



STRATEGIC PLAN

Connect Empower Cultivate

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Connect. Empower. Cultivate. Strong words. Words that we believe capture the vital nature of the relationship between Transylvania County and its public library. Words that we believe express the Library's commitment to aligning our services with the community's goals and to working together to help Transylvania County realize its aspirations for the future.

The Transylvania County Library Strategic Plan is the culmination of a year of focused research and study; of careful listening and looking outward. We have taken all that we heard and learned and have crafted what we see as an ever-evolving action guide – a tool that will enable the Library to change and grow as our community grows and as our world changes. At its best, the public library is a trusted community resource, a vibrant node of civic engagement, a sparkplug for individual creativity and lifelong learning; in short, the place the community cannot live without. And that, as you will see in these pages, is precisely what we, the staff of the Transylvania County Library, aspire to be. We are excited about our future and we invite you to join us as we work together for a vibrant Transylvania County.

Anna Yount

Transylvania County Library Director



OUR MISSION

We connect, empower, and cultivate a vibrant Transylvania County.

OUR VISION

We aspire to be:

- A vital, trusted source for discovery, inspiration, and innovation
- At the heart of a community that celebrates learning, creativity, and curiosity
- Engaged in every corner of our community
- The place the community can't live without

"During our visits to many towns in WNC, the library here was, in my opinion, the best library we had seen and was part of our decision to live in Transylvania County."

WELCOME

Goal 1: Create friendly spaces and experiences

- Re-envision TCL space for our dynamic and diverse community
- Create a flexible and open atmosphere
- Eliminate barriers to access

Transylvania County Strategy 6A:

- Provide facilities that allow for efficient service delivery to the public while creating a secure, inviting, and customer friendly environment for customers and citizens



"To my delight, I found the facility to be so inviting, from the architecture and great use of lighting and space, to the terrific welcoming staff throughout!"

REACH EVERYONE

Goal 2: Extend Library programs and services to all of Transylvania County

- Deliver a rich array of library programs for all ages at a variety of locations
- Explore opportunities for satellite combination facilities
- Create community partnerships and programs that contribute to a strong 21st century workforce for Transylvania County
- Develop a more robust digital library landscape
- Enrich and re-focus Bookmobile services to create a more powerful outreach tool

Transylvania County Strategies 1B & 5D:

- Plan, advocate, and provide infrastructure to support economic development and to make the community a desirable place to live and work
- Partner with existing agencies on community needs



CONNECT

Goal 3: Engage Transylvanians of all ages with each other in meaningful ways

- Provide meaningful, enriching inter-generational programs & activities
- Develop meaningful, enriching multi-generational volunteer opportunities
- Actively engage our diverse community around key issues
- Forge a robust partnership with Transylvania County Schools

Transylvania County Strategies 2A & 3B:

- Provide resources to support quality educational opportunities with a standard of excellence
- Support community involvement in civic activities across demographics and geographies

“Our library experience has been overwhelmingly positive... reflecting a commitment to creating a community atmosphere.”



READ TO SUCCEED

Goal 4: Ensure that every child is ready to read and succeed

- Cultivate a continuum of educational support that begins at birth
- Empower families, caregivers, and educators to help all children succeed
- Deliver early learning activities and resources beyond the library's walls



Transylvania County Strategies 2A & 2B:

- Provide resources to support quality educational opportunities with a standard of excellence
- Provide support resources that eliminate barriers to receiving education

"We are so fortunate to live in a place where children are nurtured and encouraged to love learning! Our TC Library does a phenomenal job!!! Thank you for helping us instill a love of reading and learning in our child! Job well done!"

GET THE WORD OUT!

Goal 5: Promote the Library and all that it offers

- Raise community awareness about library events, resources, and services
- Expand the Library's publicity network through partnerships
- Be the community's information hub



Transylvania County Strategy 6E:

- Provide timely accurate, transparent, and informative communication to the public and across the organization with superior customer service delivery

“Great tech services and support, very helpful librarians, the book selection is very good and current, and they’re very receptive to requests. So many great guest speakers and music shows!”



"What a wonderful asset for our community! Thank you to all of the library staff and the Friends of the Library...! We are blessed to live in such a wonderful community with such great resources for our children and families!"



