



# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **2019-2022**

A place for anyone. Something for everyone.

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# BACKGROUND

In the spring of 2016, Fresno County Public Library (FCPL) sent a team to a multi-day training at the Harwood Institute's Public Innovators Lab for Public Libraries. The team learned principles of 'Turning Outward' through community conversations to increase public knowledge of the needs and wishes of the diverse communities it serves.

Supported through the California State Library, FCPL received additional in-depth coaching from the Harwood Institute to implement and expand the practice. Through over 20 community conversations spanning two years, FCPL heard the wishes and concerns of over 200 people in Fresno County, and compiled a Public Knowledge Summary in 2018 of recurring themes and resulting priorities.

([www.fresnolibrary.org/harwood](http://www.fresnolibrary.org/harwood))

Speaking with the experts, the people living and working in communities within Fresno County, gave FCPL awareness of unique needs within each community,

and also common wishes and concerns at the larger, countywide level. Priorities for the next few years include more offerings for Spanish-speaking communities, inclusive activities for youth, access to technology and training, safe spaces for dialogue, and serving as a trusted hub of information in the community.

### Priorities for FCPL

- More Spanish/ bilingual programs, resources, and staff.
- More afterschool activities for kids and teens.
- Increased access to technology and training.
- Create open spaces for dialogue to build respect and community.
- Serve as trusted hub for information about local services.



With gained public knowledge comes the responsibility to make informed, intentional choices that accurately reflect community needs through more relevant and meaningful programs, services, spaces, and resources. The strategic plan keeps community needs at the center of a new mission statement, vision statement, values, and focus areas to ensure countywide accountability to the people we serve in Fresno County.

# THE PROCESS

The process for devising the framework of the strategic plan occurred over six team meetings with many surveys and email communications between sessions. The team started with a SWOT analysis of the organization and brainstormed core values based on key words and themes. The team then conducted staff and community surveys to redefine the purpose of the library in the community, leading to revised mission and vision statements for FCPL.

Using the themes from community conversations plus data from team and staff surveys, the group then narrowed focus areas to six topics. The team selected the five most relevant priorities within each focus area, which division managers will use to create benchmarks and key performance indicators for 2019-2022.

## Strategic Planning Process



# NITTY GRITTY: SWOT ANALYSIS

To build on the community assessment and public knowledge gained from the Harwood Public Innovators Effort, the first meeting of the strategic planning team consisted of brainstorming the organization's current perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). The analysis was framed using three lenses: professional, organizational, and community. Brainstorming in this framework helped the team recognize organizational objectives and the internal and external factors that can help or hinder the path to achieving the objectives. For the full notes from the brainstorming session, please see Appendix A.

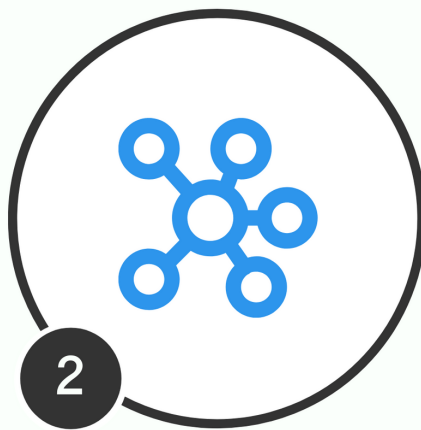
## A Vision for a Future FCPL

Imagine FCPL in 5 years. What does it mean to stay relevant, inclusive, forward-thinking, and successfully meet the diverse needs of our service areas?



### Professional Lens

What are other public libraries doing that you'd like to see at FCPL? What are people talking about on listservs, at conferences, etc.? What are current trends, and outside examples of greatness?



### Organizational Lens

What is our purpose, what is our 'why'? What internal practices/ strengths should we keep? What needs to be added or changed? What would make our organization run even more smoothly and efficiently?



### Community Lens

Who are the people in our communities? Who do we reach well? Who are we missing? How are the communities changing? What are the 'pleasure and pain' points in their interaction with our libraries?

