



# STRATEGIC PLAN

2026-2029



# Table Of Contents



- 01 Mission, Vision, Values
- 02 From the Interim Library Director
- 03 History
- 04 Planning Methodology

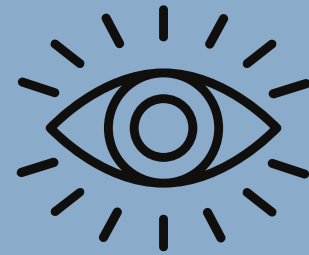
- 05 Purpose
- 06 Strategic Focus & Goals
- 07 Acknowledgments

# Mission, Vision, & Values



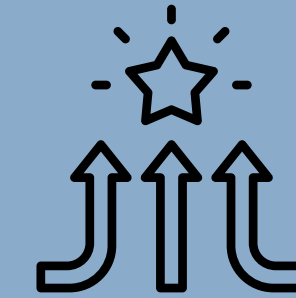
MISSION:  
WHAT WE DO

Nurturing community connections and empowering curiosity through service, resources, inclusive spaces, and meaningful discovery.



VISION: WHERE  
WE'RE GOING

Lone Cone Library is the heart of our community; a welcoming place where everyone belongs, opportunities are discovered, and doors to information and connection are always open.



VALUES: WHAT  
GUIDES US

Community: Providing welcome and orderly space to learn, focus, explore, discover, and have fun together  
Service for the Public Good: A caring helpful staff who don't give up on patron information needs  
Life-Long Learning: Building the bridge between K-12 education and life-long learning  
Sustainability: Prioritizing long-term stability through responsible budgeting, sustainable operations, and evolving services

## FROM THE INTERIM LIBRARY DIRECTOR

First, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make this strategic plan a reality. What we've created together is the result of a true group effort, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the support, insight, and dedication of such thoughtful staff, engaged board members, and passionate community members throughout this process.

It has been several years since the Lone Cone Library has had a strategic plan, which makes this accomplishment even more meaningful. Being part of this work has been both an honor and a responsibility-one that I did not take lightly. Each conversation, survey response, meeting, and shared idea contributed to something much larger than any one person. Together, we have built a roadmap that reflects our shared values, our community's needs, and our hopes for the future.

This process was not always easy-it required time, reflection, honest discussion, and a willingness to listen and adapt. But through it all, what stood out most was the genuine care each of you has for the library and for the people we serve. That commitment is what made this plan not just possible, but meaningful.

This strategic plan is truly a labor of love. It represents a collective investment in the future of the Lone Cone Library and a shared belief in its role as a vital, welcoming, and evolving part of our community. Because of your contributions, we now have a strong, thoughtful foundation to guide our decisions, strengthen our services, and continue growing in ways that matter most to those we serve.

I am deeply grateful for each of you-for your time, your ideas, your energy, and your belief in this work. It is a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated group, and I am excited for what we will accomplish together in the years ahead.

With sincere appreciation,

*Kerry Bentler*



# Lone Cone Library Profile & History.

## Community Overview: Norwood & Lone Cone Library Service Area

Norwood is a small, rural community on Wright's Mesa with a population of just over 500 residents. Rooted in agricultural and mining history, the town is defined by strong community ties, resilience, and a deep connection to place. The Lone Cone Library serves not only Norwood but also the surrounding rural areas, where access to resources, technology, and gathering spaces can be limited, making the library a vital community hub. Norwood's population is primarily White, with a significant Hispanic/Latino presence that adds to the community's cultural richness. The area includes a mix of families, working adults, and older residents, creating a need for services across all age groups. While English is the primary language, there is a need for inclusive and accessible resources. Median household incomes are lower than state averages, and many residents work in agriculture, trades, or commute for employment. Educational attainment varies, reinforcing the importance of lifelong learning and access to information.

## What the Lone Cone Library Supports

The Lone Cone Library provides essential services that reflect the needs of its rural community, including:

- Programs: Opportunities for learning, creativity, and connection for all ages
- Books & Physical Materials: Core resources for education and enjoyment
- Library of Things: Practical items that reduce financial barriers and support daily life
- Special Collections: Preservation of local history and culture
- Digital Resources: E-books, audiobooks, and online access for those beyond physical reach

The Lone Cone Library is more than a library—it is a cornerstone of the community. It connects people to information, to each other, and to opportunity, while adapting to meet evolving needs and maintaining its commitment to being a welcoming and essential resource for all.



