

**RENEWED**  
2021-23  
THROUGH 2024

# Strategic Roadmap

## Charting the Course

Strong Library.  
Strong Community.



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## WELCOME

Dear Denver Public Library Community,

Beginning in 2019, Denver Public Library launched a strategic planning process called Charting the Course to envision the library for future generations. Through extensive staff, community and partner engagement efforts, the library established a new mission statement, vision and values to better reflect aspirations for the library.

Since then, Denver Public Library has continued to work with staff, our community, and the Denver Public Library Commission to imagine the library for the future. Despite a global pandemic, our strategic planning process moved forward and we came together to develop this strategic roadmap to guide us for the next three years.

We believe a strong library is vital for a strong community. The roadmap is rooted in our values and is responsive to the evolving needs of our staff and our community. The Strategic Roadmap names a path forward and focuses on ensuring the library is a place that both welcomes community in our spaces but also meets our diverse communities where they are, reimagines our spaces to reflect community use, and ensures we focus on the well-being of internal staff culture while remaining responsible stewards of public funds.

We hope you see yourselves in this plan and look forward to seeing you in our locations soon.

Sincerely,

*Michelle Jeske*

Michelle Jeske,  
City Librarian

*Cathy Lucas*

Cathy Lucas,  
Library Commission President





## BACKGROUND

### 2019:

Strategic planning process launches and would become known as Charting the Course

### 2019:

Community engagement, staff engagement, Commission engagement

### 2019:

New mission, vision and values established

### 2020:

Continued staff and Commission engagement

### 2020:

Community indicators established

### 2020:

Values in Action Team retreats

### 2021:

Strategic Roadmap established

### 2021:

Strategic Roadmap adopted by Library Commission

### 2021-2023:

Annual Action Plans guide the work of the library



**Our Values in Action - why we do what we do**



**Our Strategic Roadmap - what we will do**



**Our Annual Action Plan - how we will do it**



## MISSION, VISION, VALUES

### MISSION:

Together, we create welcoming spaces where all are free to explore and connect.

### VISION:

A strong community where everyone thrives.

### VALUES:

Welcoming, Curiosity, Connection, Equity, Stewardship

## FROM VALUES TO VALUES IN ACTION

Our values were transformed into Values in Action to breathe life into them and create a connection and accountability. The Values in Action describe the purpose of the library's work and provide a tangible meaning to the values by providing a clear desired result of Denver Public Library's impact on the community.

Each Value in Action ultimately provided a foundation which Charting the Course: A Strategic Roadmap is built upon. Staff came together to provide recommendations on how the library can best serve the Denver community using each Value in Action to guide the conversation. Through this work, a clear set of themes emerged, confirming that the library's Values in Action span all facets of the library's work. The grouped recommendations became the Strategic Themes which are the basis of the Strategic Roadmap.

### VALUES IN ACTION:

Welcoming Everyone

Fostering Curiosity

Strengthening Connection

Challenging Inequity

Honoring Public Trust





## INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Each Value in Action has associated community indicators which are ways we can measure success in living our values and meeting the objectives of our Strategic Roadmap. Indicators include what data we can measure, how the data is measured and will tell us if we are achieving results. All these indicators work together to tell the library's story of impact and contain internal and external measures. Please note: these indicators are dynamic, some are still in development and may evolve over time.

### Welcoming Everyone

- Quality of Denver libraries - percentage the public rates the library as good or excellent
- Visits per capita - average number of times a Denver resident visits a library location or the website
- Active cardholders - percentage of Denver residents with an active library card
- Staff engagement - percentage of library staff that self identify as engaged employees

### Fostering Curiosity

- Circulation per capita - library materials circulated per capita, by collection
- Library as a space for growth and reflective engagement - under development
- Staff development - percentage of staff engaged in professional development beyond required learning

### Strengthening Connection

- New library users - percentage of new library cards issued and active
- Service usage - connection based service usage per capita
- Library as a space for connection and togetherness - under development
- Strategic partnerships - percentage of partnerships rated as highly effective or effective



## INDICATORS OF SUCCESS (continued)

### Challenging Inequity

- Equity score - staff perception that the library is committed to address/eliminate racial and ethnic inequities in the organization
- Removing barriers - percentage of library policies/procedures/practices reviewed through an equity, diversity and inclusion lens
- Investments reflective of Denver community - percentage of operating expenditures to minority, local and women-owned businesses
- Service utilization in target neighborhoods - service use by priority populations in identified communities

### Honoring Public Trust

- Investment in Denver Public Library/the sharing economy - total general fund investment in library services per capita; individual return on investment compared to the per capita general fund investment in library services
- Trust in the library - percentage of public respondents who trust the library to do what is best for the community
- The sharing economy - return on investment of the library
- Preserving Denver's history - percentage of library historical holdings that are accessible to the public

These community level indicators provide a pulse on whether Denver Public Library's efforts are having their intended impact in the community. Our internal work, collaborative work with partners and the City and County of Denver move the needle on the indicators. Several of these measures can be seen across the Strategic Themes.





