

# Strategic Plan

*High Level*

2023-2028





Beginning in the late-Spring of 2022 and completed in November 2022, under the guidance of the Carnegie-Stout Public Library (C-SPL) Library Director and Board of Trustees, a strategic planning process was completed for the Carnegie-Stout Public Library for years 2023 through 2028. Library consultants Rob Cullin and Janet Nelson of ReThinking Libraries, LLC (RTL) facilitated the process, fact finding, and analysis, but the library and its community made all choices and decisions in the process.

## The Process

The C-SPL strategic planning process and review included the following key areas:

**Gathering and analyzing community input and data**, which involved benchmarking, demographic analysis, and collection analysis. In addition, C-SPL staff and Board of Trustees were involved in exploring ideas and possibilities for the Library as a thriving 21st century library. Stakeholder sessions were conducted by RTL in the Spring and Fall of 2022. Participants included community members, community leaders, C-SPL staff members, and library trustees.

**The Engagement Sessions** covered topics of current and future library operations, seeking both aspirational and pragmatic input from the staff and board about the Library, staffing, services, facilities, marketing, community participation, and programs. These sessions facilitated by RTL sought candid input from the stakeholders about all these areas in addition to more open-ended input related to the community itself. Library facilities (both buildings and mobile) were discussed at length with participants to review the appropriateness of current spaces and help determine any needs or shifts that should be considered.

**Developing the high-level plan** during a two-day Strategic Planning Retreat held on Sept. 19 and 20, 2022. During the Retreat, all data and input was reviewed by 18 people, consisting of the community members and leaders, library leadership, staff members, and library board members. Using the data and stakeholder input, the group reviewed and discussed as a large group and in smaller breakout groups all aspects of library services and facilities. The group worked through a variety of exercises to surface the potential ideas and approaches that could make up the plan. Through a series of voting exercises, the group then identified the most essential strategic areas, specific goals, and related investments required to implement the goals to help the library thrive over the next five years and beyond. Those elements are captured here in this high-level plan document. This plan was reviewed with library staff and board, and then approved by the Board of Trustees.

**A detailed 12-month plan** will be built each year based on the guidance of this high-level plan. This plan details the relevant activities that are to be completed in the time period to further the large goals highlighted in the high-level plan. This process of developing a 12-month detailed action plan will be repeated each year by staff and reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

# ESS REVIEW

## What We Heard

The stakeholder sessions explored several topics including customer service, youth services, adult services, outreach services, programming, technology and digital services, the facility/building, collections and resources, and overall 21st century public library best practices. Detailed summaries of all stakeholder feedback and online survey results were provided in separate documents to the community and C-SPL leadership and reviewed in depth during the Strategic Planning Retreat. All stakeholder input, data analysis, and follow-up exploration work led to the strategic focuses, goals, and investments outlined in this document.

## Further Plan Development

With the goal of achieving all outlined goals over the next five years, C-SPL administration, staff, and board of trustees will regularly evaluate their progress and achievements. Objectives set forth in this plan will be further detailed each year in a 12-month detailed work plan which will be developed by the library staff. These annual 12-month plans will address the specific actions, objectives, and goals in addition to specifying required staff and financial commitments.

## Ongoing Evaluation

In addition, the high-level plan contained in this document will be re-evaluated each year by the board to ensure that the high-level goals still align with the needs and goals of the community, ahead of the staff's development of that year's 12-month plan. This balanced and systematic process also emphasizes that the resulting plan will be iterative and evolve substantially over the next several years.

## Collaboration and Communications

The keys to C-SPL implementation, evaluation, and ultimately, the success of its strategic plan will be:

- A thorough understanding of the plan as well as active involvement in implementing the plan by staff and the Board
- Frequent and ongoing communication between administration and staff
- Frequent and ongoing communication between C-SPL staff and its community
- Active collaboration between C-SPL Board of Trustees, administration, staff, outside organizations, and the community



# MISSION

Enriching lives through experiences and resources that encourage discovery.

# VISION

To improve and empower lives through accessible resources, community engagement, and entertainment opportunities in a welcoming environment.

