



ALTADENA LIBRARY DISTRICT

Honoring the past, cultivating the present, empowering the future

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FY 2014/15 – 18/19



MISSION

The Altadena Library District is dedicated to providing free and equal access to information, ideas, technology and the joy of reading to educate and empower our diverse community.

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Altadena residents take pride in their community and its institutions. As a result, Altadenans have provided residents with one of the finest libraries in Los Angeles County. Both the Board of Library Trustees and staff believe the library's future must be mapped to meet challenges ahead in order to develop a library that is timeless in its ability to meet your continually changing needs and lifestyles.

To this end, representatives from the Library Board, Staff and Community Strategic Planning Advisory Committee met with a Strategic Planning Consultant to develop a vision for the future of Altadena Library. The enclosed represents that vision. We have outlined broad goals which will guide our objectives for 2014/15.

We are now happy to share this vision with you and we invite you to help us make Altadena's "Library of the Future" a reality.

Sincerely,

David Datz, President
Altadena Board of Library Trustees



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PLANNING CONTEXT

The Altadena Board of Library Trustees recognizes that libraries are currently at the center of a revolution in information production and distribution, and in technology and communications. This revolution, coupled with trends in the economy, demographics, and government will surely impact library services during the 21st century to the extent that they may be unrecognizable as we know them today.

The commitment to quality collections and responsive services remains steadfast. However, the library must be in a position to satisfactorily respond to the current and future challenges which are transforming the vision and definition of the traditional library. It is within this context that the Community Strategic Planning Advisory Committee members, Library Board, and Staff developed a strategic plan for fiscal years 2014/15 –18/19.



VISION

The Altadena Library District continually aspires to meet the present, future, and constantly changing needs and interests of its diverse clientele. It is becoming the cultural, informational, and technological hub of the community.



GOALS 2014-2019

1. Funding: The Altadena Library District will seek to establish a stable source of funding to sustain current levels of customer service. The District will expand sources of revenue.
2. Outreach. The Altadena Library District will tell its story to the community through enhanced print, electronic and social media communications.
3. Facilities. The Altadena Library District will provide a facility that is comfortable, welcoming, safe, energy efficient, flexible, and fully disabled accessible.
4. The Altadena Library District will provide youth with the resources they need to succeed in school and to develop a life-long love of learning and reading.
5. The Altadena Library District will provide access to the digital world through state-of-the-art technologies.



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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Altadena Library District provides library service to over 53,000 residents. The District has high property values, a high household income, high rate of home ownership, and a highly educated diverse population. The community appreciates and expects a high level of library service. Respondents to a well-received community survey praised the library staff, collections and services. Compared to similar institutions, the Library is noted to “do more with less.”

A number of challenges face the Library and its ability to continue to provide the highest level of service. Among these are: an aged facility, rapidly changing technology, escalating customer expectations, and increased operating costs and decreased funding. This Strategic Plan seeks to address these challenges.

FUNDING

The Library’s biggest challenge is securing stable funding. The library budget is funded from local property taxes (64%) and a parcel tax (28%) which sunsets in 2014. Without these two sources of income, the District Library cannot operate. Additional sources of income from the state have also been eliminated recently. The economic downturn resulted in staff reductions, frozen salaries and benefits, Sunday closure, and no increase in services.

OUTREACH

The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee noted that the community had a general lack of awareness about the library and its needs, and effective communication is needed to strengthen the community’s perception of the library. Strategies suggested, include utilizing technology and social media, a greater presence of library staff and board members in the community; better signage and presence of the facility; and development of a script to tell the library’s story, and a well-planned public information campaign.

FACILITIES

The much-loved Main library building is 46 years old. Its infrastructure is aging and the facility is not fully disabled accessible. Only half of the available floor area is accessible with 13,000 square feet of underutilized space on the lower level serving as staff support and storage space. A needs assessment found that the facility needs to be expanded and updated to continue to serve the community and an architectural and engineering study provided several options for expanding the building into a fully accessible, energy-efficient, safe and well-organized library.

TECHNOLOGY

Rapidly changing technology provides a challenge to all libraries. While new technologies provide options for self-service, efficient materials handling, and the ability to post, blog, twitter, and email information to patrons, it does not come without cost. Customers want the latest versions of software, cutting edge technology, and unlimited bandwidth for free high speed wireless Internet access. The Library will develop staff technology competencies, explore loaning portable equipment, and address infrastructure issues.

YOUTH

Service to children is consistently rated as the library’s most valuable service to the community. The development of early childhood literacy, support of school curriculum, welcoming space and relevant collections for teens, and providing a safe after school destination are among the most important services a public library can provide. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee reaffirmed this priority, recognizing the need for adequate funding and facilities in support of youth services.



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Cassandra Stearns, Librarian/Youth Services; Ashley Rosenberg, Teen Librarian

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Approved by the Board of Library Trustees on ____ 2013

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