



***Strategic Plan for  
Timberland Regional Library  
2014-2018***

***Background documents:***

**Review of Agency Plans from Counties Served by the  
Timberland Regional Library  
(Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Thurston Counties)**

**Prepared by Nancy Bolt & Associates**

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## **Review of Agency Plans from Counties Served by the Timberland Regional Library (Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Thurston Counties)**

An important aspect of strategic planning is examining the environment in which the organization operates. This environment includes demographics of the current and potential user population as well as the goals and plans of related organizations.

This part of the environmental scan covers a review of strategic plans of 68 community and government agencies serving the five counties served by TRL and selected statewide plans. Thirty-five of these plans could be relevant to future TRL activities. The plans were reviewed looking for areas of overlap in the mission of TRL and the specific agency. This report identifies five areas where TRL and the community would benefit from a collaborative effort.

These specific areas are identified with the agencies that include this area in their strategic plan and we suggest possible areas of collaboration. Potential areas of cooperation were reflected in various parts of the reviewed plans: mission, values, goals, objectives, strategic initiatives, and activities. The analysis below looked for the intent rather than the placement of the commitment in the plan.

Many of these plans seek to involve the communities, either to provide information or to become partners. It would be valuable for library managers to read all the plans from their county and individual communities and seek ways to partner with community and government agencies that coincide with TRL overall goals and strategies. There are multiple opportunities for libraries to become more relevant to their communities and be included in future planning.

### **Major areas of potential collaboration**

The major areas of potential cooperation are:

- Economic development
- Art, history, culture, and recreation
- Healthy communities
- Education
- General community improvement

### **Economic Development**

Eleven of the plans specifically mentioned some aspect of economic development and/or workforce development. The plans typically include goals about supporting existing business, attracting new businesses; some also include support of training (or retraining) workers. Some plans include these unique goals:

- The Lewis County Community Development Comprehensive Plan is one of the few plans that focuses on training people rather than starting businesses. There is an emphasis on training for “green collar” jobs.
- The Chehalis Renaissance Plan has an extensive section on recruiting entrepreneurs, which it calls the “creative workforce – individuals who have an interest and propensity to try new things and take risks.” The Plan goes on to say that “quality of life factors” are critical to entrepreneurs and thus Chehalis must “market and further develop the quality of life factors of most interest to such individuals including the city’s unique educational, recreational, community, and residential attributes.”
- The Lewis County Economic Development Council has teamed up with WorkSource to create a quality work force in Lewis County. They have also established a Small Business Development Center to provide counseling to small businesses and start-up companies.
- The Mason County Comprehensive Plan proposes a multi-faceted approach to economic development. In addition to supporting existing business and business expansion, this is one of the few plans that also emphasizes workforce development. They commit to support learning communities focusing on workforce development; expand opportunities for secondary education and job training locally; support organizations that facilitate and provide professional training and retraining and improve exposure to job opportunities in Mason County.

Several plans identify the overall value of economic development to the community such as: “enhancing the quality of life for residents” (Downtown Centralia); “a stable economy that provides jobs that pay a living wage” (Olympia Comprehensive Plan); “maintain a high quality of life and environment” (Thurston County Comprehensive Plan); and “economic opportunity for all citizens of this County, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons” (Pacific County Comprehensive Plan).

### **Art, History, Culture, and Recreation**

Nine plans emphasize goals, objectives, or activities related to promoting the arts, encouraging tourism, celebrating history, and/or preserving historical buildings. Three state agencies have goals related to this theme:

- The Washington State Arts Commission Plan describes libraries as “secondary creative occupations.” The Commission also describes a Creative Vitality Index that looks at participation and employment in the arts. The national baseline is 1.00; Washington overall is at 1.32. The five TRL counties fall below the baseline between .40 and .69.

- The Washington State Parks and Recreation Department focused on planning for the Parks 2013 centennial. Most of plan deals with specific parks and their upgrade but does include a section on the Washington Historical Society to “add new partnerships to assess historic resources, curate historic artifacts, and do a more satisfactory job of historic preservation and education.”
- The Washington Sea Grant Citizen Science Projects, 2010-2014, conducts formal and informal marine education activities. They feel “ocean-related education is essential to strengthen local, regional, and national appreciation for the oceans and coasts and to improve scientific literacy.”

