

# WHERE COMMUNITY HAPPENS



STRATEGIC PLAN  
2024 - 2028



# OUR MISSION

LA County Library belongs to our communities and serves as a portal to learn, grow, and succeed.

# OUR VALUES

## TRUST

We provide reliable service for the long term.

## HOPE

We enable what's possible.

## LEADERSHIP

We strive to model a more equitable future.

## CONNECTION

Our relationships make us strong.



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is my honor to present to you LA County Library's five-year (2024-2028) Strategic Plan, a testament to our unwavering commitment to reinforce the Library's role in the community as a civic and cultural center, a hub for public information and services, and an institution of literacy, learning, and innovation.



This Strategic Plan is meticulously crafted to be responsive to the diverse needs of Los Angeles County residents. Across our 86 library locations, we aim to establish these spaces as trusted havens of pride for our users. Every program and service we offer, whether in-person or virtually, helps support strong, healthy, and resilient communities.

Over the next five years, we envision a surge in individuals benefiting from LA County Library, thanks to the innovative strategies outlined in this plan. The true value of the Library is defined by you—our current and future customers. Your input has been instrumental in shaping the experiences that draw you back to our libraries and inspire you to spread the word about all that LA County Library has to offer. As we set out on this journey, we are confident that more community members will gain a profound understanding of how the Library directly intersects with and enriches their lives.

In this plan, we reaffirm our commitment to you—our neighbors—by embracing a shared passion for reading, creativity, and continuous learning. We aspire to be more than a house for books, but a vibrant and welcoming library that is a home for ideas, ready to serve you! We aim to be your conduit to the world of information by championing your professional and personal growth through our dynamic programming, re-envisioned spaces, and collaboration with LA County partners. As we prioritize our most impactful offerings, we are embarking on a quest to elevate the Library experience because you deserve our best selves and it is our hope this plan will help to get us there.

I also know that our Library staff—the backbone of our institution—will continue to grow even stronger as a team as their passion and dedication to serving County residents fuels their ability to create novel ways to better serve our diverse neighborhoods.

As part of this transformative process, I initiated an open call for staff to provide feedback and take a leading role in designing this plan. A remarkable group emerged, representing a fraction of the immense talent that propels our libraries forward every day. They brought forth inspiring ideas on how to enhance the way we operate, emphasizing collaboration and drawing on each other's strengths.

My gratitude for your continued trust and support as we look forward to showing up over the next five years in the ways that will be most meaningful to you.

Very best,

Skye Patrick  
Library Director

# OUR PATH

## WHAT WE HEARD

Post-pandemic, the Library's ability to serve as a cultural and community center reigns important in a time of severe isolation and dissension, and continues to serve as a critical institution for connection and the convening of groups.

Several customers could identify favorite library activities and resources, while others experience barriers to accessing library services.

Most saw the Library as best poised to uplift opportunities to reach vulnerable populations including youth, community college students, and older adults.

While many utilize library resources as a critical component to their well-being, there are still many community members that are unaware of all that the Library has to offer.



**Throughout 2022 and 2023, meaningful conversations took place across the County with Library staff and community members to generate knowledge and foster aspirations for what the Library will take action on to address future needs.**

*Collectively, we explored questions such as:*

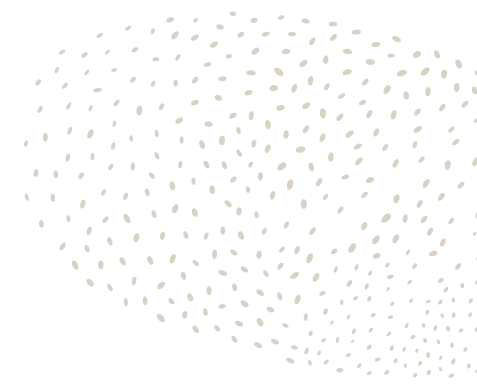
- “ How is the Library currently reaching you and meeting your needs? ”
- “ What is the opportunity to re-envision the role of the Library to better meet community needs? ”
- “ Where should the Library expand its function as connector and convener to meet future demands? ”

## WHO WE ENGAGED & WHAT WE LEARNED



# OUR FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

As our mission and values guide LA County Library's direction for 2024-2028, our strategic priorities set the roadmap for how to get there and will drive the types of activities in which we will engage.



