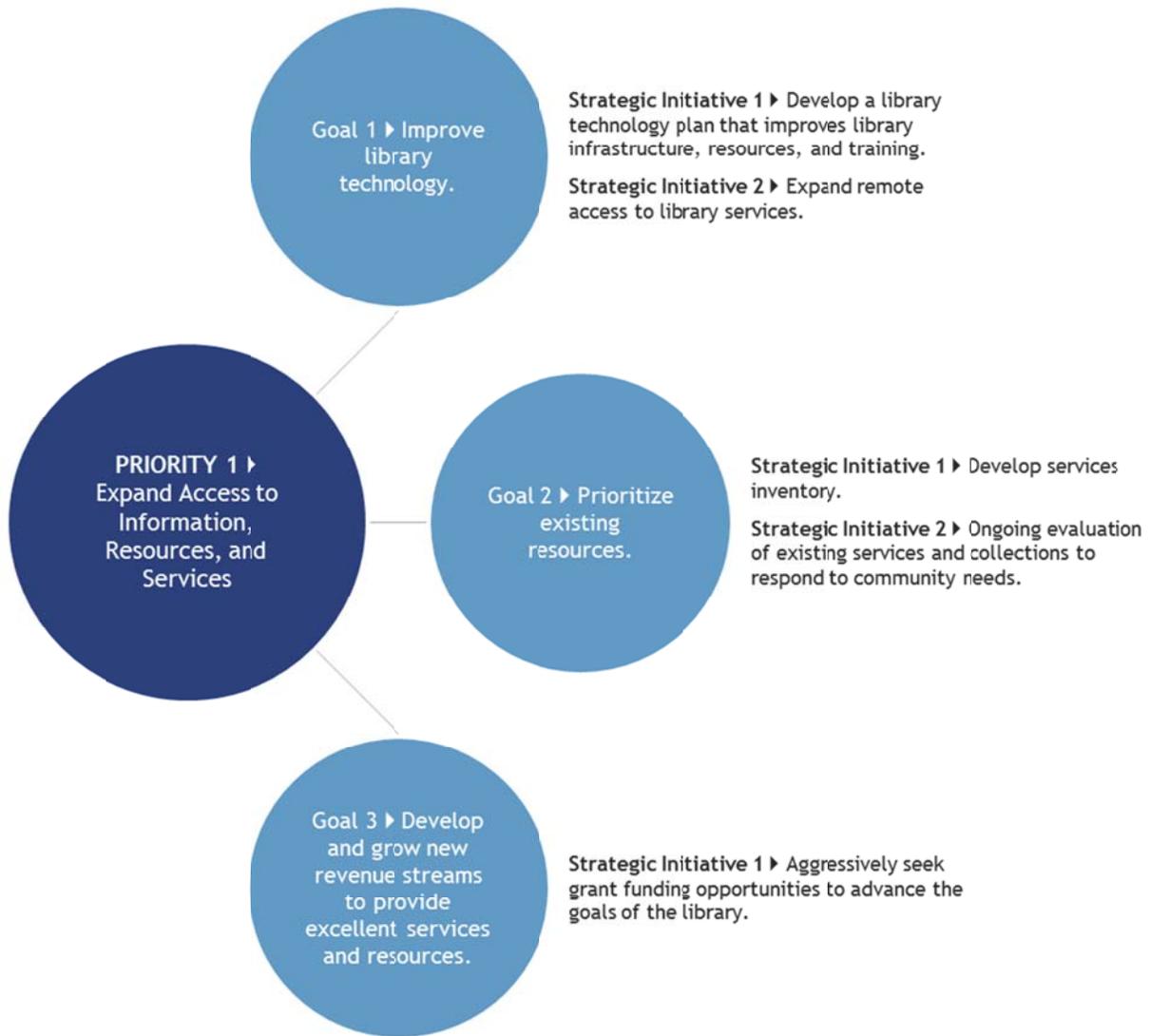
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WORKFORCE AND CAREER
DEVELOPMENT

