



**Laramie
County
Library**

CONNECTING COMMUNITY

**Laramie County Library System
Strategic Plan**

libraryIQ



PREPARED FOR
Laramie County
July, 2025

GOVERNANCE

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Dear Laramie County Community,

It is my great pleasure to share with you Connecting Community, the Laramie County Library System's 2025-2030 strategic plan. This plan represents our shared vision for the future, one that was shaped by the voices of nearly 500 community members and the insights of our dedicated library staff.

Over the past year, we've listened deeply. We've talked with families, students, business owners, seniors, educators, and civic leaders. We've gathered stories, reviewed data, and partnered with experts to ensure that this plan is both grounded in evidence and inspired by possibility. The result is a forward-looking, actionable roadmap that reflects what matters most to Laramie County.

This plan is more than a document, it is a springboard for exciting and positive change that will benefit our entire community. From expanding outreach in rural areas to enhancing digital access, from redesigning spaces to better support creativity and collaboration to building collections that reflect evolving interests and needs: this plan is bold, responsive, and rooted in our community's aspirations.

Our strategic goals are to: Expand Outreach, Marketing and Access; Enhance Collections and Events; Innovate Operations; and Reimagine Spaces. These goals are designed to ensure that the library remains a vital hub of engagement and discovery. As we look ahead, I am excited about the partnerships we will deepen, the stories we will tell, and the future we will build together.

Thank you for being part of the Laramie County Library System (LCLS) story. We look forward to the journey ahead.

Warmly,

Antonia Gaona | County Librarian & Executive Director

VISION

Champion a knowledgeable and engaged community

MISSION

Be a hub for engagement, literacy and learning, and lifelong curiosity and discovery.

COMMITMENTS

- Free and easy access to the printed and digital word, information, and cultural enhancement
- A rich reading and literacy culture for children and adults
- Dynamic, current, pertinent and uncensored collection of materials in a variety of formats
- Well-trained professional librarians, employees, and volunteers serving our community
- Responsible resource development, management, and sharing
- State-of-the-art technology and digital resources
- Innovative and welcoming facilities to meet the needs of all people of Laramie County
- Promotion of library services through a variety of communication channels
- A flexible, nimble, and responsive approach to community needs
- Welcoming for all members of our community

WHAT WE LEARNED

Through surveys, focus groups, public feedback, and a thorough analysis of library and Laramie County data, the Library gathered valuable insight into what the community values and where there are opportunities for growth.

One major theme that emerged was the desire for **expanded digital and physical resources**. Patrons expressed interest in growing the Library's digital collections — particularly through platforms like Libby and hoopla — as well as expanding the popular “Library of Things,” which includes tools, games, and kits. Many community members also asked for more life skills resources, such as help with job readiness, taxes, and basic technology, and emphasized the importance of offering inclusive materials that support neurodiverse users.

When it comes to physical space, users are looking for more **quiet study areas, flexible meeting rooms, and creative studio spaces**. There's also strong interest in improving accessibility, enhancing play areas for families, and exploring satellite branches or extended access through flexible operating hours. Some patrons suggested co-locating library services with other community services to make the Library even more useful and convenient.

Residents see the Library as a place of connection and belonging. They'd like to see it grow as a **civic hub**, with more **intergenerational** programming, leadership opportunities for teens and young adults, and outreach focused on military families, rural residents, and underserved populations. Suggestions for marketing included increasing the Library's presence on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, using QR codes for quick access to videos and services, and doing more outreach at places like grocery stores and the military base.

In terms of **technology and innovation**, Laramie County supports investing in maker spaces, content creation equipment, virtual reality, robotics, and memory labs. There's a desire for job readiness workshops, software training, and tech support that's easy to access — ideally in collaboration with local partners like Laramie County Community College.