Two of the goals in this plan relate to possible library activities: redeveloping Centralia’s historic infrastructure and restoring Centralia as a cultural and arts center of the region. Their plan states:

*An important function of a successful historic preservation program is education. Historic buildings and sites offer a valuable supplement to the written record and provide a unique three-dimensional learning experience. The preservation and interpretation of Centralia’s historic resources will unquestionably contribute to the overall education and cultural development of our fellow citizens. As such, the City supports community education programs which focus on historical events and structures.*

The plan continues to specifically suggest the cultivation of partnerships between “museums, historical organizations, tribes, and/or libraries.”

Two plans (Centralia and Chehalis) seek to restore their community to “a cultural and arts center in Southwest Washington.”

The Olympia Comprehensive Plan articulates the purpose of cultural events saying that “public art, events, and recreational programming to encourage social interaction, foster community building, and enhance the visual character and livability of Olympia.” Public buildings, but not libraries specifically, are mentioned as locations for temporary art exhibits.

The Thurston County Comprehensive Plan is one plan that focuses on historic preservation and education in “encouraging public understanding and support of historic preservation by promoting public awareness of the significance and extent of Thurston County’s archeological and history resources and the value of their preservation.”

Another plan that places a high priority on recreational programming is the Parks and Recreation Section of the City of Shelton’s Comprehensive Plan. It calls for recreational programming for all ages, specifically mentioning youth, teens, adults, and seniors, including “sedentary activities.” They also seek programs that have low costs and coordination among community agencies offering programs.

Only three plans mention libraries specifically, Centralia, Yelm, and Hoquiam. The Yelm plan identifies the public library as one of the buildings that might be preserved and the Hoquiam Plan lists the library as one of the historic buildings in town and says “the library has served the educational needs of the community for nearly a century.”

## **Healthy Communities**

Six plans reviewed deal with some aspect of creating healthy communities. Two of the plans are statewide, the Rural Health Care Strategic Plan and the Washington Health Benefit Exchange. The Washington Health Benefit Exchange is the state agency charged with implementing the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In their December 2012 report to the state legislature they described their plans and while they did not mention libraries, they did indicate the necessity of sharing information about ACA options.

The Choice Regional Health Network serves the same five counties as TRL. Their plan does not mention libraries but does give a profile of the health condition of people in the area: “the CHOICE region has some of the poorest and sickest residents in the state. Individuals in our region are significantly more likely to not have a primary care physician and were more likely to forego care when needed because of costs as compared to the state as a whole. Individuals in our region are more likely to have higher smoking rates, obesity rates, and no-exercise rates than statewide rates.”

Three plans (Lewis County Strategic Plan, Mason County Community Health Assessment, and the Pacific County Health and Human Services) seek to work with community agencies with goals such as “inform, educate, and empower people about health issues” and “mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.”

## **Education**

Plans of 10 educational agencies were reviewed. Two of the plans were statewide:

The Washington State Board of Education indicates that their environmental scan shows that less than 50% of children enter kindergarten ready to learn. Their first strategy is to advocate for a cooperative agreement among state and local “school districts and other key stakeholders to forge a system approach to achieve the goals.”

The Washington State Department of Early Learning in their 2011-2014 Strategic Plan indicates that the purpose of the plan is to prepare a “roadmap for all entities that work with families in ensuring every child grows up healthy, capable, and ready for school and life.” Their vision calls for “developmentally and culturally appropriate early learning opportunities for all of Washington’s youngest learners” and to “partner with and inform parents, families, and communities about early learning.”

Six school districts (Chehalis, Mossy Rock, Olympia, North Thurston, Shelton, Tumwater and North Mason) have plans that call for some aspect of community engagement to meet the needs of students or improve student achievement.

One more unique plan was the Chehalis Renaissance Plan which seeks to involve young people in public service efforts by encouraging outreach by community organizations.

### **General Community Improvement**

Some plans had unique aspects that do not fit neatly in the themes above. One is the Washington State Library's plan that emphasizes the role of the library in the community.

Their vision includes:

- the value of a public library to its community including partnerships and inviting library buildings
- access to resources for Washington citizens
- early learning and information literacy
- racial/ethnic and cultural diversity reflected in staff
- stable and sufficient funding
- the library as the hub of the community

The Lewis County Strategic Plan has two unique aspects to their plan. One is to develop and implement a Lewis County Emergency Action Plan. The second is for a "search engine to the county's website that will allow users to search the site for the information needed. This will allow citizens to locate where services are delivered and get directions to find the location."