# Strategic Planning Methodology.



**Staff**



**Board**



**Community Survey**

Staff began planning in July of 2025. They started with updating the mission, then creating the vision and values before planning the actual plan. They then analyzed internal capacity and external influences to help create the draft.

The Board input and final decision -making happened at meetings and the retreat where discussions were held and findings were reported.

The community was polled with 29 responses-both online and paper copies were tallied. Staff and Board members listened to the voices of the community and incorporated that into the this plan.

## PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Lone Cone Library Strategic Plan is a guiding document that communicates our values, commitments, and vision for organizational effectiveness.

Grounded in our mission, vision, and values, this plan provides clear direction for the future through defined goals and objectives that reflect the needs and priorities of our community.

This strategic plan serves as a written roadmap for where the Lone Cone Library is going, how we will get there, and how we will measure success along the way. It focuses our efforts, helping staff, Board members, and partners work toward shared goals with clarity and purpose.

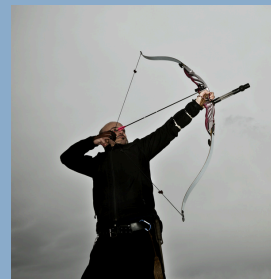
The plan also supports responsible stewardship by identifying the most impactful areas to invest time, funding, and resources. It informs budget planning, strengthens grant applications, and highlights opportunities for donors to contribute to the library's sustainability and growth.

By building on existing strengths, maintaining relevance in a changing environment, and fostering thoughtful decision-making, this strategic plan ensures that the Lone Cone Library continues to serve as a vital, responsive, and forward-looking resource for our community.

This strategic plan reflects where we are today as an organization while providing a clear vision for where we are going. Through the use of SMART goals, it defines where we want to be and outlines specific action steps that guide how we will get there. Grounded in our shared values and ideals, the plan helps inform our decisions and actions while keeping our work aligned with our long-term vision. Ultimately, it clarifies our direction and desired outcomes, serving as a roadmap for the future of the Lone Cone Library.



# Strategic Focus



## #1 FINANCIAL STABILITY

- a. Mission-focused grants
- b. Fundraising
- c. Donor Outreach
- d. Build Reserves



## #2 PROGRAMMING

- a. School Patnership
- b. Outreach
- c. Library of Things
- d. T'ween and Teen Programming
- e. Senior Programming



## STRATEGIC FOCUS #1: FINANCIAL STABILITY

**SMART GOAL:** BY APRIL 30, 2027, LIBRARY STAFF, LED BY KERRY, EVAN, AND JORDON, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY, WILL STRENGTHEN THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE LONE CONE LIBRARY BY INCREASING FUNDING SOURCES, BUILDING FINANCIAL RESERVES, AND SUPPORTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS. THROUGH ONGOING GRANT RESEARCH AND APPLICATIONS USING GRANTSTATION AND THE COLORADO GRANTS GUIDE, COMMUNITY-BASED FUNDRAISING, DONOR ENGAGEMENT, AND CAREFUL BUDGETING PRACTICES, THESE EFFORTS WILL EXPAND AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS, PRESERVE OPERATIONAL FUNDS, AND SUPPORT FUTURE FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS. STAFF WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE EMERGENCY FUND ON A BI-WEEKLY BASIS AND MAINTAIN REQUIRED RESERVES TO ENSURE BOTH PREPAREDNESS AND COMPLIANCE WITH COLORADO STATE TABOR REQUIREMENTS. USING DEDICATED STAFF TIME, VOLUNTEER SUPPORT, AND AVAILABLE FINANCIAL RESOURCES, SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED BY SECURING AT LEAST 5 GRANTS OR \$10,000 IN GRANT FUNDING, RAISING AT LEAST \$2,500 THROUGH FUNDRAISING EFFORTS, GAINING AT LEAST 5 NEW DONORS, MAINTAINING APPROXIMATELY \$22,000 IN THE EMERGENCY FUND (ONE MONTH OF OPERATING EXPENSES), SUSTAINING AT LEAST \$16,350 IN TABOR-DESIGNATED RESERVES, AND IDENTIFYING AND APPLYING TO AT LEAST 2 CAPITAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT LANDSCAPING AND BUILDING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS #2: PROGRAMMING