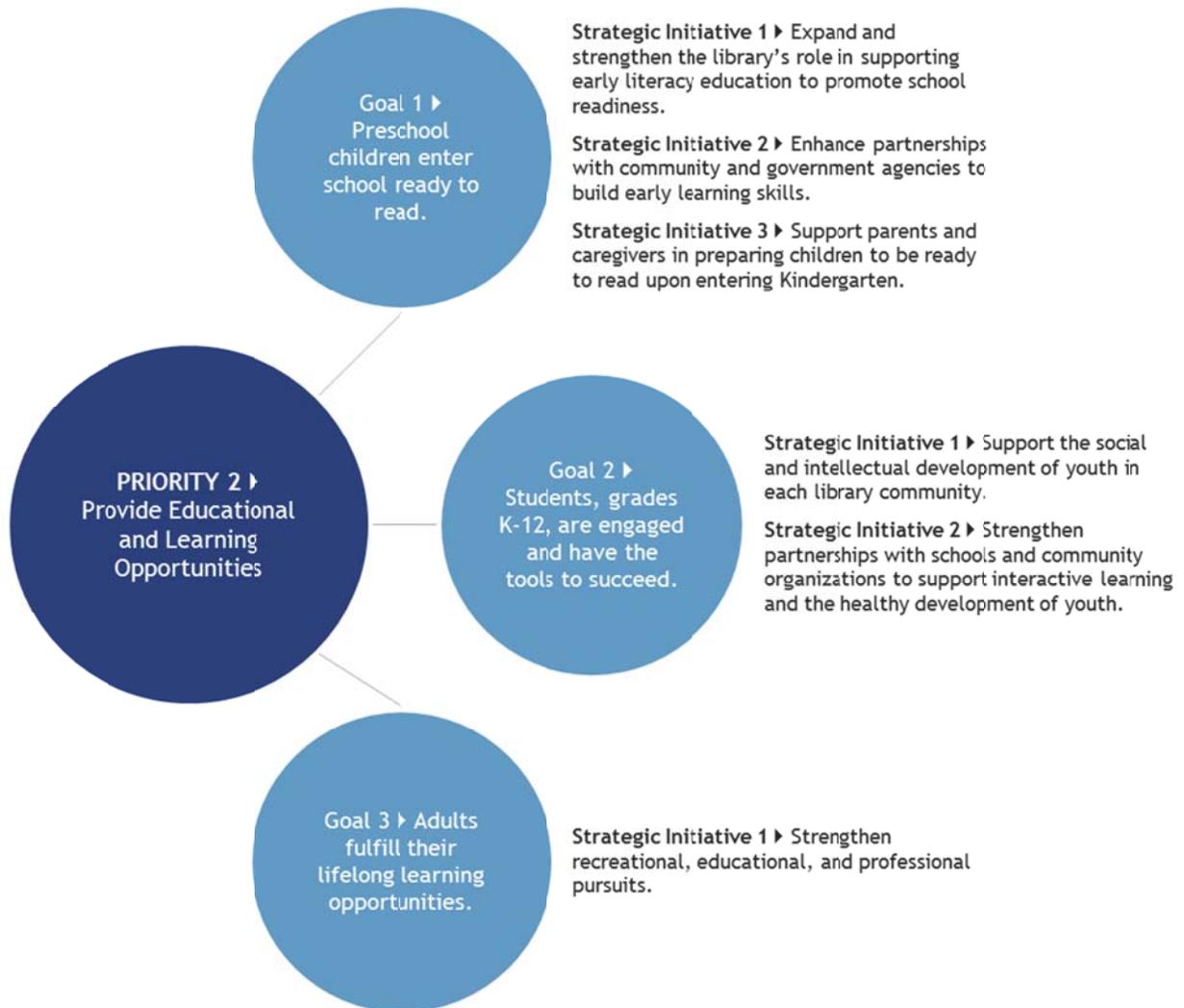
4

ENGAGE AND EMPOWER
DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, RESOURCES, SERVICES