The assessment also revealed some challenges. People noted that library hours and event times don't always work for those with busy schedules, and there were concerns about comfort and accessibility. Others shared that they didn't always know what the Library offered or found the website and catalog hard to navigate. While many praised the Library's friendly staff and welcoming environment, some patrons expressed concern over access, especially at the Burns and Pine Bluffs branches.

Looking ahead, community members would like the Library to offer more services out in the community — at parks, schools, senior centers, and other local hubs. They're interested in programming that includes life skills, healthy living, arts and culture, STEM, and even opportunities to meet new people. At the same time, many emphasized that books should remain central to the Library's mission.

Overall, the community made it clear that LCLS is a valued and trusted resource. Residents appreciate the Library's role in supporting learning, connection, and innovation — and they're eager to see it evolve to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population.

COMMUNITY-CENTERED RESEARCH

To reflect the priorities of the entire Laramie County population, LCLS engaged nearly 500 community members using multiple strategies:



Resident Profiles

LCLS partners, JLG Architects and LibraryIQ, created data-driven demographic profiles and patron maps, providing a deep understanding of residents - both library patrons and non-users.



Focused Conversations + Public Meetings

Skilled JLG and LibraryIQ facilitators spoke with more than 100 staff, community leaders and residents. These meaningful conversations focused on residents' hopes for their neighborhoods, and for library services.



Website for Public Engagement

A public survey, available online and in person, gathered more than 300 responses and provided broad insight into community needs and interests. The website also gathered residents' "Big Ideas" for the Library.



STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Staff engagement was critical to the process. LCLS staff contributed their deep expertise in aligning the Library's mission and capacities with community priorities. Staff also led aspirations-based conversations with community members.

CONNECTING COMMUNITY is rooted in data. National best practices, local demographics, growth projections, economic and social climate, facility use, and program engagement were also part of the analysis. Data sources include:

- Laramie County Library System, and State of Wyoming, City of Cheyenne, and Laramie County information and statistics
- LibraryIQ collection data analytics
- LibraryIQ recommendations based on consumer segmentation data
- United States Census
- Institute of Museum and Library Services

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

POPULATION

Laramie County's population growth has been slow and steady, with an increase of about 6% during the past ten yearsⁱ

- The population is gradually aging; the median age, now 38, is slowly increasing.
- The fastest growing age group is 65+ and is now 17% of the total population.
- About 4% of the population speaks Spanish.

Consumer segmentation uses age, income and other information to understand Laramie County residents.ⁱⁱ

- The largest percentage of households (18%) are led by residents aged 65-74. With some college education (and many former military), they are empty nesters who enjoy reading and other home-based hobbies.
- 14% of Laramie County households are highly educated, well-compensated professionals, many aged 45-54. They have children or teens at home and are avid technology users.
- 12% of households are led by high school graduates, many with some college, who are raising families. They enjoy sports and outdoor activities.
- 12% of households are led by older adults in upscale suburban neighborhoods. They often use the library and enjoy arts and culture activities.
- The remaining households are a mix of young to middle-aged residents, about half with children, with interests ranging from streaming video to travel and technology.



What This Means for LCLS

Stable population growth means LCLS can innovate and make cost-efficient strategic investments with a focus on operational sustainability.

- The growing senior population will increasingly shape demand for services (such as large-print materials, genealogy resources, and health and wellness programs).
- The large number of families suggests a need for multigenerational events, work-from-library spaces, digital learning tools, and educational opportunities.
- Interest in outdoor activities, arts and culture, and streaming indicates demand for entertainment and enrichment events.

ECONOMY

The County's economic health is steady. Unemployment is trending down since 2020, nonfarm jobs are up, and 4% sales and use tax collections grew 8.5% 2023-2024.ⁱⁱⁱ

- Laramie County's median income is \$76,282 with a 72% home ownership rate.
- 10% of families with children under 18 live below the federal poverty level, as do 9% of all County residents.
- Employment has shifted from rural and government to service and education, with corresponding earnings differences in rural and urban areas.
- Leading employers are services, government, and educational services.
- Laramie County's cost of living is a bit higher than many other Wyoming counties.