# VALUES

## **Welcoming:**

Creating spaces and an environment that is open to all.

## **Discovery:**

Providing engaging enrichment opportunities and a culture of life-long learning.

## **Inclusion:**

Adopting resources and policies that provide a welcoming space.

## **Forward Thinking:**

Creatively adapting to evolving technology and changing needs.

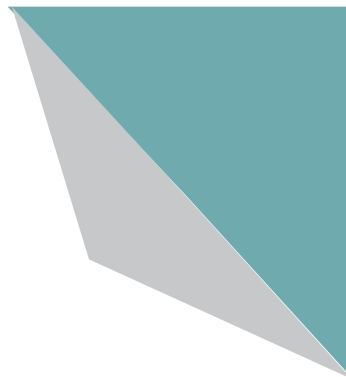
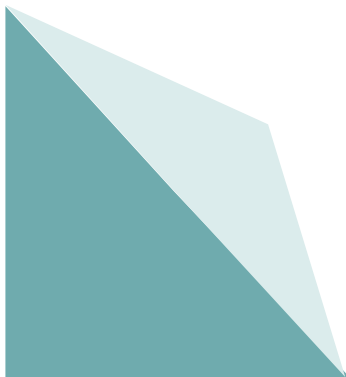
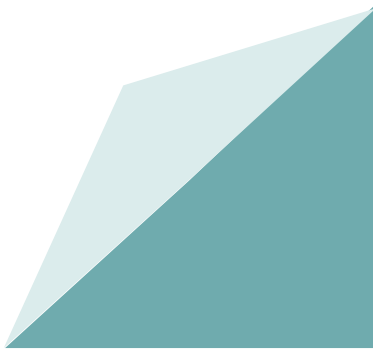
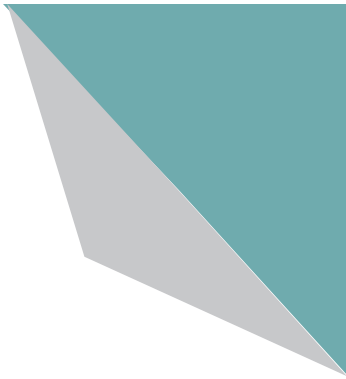
## **Accessibility:**

Recognizing seen and unseen barriers and providing equitable access when and where services are needed.

## **Community Focus:**

Collections and services that are aligned with community needs and interests.

