

Montana State Library

# Library Services & Technology Act

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2023-2028  
FIVE-YEAR PLAN



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# MISSION STATEMENT

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## OUR PURPOSE

The Montana State Library helps all organizations, communities, and Montanans thrive through excellent library resources and services.

## WHAT WE VALUE

- User-centric services;
- The diverse world-views of our users and partners;
- Open and free information that is accurate, timely, comprehensive and convenient;
- Data driven planning and evaluation coupled with compelling narrative;
- Risk-taking;
- Progressive library services and collections that are models for others.

## OUR ROLES DEFINED IN MONTANA STATUTE

- The Montana State Library is the source for State Government Information, Natural Resources Information, and Geographic Information, for all Montanans.
- MSL supports the development and excellence of Montana's tax-supported public libraries.
- MSL supports reading for Montanans with visual or physical disabilities.

## HOW WE PROVIDE THESE SERVICES

- The Montana State Library plans, implements, and coordinates collaborative statewide projects to improve library services and collections.
- The Montana State Library provides consulting and training services that develop the skills of library staff and board members.
- The Montana State Library provides a Talking Book Library for Montanans eligible for materials from the National Library Service.



# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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Montana State Library considered input from several sources to identify needs to be addressed in the new LSTA five-year plan. Sources include the LSTA Five-Year Evaluation, Core Services Committees evaluation frameworks, Library Federation needs, Directors Institute data, and the Talking Book program.

## LSTA FIVE-YEAR EVALUATION

Montana's 2018-2022 evaluation was conducted by QualityMetrics LLC. Summary of suggestions from the evaluators:

- Continue to invest in technology for libraries such as hot spots, wiring upgrades, and broadband.
- Provide more outreach to libraries to help them understand their options for services such as E-Rate and other opportunities.
- Provide access to electronic resources for all types of libraries.
- Address the challenges of staffing limitations and capacity at libraries.
- Recruit schools into the lifelong learning programs.
- Conduct user experience studies of MSL's website resources.
- Provide technology support for small libraries.
- Invest more in courier services.
- Help libraries expand their collections.

## CORE SERVICES COMMITTEES EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

MSL and Montana libraries reimagined how they think about, plan for, evaluate, deliver and build collaborative library services in Montana under the moniker, the **Montana Library Network (MLN)**. MLN is collaborative community of Montana libraries working together to provide all Montanans with library content and services sufficient unto their needs.

Key principles of MLN:

- Our success is measured by our users' successes.
- Collaboration makes our services efficient.
- Local librarians know best the needs of their communities, and how to meet these needs.
- We learn from others.
- We are future focused. We work to improve what we do and how we do it, focusing on the present and future needs of our communities.
- We explore, try, test, pilot, and adapt to new and changing programs and services.
- Montana libraries decide how or if they participate in MLN.

To support and enhance the MLN, the structure of MSL's advisory board, the **Network Advisory Council (NAC)**, was reorganized.

The NAC is a small committee of thought leaders that advance the vision of the Montana Library Network.

The NAC's role in the MLN is to:

- Articulate the successful outcomes of MLN that will help us to continually evaluate our success, adapting as necessary.
- Identify, prioritize and evaluate shared services that will best achieve the fair library access resolution.
- Identify the gaps in achieving the fair library access resolution.

- Consider core services holistically, understanding that in most instances these services depend one upon the other.
- Recommend to MSL how best to invest resources (including time and money) to effectively deliver core services.
- Help MSL and Montana libraries plan for the future, including development of the LSTA 5-year plan.

NAC subcommittees are made up of subject matter experts and support specific core services. Each **core services committee** meets regularly to evaluate the success of the services for which they are responsible and to consider questions of importance related to those core services.

NAC core services committees' role in the MLN is to:

- Develop and maintain necessary policies and workflows to ensure effective core service delivery.
- Serve on RFP committees and provide similar administrative support when necessary.
- Identify both short and long-term success measures for core services and continue to refine those measures overtime.
- Identify data and other means to evaluate success.
- Consider how to deliver core services for all patron types and across all library types.
- Identify opportunities to continue to improve service delivery through deeper collaboration, new technologies, partnerships, etc., always with an eye to measures of success.
- Identify funding needs and future funding goals.
- Be a resource for the NAC and MSL to understand the impact of circumstances such as the pandemic on our resources and services.

The projects and initial tasks in this LSTA plan are organized by core services committees or by projects that support the work of the core services committees. The NAC will consider the input from the subcommittees collectively and should advise MSL and Montana libraries about opportunities to advance service models, work and funding priorities (see Appendix B).

The core services committees are in the process of finalizing their initial evaluation frameworks for the end-user services within their purview. These frameworks are living documents and will be revisited at least annually and shared with the NAC. The NAC will use these evaluation frameworks to consider new service models, trends impacting library development priorities, the need to continuing and new professional development and consulting options, and to prioritize available and future fund to continue to develop and enhance library services.

## LIBRARY FEDERATION NEEDS

To better understand how MSL can help serve all Montanans as described in the **Fair Library Access Resolution** (see Appendix A), adopted by the **State Library Commission (Commission)** in 2019, MSL staff gathered data and public library input about the communities we serve to share with the NAC. The intent is that this data and input can help the NAC and core services committees set user-informed funding priorities. MSL staff would also like to learn about opportunities to strengthen services and collaborative opportunities at the federation level.

Montana is organized into six regional **federations**. Public library directors serve as federation coordinators and public library board members serve as the board for the federations. Federations provide opportunities for collaboration and shared learning. To begin this study, MSL staff held discussions with directors and trustees from each of the six public library federations.