What This Means for LCLS

LCLS is a smart investment for Laramie County, with a strong return on investment in education, literacy, and workforce development.

- The stable economy means the next few years are a good time for capital improvements or service expansions.
- The shift to service and education jobs means economic opportunities and educational attainment needs are evolving.
- While overall economic health is strong, disparities persist, especially among households with children.
- Living expenses in Laramie County are somewhat higher than other Wyoming counties, which can strain low-income residents.

EDUCATION AND LITERACY

About 25% of County residents are high school graduates, 14% have an associate's degree, and 30% have a bachelor's or graduate degree.

- In Laramie County School District #1, 48% of elementary, 48% of middle school, and 42% of high school students test at proficient levels for reading.
- In LCSD #1, 43% of elementary, 43% of middle school and 35% of high school students test at proficient levels for math.
- In Laramie County School District #2, 56% of elementary, 56% of middle school and 42% of high school students test at proficient levels for reading.
- In LCSD #2, 60% of elementary, 60% of middle school and 32% of high school students test at proficient levels for math.^{iv}



What This Means for LCLS

A significant portion of the population is likely in need of continued education or upskilling opportunities.

- Education levels suggest need for support for those who don't engage with college or trades, and for access to analog and digital equipment and resources.
- There is a pressing need for youth academic support, especially in foundational literacy and STEM/STEAM.
- LCLS can serve as a central educational support hub, bridging gaps for children, teens and adults.

ⁱ Demographic data from US Census American Community Survey and Wyoming Dept of Administration & Information Economic Analysis Division

ⁱⁱ Consumer segmentation data from Claritas via LibraryIQ Data Analytics Platform

ⁱⁱⁱ Economic data from US Census American Community Survey and Wyoming Dept of Administration & Information Economic Analysis Division, and Headwaters Economics

^{iv} Education data from Laramie County School Districts #1 and #2 via US News & World Report

LCLS STRATEGIC GOALS

1



EXPAND OUTREACH, MARKETING AND ACCESS

The Laramie County Library offers all kinds of helpful services that make life a little easier and a lot more interesting. From early literacy classes and teen volunteer programs to free Wi-Fi, notary services, 3D printing, and downloadable books and movies, there's something for everyone. But not everyone knows just how much the Library has to offer. That's why building more awareness in the community is so important. When more people know about library services, more people can benefit – and the Library can keep growing as a welcoming, useful, and inspiring place for everyone in Laramie County.

To make sure more people know about these great resources, the Library will focus on outreach and building awareness across the community. That means meeting people where they are – at schools, community events, and other local gathering spots – so everyone has a chance to discover all the ways the Library can support them. By expanding its reach, the Library can continue to grow as a welcoming, useful, and inspiring place for everyone in Laramie County.

The Laramie County Library will remove barriers to library service, and engage existing and new library patrons.

Strategies

- Make accessing Library services easy for all residents
- Raise awareness of the Library and its services
- Create awareness of the value of Library services
- Expand opportunities for outreach and community engagement

Examples of What You'll See

- Ability to use a mobile device to reserve meeting and study rooms
- More materials delivery to customers with limited mobility and transportation challenges
- Holds pickup and browsing lockers at non-library locations
- New library website that is easy to use for access to events and digital resources
- Plenty of communication to increase public awareness of the library as a place for community connection, technology, fun and learning
- More public awareness of the digital collection's value and convenience
- More library participation in school and community educational events
- Promotion of library services to students and families through school communications

How We Will Measure Success

- More people attending events or using library services at times that work better for them
- Lots of scans and successful book downloads through QR codes
- More visitors at mobile stops in neighborhoods that need it most
- New library cards issued at mobile stops
- More people placing holds because it's easier to get their books
- More people visiting and using the LCLS website to access services
- Large attendance for events or services that were specifically promoted
- New users signing up after seeing ads or hearing about us

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ENHANCE COLLECTIONS AND EVENTS

LCLS has a strong foundation of community-inspired initiatives, like Bookmobile outreach to rural and underserved areas, intergenerational storytimes, and adult-disability inclusion programs.