# STRENGTHS

From a SWOT analysis through three lenses, the strategic planning team brainstormed a list of FCPL's current strengths. Many strengths centered around the organization's creative, forward-thinking staff and how we reach current, primarily English-speaking customers through outreach to the community and programs for all ages, especially young children and their parents.

FCPL branches are typically seen as safe spaces in the community that provide opportunities for learning and recreation to improve the lives of our customers. Providing access to resources and information is another perceived strength of the organization.

Strengths:



Weaknesses:



# WEAKNESSES

The SWOT brainstorming delineated a list of weaknesses common to a large, geographically-vast organization such as FCPL, including challenges of internal communication, a perceived lack of consistency in policy enforcement, and a lack of transparency.

Weaknesses in serving our public included language barriers, challenges reaching rural communities, barriers of fines and fees, and challenges reaching low-income communities.

Underserved communities mentioned included veterans, ESL communities, group home residents, business owners, and immigrants or refugees.

# OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities:



A wish list of opportunities for FCPL to better serve its diverse communities included innovative ideas such as newer technology and training, online library card registration, museum pass programs, amnesty for fines and fees, faster bandwidth speeds, more programs and services for ESL communities, and more practical makerspaces.

The team listed incentivized programs such as a reading program for early literacy and life hacks for teens as opportunities, along with more teen-friendly spaces and places to study with access to charging stations. An additional opportunity mentioned is adding kiosks and/or interactive displays to bring the library to underserved areas.

# THREATS

Threats perceived as obstacles to FCPL reaching its full potential in serving the community included the barriers of fines and fees, observed poor customer service, the vast size of the organization and its division into six clusters, and the red tape of bureaucracy in slowing down processes.

Additional perceived threats to obtaining objectives included a fear of taking risks, a fear of retribution, a lack of spaces in branches for more noisy activities, and potential duplication of efforts with other community organizations.

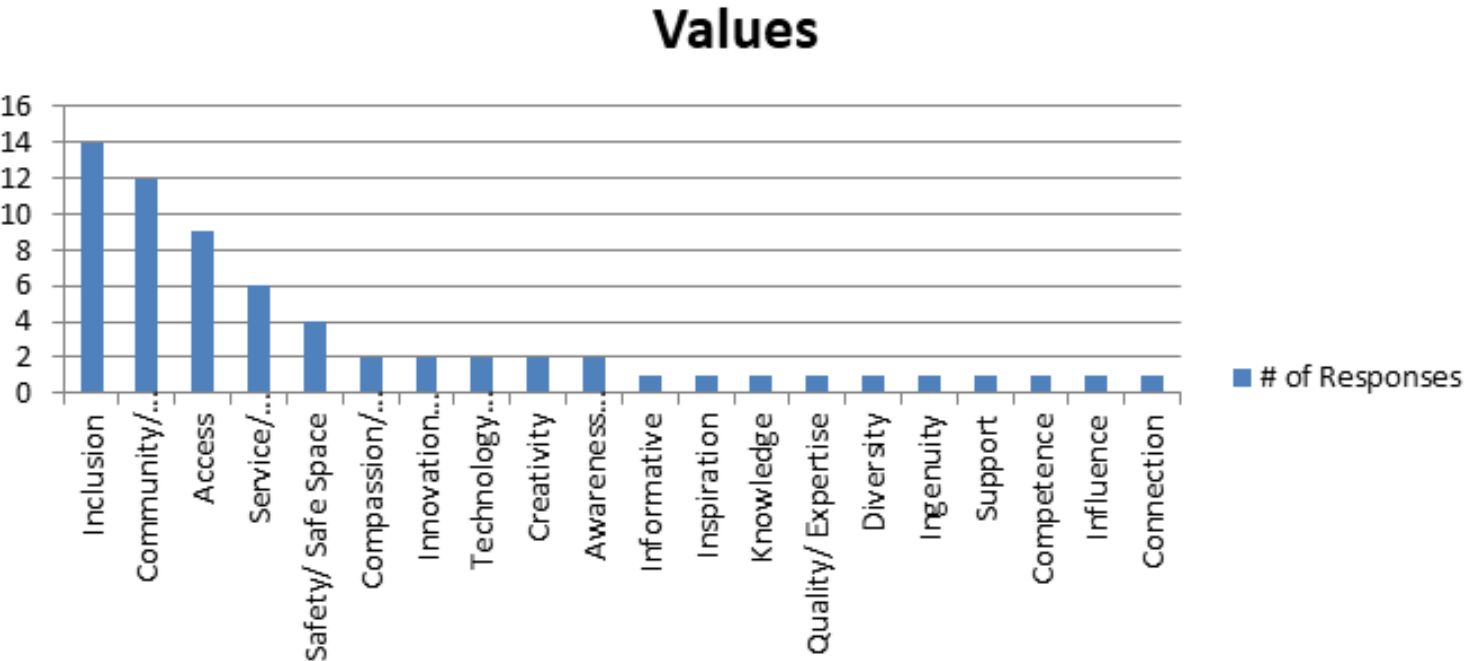
Threats:





# ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Recurring themes from the Harwood community conversations combined with SWOT analysis and resulting discussions paved the way for the strategic planning team to reconsider FCPL's current organizational values (service, community, respect, and inspiration). The team members each suggested up to five new values for the organization. Five key words recurred multiple times: inclusion, community, access, service, and safety. Please see Appendix B for all responses. Further brainstorming resulted in adding "innovation" to the list of core values. The group also defined a set of core services to include in the plan that are inherent to the organization as a public library.



## CORE VALUES

**ACCESS**

**COMMUNITY**

**INCLUSION**

**INNOVATION**

**SAFETY**

**SERVICE**



Recurring words from the staff survey: community, provide, information, place, library, access, resources, free, programs, people.

Staff responses:



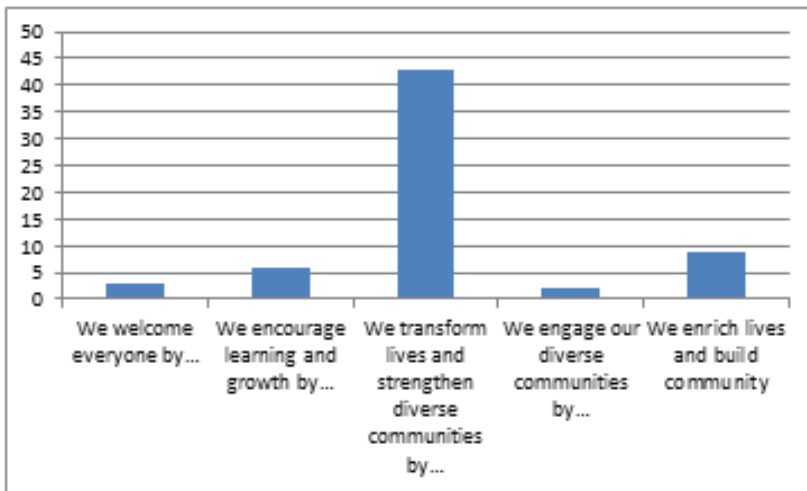


# MISSION STATEMENT

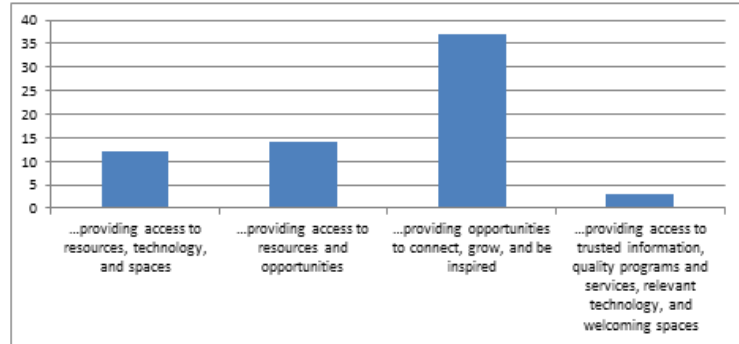
From recurring key words in community and staff survey responses about the purpose of the library in Fresno County, the strategic planning team discussed FCPL's current mission and vision statements from the 2015-2018 strategic plan. A mission statement should explain what an organization does and why, its purpose for being. The group felt that the current mission statement, "We enrich lives and build community," leaned more toward a tag line and lacked explanation of how and why the organization fulfills its mission.