## 1 BELONGING TO OUR COMMUNITIES

As a diverse County, we want to present each of our libraries as individual community hubs, but also as part of a larger ecosystem that shares several common resources. We want each of our community libraries to be welcoming, safe spaces that promote a culture of literacy, learning, and experiences that are responsive to local needs and values.

## 2 ADVANCING OUR PARTNERSHIPS

The Library is part of a large county, with many resources and programs that are available for County residents. As a community hub, the Library will leverage the County's extensive support network to drive and coordinate impact of services.



## 3 RISING TO OUR POTENTIAL

Just as the County is diverse, Library employees are also talented individuals with many skills to offer along with a willingness to learn. We would like to reimagine our work by committing to professional growth, learning from each other, and streamlining processes to make our work more effective and impactful.

## 4 TELLING OUR STORY

We know that the Library has a lot to offer our neighbors but realize that many people are unaware of the tremendous resource that is their public library. We commit to improving our communication with the public so they understand the value of libraries.



# BELONGING TO OUR COMMUNITIES

**Co-create welcoming, safe spaces and experiences that respond to local needs and cultures.**

## OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the opportunities and assets in each neighborhood and library to cultivate collaborative relationships and community-based services.
2. Engage community groups for insights on local needs and resources to guide the work of libraries and the services we provide.
3. Activate staff insights and leverage their input to ensure a safe space for all.



## STEPS WE CAN TAKE

- Host additional events at more libraries and encourage staff to participate and show up for their community.
- Conduct community asset mapping for each library to understand the strengths and resources of respective communities and help uncover opportunities that encompass safety, wellness, and mental health considerations.
- Develop new models to facilitate community-informed and community-sponsored programs.

## OUTCOMES WE ENVISION

- The community ecosystem works together to celebrate its strengths and solve shared problems.
- Communities build confidence and practice having safe and brave conversations.
- A high percentage of family members and friends of Library employees are inspired to use the Library.

# ADVANCING OUR PARTNERSHIPS

**Leverage the County's extensive support network to drive and coordinate impact of services.**

## OBJECTIVES

1. Utilize physical spaces to embed intentional partner services and resources.
2. Build, maintain, and evaluate partner programs aligned with the Library's goals and pillars of service.
3. Incorporate intergenerational and lifespan approaches into the search for and evaluation of partnerships.



## STEPS WE CAN TAKE

- Conduct an inventory of existing partner programs to assess alignment with the Library's strategic priorities, core values, and pillars of service.
- Assess local opportunities for embedded partnerships and services.
- Redesign procedures for staff to suggest partners for joint programs between libraries.

## OUTCOMES WE ENVISION

- Community libraries are recognized hubs for partners to effectively reach mutual populations in streamlined ways.
- The Library's partnerships are sustainable, appropriately resourced, and serve as models for achieving shared goals in service to the community.
- The social fabric of the County grows stronger as people of different ages and backgrounds increase their touchpoints and interactions.



# RISING TO OUR POTENTIAL

**Streamline processes and reimagine workforce development.**

## OBJECTIVES

1. Strengthen and modernize internal knowledge management while increasing accessibility at all levels.
2. Enhance and maintain the transparency, consistency, and efficiency of our business processes at all operational levels.
3. Empower staff to develop their careers at the Library with mentorship, peer-to-peer learning, and operational cross-training.



## STEPS WE CAN TAKE

- Identify automation opportunities for a prioritized list of systemwide Library processes.
- Develop and pilot a structure for cross-functional, peer-to-peer mentoring.
- Establish a structure for staff development and succession planning.

## OUTCOMES WE ENVISION

- Staff have a shared understanding of how to readily access the information they need to be effective employees.
- The Library increases organizational trust in the efficacy of internal communication and a culture of open sharing.
- The Library ecosystem cultivates its next generation of leaders who, in turn, cultivate their successors.

# TELLING OUR STORY

**Align the public perception of the Library's value with what we know to be true.**

## OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate how the Library is a key driver of quality of life in the County.
2. Develop new Library advocates and ambassadors from unexpected places.
3. Secure support from elected officials and funders to help make a path toward a sustainable budget.