To deepen this commitment, LCLS will offer events directly shaped by local interests, and proactively solicit ideas from patrons at all branches in order to address immediate community needs and challenges. Library collections will be enhanced to further reflect community identity, ensuring historic ties and local narratives are preserved and celebrated. Finally, by co-designing new services, the library will better meet local needs and create an environment where everyone feels valued, welcome, and included.

The Laramie County Library System will provide data-informed and community-driven collections and events that support skills development, career readiness, and life enrichment to reflect changing community needs.

Strategies

- Implement data-driven collection development practices
- Align collection budget with community interest trends
- Align collection budget with state and national trends as possible
- Support life skills, mental health, and healthy living
- Provide multigenerational literacy opportunities

Examples of What You'll See

- Use of analytics platform data to set and monitor performance indicators
- Collection budget adjustments to help meet the demand for digital books, downloadable audiobooks and other materials
- Information about the use of the Library spaces as professional centers provided to small business owners and entrepreneurs
- Workshops in career upskilling, resume review, interview coaching, help with writing business plans, etc.
- College and financial aid application and job readiness programs for teens
- Life skills and affordable living programs like financial literacy, sewing, and couponing
- Partnerships with local mental health professionals to provide mindfulness, meditation, yoga, and workshops on stress management
- Community talks on depression, trauma, and youth mental health
- More opportunities for families to engage in STEAM activities together

How We Will Measure Success

- More monthly checkouts of eBooks and downloadable audiobooks
- Reduced wait times for popular digital titles
- Increased room reservations by business people and entrepreneurs
- Students, job seekers and career changers attending career workshops
- Stronger teen participation in college/job programs
- More workshops in budgeting, couponing, sewing, etc. offered
- Mental health and wellness events added to the library calendar
- Strong attendance and increased number of family STEAM events

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INNOVATE OPERATIONS

LCLS is well-positioned to lead through innovative operational practices that enhance efficiency and service. By using data and analytics to guide decisions, the library will continue to tailor collections, outreach, and programs to meet evolving community needs. Ongoing investments in innovative tools, resources and workplace adjustments will make library use more flexible and accessible for everyone, regardless of location, need or circumstance.

LCLS will also strengthen its role as a community partner by collaborating with schools, government agencies, and nonprofits to deliver services where they're most needed. Internally, the Library will prioritize leadership development and encourage staff at all levels to take initiative, lead change, and contribute to service innovation. By building a culture of forward thinking adaptability, LCLS will continue to evolve as a dynamic resource for all of Laramie County.

The Laramie County Library System will maintain and strengthen organizational operations to foster civic engagement, support lifelong learning, celebrate diversity, and strengthen community bonds.

Strategies

- Analyze library workflow and service model for efficiency and effectiveness
- Invest in professional development and staff opportunity to recruit and retain top talent
- Maximize role as community hub through arts, culture, and literacy opportunities
- Emphasize community cohesion and foster deeper connections
- Position the Library as a place for technology access and support
- Help make emerging technologies more accessible

Examples of What You'll See

- A staffing structure that supports emerging and innovative library services
- Training for staff to enhance the culture of excellent customer service
- Enhanced partnerships with community educational organizations such as museums, historic sites, parks, etc.
- More services for homeschool families with a focus on social and creative opportunities
- Exciting arts events such as storytelling, poetry, local history, and music open mic nights
- More "maker" equipment such as sewing machines, hand tools, etc.
- Technology and skill-based education programs tailored to the needs of seniors and low-income families