The team brainstormed several new options for mission statements, divided into two halves each to cover the 'what' and 'how/ why.' Staff from throughout FCPL voted on mission statements via an online survey and during a presentation at the Annual Library Meeting (ALM).

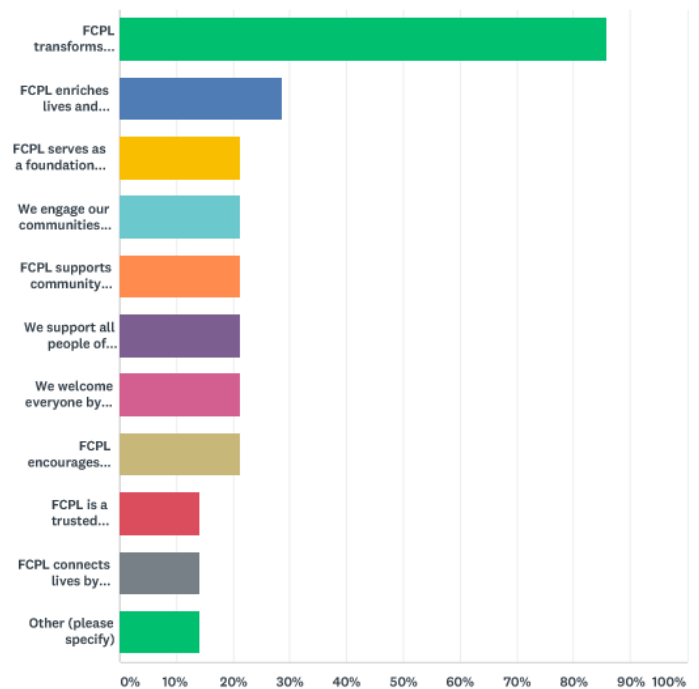
Mission Statement 1st 1/2 from ALM:



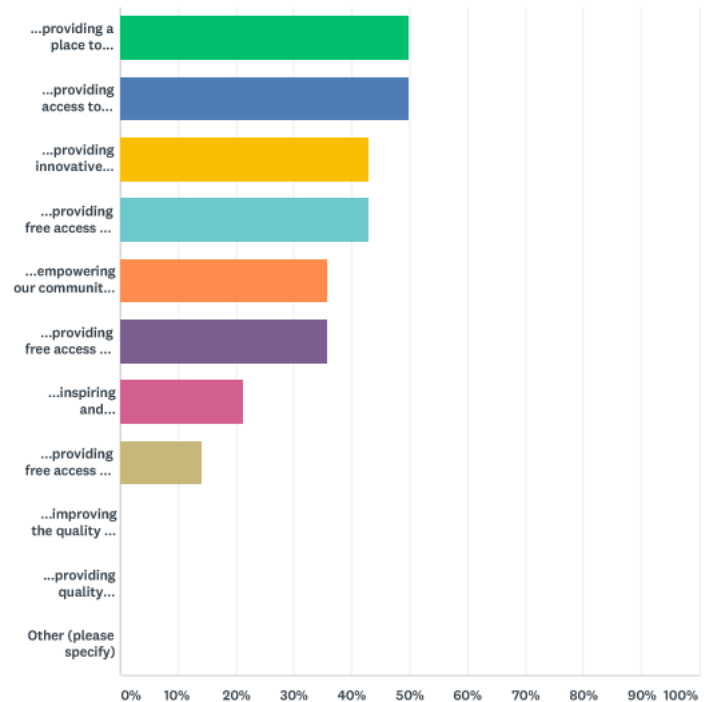
Mission statement 2nd 1/2 from ALM:



Mission statement 1st 1/2 from team:



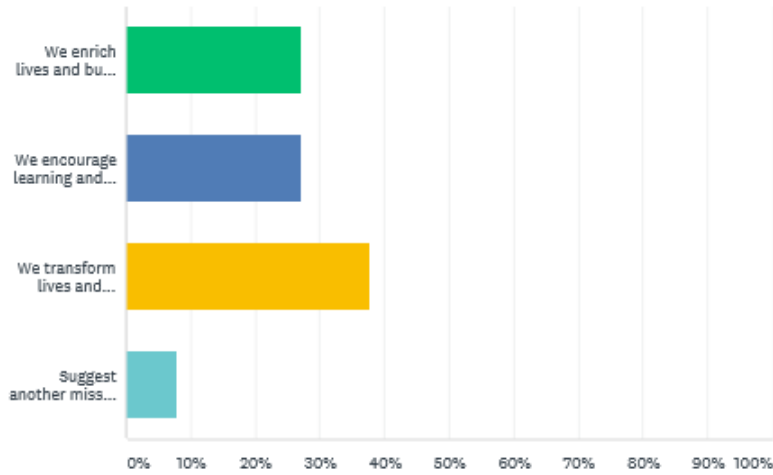
Mission statement 2nd 1/2 from team:



## Combined mission statement from staff survey:

A mission statement describes what the library does and why. It's our purpose for being- why the library exists. Choose your favorite or suggest a new one:

Answered: 77 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ We enrich lives and build community (current mission statement).	27.27% 21
▼ We encourage learning and growth by providing access to resources and opportunities.	27.27% 21
▼ We transform lives and strengthen community by providing opportunities to connect, grow, and be inspired.	37.66% 29
▼ Suggest another mission statement:	<a href="#">Responses</a> 7.79% 6
Total Respondents: 77	

From the various means of collecting input from staff and the planning team, the proposed new mission statement is an extended variation on the existing one:



# VISION STATEMENT

The team used a similar process in reconsidering the vision statement from the 2015-2018 strategic plan. A vision statement should describe where the library is headed and what it hopes to achieve; or based on the organizational purpose, what it wants to become during the time period of the plan.

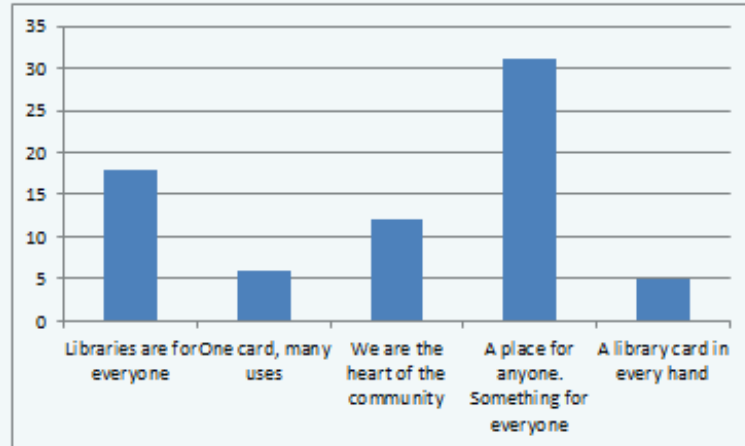
The group felt that the current vision statement, "A library card in every hand," can be confusing to staff and the public and also seems more like a tag line.

The team brainstormed several new options for vision statements. Staff from throughout FCPL voted on new vision statements via an online survey and during a presentation at the Annual Library Meeting. From all means of input, the new proposed vision statement is:

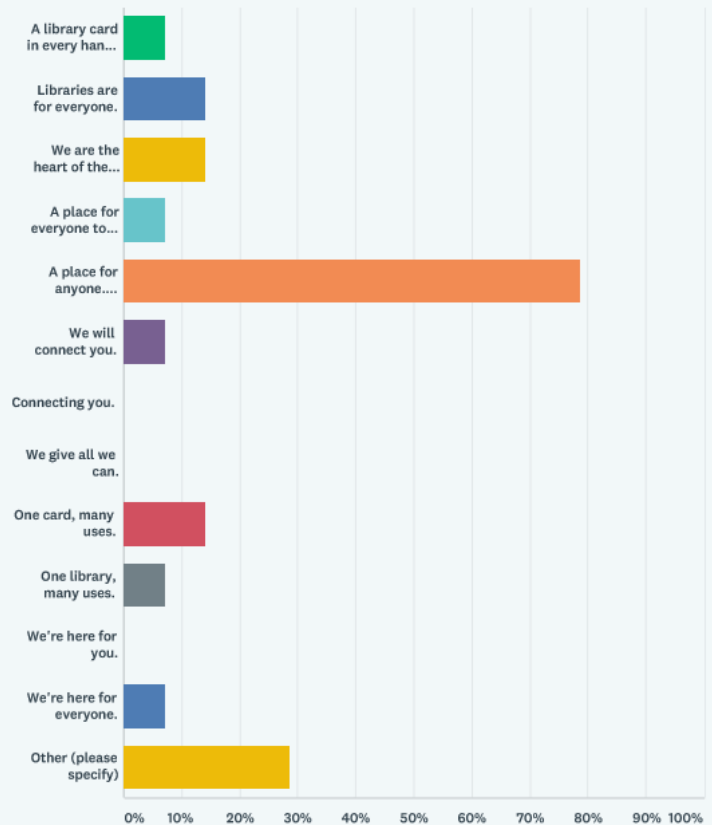
## OUR VISION

A place for anyone.  
Something for everyone.

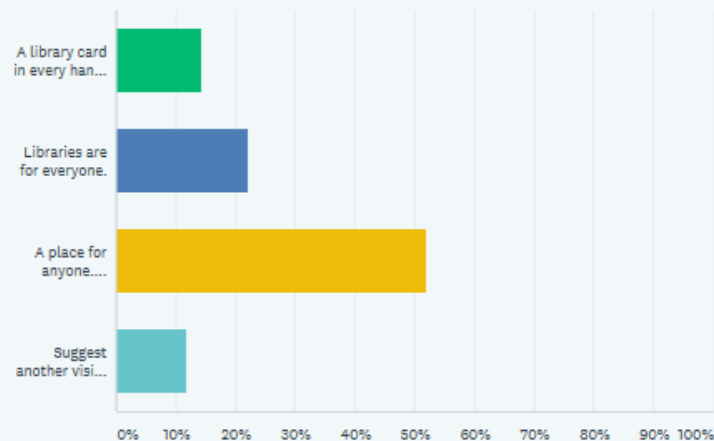
Vision statement from ALM:



Vision statement from team:



Vision statement from staff:



# FOCUS AREAS

Using the five implications for FCPL that arose from themes of the Harwood community conversations as a starting point, the team discussed ideas for new areas of focus for FCPL over the next few years.

The Harwood practice taught us that while public library staff tend to strive to be everything to all people all of the time, finite limitations of budget, staffing, and time make it necessary to narrow an overall system-wide focus to primary priorities in order to meet the most pressing community needs and be more intentional in maximizing resources within FCPL's organizational capacity.

Through debate and discussion, the strategic planning team decided to keep the five focus areas from the Harwood project, and add a sixth area of "Culture and Customer Service" to include internal communication, collaboration, and staff interactions with the public.

Focus areas:

Underserved Communities

Access to Technology and Training

Welcoming and Accessible Spaces

Inclusive Activities

Trusted Hub for Information

Culture and Customer Service

Using suggestions from the SWOT analysis from the first planning meeting, staff and the strategic planning team each took surveys to narrow topics and share input for prioritizing new directions within each focus area.

Using data from both surveys, the team devised a list of the top five organizational priorities for the next few years within each focus area. Please see Appendix F and G for full responses from both surveys.





# PRIORITIES

Priorities for each focus area:

Underserved Communities	Technology and Training	Welcoming and Accessible Spaces	Inclusive Activities	Trusted Hub for Information	Culture and Customer Service
Low-Income	Staff Training	Overcoming Language Barriers	Increased Community Partners/ Museum Passes	Internal Training Proficiencies	Consistent Policy to Err on the Side of Good Customer Service
Spanish-Speaking	Computer Classes	Separate Spaces for Activities/ Ages	Wider Selection of Programming	Messaging about Offerings/ Resources	Improved Internal Communication
Seniors	Staff Time	Teen-Friendly Spaces	Reading Incentives for Early Literacy	Cross-Promotion with Partner Organizations	Everyone Focused on Same Mission, Vision, Values
Rural Communities	Computers/ Devices	Community Center	Teen Life Hacks	Kiosks/ Displays in Public Places	Overcoming Barriers of Fines and Fees
At-Risk Youth	Bandwidth Speed	Social Services in Libraries or Pop-Ups at Social Services	Exercise/ Recreation	Varied and Revisited Forms of Reference	More Staff/ More Efficient Use (i.e., Cluster Groupings)

The next step is for division heads to consider each focus area/ priority and how it relates to their departments. Managers will complete the worksheet below to recognize priorities within their areas and define key performance indicators (KPIs) or benchmarks to track progress. Communication needs to occur among divisions to avoid either leaving out important priorities or duplicating efforts. The KPIs will filter down to departmental and staff performance plans.