OUR PROCESS

The seeds for the Transylvania County Library's strategic planning process were sown in the fall of 2015, when North Carolina's State Librarian, Cal Shepard, distributed copies of the 2014 Aspen Institute report, *Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries*, to every public library director in the state. The Report illustrated a dynamic new way of looking at the public library's role in its community.



We learned about new research and processes that could “illuminate ways that communities can leverage investments in libraries to build stronger civic ecologies and forge new partnerships for achieving local goals”. We were hooked. Board members and staff were all reading the Aspen Report.

Maureen Sullivan, a founding member of The Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries working group, accepted our invitation to attend TCL's annual Staff





Development Day on February 15, 2016. Her insights and guidance reinforced our conviction that the Aspen Report captured the spirit and excitement of what we want the Transylvania County Library to do and to be in our changing community.

We received a 2016-2017 LSTA EZ Planning Grant which enabled us to fully utilize the Aspen Report and its companion *Action Guide for Re-Envisioning Your Public Library* to craft a new strategic plan for the Transylvania County Library. We worked our way through



the Action Guide. We researched community trends and demographics. We scrutinized our physical space and brainstormed about our virtual space. We interviewed key stakeholders. We asked people to

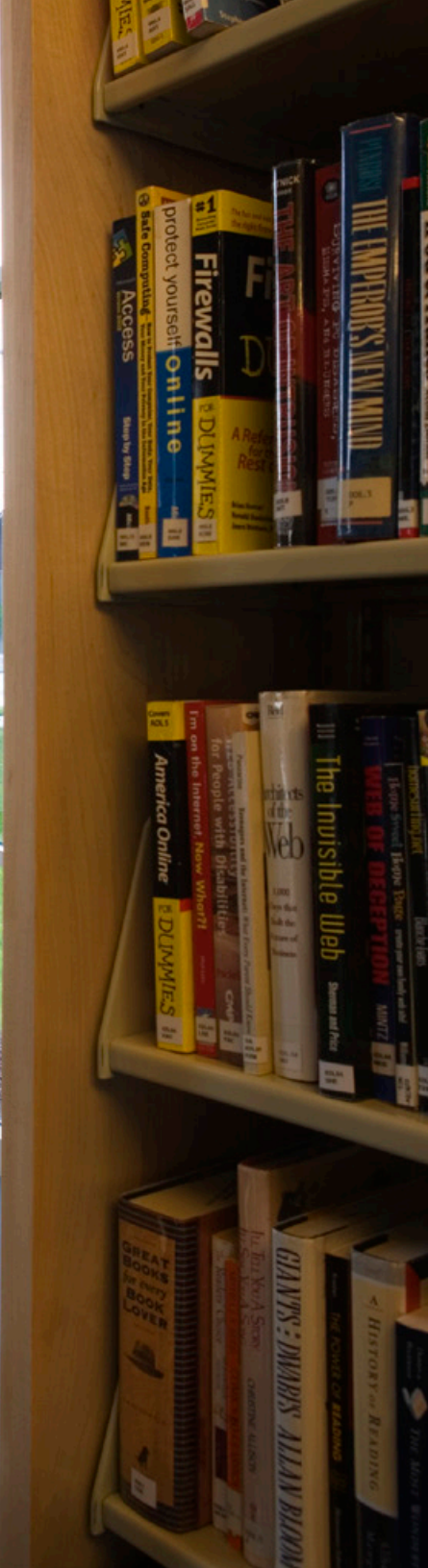
write letters to their library and tell us what they like and what they don't like.

OUR PROCESS

We held public dialogue sessions—seven of them—facilitated by Maureen Sullivan. At these sessions, we asked people to tell us about their hopes and dreams for Transylvania County, and what the Library could do to make those dreams come true. We took all that we heard and learned and set to work.

Our goal for this planning process has been to create a short, flexible, useful document. Our intention is to develop a plan that allows the Library to be creative and nimble and to utilize our strengths and resources to align our services in support of community goals and to break out of the stereotype of a book warehouse. We want to be “out of the building, not just out of the box”. We want to create a bold strategy that will awaken our community to the public library as a vibrant node of civic engagement. As the Aspen Report succinctly puts it: “An intelligent community, not large circulation numbers, is the primary goal.”





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