The following needs were identified:

- Technology support
- Library program ideas and resources
- Subsidizing statewide resources of use to most Montana communities, such as OCLC and Montana Shared Catalog
- Help with building assessments and improvements
- Support with legal and local government issues

In addition, library directors identified audiences they would like to serve better including young adults, senior citizens, people with restricted access to physical or digital library services, and residents affected by unemployment, workforce transitions, homelessness, and poverty.

## DIRECTORS INSTITUTE DATA

22 out of 82 public library directors gathered in May 2022 to discuss shared challenges and solutions. Their list of identified needs is as follows:

Training on the following topics:

- Library law
- Human Resources training
- Policy review and development
- Harassment/Hostile work environment
- Budgeting and fiscal authority
- State laws and administrative rules
- Working effectively with local government officials
- Project management/strategic planning/master planning

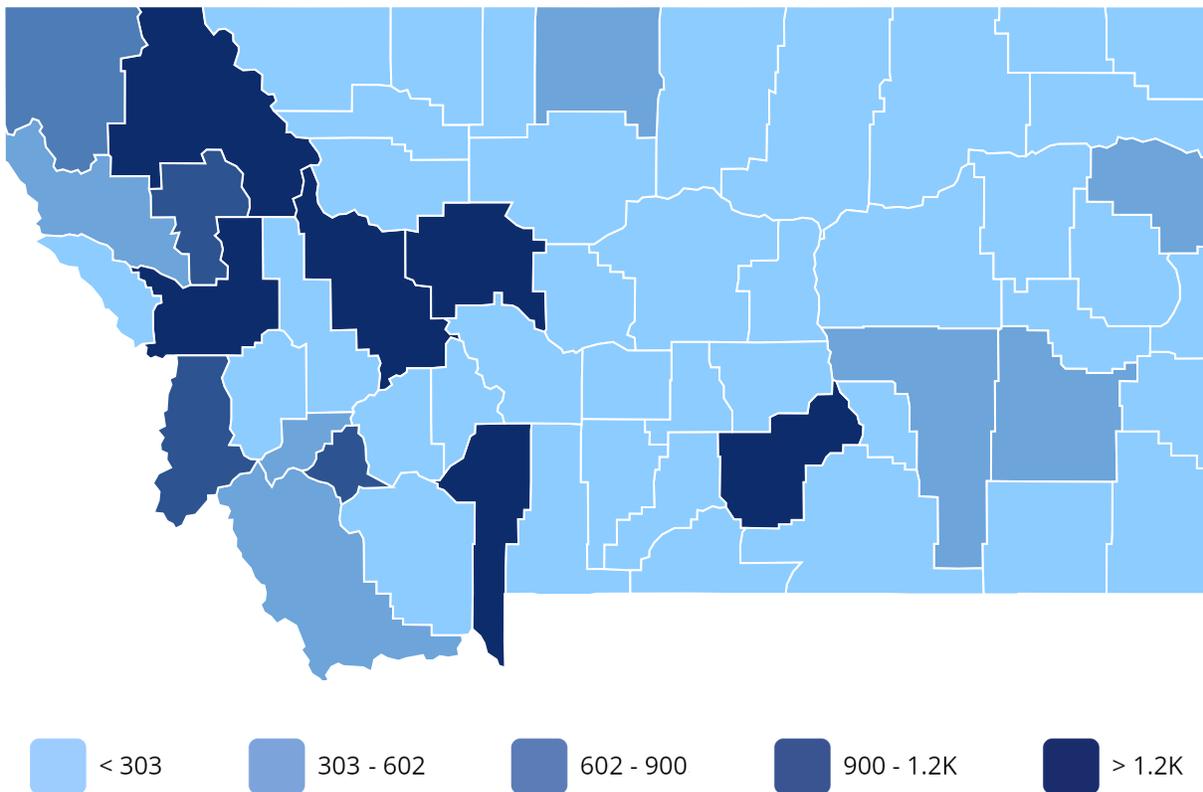
Information and resources to address the following topics:

- Legal information
- Human Rights Bureau contacts
- Censorship and materials challenges
- Job descriptions and qualifications
- New Public Library Standards rollout
- Communication and sharing between library directors
- Website development
- Collaborative collection development

## TALKING BOOK PROGRAM

MSL currently serves approximately 2,000 **Talking Book** patrons. According to the United States Census, an estimated 21,800 people are reported to have a visual disability in Montana. This means that MSL is serving less than 10% of visually disabled Montanans. MSL estimates the total number of people eligible for Talking Book services is closer to 50,000 when other conditions that impact a person's ability to read are considered, bringing that percentage below 5%.

### MONTANANS WITH VISION DIFFICULTY BY COUNTY



A map shaded by Montana county based on the estimated population with vision difficulty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

# GOALS

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**1**

**All Montanans have access to library content, services, and information to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.**

**All Montanans have sufficient access to and can use technology to enable their personal, educational, and professional growth.**

**2****3**

**All Montanans live in communities where the local government and library work together to build resilient communities.**

