



STRATEGIC PLAN  
2017 – 2020

## **ABOUT THOMAS BRANIGAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

### **Library's History\***

Beginning in the early 1900s, several small libraries were started and abandoned in Las Cruces. The actual forerunner of Branigan Library was the Woman's Improvement Association's subscription library, founded in 1924.

The original Thomas Branigan Memorial Library was completed in 1935 with funds willed to the City of Las Cruces by Mrs. Alice Branigan in memory of her husband, Captain Thomas Branigan. Her will left \$35,000 for the specific purpose of building a library for Las Cruces. In October 1935, the WIA Library was officially closed and its books donated to Branigan as the nucleus of its collection.

As Las Cruces grew, the functions and services of the library increased. By 1976, it was clear that a larger facility was needed. The City Commission committed to constructing a new building, and six acres of land were purchased in 1977 for the new library's site on Picacho Avenue.

The first floor of the new Thomas Branigan Library was dedicated in December 1979. In 1988, construction was completed to enclose a second-floor terrace and provide space for a future second floor addition. The addition was completed in 1991 and included renovations to portions of the first floor.

April 1992 marked the beginning of the technology revolution for Branigan Library, with the arrival of computers and the opening of a public computer room. Computerization continued through the 1990s. In early 1997, the library went online with its integrated automated system. In the following year, the public computer room reopened with new computers, Internet access, including to the library's web site, and computers in the children's area. 1999 saw the creation of the Gates Foundation-funded computer lab with 25 public-access computers, offering classes and training in computers.

The 1990s also brought a distinctive physical change to Branigan Library. The building was painted "terra cotta" red with turquoise trim, to demonstrate the vitality it brings to the community.

*\*Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, Comprehensive Plan 2000*

## **The Library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, has become a complex and busy place, responding to community needs and advances in technology that bring the world to Las Cruces. In 2008, the Library began a direct delivery service called Books by Mail; in 2010 the public computer lab was revamped; the Roadrunner Room, a free public

meeting space with capacity for 100 people, was completed; in 2012, a state-of-the-art automated check-in sorter was installed, and in 2013, Branigan Library Express @ Sage Café, located on the East Mesa, opened.

The main library's collection today contains:

- 251,373 print materials
- 51,515 electronic books
- 10,768 CDs
- 80,630 downloadable audio items
- 18,501 DVDs
- 15,000 downloadable video units

The library has a staff of 42 people and an annual budget of approximately \$1,900,000.

Average monthly statistics show: 20,000 visitors come to the library; the library staff answers more than 4,000 reference questions; and more than 5,000 computer log-in sessions by the public.

Other materials and services include:

- Print and electronic research materials
- Genealogy collection
- Magazines and newspapers (print and online)
- Wall art for check out
- Meeting rooms open to community groups at no charge
- Children's early literacy programming
- Teen (young adult) computers, extensive book collection, programming
- Adult programming (educational and recreational)
- Annual Summer Reading Programs for all ages
- Bilingual staff members who speak both English and Spanish are available.

## City of Las Cruces Demographics\*

### Population

- 101,408 people called Las Cruces home in 2014, up almost 4% since 2010. (US Census, 2014)

### Income

- Median household income is \$40,658
- Per capita income is \$21,782
- 24% people live in poverty (US Census, 2014)

### Home Values

- Median home value is \$149,700
- Median gross rent is \$750 a month
- Almost 39,000 households have an average of 2.5 people each. (US Census, 2014)

### Education

- For those over 25 years old, 85% have a high school diploma or higher, and 34% have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Las Cruces is home to New Mexico State University

### Employment

- 62% of people 16 years and older are in the civilian labor force, spending 19 minutes each way to get to work every day.
- Unemployment: 6.9%
- Major Industries: Agriculture, Aerospace & Defense
- Job Growth (2015): 1.9%
- Cost of Living: 11.3% below national average
- Net Migration (2014): a loss of 330 people

\*Demographic data from the *City of Las Cruces, Downtown Master Plan, adopted Dec 2016*.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 – 2020**

The strategic plan outlines the goals of Thomas Branigan Memorial Library for the next three years. While not every aspect of the library's potential work is identified, the goals do clarify priorities moving forward. Contained are five themes related to: Staff Development, Partnerships, Programming, Facility Improvement and Infrastructure. The objectives have a variety of tactics to achieve the goals and support the theme.

The Library has not had a formal strategic plan since 1997, so the broader goals in this plan are challenging, but attainable. Success in meeting the plan will depend on the existence of adequate staffing, funding, space and technology resources, and support from the community and city officials of Las Cruces.

In 2014, a survey of library customers was conducted. A total of 337 responses were collected and those results helped to identify the main opportunities noted in this plan for improvement in the coming years.

A staff committee began the discussion of strategic planning in late 2016, and a planning workshop facilitated by the Executive Director of the City of Las Cruces Convention and Visitors Bureau was held in early 2017 to begin the task of developing a strategic plan. A draft seeking input was distributed to all staff members, the Library Advisory Board, and the Friends of Thomas Branigan Memorial Library Board in February-March 2017. Once all comments were received and incorporated, the Library Advisory Board voted their approval on April 27, 2017.

### **Mission Statement:**

Thomas Branigan Library is proud to help our community make connections, provide limitless access to information, education, and enriching programs and services.

### **Vision Statement**

Our vision is to create an environment that uplifts and supports collaboration, growth and enrichment.