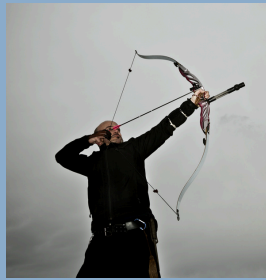


**SMART GOAL:** BETWEEN MARCH 2026 AND APRIL 30, 2027, LIBRARY STAFF, IN COLLABORATION WITH NORWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL, THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS, WILL STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, EXPAND PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, AND INCREASE ACCESS TO RESOURCES FOR ALL AGES. THROUGH COORDINATED COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL, INCLUDING MONTHLY SCHEDULING UPDATES, STAFF WILL ALIGN PROGRAMMING AND REDUCE CONFLICTS WHILE IMPLEMENTING A PEER-TO-PEER HOMEWORK SUPPORT PROGRAM AT THE LIBRARY. STAFF WILL ALSO INCREASE OUTREACH AND VISIBILITY BY HOSTING AN ANNUAL LIBRARY OPEN HOUSE, ENGAGING COMMUNITY MEMBERS, AND EXPANDING THE LIBRARY OF THINGS BASED ON PATRON INPUT AND REQUESTS.

ADDITIONALLY, STAFF WILL ENHANCE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT BY DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING NEW TWEEN AND TEEN PROGRAMS INFORMED BY YOUTH FEEDBACK, AND BY INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN THE SUMMER READING PROGRAM THROUGH TARGETED RECRUITMENT AND EVENTS. SENIOR ENGAGEMENT WILL BE EXPANDED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AARP LIBRARY PILOT PROGRAM, WEEKLY SENIOR SAVVY TECH TIME SESSIONS, AND ONGOING OUTREACH AT THE SENIOR LUNCH TO PROMOTE LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

USING STAFF TIME, VOLUNTEER SUPPORT, COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES, THESE EFFORTS WILL STRENGTHEN THE LIBRARY'S ROLE AS A COMMUNITY HUB AND ENSURE SERVICES REMAIN RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT. SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED BY ESTABLISHING AT LEAST 2 ACTIVE STUDENT TUTORING PAIRS, RECEIVING MONTHLY SCHOOL SCHEDULES IN ADVANCE BEGINNING APRIL 24, 2026, WELCOMING AT LEAST 4 NEW COMMUNITY MEMBERS AT THE ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE, ADDING AT LEAST 8 NEW ITEMS TO THE LIBRARY OF THINGS, IMPLEMENTING AT LEAST 3 TWEEN/TEEN PROGRAMS WITH REGULAR ATTENDANCE OF 3 OR MORE PARTICIPANTS, REGISTERING AT LEAST 4 TWEENS/TEENS FOR THE SUMMER READING PROGRAM, TRAINING STAFF TO DELIVER AARP PROGRAMMING WITH AT LEAST 3 SENIORS ATTENDING EACH SESSION, ENGAGING AT LEAST 8 SENIORS PER MONTH IN TECH TIME, AND ENCOURAGING AT LEAST 3 SENIORS TO ATTEND A LIBRARY CLASS THROUGH OUTREACH EFFORTS.

# Strategic Focus



## #3 INTERNAL PROCESSES

- a. Increase staff salaries
- b. Clarify Staff Roles & Responsibilities
- c. Provide Staff Growth & Opportunities
- d. Increase Volunteers



## #4 LANDSCAPING PLAN

- a. Break Down Master Plan
- b. Seek Capital Campaigns
- c. Host Volunteer Day
- d. Increase Community Partnerships





## STRATEGIC FOCUS #3: INTERNAL PROCESSES

**SMART GOAL:** BY JANUARY 31, 2027, THE BOARD, INTERIM LIBRARY DIRECTOR, AND LIBRARY STAFF WILL STRENGTHEN STAFF CAPACITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS BY INCREASING COMPENSATION, CLARIFYING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, EXPANDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, AND GROWING VOLUNTEER SUPPORT. THROUGH RESPONSIBLE BUDGET PLANNING, STAFF WILL RECEIVE INCREMENTAL SALARY INCREASES TO MOVE COMPENSATION CLOSER TO STATE AVERAGES, WHILE ALL STAFF WILL REVIEW AND UPDATE JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND MAINTAIN A RECORD OF ADDITIONAL DUTIES TO ENSURE BALANCED WORKLOADS AND PREVENT OVERLOAD. STAFF WILL ALSO IDENTIFY AND PARTICIPATE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, USING AVAILABLE RESOURCES, TIME, AND COVERAGE TO BUILD SKILLS AND ENHANCE SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY. IN ADDITION, STAFF, BOARD MEMBERS, AND FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY WILL RECRUIT AND ENGAGE VOLUNTEERS TO SUPPORT FRONT DESK OPERATIONS AND FREE UP STAFF TIME FOR EXPANDED SERVICES.