**All Montanans have access to learning experiences that support personal, educational, and professional growth.**

**4**

PRIORITY	GOAL	NEEDS MET	LSTA PRIORITY	MEASURING SUCCESS FOCAL AREA
1	All Montanans have access to library content, services, and information to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.	<p>Provide access to electronic resources for all types of libraries</p> <p>Invest more in courier services</p> <p>Help libraries expand their collections</p> <p>Collaborative collection development</p> <p>Subsidize statewide resources of use to most Montana communities</p>	Expand services for learning and access to information; establish electronic and other linkages; target library services to individuals of diverse backgrounds; target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library; develop library services that provide all user access to information	Information Access; Lifelong Learning
2	All Montanans have sufficient access to and can use technology to enable their personal, educational, and professional growth.	<p>Technology support</p> <p>Continue to invest in technology for libraries such as hot spots, wiring upgrades, and broadband</p> <p>Provide more outreach to libraries to help them understand their options for services such as E-Rate</p>	Expand services for learning and access to information; establish electronic and other linkages; target library services to individuals of diverse backgrounds; target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library; develop library services that provide all user access to information	Information Access; Lifelong Learning
3	All Montanans live in communities where the local government and library work together to build resilient communities.	<p>Help with building assessments and improvements</p> <p>Support with legal and local government issues</p> <p>Address training needs outlined under Library Director's Institute section</p>	Expand services for learning and access to information; develop public and private partnerships; target library services to individuals of diverse backgrounds; target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library	Institutional Capacity
4	All Montanans have access to learning experiences that support personal, educational, and professional growth.	<p>Library program ideas and resources</p> <p>Services for teens</p> <p>Services/programming for residents affected by unemployment, workforce transitions, homelessness and poverty</p>	Expand services for learning and access to information; develop public and private partnerships; target library services to individuals of diverse backgrounds; target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library	Lifelong Learning; Economic & Employment Development; Human Services; Civic Engagement

# PRIORITY PROJECTS

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**Project:** Collection Management

**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans have access to library content, services, and information to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Support a statewide, centralized integrated library system (ILS) and provide education and assistance for member libraries	Library staff and library users	Training; knowledge-base article creation; help desk	Montana librarians will have an ILS that supports their library functions and increases their efficiency and efficacy thereby increasing institutional capacity, and Montana library users will have access to a modern, easy to use online library interface and catalog to increase their ability to find and partake of library services and resources	Staff funding, software	Years 1-5 - continue ongoing work
Expand opportunities for ILS sharing between libraries	Library staff	Training; knowledge-base articles, library data migration	New libraries will join the MSC and the librarians and their patrons will gain access to the benefits of the consortium and will add their resources and expertise to the shared resources of the group.	Staff funding, vendor migration costs for new libraries	Years 1-5 - continue ongoing work; annual application period and migration schedule

**Project:** Consulting and Continuing Education support for Montana librarians

**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans live in communities where the local government and library work together to build resilient communities.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
<p>Partner with local government support groups to offer training that improves library officials' and local government officials' understanding of each other's roles so that they can co-create a healthy work environment.</p>	<p>Montana library directors and board members</p> <p>Montana local government officials</p>	<p>Training; partnerships; handbooks; coordination of communications between entities</p>	<p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience</p>	<p>20% of consulting budget</p>	<p>Year 1 – use existing partnerships to offer workshops about roles and responsibilities and healthy work environments; attend local government conferences; evaluate and make changes</p> <p>Years 2-5 – implement possible solutions and ideas from both local government officials and libraries; evaluate and make changes</p>
<p>Assist libraries with identifying and overcoming barriers that may impede Montanans use of public or tribal college library services.</p>	<p>Primary audience – Populations that do not use libraries</p> <p>Secondary audience – library staff, directors, and board members</p>	<p>Conduct geographic divide study; Identify populations that aren't using libraries; discuss barriers; talk to non-library users; try solutions; training for library staff that helps reduce barriers</p>	<p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience</p> <p>Montanans experience a reduction in social isolation</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p> <p>Montanans experience personal growth</p>	<p>10% of consulting; 10% of CE</p>	<p>Year 1 – identify populations that aren't currently using libraries; discuss why</p> <p>Year 2 – identify how to gather feedback from populations directly; offer workshops from presenters trained to assist libraries with this work; evaluate and modify</p> <p>Year 3 – select recommendations to implement</p> <p>Years 4 and 5 – implement recommendations, evaluate and modify</p>

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## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE – CONSULTING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Provide training for library staff addressing social services topics that impact library users: de-escalation, crisis intervention, homelessness, and medical emergencies	Library staff	Training and information that supports the creation of healthy communities	Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience	10% of CE	Years 1-5 – offer trainings and information about issues facing communities in Montana that help library staff succeed in providing services; evaluate and modify
Assist library boards, directors, and local government officials with improving wages for library staff and administration	Public and Tribal College library directors and staff	Conduct a study of comparable wages and occupational standards for library positions in order to evaluate the need to improve library salaries	Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience	No funding allocated at this time	Years 1-2 – conduct study, share results, and identify possible solutions Years 3-5 – assist libraries in implementing solutions; evaluate and modify
Educate library directors and board members about the legislative process	Library directors and board members	Training and information sharing	Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience	IMLS funding not allocated at this time	Year 1 – training and information sharing Years 2-5 – answer questions from libraries and assist them in using what they learned
Support libraries in overcoming and addressing problems the library faces at the local level	Library directors and board members	Training and information sharing about funding, government relations, board/director relations, policy development and other operational challenges	Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience	45% of consulting budget	Years 1-5 – work with libraries to identify challenges and solutions; work with libraries to implement solutions; evaluate and modify