How We Will Measure Success

- Some staff positions adjusted to support new and existing services
- Number of training sessions to improve customer service and learn new skills
- Positive feedback from customers about the service they receive
- Partnerships formed or strengthened with schools, museums, parks, and similar organizations
- More homeschool families attending library programs, including how often they return
- Number of and attendance at arts events such as storytelling, poetry, local history, and music nights
- How often maker equipment like sewing machines and tools is used
- Participation in technology classes, particularly by seniors and low-income families
- Feedback from key groups like homeschoolers and seniors via survey and conversation

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REIMAGINE SPACES

LCLS includes a vibrant central library in Cheyenne and two rural branches in Pine Bluffs and Burns. Each location serves a unique community, offering spaces for reading, learning, and gathering. As the county grows and community needs evolve, the library is taking steps to ensure its buildings remain welcoming, accessible, and responsive to users of all ages.

The Cheyenne central library has been a civic landmark with welcoming spaces like quiet reading rooms, sunlit nooks, and adaptable meeting areas. Building on that success, plans are underway to modernize branch locations, expand accessibility, and create innovative, user-centered environments that reinforce the library's mission, vision and values.

With extensive input from the public through surveys, focus groups, and community conversations, the library will reimagine its spaces to be more flexible, inclusive, and engaging. The result will be dynamic and adaptable environments that reflect the way people want to use the library today — and into the future.

The Laramie County Library System will adapt library spaces to support a balanced mix of quiet study, social interaction, and creative exploration — ensuring environments that are welcoming, flexible, and responsive to diverse community needs.

Strategies

- Expand creative and makerspace offerings
- Redesign underutilized areas
- Support the community's workforce
- Embrace role as a community hub

Examples of What You'll See

- Assessment of how existing spaces are currently used and identification of unmet needs for quiet, social, and creative areas
- Creative studios at Pine Bluffs and Burns libraries as space allows
- Larger areas for makerspaces, STEAM programming, and creative workshops, and new or enhanced creative zones at the Cheyenne Library
- Attractive and functional meeting and coworking areas
- Opportunities to create or enhance local artist exhibit areas
- Soundproof pods/rooms for telehealth and other private calls
- Research options for quiet pods/rooms for reading/study in the Burns and Pine Bluffs branches with acoustic separation between children's and adult areas
- Space for a "Library of Things"
- Evaluation of options for Pine Bluffs branch expansion

How We Will Measure Success

- Library spaces are activated in productive ways and are being used by the public for their intended purposes
- Zones for quiet, social, and creative use in place at all library locations (based on a completed space use assessment that identifies current use and unmet needs)
- New or expanded creative spaces such as studios, makerspaces, and STEAM areas in place at all locations
- Frequency of use and user feedback for meeting rooms
- Regular local artist exhibits with more participating artists at all locations
- Soundproof rooms or pods for telehealth, private calls, and quiet reading or study available at all location
- Number of "Library of Things" items available and circulation of items
- Completed feasibility study for Pine Bluffs branch expansion

A photograph of the Burns Branch Library building, a brick structure with a prominent arched entrance. The words "BURNS BRANCH LIBRARY" are visible on the upper left side of the building. The number "112" is above the entrance. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color.

BURNS BRANCH LIBRARY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

2025 LCLS LEADERSHIP

Antonia Gaona, County Librarian and Executive Director

Laura Block, Senior Deputy Director of Operations

Beth Cook, Deputy Director of Public Services

Joelle Ashley, Marketing and Communications Manager

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Mike Kamber, Information Technology Services Manager

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Kashawna White, Circulation & Branch Services Manager

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Frank Magazine

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LCLS STAFF

Employees gave their commitment and insight to this process, particularly our talented Outreach staff including:

Melanie Hornbeck

Abby Roswell

Kayla Schwab

Holly Bauer

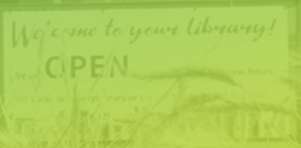
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