## STEPS WE CAN TAKE

- Build a robust data program based on core areas where the Library wants to demonstrate impact.
- Train staff to access Library data and use it to tell their stories.
- Collaborate with LA County Library Foundation to expand visibility for philanthropic support and identify new partners that can serve as stable funding sources.

## OUTCOMES WE ENVISION

- Community members routinely articulate positive ways that the Library improves their lives on public platforms.
- Funders confidently increase support for the Library because they understand the impact their dollars will make.
- The Library has resilient, well-resourced staff to deliver a mix of core services and innovative, community-centric programs that are built to withstand shocks and stressors to the budget.



## THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY

We help build strong systems in response to community needs. We do this by bringing people, partners, and assets together to align resources and collectively solve problems. The pace of change is accelerating dramatically and the future is increasingly interconnected. Libraries are anchor institutions in the community ecosystem. They galvanize resources and seek out collaborative opportunities.

Our geographic reach makes us natural partners for a multitude of initiatives across the County. We do our best work when we are in a position to pilot what works and scale up accordingly with allocated funding and resources.

We will continue to fulfill our time-honored role as a resource for literature and a center of learning.

**In addition, public libraries play a critical function in helping communities build muscles to talk to one another, forge relationships, and be in dialogue across differences.** For a democratic society to thrive, the freedom to think and read widely ensures diversity of thought. The Library supports access to information and the public's engagement in conversations that help keep our communities strong, informed, and connected.

“ *Local, face-to-face interactions—at the school, the playground, and the corner diner—are the building blocks of public life. People forge bonds in places that have healthy social infrastructure—not because they set out to build community, but because when people engage in sustained, recurring interaction, particularly while doing something they enjoy, relationships inevitably grow.* ”

*From Palaces for the People  
by Eric Klinenberg*

## PILLARS OF SERVICE

We developed four Pillars of Service to help focus the Library's work and lead us to successfully fulfill our mission and goals. Through these pillars, we can build resilience and provide opportunities that promote wellness, scholarship, and aid in self-development.



Prevention



Care



Literacy



Economic Well-being

## FUTURE YEARS

### 2024

Share the plan for maximum visibility. Perform audits and inventories to set projects up for success. Identify quick wins to jumpstart our work.

### 2025

Pilot and experiment with community-centric methods. Embed initial groups of local partners in select locations. Testimonials and awareness activities are on the rise.

### 2026

Evaluate initial improvements to data, knowledge management, and communications practices. Build on systems that support both Library staff and the communities they serve.

### 2027

Assess areas where the Library is demonstrating impact to quality of life. Spread the word through Library advocates. Expand successful initiatives for internal workforce development.

### 2028

Celebrate and assess the Library's strategic priorities, objectives, and accomplishments. What has stood the test of time? Where do we envision new possibilities and deeper alignments?



# SERVING LA COUNTY

## About LA County Library

Founded in 1912, LA County Library is one of the largest and most innovative library systems in the US. It offers free public resources including books, music, multimedia materials, computers and internet access, and educational and recreational services. LA County Library is dedicated to reducing barriers and increasing access to and equity of public services for all.