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## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE – CONSULTING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Provide training and/or access to training that assists libraries in meeting the new public library standards	Library directors and board members	Training about budgets, best practices for library administration, and serving all Montanans; support for strategic planning in libraries	<p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	20% of CE budget; 10% of consulting budget	<p>Year 1 – identify key standards that libraries may require assistance to meet; provide training and support for libraries; evaluate and make changes</p> <p>Years 2–5 – continue to assist libraries in meeting standards; work with libraries to review the road map and assist libraries in meeting the road map</p>
Support the development of meaningful training provided by MSL staff using learning outcomes, design methodology, and evaluation	<p>Primary audience – MSL staff and MSL hired presenters</p> <p>Secondary audience – Library directors and board members</p>	Instructional design support and encouragement for presenters hired by MSL and MSL staff that lead workshops; offer valuable learning experiences for library staff, directors, and boards	<p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connections and resiliency</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	50% of CE budget	Years 1–5 – provide instructional design assistance, support, and guidance to presenters; manage certification program for library directors, staff, and board members; evaluate workshops and implement any needed changes
Provide new director training and mentorship opportunities	Public and tribal college library directors	Training, mentorship, and support	<p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connections and resiliency</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	5% of consulting budget	

**Project:** Cultural Resources

**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans have access to library content, services, and information to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Continue to enhance the Montana Memory Project (MMP) platform and user experience	MMP users and contributors	Improve site organization and metadata; create new exhibits; create new ways to organize content into easy-to-use segments based on topics or themes; add new collections that target areas of Montana not currently represented in the MMP; create geocache tours that utilize MMP content	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans contribute to their community and its culture</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p>	Software; personnel; digitization	<p>Year 1 - geocache tours</p> <p>Years 1-5 - exhibits and other work is ongoing</p>
Training for Academics and educators to use MMP	Educators at all levels	Host a Summer teacher workshop to educate teachers about how to incorporate MMP content into curriculum (2022); identify opportunities for outreach to academics and site demonstrations; offer sessions at the Annual teacher conference, museums conference and other conferences	Montanans are successful in formal education settings	Training; staff funding	<p>Year 1 - workshops</p> <p>Year 1-5 - other ongoing outreach</p>

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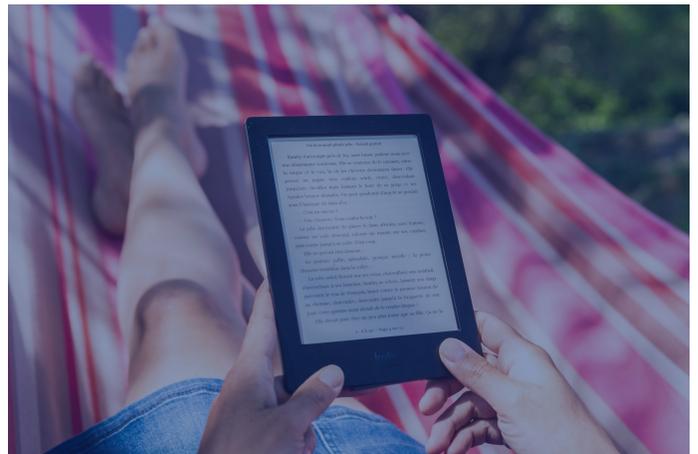
## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE – CULTURAL RESOURCES

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Expand MMP to include content from every county in Montana	Libraries, museums, and archives	Visit 15 counties without collections; encourage contributions and help discover collection materials; assist in finding funding as needed for digitization; promotion at conferences	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans contribute to their community and its culture</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p>	Digitization; outreach; travel	Years 1-3 - ongoing work
Enable citizen-generated content in MMP	History lovers and genealogists	Create a private contributor policy; create a private contributor procedure; enable individual contributions in the Recollect platform; create policy and procedures for crowd-sourced transcription; enable crowd source transcription and promote	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans contribute to their community and its culture</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p>	Software; staff funding	Years 1-5 - ongoing work
Increase citizen engagement in MMP	MMP users	Enable end user tools for engagement in CMS; promote and encourage use of end user engagement tools; create and promote contests	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans contribute to their community and its culture</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p>	Software; staff funding	Year 1-5 - ongoing work

**Project:** Electronic Resources

**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans have access to library content, services, and information to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Support centralized access to licensed e-resources	Montanans who want to use electronic resources such as e-books, online subscription websites and databases	Enable existing centralized e-resources services by providing funding and administrative support; Invest in trial subscriptions to evaluate use and make recommendations for future funding; Draft collection development policy and provide guidance to member libraries on collection development and maintenance; uphold patron privacy laws and the freedom to read and learn	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	Contracts; staff funding	<p>Years 1-5 - ongoing contracts, support, and funding</p> <p>Year 1 - draft collection development policy for e-resources maintained by MSL; conclude ARPA-funded trial subscriptions and analyze value for future funding considerations or group purchases</p>



**Project:** Programming and Lifelong Learning

**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans have access to learning experiences that support personal, educational, and professional growth.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Support library services for parents and caregivers	Parents and caregivers	Early Literacy Trainings for adults and/or caregivers, providing childcare and food so those programs are made possible for patrons with young children and families	<p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p> <p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience</p>	10% of LLP budget	<p>Year 1 – identify which barriers to tackle and solutions</p> <p>Year 2 – implement possible solutions</p> <p>Year 3 – evaluate success and modify possible solutions</p> <p>Years 4 and 5 – identify ways to sustain the solutions; evaluation</p>
Assist libraries with identifying and overcoming barriers that may impede Montanans use of public or tribal college library services.	Populations that do not use libraries	Identify populations that aren't using libraries; discuss barriers; talk to non-library users; try solutions	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans experience a reduction in social isolation</p> <p>Montanans contribute to their community and its culture</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p> <p>Montanans experience personal growth</p>	10% of LLP budget	<p>Year 1 – identify populations that aren't currently using libraries; discuss why they aren't using the library</p> <p>Year 2 – identify how to gather feedback from these populations directly</p> <p>Year 3 – select recommendations to implement</p> <p>Years 4 and 5 – implement recommendations, evaluate, and modify</p>