USING DEDICATED STAFF TIME, FUNDING, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, THESE EFFORTS WILL SUPPORT RETENTION, EQUITY, AND LONG-TERM ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH. SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED BY PROVIDING STAFF WITH AT LEAST A 2% ANNUAL SALARY INCREASE, COMPLETING UPDATED JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND DOCUMENTED ADDITIONAL DUTIES FOR ALL STAFF BY JANUARY 31, 2027, ENSURING EACH STAFF MEMBER PARTICIPATES IN AT LEAST 2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, AND INCREASING VOLUNTEER SUPPORT BY ADDING AT LEAST 3 NEW VOLUNTEERS AND/OR ACHIEVING AT LEAST 4 VOLUNTEER HOURS PER MONTH FROM CURRENT VOLUNTEERS.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS #4: LANDSCAPING PLAN



**SMART GOAL:** BY DECEMBER 31, 2027, LIBRARY STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS, WILL ADVANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIBRARY GROUNDS INTO A MULTIFUNCTIONAL OUTDOOR SPACE THAT MAY INCLUDE FEATURES SUCH AS A GREENHOUSE, GARDENING AREAS, OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS, STORY WALKS, SCIENCE EXPLORATION SPACES, READING NOOKS, AND AN AMPHITHEATER. STAFF AND THE BOARD WILL REVIEW AND REFINE THE EXISTING MASTER GROUNDS PLAN BY BREAKING IT INTO SMALLER, MANAGEABLE PHASES TO CREATE A REALISTIC, COST-EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION. THROUGH CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP-BUILDING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY MEETINGS, THE LIBRARY WILL ALIGN PROJECTS WITH COMMUNITY NEEDS AND AVOID DUPLICATION OF SERVICES.

AT THE SAME TIME, STAFF, LED BY KERRY AND EVAN, WILL PURSUE CAPITAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES USING GRANTSTATION, THE COLORADO GRANTS GUIDE, AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS TO SUPPORT PHASED DEVELOPMENT. BEGINNING IN MAY 2027 AND CONTINUING ANNUALLY, THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY, WITH STAFF SUPPORT, WILL HOST VOLUNTEER DAYS TO COMPLETE SMALLER PROJECTS AND INCREASE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. USING STAFF AND BOARD TIME, VOLUNTEER SUPPORT, AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES, SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED BY CREATING A MORE PHASED MASTER PLAN, APPLYING TO AT LEAST 3 CAPITAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, ENGAGING AT LEAST 10 VOLUNTEERS AT THE 2027 VOLUNTEER DAY, AND ATTENDING AT LEAST 4 PARTNER MEETINGS IN 2026 TO STRENGTHEN COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT PROJECT SUCCESS.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Lone Cone Library is greatly indebted to the Norwood and surrounding area communities for their continued patronage and support. In preparation of this strategic plan, we would especially like to thank:

### Lone Cone Library staff:

Kerry Bentler, Interim Library Director

Evan Allen, Technology & Circulation Desk Manager

Rhonda Oliver, Cataloguer Librarian

Hollie Marble, Library Services Coordinator

Nina Kothe, Facilities & Circulation Desk Assistant

Jordon Smith, Youth Program Manager

### Lone Cone Library Board:

Isabella James, President

Todd Bissell, Vice-President

Kim Campbell, Secretary

Emily Haight

Michael Donnellon

And a special thanks to Anna Szczepanski, CLiC



This final Strategic Plan was approved by the Lone Cone Board of trustees on \*\*\*\*\*

## DISCLAIMER

While the Strategic Plan outlines our priority areas for growth and innovation, it is important to emphasize that these goals represent our "reach" initiatives—strategic efforts to expand services to address current and emerging needs.

These areas do not replace the core functions that remain central to our mission.

The Lone Cone Library will continue to:

- Build and maintain a robust collection of materials that inform, educate, and entertain our community.
- Support early literacy initiatives through engaging youth services, including storytimes, reading programs, and partnerships with local schools.
- Provide free access to information in all formats, ensuring equitable opportunities for learning and discovery.
- Protect intellectual freedom by upholding the right to access information without censorship or restriction.
- Ensure our programs, services, and collections are relevant to our community's needs.