**86 libraries**

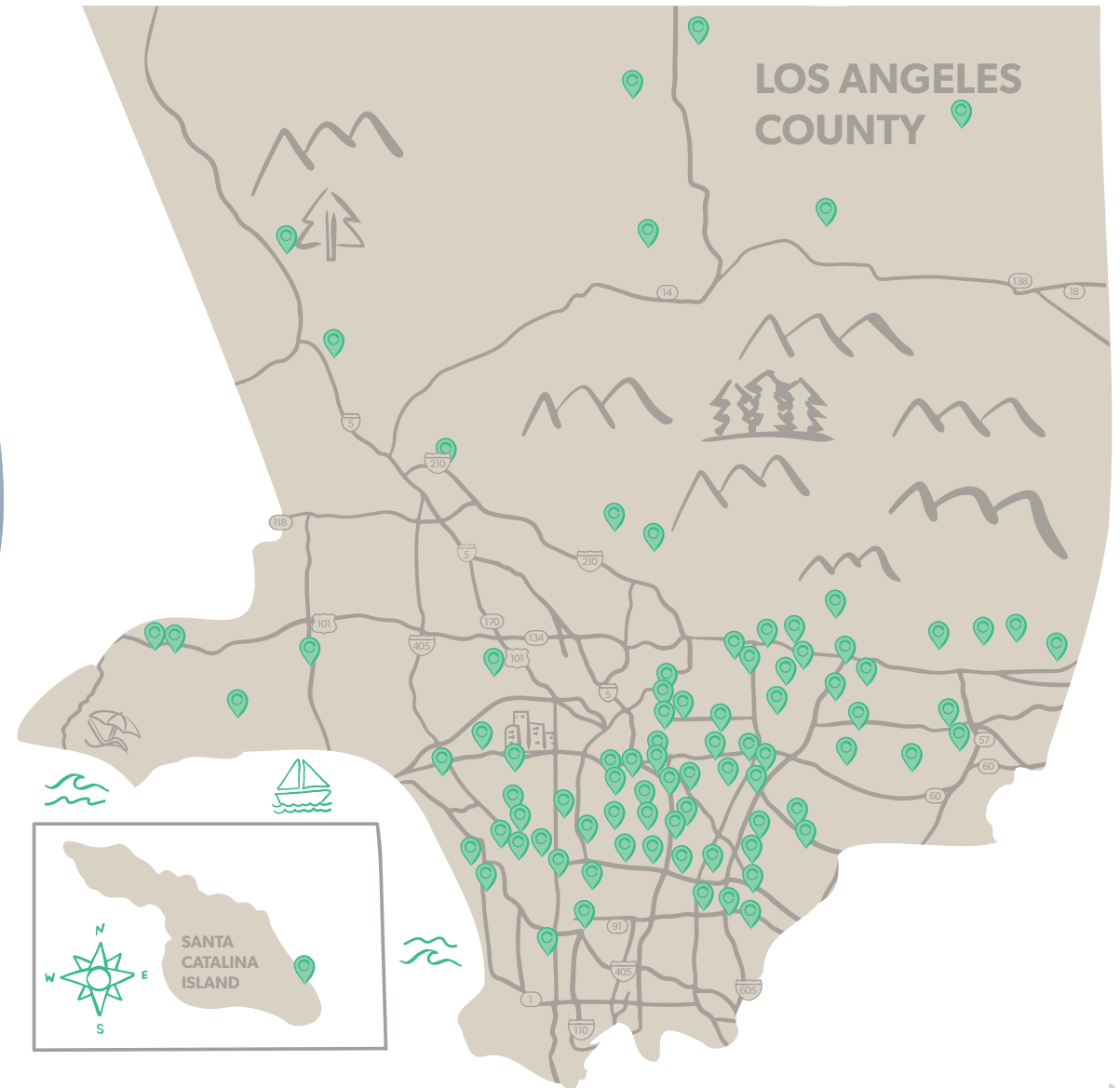
**10 million LA County residents**

**3,000+ square mile service area**

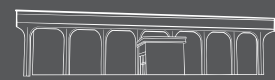
**4 Cultural Resource Centers**

**4 Veterans Resource Centers**

**15 vehicle mobile fleet**



# OUR LIBRARIES



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Acton Agua Dulce



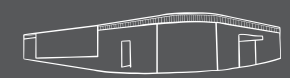
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Alondra



Angelo M. Iacoboni



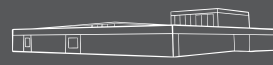
Anthony Quinn



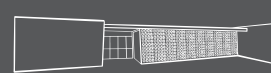
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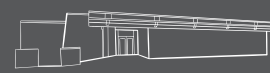
Avalon



Baldwin Park



Bell



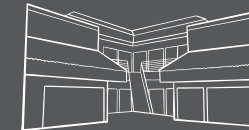
Bell Gardens



Carson



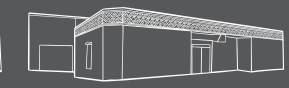
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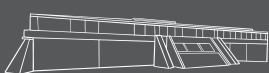
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Chet Holifield