## **GOAL 1 – ESTABLISH ON-GOING STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

*Staff have different levels of understanding what the Library offers patrons. This causes inconsistent levels of customer service and morale.*

### **Objective**

*Optimize staff knowledge of basic library services, both online and traditional, and encourage teamwork opportunities. (2017-2020)*

### **Tactics**

- 1.1 Continue to provide annual all-staff training in August; identify topics and presenters
- 1.2 Standardize new employee training; develop peer mentors
- 1.3 Concentrate on team building/pride exercises
- 1.4 Identify and implement additional cross-training opportunities
- 1.5 Establish monthly staff/manager discussions about expectations, professional concerns

## **GOAL 2 – BUILD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

*Thomas Branigan Memorial Library needs to do more to toot their own horn to promote the library as a hub for culture, social engagement, and education in the community.*

### **Objective**

*Join forces and team up with community partners to create new and increased value for the public. (2017-2020)*

### **Tactics**

- 2.1 Seek alternative sources of funding through grants, state funds, etc.
- 2.2 Partner with educational institutions (e.g., Las Cruces Public Schools, Dona Ana Community College, NMSU).
- 2.3 Partner with local businesses (e.g., Mountain View Co-op, gyms, hospital/health affiliates).
- 2.4 Partner with civic & community organizations (e.g., Realtors, Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Solutions, Junior League, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Moose and Elk Lodges, Homebuilders).
- 2.5 Partner with other City Departments (e.g., Museums, Parks & Rec, Transit, Community Development).

- 2.6 Encourage engagement between the Library Advisory Board, the Friends of the Library and community partners.

**GOAL 3 – PROVIDE ENRICHING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO MEET SPECIFIC NEEDS FOR TARGETED AUDIENCES.**

*The Library’s primary clientele are seniors and young families. We are not adequately reaching the 20 to 45-year-old audience.*

**Objective**

*Learn what the needs of adults are in this target audience and how to attract them to be active users of the Library. (2017-2020)*

**Tactics**

- 3.1 Conduct research to solicit input from target audience using surveys, focus groups and other methods recommended by professional research providers.
- 3.2 Define and refine our virtual/online services, adult tech tent, adult workshops/classes, computer classes, family services programs, recreational programs (e.g. movies and book clubs) to meet the needs of this target audience.
- 3.3 Create communications/marketing plan with direction from the Quality of Life Marketing Coordinator. Re-brand to emphasize that the library is “more than just books.” Use more social media to promote library services/programs
- 3.4 Participate in more events outside of the building (e.g., Farmers Market, ComicCon, educational fairs and other local events). Actively distribute library cards to non-users and introduce new, more convenient card activation procedures.

**GOAL 4 – ENHANCE THE FEEL AND LOOK OF THE MAIN LIBRARY**

*Libraries reflect a community’s values. Thomas Branigan Memorial Library needs to be kept in good repair and renovated when necessary so it can properly reflect the value the community places on literacy and knowledge. Moderate improvements can still be made on tight budgets and with a plan in place.*

**Objective**

*Prioritize the City’s capital improvement roster. The following tactics are identified to ensure projects are addressed in a timely and collaborative manner with the appropriate City departments involved with each project. (2017-2020)*

## **Tactics**

Actively collaborate with City Public Works Department to:

- 4.1 develop a professional design plan to include style, color, exterior and interior renovation efforts.
- 4.2 paint the exterior and interior of the facility.
- 4.3 resurface and repaint the library's parking lot.

## **GOAL 5: ESTABLISH AT LEAST ONE BRANCH LIBRARY**

*Since Thomas Branigan Memorial Library was constructed in 1978, the City's population has almost doubled. The main downtown library no longer meets the community needs. Due to limited space, we cannot expand our materials collection; our ability is limited to meet the demand for workshops, covering educational and recreational topics; and the current infrastructure limits our ability to offer constantly-changing technology-based services.*

## **Objective**

*Provide the library, community, and City administration with information to guide the provision of library services to the community. Note: the City's capital improvement program identified a new branch library to be built in 2022. To achieve this objective, the following must first take place. (2017-2020)*

## **Tactics**

- 5.1 Develop justification to include:
  - Demographic research; projected growth; future expansion
  - Location/Land availability
  - Architectural consultation/recommendations
  - Community input
- 5.2 Explore Funding and other support:
  - What are options; identify community groups to work with
  - How much funding needed for staff, materials, furniture
  - Technology (current and future needs)
- 5.3 Prepare formal presentations to City Administration

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

### Planning Committee

- Renee Payne-Frankel, Library Administrator, (Focus: Community Partnerships – Goal 2)
- Catherine Christmann, Library Manager, (Focus: Programming - Goal 3)
- Todd Baker, Librarian, (Focus: Staff Development - Goal 1)
- Tracee Waters, Library Assistant Senior, (Focus: Branch Library – Goal 5)
- Lanee Lujan, Library Assistant, (Focus: Enhance Look of Library – Goal 4)
- Elise Vidal, Library Supervisor
- Dan Carrillo, Administrative Assistant
- Phil San Filippo, Facilitator, Executive Director, City of Las Cruces Convention and Visitors Bureau

### Library Advisory Board Members

- Ellen Young, President
- Jose Aranda, Vice President
- Susan Pinkerton, Ph.D., Secretary
- Sue Fletcher, Friends of Thomas Branigan Library Board Liaison
- Sue Patterson, Member
- Sharon Shoemaker, Member
- Elsie Ramirez, Member

### Friends of Thomas Branigan Memorial Library Board

- Dennis Cherry, President
- Sue Fletcher, Vice President
- Mary Pizzuti, Secretary
- Bonnie Poloner, Treasurer
- Jo Banks, Membership Chair
- Louise Forshaw, Historian
- Sandy Miles, Events Chair
- Dolores Tellez, Events Co-Chair
- Valerie Crowder, Member at Large, Webmaster