## STRATEGIC THEMES



### Space & Place

All Denver Public Library locations and services are welcoming, reflect and honor the unique needs of neighborhoods and are placed in geographically diverse locations to ensure all have access.



### Access & Enrichment

The Denver Public Library is responsive to the diverse needs of its community and reaches beyond its walls to offer library services to all.



### Culture & Organizational Health

The Denver Public Library offers a strong internal culture for employees focused on equity. The library is a trusted community organization and responsible steward of taxpayer dollars.





## ACCESS & ENRICHMENT

The Denver Public Library is responsive to the diverse needs of its community and reaches beyond its walls to offer library services to all.

### Objectives:

- 1.1 Reimagine service delivery models and grow the library's commitment to meeting people where they are.
- 1.2 Expand the library's reach and boost public awareness of what the library has to offer.
- 1.3 Offer relevant and supportive resources, services and materials in Denver's key languages.
- 1.4 Inspire and encourage a sense of wonder by curating relevant, engaging and diverse materials that reflect the interests of the community and promote literacy at all ages.
- 1.5 Harness the power of current and emerging technology to eliminate barriers and facilitate exploration.



*The library is committed to broaden our external outreach, better tell the story of our value and services to the community, improve language access of services and materials, and sustain digital inclusion work.*



## SPACE & PLACE

All Denver Public Library locations and services are welcoming, reflect and honor the unique needs of neighborhoods and are placed in geographically diverse locations to ensure all have access.

### Objectives:

2.1 Maintain and improve existing library infrastructure to enhance the customer experience and explore opportunities to add new locations as we grow with the community.

2.2 Anchor the library's role as a connector within the larger social and economic fabric of the community.

2.3 Celebrate unique neighborhood characteristics through the design of culturally representative spaces.

2.4 Develop a trauma-informed and culturally responsive customer service model that matches community needs, while also encouraging staff to maintain their own wellness.



*The library is focused on strengthening strategic partnerships, reenvisioning our physical environments to reflect unique community use, and incorporating universal design to make everybody feel more welcome.*





A close-up photograph of a smiling woman with dark hair, wearing a blue top, holding a baby. The baby is looking directly at the camera and wearing a pink shirt with a small basket on the front.

## CULTURE & ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

The Denver Public Library offers a strong internal culture for employees focused on equity. The library is a trusted community organization and responsible steward of taxpayer dollars.

### Objectives:

- 3.1 Cultivate an inclusive organization focused on equitable outcomes and services for all, leading with race.
- 3.2 Provide responsive and inspired service through data-informed decision making.
- 3.3 Nurture the full employee lifecycle, build staff capacity to deliver on our mission and create opportunities for career exploration.
- 3.4 Align financial and operational resources with strategic priorities to ensure long term sustainability.
- 3.5 Provide consistent, transparent, high quality communication and prioritize meaningful opportunities for staff and community engagement.



*The library recognizes the link between internal wellbeing and external service through prioritizing employee engagement, sound financial management, data collection and use, and stakeholder accountability.*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### **Denver Public Library Commission**

Cathy Lucas, President  
Sonya Ulibarri, Vice President  
Laurie Mathews, Secretary  
savinay chandrasekhar  
Jehan Benton-Clark  
Carlos Martinez  
Michael Niyompong

### **Denver Public Library Executive Team**

Michelle Jeske, City Librarian  
Bria Ward, Interim Chief of Staff, Director of Human Resources  
Ozy Aloziem, Manager of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Rachel Fewell, Central Library Administrator  
Anne Kemmerling, Director of Neighborhood Services  
Zeth Lietzau, Director of Collections, Technology, and Strategy  
Amber Lindberg, Director of Finance and Facilities  
Erika R. Martinez, Director of Communications and Community Engagement

### **Charting the Course Project Team**

Kirsten Decker, Manager of Strategy and Evaluation, Charting the Course Project Lead  
Ozy Aloziem, Manager of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Bec Czarnecki, Assistant to the City Librarian  
Jina Dunn, Finance Manager  
Olivia Gallegos, Communications Manager  
Seana O'Grady, Senior Management Analyst - Strategy & Evaluation  
Taylor Schaffter, Learning and Development Manager

### **Charting the Course Change Team**

Jim Bang, Security Supervisor  
Melanie Colletti, Senior Librarian  
Ernesto Escarsega, Library Program Associate  
Joe Gosalvez, Communications Specialist  
Jennifer Lay, Learning Program Specialist  
Joe Mills, Library Assistant III  
Edgar Morales, Library Assistant IV  
Matt Simpson, Circulation Services Supervisor  
Joan Vigil, Senior Librarian

### **Values in Action Team Leads**

Welcoming Everyone  
Amanie Mahmood, Collection Specialist

### **Fostering Curiosity**

Nate Stone, Program Administrator - Digital Inclusion

### **Strengthening Connection**

Yvonne Sadeghzadeh, Library Assistant V

### **Challenging Inequity**

Daniyom Bekele, Librarian

### **Honoring Public Trust**

Christina McClelland, Resource Development Officer