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## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE – PROGRAMMING AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Provide virtual programming sessions for Montanans using the Montana Library Network platform	Montanans and Montana librarians	Schedule 3-4 virtual programs that have statewide appeal; ask librarians to help facilitate	<p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connection and resilience</p> <p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p>	\$3,000	<p>Years 1-5 – work with committee members to identify topics, hire presenters, and arrange sessions; work with Montana librarians to build virtual programming facilitation skills and inform Montanans of the programs; evaluate and make changes</p>
Support early literacy efforts in libraries	Children 0-5 and their caregivers	Ready2Read program; workshops; training for libraries	<p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p>	40% of LLP budget	<p>Year 1 – Ready2Read Rendezvous; evaluation of rendezvous; print new brochures for caregivers that empower them to support early literacy</p> <p>Year 2 – implement suggestions from rendezvous and librarians</p> <p>Years 3-5 – offer additional training; evaluate program; make changes; answer questions from library staff</p>
Work with Humanities Montana to develop civic engagement programming in libraries	Teens; all Montanans	Humanities Montana programming and learning cohorts; work with librarians to identify additional ways to provide civic engagement learning experiences in libraries	<p>Montanans contribute to their community and its culture</p> <p>Montana libraries will build social infrastructure and safe public spaces so that communities can build better connections and resiliency</p>	1% of LLP budget	<p>Year 1 – work with Humanities Montana and a cohort of librarians; evaluate progress</p> <p>Year 2 – work with librarians to identify ways to continue civic engagement work</p> <p>Years 3-5 – implement solutions</p>

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CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE – PROGRAMMING AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Support summer reading development and programming in libraries	Children and teen; library staff	Work with Collaborative Summer Library Program; answer questions; develop partnerships that benefit libraries; training and collaboration	Montanans are successful in formal education settings  Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers	\$1,000	Years 1-5 – order summer reading manuals; schedule online discussions with library staff to discuss new theme and ideas for summer reading; evaluate progress; make changes
Provide learning experiences that support economic development in Montana communities	Montanans seeking better professional opportunities	Support cohort of librarians learning about ways to help Montanans start their own business; training; economic development partnerships	Montanans are able to better themselves economically	\$3,000 – 5,000	Years 1-5 – focus on small business development; take advantage of any other partnerships that may help Montanans improve their skills; evaluate; and make changes, as needed



**Project:** Resource Sharing

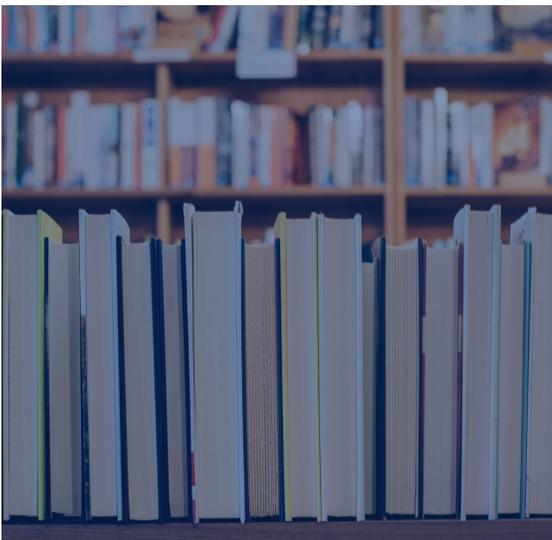
**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans have access to library content, services, and information to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Provide tools that support resource sharing between libraries	Montanans who want to borrow items from their libraries	Provide centralized contracts, funding, and support for cataloging, interlibrary loan, and physical delivery of materials between libraries	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	Contracts; staff funding	<p>Years 1-5 - ongoing contracts work</p> <p>Year 1 - create a marketing plan for the sharing group service</p> <p>Years 1-2 - analyze local practices to look for ways to increase efficiency of workflow</p>
Provide training that supports resource sharing between libraries	Library staff	Provide training and learning resources for cataloging, interlibrary loan, and physical delivery of materials between libraries	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p>	Staff funding	Years 1-5 - ongoing work
Support and expand the courier network	Library staff; Montanans who want to borrow items from their libraries	Provide centralized contract, funding, and support for courier services; Add new steps to expand the number of libraries that can afford to participate in resource sharing; create a delivery service map	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	Contracts; staff funding	Year 1-2 - add new libraries to the courier network; maintain services and costs for existing libraries; implement a system for tracking and counting items sent via courier; create delivery service map

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## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE – RESOURCE SHARING

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Support cooperative collection development projects	Library staff; Montanans who want to borrow items from their libraries	Support existing cooperative collection development efforts; analyze how content is currently purchased and shared within sharing groups; prepare recommendations for improving shared collections and sharing procedures; develop and implement collaborative collection development strategy for new and existing projects	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	Contracts; staff funding	<p>Year 1-2: conduct an analysis of shared collections in the state and prepare recommendations for improving shared collections</p> <p>Year 2-5: develop and implement collaborative collection development strategy</p>