The Chehalis Renaissance Plan has a similar goal of a "web-based clearinghouse coordinating recreational program offerings that include as wide a variety of activities as there is an interest by city residents, regardless of age, skill level, or program provider."

The City of Lacey's Comprehensive Plan from 2008 is one of the few plans that mentions the library and indicates that the city's strategic plan can be viewed at the library. It also calls for the creation of "urban neighborhoods that provide convenient community/social interaction and foster opportunities for memorable lifetime experiences."

The City of Shelton's Strategic Plan from 2007 is one of the few plans that mentions the public library directly. In discussing the building, the plan indicates that "TRL officials have not identified any existing future deficiencies" and "there are no plans to expand the Shelton library facility within the six-year CFE planning period." They go on to say that TRL administration says that the Shelton Library meets ALA standards for space needs. TRL did ask for replacement of the heating and cooling system.

The Pacific County Community Resilience Report has a long list of community agencies that serve as a resource for Pacific County. The Grays Harbor 2020 Plan mentions 32 community partners. Neither plan mentions the library.

### Summary of Plans Reviewed with Common Themes of Relevance to the Library

Consultants obtained a list of 68 strategic plans from TRL staff. Of these, 35 plans had content that seemed relevant to library services. Plans that dealt with topics that seemed particularly tangential to library programs were reviewed but are not included in the table below. Some plans, for example, dealt specifically with public utilities or coastal development. While the library may have a tangential role in providing information for the public, these plans did not fit into the themes above.

The 35 agencies with relevant plans are listed below, divided into the five theme areas, with a brief indication of the content of their plan. TRL staff are urged to read the full plans of the agencies in their county.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Art and Cultural and Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Healthy Communities</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>General Community Improvement</b>
WA Dept. of Education				A goal on information literacy	
WA State Dept. of Early Learning, 2011-2014				Focus on early learning	
WA State Library, 2012					Vision for libraries in the state
WA Art Commission, 2009		Libraries as partners			
Rural Health Care Plan, 2009			Wants to involve communities		
Choice Regional Health Network, 2011			No mention of collaboration		

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Art and Cultural and Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Healthy Communities</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>General Community Improvement</b>
WA State Parks and Recreation Dept., 2009-2015		Historical Society desires to add partners			
WA Health Benefit Exchange, 2012			Implements the Affordable Care Act		
Lewis Co. Community Development Comprehensive Plan, 2010	Business development and help unemployed				
Lewis Co Strategic Plan	Build new business		Partner with others		Build emergency plan Provide community information
Downtown Centralia	Build new business	Develop historic infrastructure, culture, and the arts			
Chehalis Renaissance Plan	Focus on entrepreneur	Emphasize culture and arts		Involve youth in community agencies	Community recreation clearinghouse
Chehalis School District				Requests non-specific community involvement	

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Art and Cultural and Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Healthy Communities</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>General Community Improvement</b>
Mossy Rock School District, 2010				Requests non-specific community involvement	
Lewis County Economic Development Council	Work with WorkSource and establish a business development Center				
Olympia Comprehensive Plan	Support jobs, small business, stable economy	Art and programs in public buildings			
Tumwater Strategic Plan	Attract business and investors				
Lacey Comprehensive Plan					Create neighborhood centers
City of Yelm Comprehensive Plan	Help unemployed and support business development	Preserve historical buildings, including library			
Thurston County Comprehensive Plan	Sustainable business development	Public understanding of historical resources			
Olympia School District, 2013				Work with community agencies	

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Art and Cultural and Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Healthy Communities</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>General Community Improvement</b>
North Thurston Public Schools, 2013				Community Engagement	
Tumwater School District Strategic Plan- 2011- 2016				Collaborative Partnerships	
Mason County Community Health Assessment			Mobilize community partnerships		
Mason County Comprehensive Plan	Support community organizations that support workforce development				
City of Shelton Comprehensive Plan		Increased programming for all ages			Adequacy of Shelton library
Washington Sea Grant Citizen Science Projects		Marine education programs			
Shelton School District				Community engagement	
North Mason School District, 2011-2012				Community engagement	
Pacific County Comprehensive Plan	Economic opportunity for all citizens				
Pacific County Health and Human Services			Improve communications with agencies		

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Art and Cultural and Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Healthy Communities</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>General Community Improvement</b>
Community Resilience Report					Library not listed as a resource
Long Beach Comprehensive Plan					Library renovated
Grays Harbor 2020					Library not listed as part of community plan
Downtown Hoquiam Historic Preservation Plan					Library one of the historic buildings celebrated