Pierce County Library System launches Strategic Plan to serve communities

TACOMA – What do people want and need from their library today? Pierce County Library System is in constant contact with residents to ensure it is providing valued services. The nationally recognized, award winning library system recently spent a concerted effort to get ideas and input from thousands of people in its service area, which serves 590,000 people in all of unincorporated Pierce County and 15 cities and towns that annexed to it for services.

“People told us what was happening in their communities and their lives,” said Georgia Lomax, the Library’s executive director. “We paired their issues and concerns with services that the Library can provide to support people’s lives and the health of communities. We also heard that we are on the right track with the services we are offering—although the theme for more was definitely heard.”

The public’s enthusiasm was universal in wanting more library service – books, e-books, bigger buildings and technology.

Lomax explained that the Library system is working to support communities, at the same time the costs to run the Library System are not keeping up with revenues. This funding concern will lead to further conversations with the public in coming months.

The Library System will build on its public involvement activities from last year when it conducted a series of public meetings, surveys and conversations to hear from the public about individual and community issues. Thanks to the input from more than 20 community leaders and nearly 12,000 responses from individuals, the Library is committed to directing library services in three primary areas: learning, enjoyment and community connection.

The Library’s Strategic Plan focuses on a multi-year plan. In 2017, the Library identified services and programs to spark successes for Pierce County residents’ pursuit of learning, enjoying and connecting as a community.

To implement the plan this year, Pierce County Library has been updating choices of books and materials—on shelves and online—technology services, and the spaces inside some of its 20 libraries. It is streamlining its overall operations to continue to invest taxpayers’ dollars efficiently.

With the focus area of learning, Pierce County Library supports growth and curiosity by preparing preschoolers to learn, so children enter kindergarten ready to learn, as well as supports school and career success for people of all ages.

With the focus area of enjoyment, staff is helping people enjoy their free time and foster a love of reading, so people discover outlets to offset the pressures of daily life and relax.
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Contact: Mary Getchell, Marketing and Communications Director
253-548-3428—direct; 253-229-4477—mobile

With the focus area of community, the Library System is continuing to work to connect and strengthen communities by bringing people together around shared interests and activities, so people are engaged in their thriving community and optimistic about its future.


About Pierce County Library System
The nationally acclaimed Pierce County Library System serves 590,000 people throughout Pierce County with 20 libraries and online services. The system is the fourth largest in the state and is funded primarily through property taxes. People may choose from more than 1.5 million books, movies and other materials, as well as nearly half a million online/downloadable materials. Pierce County Library is committed to directing services in three primary areas: learning, enjoyment and community connection. Its services and programs spark success for Pierce County residents. More than 2 million people visit Pierce County Libraries each year. The Library provides services and programs directly to people in adult care facilities or who are homebound, and to children in child care centers and schools. Pierce County Libraries are located at Anderson Island, Bonney Lake, Buckley, DuPont, Eatonville, Fife, Gig Harbor, Graham, Key Center, Lakewood, Milton/Edgewood, Orting, Parkland/Spanaway, Pierce County Library Administrative Center, South Hill, Steilacoom, Summit, Sumner, Tillicum and University Place. Pierce County Library is an independent municipal corporation and operates as a junior taxing district.

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