**Project:** Talking Book (TB) Services for Montanans

**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans have access to library content, services, and information to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
<p>TB patrons will confidently use technology to enhance their quality of life; MSL staff will provide opportunities for TB patrons to explore and test new and emerging accessibility technologies; TB patrons have the opportunity to participate in learning experiences that enhance their quality of library and reduce isolation; MSL staff create learning experiences that enhance educational, personal growth, and recreational opportunities and that build communities of TB patrons.</p>	<p>Blind and low-vision Montanans</p>	<p>Support a contract for Talking Book Library services for qualified Montana patrons; create and implement an outreach plan to identify eligible patrons and stakeholder communities.</p>	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are able to de-stress and find hope/joy in life</p> <p>Montanans experience a reduction in social isolation</p> <p>Montana libraries build communities of confident and enthusiastic readers</p>	<p>Contracts; staff funding</p>	<p>Year 1 - MSL will contract with the Utah MSL to provide direct TB patron support including duplication on demand, circulation, and readers advisory; MSL will create and outreach staffing model that is focused on identifying and serving new TB patrons.</p> <p>Years 2-5 - MSL will create and implement a focused outreach plan that identifies eligible patrons and stakeholder communities, creates custom outreach strategies to reach these groups, and implements those strategies to serve more patrons.</p>



**Project:** Technology Support

**Primary goal addressed:** All Montanans have sufficient access to and can use technology to enable their personal, educational, and professional growth.

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
Evaluate impact of digital divide and support digital literacy efforts to address disparities	Montanans who lack adequate access to digital tools and the Internet	Review research about digital equity in Montana; participate in broadband and digital equity planning; partner with other entities to address the issues	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are able to better themselves economically</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans experience personal growth</p>	No funding allocated at this time	<p>Year 1 – find funding; participate in broadband and digital equity roundtables</p> <p>Year 2 – study results and work with partners to identify solutions</p> <p>Years 3-5 – implement solutions</p>
Identify funding and support for to continue a statewide hot spot lending program	Montanans who need mobile Internet access	Find funding; provide support to libraries offering hotspot program; inform Montanans; evaluate data	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are able to better themselves economically</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans experience personal growth</p>	No funding allocated at this time	<p>Year 1 – find funding and continue support of program</p> <p>Years 2-5 – if funding is found, continue to support, evaluate, and improve the program</p>

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE – TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	PROCEDURES	DESIRED OUTCOMES	FUNDING	TIMELINE
<p>Identify funding and support for internal wiring and broadband upgrades in libraries</p>	<p>Montanans who use wifi and wired Internet connections at public libraries</p>	<p>Find funding; procurement process; application process for libraries; manage ordering and installation of equipment; support libraries submitting e-rate applications</p>	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are able to better themselves economically</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans experience personal growth</p>	<p>5% of consulting budget plus additional non-IMLS funding</p>	<p>Years 1–5 – find funding and upgrade wiring and networking equipment in public libraries; continue to encourage and support public and tribal college libraries that apply for e-rate funds</p>
<p>Help small libraries find technical support to address technology needs in the library</p>	<p>Montanans who use wifi and wired Internet connections at public libraries</p>	<p>Work with libraries to brainstorm solutions; find funding and/or implement proposed solutions</p>	<p>Montanans informally learn about topics of interest to them</p> <p>Montanans are able to better themselves economically</p> <p>Montanans are successful in formal education settings</p> <p>Montanans experience personal growth</p>	<p>5% of consulting budget plus additional non-IMLS funding</p>	<p>Year 1 – discuss with federation coordinators and members to see if solutions exist</p> <p>Years 2–5 – implement solutions, evaluate, and modify</p>



# EVALUATION PLAN

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MSL staff, core services committees, and the NAC will use data when appropriate to plan, evaluate, and make recommendations to The Commission regarding their projects.

## IMPACT REPORTS FOR DATA-INFORMED PLANNING

MSL's **Data Coordinator** compiles and visualizes program data for the NAC and core services committees in order to help evaluate progress on our LSTA-funded work. One example is the [MontanaLibrary2Go Impact Report](#).

## GEOGRAPHIC DIVIDE STUDY

22% of Montanans live more than six miles from the nearest library (Donnelly, 2015). Comparatively, the national average distance to a public library, weighted by population, is only 2.1 miles, and library and information science (LIS) research studies popularly refer to a 2-mile radius when defining the ideal service area. Additional research indicates that spatial considerations, including proximity and transportation networks, impact equitable access to libraries, with increased distance dissuading or preventing people from visiting (Allen, 2019).

Strategic placement of new library facilities can increase equitable access to materials, whether that facility is a traditional library building or other points of access like book lockers, little free libraries, or bookmobiles. Further research on the geographic divide in Montana might include identifying the geographic areas of greatest need based on the 2020 Census and the Institute of Museum and Library Services Public Libraries Survey.

In addition, MSL will continue to look to the evaluation frameworks maintained by the core services committees to help inform our planning for these services.

## STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The Commission recently re-organized the NAC which is comprised of librarians from around the state. Members are selected based on their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and their willingness to look to the future. This council is charged with advising MSL staff on what priorities should be addressed, how, and why. MSL staff will report back to the NAC who is the body that will review, modify, and recommend adoption of this plan. The Commission is the final authority and will adopt the plan.

Staff will share this plan with the Montana library community at their monthly Webside Chats with the **State Librarian**, various regional meetings, small group settings at local libraries, and through online tools. We will use the same venues to report back on our progress with the plan.

## COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

MSL's Data Coordinator will continue to create dashboards and impact reports that assist staff and the NAC with evaluating progress, communicating value, and making decisions. These dashboards and impact reports will be available on MSL's website and will be shared at meetings with stakeholders.

The plan itself will reside on MSL's website and will be discussed with stakeholders such as MSL staff, the NAC, and other committees.

