

Letter from our Executive Director

Jamie LaRue, Executive Director

Garfield County Libraries

jarue@gcpld.org

August 1, 2024

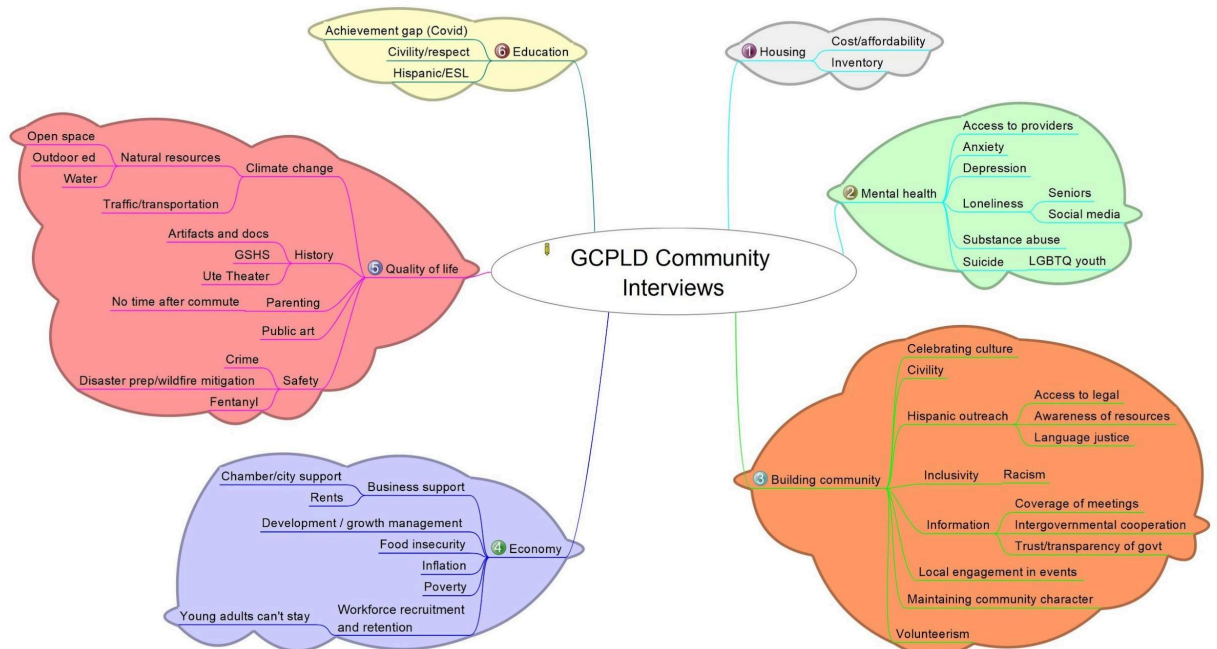
Welcome to the Garfield County Public Library District! It is my privilege and pleasure to serve as Executive Director.

Over the past year, our library board and staff have been working on developing a strategic plan. It began with a series of staff interviews with community leaders. We spoke to (among others) business owners, non-profit owners, educators, faith-based leaders, civic organizations, health care providers, and both elected and appointed government officials. Then we tried to boil it down to seven recurrent themes, the issues that local leaders kept identifying. This mindmap (start at the one o'clock position and read clockwise for themes, and top to bottom for subcategories) provides a graphic representation of our findings in order of significance. (The more often people mentioned it, the higher we ranked it.)

My motto: it is not the job of the community to make a great library; it is the job of the library to make a great community. So our second step was to try to craft a strategic plan that brings the social asset of the library to bear on our shared concerns.

While we're still fleshing out all the objectives and subtasks, I thought the community might be interested in our key areas of emphasis.

2024-2027 Strategic Plan



- **Build Community**

1. Civic Engagement: Foster a vibrant and inclusive civic culture by promoting civil discourse and active participation in community affairs through engaging programming and collaborative partnerships.
2. Local History: Preserve and promote the richness of our local history by working with partners to collect, archive, and share resources that reflect the unique heritage and experiences of our community.
3. Economic Development: Help build a vibrant economic climate for local businesses through the provision of information and public space.
4. 6A Groups (promises made in our 2019 election) and Underrepresented

Populations: Develop and implement tailored programs and services that specifically serve and uplift underrepresented populations within our community, fostering inclusivity and equitable access to information and resources.

5. Mental Health: Partner with community agencies to create and offer programs and services that educate the community about mental health care and provide access to resources, promoting mental wellness and reducing stigma.

- **Foster Early Literacy**

1. Reading Readiness: Every Garfield County child will be ready to read by kindergarten.
2. Staff Growth & Development: Ensure staff has necessary, ongoing education and resources to provide meaningful and relevant early literacy services
3. Increase Access: Our libraries will expand access to early literacy materials for check-out and home use.
4. Increase Community Awareness: Grow community awareness of the importance of early literacy education and skills

- **Spanish Services**

1. Collection Growth: We will grow our Spanish collection to better represent our communities.
2. Programming: We will expand Spanish/Bilingual Programming at all branches
3. Outreach: We will build visibility and relationships with Spanish-speaking community through outreach activities.
4. Recruiting, Retaining, and Training Bilingual Staff: We will increase the number of Spanish speakers staff to better reflect our communities

- **Facilities**

1. **Beautiful Buildings:** Enhance library facilities by remodeling libraries to implement new technologies, improve accessibility, increase usage, and create collaborative spaces to promote community engagement.
2. **Improve Wayfinding:** Implement bilingual signage throughout our libraries to enhance inclusivity and accessibility for Spanish-speaking patrons, fostering a welcoming and supportive space for all community members.
3. **Maximize Outdoor Space:** Revitalize library outdoor spaces to encourage community use and expand the footprint of the library buildings.
4. **Maximize Staff Areas:** Enhance and maximize staff areas for improved workplace efficiencies & improved customer experience

- **Building Our Workforce**

1. **Recruit:** Attract and recruit high quality talent who reflect the community we serve, demonstrate a commitment to service, strive to make a positive impact on the community, and align with GCPLD's core values and the
2. **Retention:** Implement strategies that foster a positive work environment, professional growth opportunities, and employee support, resulting in increased employee satisfaction, higher retention rates, and a stronger, more cohesive team.
3. **Leadership Development:** Foster the growth and development of current and emerging leaders to meet organizational goals, create succession planning, and increase employee engagement.

Please note that all of these things will not be accomplished in a single year!
But we hope the match is strong between our initiatives and community needs.