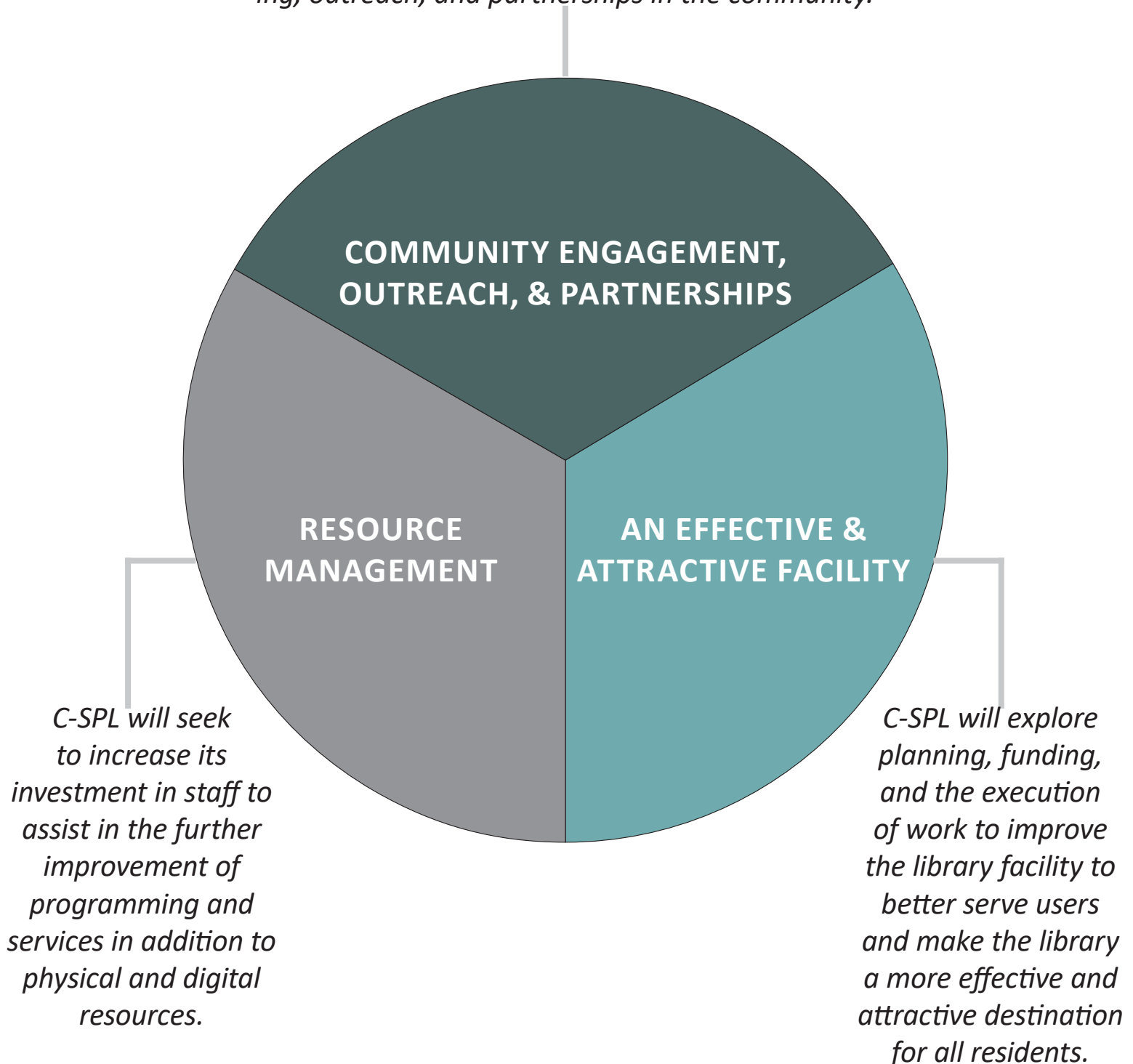






# FOCU

*C-SPL will create a more engaged community and user base through marketing, outreach, and partnerships in the community.*



# SAREAS

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIPS

C-SPL will create a more engaged community and user base through marketing, outreach, and partnerships in the community.

**GOAL 1: Develop Marketing/Engagement master plan that explores needs in staffing levels and identifies strategies to increase awareness of the library and its values in the community.**

OBJECTIVES:

1. Meet with other library and/or nonprofit marketing teams to evaluate library marketing staffing needs.
2. Explore marketing best practices, including training for library staff.
3. Develop a marketing master plan, library branding guide or brand book.

OUTCOMES:

- Provide a cohesive, consistent branded identity.
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**GOAL 2: Continue to seek out outreach opportunities in Dubuque.**

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify staff resources available for outreach opportunities.
2. Explore outreach programming opportunities at community events.

OUTCOMES:

- Meet more community members where they are, increasing an understanding of what resources the library has to offer.
  - Organizations and community members recognize the library as a resource for the entire community.
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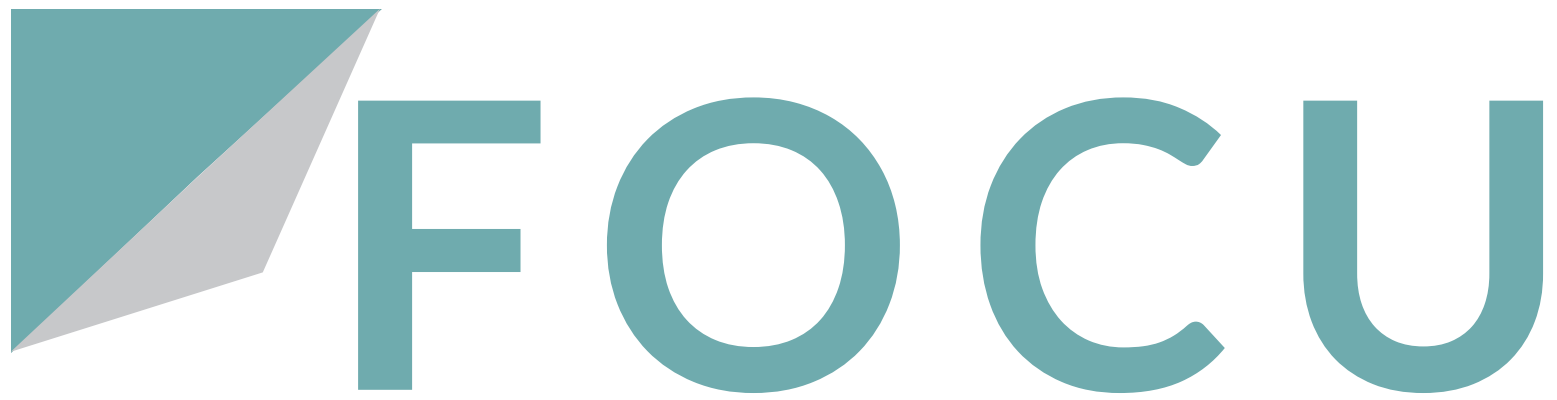
**GOAL 3: Seek partnerships to help expand library service and develop and maintain relationships with local organizations that complement or align with the C-SPL mission.**

OBJECTIVES:

1. Explore community partnerships to engage non-English speaking residents.
2. Maintain/expand partnerships with schools and education related organizations.
3. Partner with organizations across various demographics, needs, interests to broaden library support for the community.

OUTCOMES:

- Library service across all communities increase.
- Organizations, schools, and agencies in the area recognize the library as a vital partner in servicing the community.



## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

C-SPL will seek to increase its investment in staff to assist in the further improvement of programming and services in addition to physical and digital resources.

### **GOAL 1: Offer current technology and systems to improve the usage of library materials and resources.**

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Research and consider updated technologies for the library that could improve library experience for community and staff. Examples could be updated self-check machines, automated materials pick-up stations (internal & external), etc.
2. Review library collections as part of space needs assessment for usage rates, need, size of collection, etc.

#### OUTCOMES:

- Improve service utilization for community and staff.
  - Community receives ease of access to information, resources, and library programming.
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### **GOAL 2: Review library policies while considering equity and access to resources and information, staff workflow for procedures and policies, and other needs as they arise.**

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Consult City's Intercultural Competency Team, Department of Equity & Human Rights for review of library policies to consider equitable solutions to complex, unique situations community members face with regards to library resource access.
2. Consult library staff with regard to procedures and policies to consider removing roadblocks that limit staff ability to provide excellent library service.

#### OUTCOMES:

- Library policies are seen as fair and reasonable.
  - Increase in residents that are positively impacted by library services.
  - Library staff see processes and policies as more clear, and beneficial for patrons.
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### **GOAL 3: Increase support and flexibility for staff to improve effectiveness and satisfaction.**

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Investigate and request shifting of part-time positions to full-time positions where feasible and appropriate.
2. Investigate staffing levels compared to patron needs, succession planning, etc.
3. Create more opportunities for staff development.

#### OUTCOMES:

- Library staff report the ability to offer better services to the community.
- Library staff have the ability to offer sustaining, quality programming.



# SAREAS

## EFFECTIVE & ATTRACTIVE FACILITY

C-SPL will explore planning, funding, and the execution of work to improve the library facility to better serve users and make the library a more effective and attractive destination for all residents.

### **GOAL 1: Launch a facility assessment and complete a building master plan.**

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Hire a consultant to conduct a space needs and/or a use needs study.
2. Use study to develop master plan.
3. Use master plan to plan for future space alterations or possible renovations.

#### OUTCOMES:

- Improve building with emphasis on service access and efficiency.
  - Develop engaging and appropriate spaces.
  - More meeting and study spaces.
  - Improved way-finding and directional signage.
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### **GOAL 2: Address parking limitations near the library.**

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Work with City leadership to explore options to equitably address public parking limitations near the library.

#### OUTCOMES:

- Seek more free and/or cheaper parking options for library patrons.



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