## MONITORING

- Implementation of the data driven model will help MSL staff monitor their progress on achievement of their outcomes.
- A data collection/reporting system will be used to collect and analyze data.
- MSL staff will meet regularly to discuss progress and reflect on what they have learned and what the data is telling them.
- MSL staff will continue to report on their activities and outcomes through the State Program Report.

# REFERENCES

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# APPENDIX A

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## **Fair Library Access for All Montanans: A Resolution from the Montana State Library Commission, Regarding Fair Standard Access to Library Content and Services for All Montanans**

Montana State Library Commission, Aaron LaFromboise, Chair

### **Montanans' Dignity**

Whereas all Montanans are born with inherent, inviolable dignity;  
Whereas all Montanans are at liberty to pursue life's basic necessities, health,  
and happiness;

### **Right to Lifelong Learning**

Whereas in pursuit of life's basic necessities, health, and happiness, all  
Montanans have the right to seek information and pursue ideas, through any  
media, regardless of location, and without discrimination;  
Whereas it is Montana's constitutional goal to establish a system of education  
which will develop the full potential of each person, with equitable education  
opportunities being guaranteed to each person of the state;  
Whereas, the Montana State Library (MSL) is aligned with and affirms the  
American Library Association's placing high value in a learning society, and in  
affirming libraries' vital and cooperative role in supporting all Montanans' lifelong  
pursuit of inquiry and learning for all;

### **Montana State Library's Role**

Whereas libraries exist to help Montanans to enrich and inform themselves;

Whereas Montana State Library's purpose is to assist all organizations, communities, and Montanans to thrive through excellent library resources and services;

Whereas it is MSL's duty to directly provide or distribute access to library content and services, sufficient to each user's needs, to all Montanans;

Whereas MSL's many dynamic relationships with users and partners include, either directly or indirectly, local, State and Federal agencies, all Montanans, and all of Montana's libraries' communities including all those they serve;

Whereas because MSL provides content or services to users through its relationships with governmental agencies, libraries, or other institutional partners, it follows that MSL measures its success by evaluating the degree to which, through its efforts, individual users have access to sufficient library content and services to meet their needs;

### **Fair (equitable) Access**

Whereas to thrive, all Montanans deserve convenient access to sufficient (if not necessarily the same) library content and services, so that they may seek information and pursue ideas;

Whereas Montana's communities vary, in regards to the availability of local resources, in differences between each communities' ability to provide their users with sufficient resources, and in their ability to participate as a partner with other sources of Montana information resources, including the Montana State Library;

Whereas all Montana communities experience gaps in library services, and vary in their ability to help their users and their communities thrive; therefore, let it be

### **Resolution**

Resolved, that the Montana State Library acknowledges that that there is an uneven distribution of library services throughout Montana, and that there are disparities in the sufficiency of library services;

Montanans have unique critical needs for convenient access to sustainably funded, sufficient unto each Montanan's needs, high-quality library content and services;

With its partners and all Montana Libraries, Montana State Library commits to developing and implementing a statewide strategy, toward the goal of providing all Montanans with equitable, sufficient access to library resources;

That all Montana's libraries, all Montana State Library's partners, and all state agencies will be encouraged to join in this statewide strategy; so that

All Montanans will have access to library content and services, sufficient unto their needs.

# APPENDIX B

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## Core Services Committees (CSC) Evaluation Frameworks

### CULTURAL RESOURCES CSC

**Description** - The Montana Memory Project is digital repository for cultural heritage materials relating to what is now Montana from organizations across the state. Provides no cost global access to these materials and provides preservation of digital copies of these resources.

**Audience** - Montanans and people interested in Montana's history; libraries and other cultural institutions that hold these materials; academic and independent researchers, educators, students, local historians, tribal entities, donors, genealogists, internet browsers

**Benefits** - Provide an understanding of Montana and its people, free remote access to digital content, facilitate research, life-long learning, growth, collaboration, primary documents, contributing institutions benefit from donor relationships and being able to make available content online, build and maintain relationships, make connections between and among content held by different institutions, institutions and organizations preserve historic content

**Not providing** - Interpretation or understanding

**Desired outcomes** - Institutions and organizations learn the value and the process of preserving materials both physically and digitally, people discover content in a platform that is easy to navigate and meets users expectations,

Content continues to grow, content is accessible – provide transcripts, educational and ethical methods for looking at cultural resources, guides for how to read the metadata and respectful descriptions, guides on how to search.

**Progress toward these outcomes** – How can we make sure we are reaching diverse populations? Google analytics for MMP; social Media stats and comments; emails; survey results – Montana Memory Project, Pop Up, Sharedexplore, public-view (alchemer.com)

**Impacts** – Institutions and organizations learn the value and the process of preserving materials both physically and digitally, people discover content in a platform that is easy to navigate and meets users expectations, content continues to grow, content is accessible – provide transcripts, educational and ethical methods for looking at cultural resources, provide a guide for how to read the metadata and respectful descriptions, provide guides on how to search.

**Who is not being served?** – 14 counties not represented. These are all remote counties with volunteers running museums. They have not had the manpower to contribute content and then their community does not have stories told or shared. Tribal communities are not well represented at this point. Higher ed students are not using this content as much as they could be. Users who do not have access to internet or understanding of technology.

**Barriers** – We provide funding for digitization and so does MHF. The bigger issue is people and time is a barrier to contributing content. Time to work with faculty to develop course projects in which students could engage such as transcription projects. Learning curve of the new platform. Understanding how to set up our platform to best serve our users.

**Solutions** – Outreach to each missing community is scheduled for this summer. Providing solutions to get collections created and assistance with applying for funding. Suggest working with teachers and schools to accomplish work.

