



To: West Fargo Public Library Board of Directors
From: Carissa Hansen, Director
Maria Kramer, Deputy Director of Public Services

Date: August 19, 2021

Subject: Strategic planning: review of identified community needs and staff SWOT analysis

Action: Provide feedback on recommended strategic plan priority areas

West Fargo Public Library Board of Directors

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As part of the strategic planning process, Library staff, the Director and the Deputy Director composed seven "Needs Statements," based on analysis of many sources of community information, including:

- Community survey, conducted by Folkways
- Interviews, conducted by Folkways
- Personas, developed by Folkways
- The West Fargo 2.0 Plan, developed by the City of West Fargo
- Community statistics (ex: Census)
- Community partnerships and involvement
 - (Ex: staff representation on the West Fargo Public Schools Equity and Inclusion Task Force)

The seven needs statements are:

1. Parents need services for their families in close and convenient locations (5-10 minutes or less) in order to maximize resources available to them.

2. Everyone needs services and resources in which they see themselves in order to feel welcome and take full advantage of what is available at the library, especially those facing barriers (cultural, financial, language, age, etc.).

3. Parents and children birth to age 5 need a way to develop literacy and social skills in order to ensure success in Kindergarten and beyond.

4. Teens need additional support outside of school to develop personal interests, build life skills, and have real-world experiences in order to be confident and prepared for their futures.

5. Adults need ways to reduce stress, make informed life decisions, and take care of themselves in order to improve personal wellbeing.

6. Adults need ways to learn new things, in order to expand their horizons on limited budgets.

7. Adults need an outlet to learn hands-on arts and crafting skills to be more self-sufficient and express themselves, but they don't necessarily have the skills, tools, or teachers to help them learn on their own.

These needs statements were then brought back to Library staff for a SWOT analysis to aid in selecting priority areas of focus for the final strategic plan. SWOT stands for "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats". This form of analysis identifies factors both internal and external to an organization that may influence the success of a proposed initiative. This SWOT was carried out at an August all-staff meeting, and a Google Jamboard was sent out to capture information from staff who could not attend in person.

Some themes of the SWOT, which will inform the Library's organizational competency goals, were:

- Need for more staff to take on new and additional responsibilities.
- Need to expand/update the building.
- Need for funding for new projects/equipment.
- Need to build awareness of WFPL services in the community.
- The importance of outreach.
- The importance of continued staff training as staff take on new projects.
- The need to optimize processes and workflow.
- The need to differentiate and not overlap with other entities.

Based on specific SWOT results, as applied to individual needs statements, as well as community factors, library administration recommends the 2022-2024 strategic plan move ahead using statements 1-4 as priority areas of focus.

Process/Timeline:

Process	Date
Board reviewed draft organizational values	December 10, 2020
Board reviewed draft mission & vision statements	March 11, 2021
Board reviews potential needs strategic plan priority areas	August 19, 2021

	Draft strategic plan presented to Board for approval	Sept. 9, 2021	
	Implementation of 2022-2024 strategic plan begins	September 2021	