



**MONTANA STATE LIBRARY  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2016-2021**

***DRAFT FOR REVIEW 9-6-16:***

## Practical Vision

What do we want to see in place in the next five years?

### Connected Community Partnerships

Collected & shared stories for human connection

Workshops for non-librarians to communicate our value & information available

PSAs with music and interviews about impact/ value of MSL

Vets have presence at MLA conferences, MSL advisory groups

Local leaders embrace role of libraries in community problem solving, through MSL's leadership

MSL partners with local leaders to work on community transformation

Connecting & building communities through the work of MSL

Empowering the people - crowdsourced, curated, engaged information

People come to us to get their information out & accessible

MSL staff brings strengths to collaborate on programs/ services for end users

Lifelong Learning Department reaching various groups (vets, seniors)

MSL leads other agencies to standards for data to ensure easy access

### New and Diversified Funding

Average budget of Montana's public libraries has doubled from 2016-2021

Businesses & foundations support library initiatives

MSL budget is robust enough to accomplish our mission (Commission is reviewing)

### Useful Information Infrastructure

Augmented reality app using GIS data connected to other data sets

MSL leads in making cultural, natural resource & historical collections available online

All librarians have affordable, high-speed broadband

Interconnected infrastructure of local to state library to federal to international levels

3D, 360° GIS is in place

MSL is a leader in creating a culture of open information access

Montana is a model for information infrastructure for other states

MSL & National Library Service have developed sustainable service delivery model for the visually impaired

Programming and resources in place to reach more veterans, with impact data collected

GIS and other data is readily available for legislative use (context-setting, "geo notes" like a fiscal note)

## Underlying Contradictions

What blocks or barriers might hold us back from achieving our Practical Vision?

### Limiting Political Climate

Concerns over political views tied to funding (why do we need state funding if we are able to attract other funding?)

Belief in smaller government, disagreements about the role of government

Arbitrary funding caps

Fiscally conservative state

Legislators are unaware about why & how MSL should be funded

Advocacy for funding is dependent on 2 voices speaking to Legislators

### Risk-Averse Library Culture

Fear of failure or harm

Tendency to always want to be "the Leader" when we might need to follow & listen

Poverty mentality & scarcity model among librarians

Commissioners are unclear on their role in advocacy

Emphasizing cost over value

Some Commissioners are unskilled in politics due to limited experience

Fear of ceding power & perception that we aren't leading (threat to funding)

Desire to protect turf, internally and externally

Lingering attitude toward "not ruffling feathers"

### Divergent Expectations

Not engaged with Board of Public Education & Office of Public Instruction as partners in support of our mission

Culture among partners may not support open, shared information

Insufficient shared vision of a new library model/frame, for local communities and MSL

Our "ideal library" may not match patron's and taxpayer ideas

Perception of libraries as book warehouses

Changing technology lead to questions about our reason to exist

Diminished perception of the value of libraries

### Non-Strategic Resource Allocation

Fragmented approach to identifying and engaging partnerships – we are not disciplined

So many options for partnering lead to resource allocation questions

Insufficient marketing

### Challenging Geography

Fragmented broadband accessibility

Distance and diversity of Montana towns

## **Strategic Directions**

***Where will we focus our attention over the next 2-3 years, to address our Contradictions and move toward our Practical Vision?***

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### **Strategic Direction: Engagement, Advocacy and Story Telling**

*Ideas that led to this Strategic Direction: (\*Denotes Commissioner-led or Commissioner-initiated activity)*

- Amplify and leverage value of community libraries and MSL
- Engage broad stakeholders in visioning the future of libraries – form a group that goes beyond libraries
- Create talking points about our plan, customizable to different audiences and their goals
- Work to increase marketing, story-telling and advocacy
- Public Service Announcements: create the message we want to share
- Create a simple, crowdsourced story map
- Find a compelling means to communicate value vs. cost of MSL/library services
- Attend MLA-sponsored workshop on how to interact and advocate with Legislators
- Mobilize local library trustees and school administrators to support MSL at the Legislature
- Tap into the MLA listserv for legislative information alerts
- Create talking points for commissioners in support of MSL
- *\*One-on-one Commissioner/Legislator relationships; coffees, events, lunch*

### **Strategic Direction: Culture and Impacts**

*Ideas that led to this Strategic Direction:*

- Be willing to say “No”
- Think End-User first in all decisions; ask what is the impact of this decision?
- Hold ourselves accountable to what is best for the end user
- More pilot projects with a willingness to “fail forward”
- Avoid comparing libraries – each library’s context is different
- Align our expectations with current reality
- Avoid the “old frame” – ask if we are living in 2005, or are we thinking forward to 2025?
- Help libraries measure impact through stories and data

## ***Montana State Library Strategic Plan 2016-2021***

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### **Strategic Direction: Infrastructure**

*Ideas that led to this Strategic Direction:*

- Push a broadband initiative in 2017 or 2019 Legislature, include all seven tribal communities
- Create an alliance of business and other partners for broadband access
- Turn libraries into community technology centers

### **Strategic Direction: Federations**

*Ideas that led to this Strategic Direction:*

- Reframe the role of federations in light of this strategic plan – empower them!!
- Re-examine the role of school and academic groups
- Re-examine the role of tribal libraries in federations

### ***Next Steps in the Strategic Plan process:***

1. Staff will gather to do an implementation plan based on the vision and strategic directions on August 24, 2016.
2. Consultant Ned Cooney will document that implementation plan and return to MSL by September 6, 2016.
3. Gather feedback from the Federations, MLA, MLIAC, NAC, NRIS and other stakeholders in the Fall of 2016.
4. Commissioners will review interim drafts, with the goal of final adoption at their meeting in December 2016.