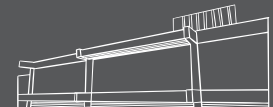
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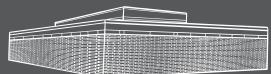
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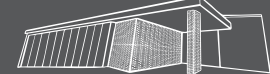
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Compton



Cudahy



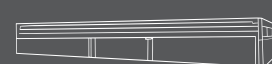
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Diamond Bar



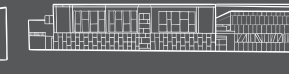
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



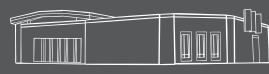
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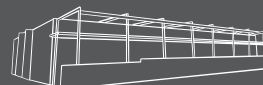
East Los Angeles



East Rancho Dominguez



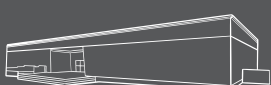
El Camino Real



El Monte



Florence



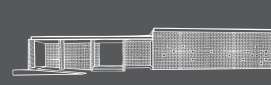
Gardena Mayme Dear



George Nye, Jr.



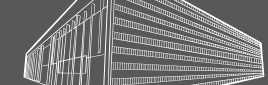
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Hacienda Heights



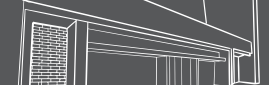
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Hawthorne



Hermosa Beach



Hollydale



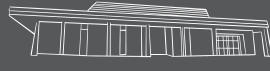
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La Cañada Flintridge



La Crescenta



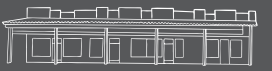
La Mirada



La Puente



La Verne



Lake Los Angeles



Lancaster



Lawndale



Leland R. Weaver



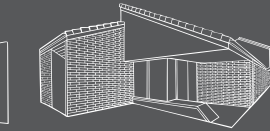
Lennox



Littlerock



Live Oak



Lloyd Taber - Marina del Rey



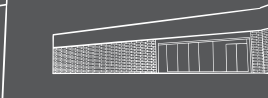
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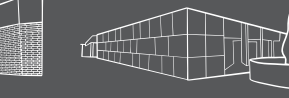
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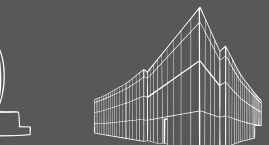
Los Padrinos



Lynwood



Malibu



Manhattan Beach



Masao W. Satow



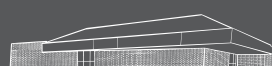
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Montebello



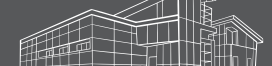
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Norwood



Paramount



Pico Rivera



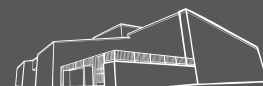
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Rivera



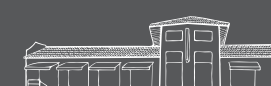
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Rowland Heights



San Dimas



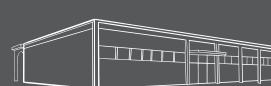
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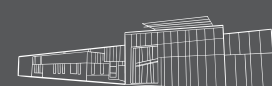
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Sorensen



South El Monte



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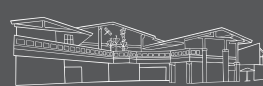
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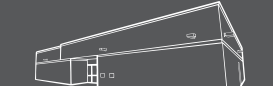
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Temple City



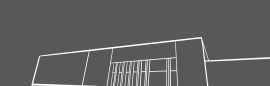
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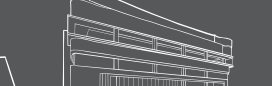
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Walnut



West Covina



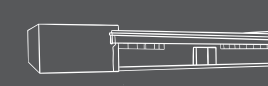
West Hollywood



Westlake Village



Willowbrook



Wiseburn



Woodcrest



## STRATEGIC PLAN ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENTS  
LA COUNTY LIBRARY STAFF  
LA COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION  
LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY RESIDENTS & LIBRARY CUSTOMERS

### CONSULTING PARTNER

ARROYO ASSOCIATES, INC.



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