Outreach specifically to university faculty. Providing tutorials and knowledge base materials. Inviting teacher community to create exhibits and other engagement content for the MMP and for classroom use. Hiring interns for data entry, metadata mitigation, and migration issues.

**Who can help us address the barriers? (current and future partners)** - Current: Montana History Foundation, BSCDN, Recollect user group, users will continue to provide feedback; university libraries have their own digital repositories; Humanities Montana; individual museum websites; teachers; interns

**Related programs** - Not a CSC, but these MSL programs are most closely related - Cadastral, Place Names, Natural Heritage, Government Records.

**Related CSC programs** - What do we need to work on together to support the achievement of our desired outcomes?

**Final recommendations** - What do we recommend as next steps for achieving our desired outcomes for this program?

Focus on developing out the MMP's new platform, continue outreach to new contributors, educate end-users, and develop end-user engagement. Develop the policies to allow the use of new features like crowd-sourcing transcripts and getting content from individual contributors. We recommend considering additional staff for the MMP to develop this content to the fullest. Policy development, promotion, outreach, engagement content, website maintenance, adding new collections, responding research questions, and support tickets.

**Future endeavors** - Ways that we can support Montana Newspapers and moving image content, based on rights limitations; music and audio content, based on rights limitations; music and movies that were created, produced in or by Montanans; MHS Moving Image Archive - YouTube

## E-RESOURCES CSC

**Description** - Downloadable and streaming e-content; research databases; general interest databases; tools for organizing information

**Current public library users needs** - Adult education; lifelong learning; practical skills; "The survey indicates that the above are some of the most valuable to service communities and for the most part have the lowest perception of sufficiency to meet needs."

**Current school library users needs** - Research databases for MS/HS; homework help; college prep/test prep; Internet access/hotspots (some areas)

**Current academic library users needs** - Research; Internet (insufficient); student support (insufficient)

**Current special library users needs (FWP, DOT, DNRC, AG, DEQ, legislature, historical researchers, genealogists, medical community, public)** - Technology resources; adult education, timely Information; research; genealogy; downloadable and streaming e-content; targeted access to industry standards, specific research tools (e.g., ASTM, International Fire Code); up to the minute public health or Montana issue snapshot (e.g., [MT COVID-19 Dashboard](#)); research databases (science, safety, engineering, construction, medical, geology); tools for organizing information (e.g. LibGuides)

Ease of access by public library users, includes marketing to potential users. Staff is requesting more basic adult education and professional/personal development resources. Technical writing, public speaking, computer skills, stress management and interpersonal skills have all had an uptick in use. Staff always has a demand for industry research and timely information.

**Non-library users of any type of library** – What do they need that the library is not currently able to provide? Downloadable and streaming e-content; standards and guides for cross government agency use; tools for organizing information; curated ready reference on subjects of common interest; curated ready reference at a statewide level linking to the appropriate state agencies for regularly requested services

**What needs should we prioritize trying to meet through e-resource funding in the next year?** – Potential for digital literacy classes, though the electronic format may make access difficult for some patrons that may be interested. Based on the public library survey, adult education and entertainment/lifelong learning are the most valued, and responses indicate both are insufficient. Downloadable and streaming e-content; adult education, basic skills, lifelong learning; flexible resource(s) for students to work with teachers, or at home; general interest databases; flexible resource(s) for students to work with teachers, or at home; tools for organizing information (e.g., LibGuides)

## PROGRAMMING CSC

**Areas of need/challenge** – Better training for staff around social services: librarians might feel unqualified to provide services in those areas, so any training would be appreciated; de-escalation is of interest, becoming an important/more necessary skill; more tools to work with those who struggle with homelessness/addiction/mental health. Marketing/Awareness: older population in community, TV ads are super helpful for the hotspots, marketing tools for programs to help people understand the services that are available; simple checklists for marketing: If there were simple things for training that people could work on, that might be helpful

**Who is not being served?** – Kids with working parents, after school programs could help fill that gap, but that is a group that might fall in the gap; people not on social media: ideas like putting stuff in water bills

**What are solutions to address barriers?** – Bookmobiles, funding for gas; physically getting to other places, in whatever channel that might be, and support to do that

**Other needs** – IT Support: Would be a huge help; IT support training for library staff would be super helpful: Self-paced stuff would be great, would help free up director time from training staff; consultant support for a library to call in, lots of libraries have an IT person, but lots of libraries don't. Increased awareness of comparable wages: effort to do a statewide wage survey to compare similar sized libraries, and have that data available

## RESOURCE SHARING CSC

**Success measures** – Libraries agree upon and meet service standards; libraries save money as compared with standalone services for the same level of service to patrons; more libraries can participate in the courier; academic libraries use the courier so that academic library patrons can receive more materials; users are satisfied with available services

**Impacts** – Montanans have access to more library materials; Montanans report improved library service across Montana; Montanans report being satisfied with their ability to borrow any item they want through the library; Montana libraries can sustain the cost of participating in interlibrary sharing

**Known obstacles** – Implementation of interlibrary cooperation; geography; cost – system improvements will cost money. Participating in resource sharing costs more than not participating in resource sharing.

**Opportunities [2022 priorities in bold]** – Low effort/low or one-time investment: Create a delivery service map; **create a marketing brand/plan for the sharing service**; purchase more weatherproof delivery crates; analyze local practices to look for ways to increase efficiency of workflow;

Float some or all collections in the shared [Partners] collection

High effort/high or ongoing investment: **Evaluate the shared collection development strategy as a whole; MSC – sharing group collection analysis; develop and implement a collaborative collection development strategy for Partners**