## DIVISION BENCHMARKS

**DIVISION :** \_\_\_\_\_

**FOCUS AREA :** \_\_\_\_\_ *Underserved Communities*

Access	Community	Inclusion	Innovation	Safety	Service
Priorities	Priorities	Priorities	Priorities	Priorities	Priorities
KPIs	KPIs	KPIs	KPIs	KPIs	KPIs

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2022



Fresno County Public Library

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

2019 - 2022

## OUR MISSION

FCPL transforms lives and strengthens communities by providing opportunities to connect, grow, and be inspired.

## OUR VISION

A place for anyone.  
Something for everyone.



# CORE VALUES

ACCESS

COMMUNITY

INCLUSION

INNOVATION

SAFETY

SERVICE

# CORE SERVICES

INFORMATION

LEARNING

MATERIALS

PEOPLE

SPACES

TECHNOLOGY

# FOCUS AREAS



Underserved Communities

Access to Technology  
and Training

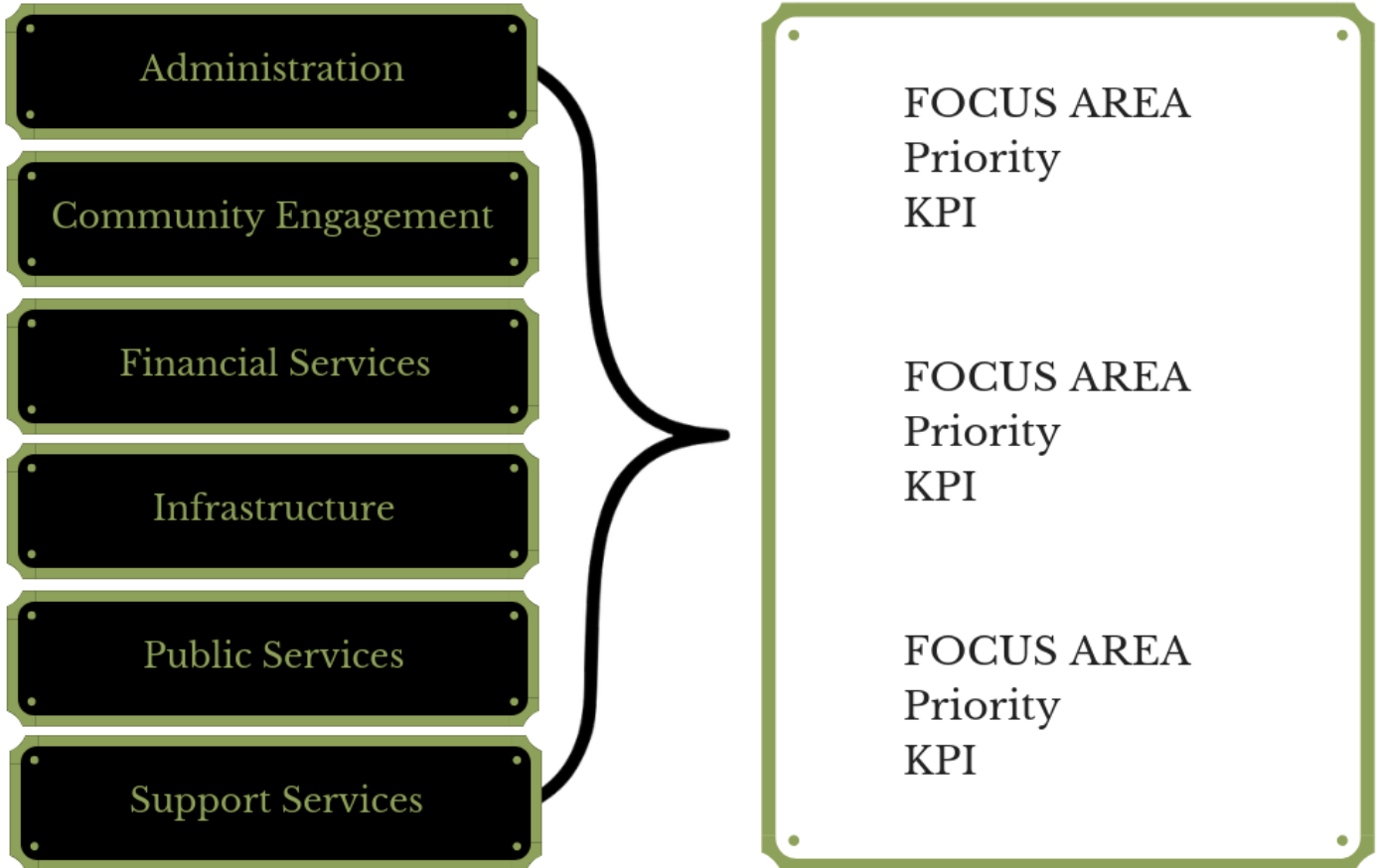
Welcoming and  
Accessible Spaces

Inclusive Activities

Trusted Hub for Information

Culture and  
Customer Service

# DIVISION BENCHMARKS



# DEPARTMENT PLANS OF SERVICE

FOCUS AREA  
Priority  
KPI  
Goal:

FOCUS AREA  
Priority  
KPI  
Goal:



## Staff Performance Plan based on FCPL's Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Mission: We transform lives and strengthen community by providing opportunities to connect, grow, and be inspired.

Vision: A place for anyone. Something for everyone.

Values: Access, Community, Inclusion, Innovation, Safety, Service

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Review Period: \_\_\_\_\_

### Focus Area: Underserved Communities

FCPL Value(s)	Division Benchmark or KPI	Individual Goal/ Objective
Inclusion	Increase programming for Spanish-speaking children ages 0-5 by 25% by January 2020.	Work with bilingual staff or community partners to offer two new Spanish story times for children ages 0-5 during fall programming session. Report statistics from the session to supervisor <a href="#">by December 15, 2019</a> .

### Focus Area: Inclusive Activities

FCPL Value(s)	Division Benchmark or KPI	Individual Goal/ Objective