EDUCATIONAL AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



WORKFORCE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT



ENGAGE AND EMPOWER DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

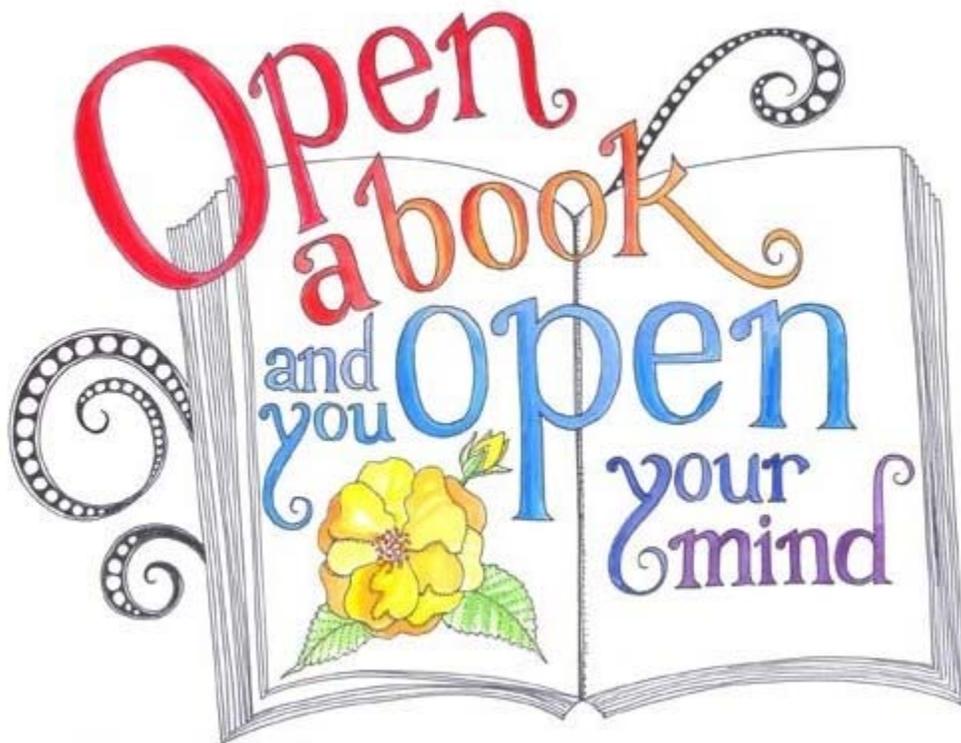
PRIORITY 4 ▶
Engage and Empower
Our Diverse
Communities

Goal 1 ▶ People
view the library as a
vibrant destination
offering collections,
services, events,
and welcoming
spaces that promote
community
engagement.

Strategic Initiative 1 ▶ Strengthen
resources, services, and events that
promote community interaction.

Strategic Initiative 2 ▶ Create an
environment in which all libraries are
physically inviting and convenient places
to visit.

Strategic Initiative 3 ▶ Develop a
comprehensive marketing, outreach, and
advocacy plan that promotes the Library
as a community gathering place.





The Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library acknowledges the support of staff, partners, stakeholders, and residents who provided opinions, suggestions, ideas, and help in developing this strategic plan. We would like to thank the strategic planning team who invested enormous effort, energy, and time throughout the strategic planning process. Their expertise, commitment, and dedication was critical in making the strategic planning process a tremendous success. Sincere appreciation is extended to each member for their unwavering support of this effort. The strategic planning team served as a sounding board, refining priorities and goals and creatively thinking outside the box, but not forgetting what that box is.

This strategic plan has truly been a collaborative effort. Sincere thanks to all who contributed their time, passion, and skills to the development and production of this document. As an institution funded by and for the public, a great deal of effort has gone into consulting the public about the future of the library.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge and thank the California State Library for providing the funding for the strategic planning process. Its support and contribution allowed the library to complete this very important strategic plan to guide our efforts and set an ambitious course for the future of the library.

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