### Focus Area: Technology and Training

FCPL Value(s)	Division Benchmark or KPI	Individual Goal/ Objective

### Focus Area: Trusted Hub for Information

FCPL Value(s)	Division Benchmark or KPI	Individual Goal/ Objective

# ASSESSMENT MEASUREMENTS

The most important aspect of the strategic planning process occurs after writing the plan, in the implementation and assessment. Scheduled review periods are essential to celebrate achieved benchmarks, track progress, reflect on relevancy, and maintain a system-wide focus on a shared vision and organizational priorities.

A 'balanced scorecard' allows for system-wide self- and departmental-evaluations based on key performance indicators from departmental plans of service and staff performance plans. Balanced scorecards help maintain accountability and keep the mission and vision statements centered in the minds of staff at all levels of an organization. Ratings from balanced scorecards help define which KPIs under each focus area are being met, and which areas need more attention throughout the life of the plan. Scorecard assessments should be conducted at least annually if not more frequently.

Sample excerpt of a balanced scorecard:

Focus Area	Indicator	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Needs to Improve
1. Underserved Communities	1a. Our branch increased children's programs for Spanish-speaking communities by 25%.						
	1b. We partnered with 2 new organizations to increase offerings in low-income areas within our service area.						
	1c. Staff participated in outreach events in Spanish-speaking communities within our service area.						
2. Technology and Training	1a. Our branch increased public computer classes by 10%.						
	1b. Staff had time allotted to conduct computer classes and one-on-one assistance with customers.						
	1c. Staff had training opportunities to learn techniques for offering computer classes.						



FRESNO COUNTY PUBLIC  
**LIBRARY**

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*A place to grow.*