



# **Strategic Plan**

**Clay Center Public Library**

**Clay Center, Nebraska**

**2017-2020**

**Approved by the Library Board on Sept 5, 2017**

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## **Planning Process**

This plan was developed by the Clay Center Public Library Board and staff. The Board and staff will review the plan annually in August and update as needed.

### **LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS**

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## COMMUNITY PROFILE

- Clay Center's population as of the 2010 census is 760, a decrease of 101 from the 2000 census of 861.
- Median age is 45, an increase of 4 years from the 2000 census of 38.
- Persons 65 and older represent 28.3%, an increase from the 13.4% of 2000.
- Hispanic population has increased a little from 3.2% to 4.6%.
- Median household income in Clay Center is \$45,750, while the state median household income is \$51,381.

## **COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**

Clay Center is the county seat of Clay County and encompasses an area of 0.72 square miles. It is located 24 miles southeast of Hastings and 25 miles south of Interstate 80.

Clay Center was laid out in the summer of 1879. An election on November 4 confirmed Clay Center as the location for the Clay County seat following months of heated competition with rivals Sutton and Harvard. In February of 1887, Clay Center became an incorporated village.

Industrial development began in 1903 when M.M. Johnson built a factory to manufacture “Old Trusty” poultry incubators and brooders that were sold nationwide. The factor provided employment for hundreds of local citizens. The Johnson Company established radio station KMMJ in 1925 to promote its products, and the station made Clay Center a well-known and respected name in farm homes throughout the Midwest.

Clay Center experienced dramatic change in 1942 when a Naval Ammunition Depot was built just west of town to produce bombs and shells during World War II. This property was later transferred to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and has been designated by Congress as the Roman L. Hruska U.S. Meat Animal Research Center.

## **COMMUNITY NEEDS**

Our community has expressed many desires over the past few years for improvement to our village. This is the list given in order of importance by the citizens of Clay Center as reported by a Strategic Plan done for our community by JEO Consulting Group.

1. Demolition/renovation of downtown buildings
2. Clay Center Sports Complex improvements
3. New or remodeled swimming pool
4. New or remodeled Public Library
5. Sustainability of current projects/festivals/activities
6. Street improvements
7. Public infrastructure
8. Business retention/recruitment
9. Sidewalk Conditions
10. Fire/EMT improvements/or replacement

Our City Council has been working to address each of these issues with a timeline of planned accomplishments.

## **LIBRARY ANALYSIS**

Overview: Clay Center Public Library statistics, reflected on the most recent Nebraska Library survey data, were compared to our peer group of 25 libraries, as determined by the Nebraska Library Commission. Clay Center's population is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest in the 25 peer libraries.

### **Internal Environment**

#### ***Major Strengths: (peer ranking noted):***

- >Total circulation (1<sup>st</sup>)*
- >Circulation of children's books (1<sup>st</sup>)*
- >Largest DVD collection (1<sup>st</sup>)*
- >Non-resident cards issued (1<sup>st</sup>)*
- >Tied for highest internet speed among peers*

#### ***Major Weaknesses:***

- >Age of building/ not handicapped accessible*
- >Attendance of children's programs offered*
- >Computer usage has declined*
- >Library visits have declined*
- >Would like more hours of operation available*

## **EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

### ***Major Opportunities***

- >New young families moved to town with small children
- >Entertainment is limited in Clay Center and Hastings is 23 miles away
- >Our wifi speed is pretty good and widely used by patrons and visitors
- >Clay Center residents are supportive of the library

### ***Major Threats***

- > Clay Center residents are supportive of the library, but not good at attending community events
- >Although we have had an influx of young families in the past few years we have a decreased population
- >People would like to see a remodeled library here in Clay Center but the revenue isn't available



## **The Library's Contribution to Clay Center**

Clay Center is a small community. Based on the information gathered by the JEO Consulting Group, much work needs to be done to maintain Clay Center and to ensure that the community thrives in the future.

Local festivals such as "4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration", "Old Trusty Days" and "Christmas on the Square," create a sense of community pride. The Community Club sponsors these events and needs the involvement of all organizations in Clay Center to make them a success. When asked, the citizens of Clay Center put sustainability of these long-standing events high on the list of desires.

Another highly rated community project is the renovation of the library. Other community needs have taken priority in the past few years. There is still a desire to do something, but it has been put on hold for now. With a resurgence of young families the library would like to try some new programming for young children. In cooperation with our Extension Agency here in town we would like to offer a once a month reading program for young children.

Getting people into the library has been a growing problem in the last few years. We will create our own maker space in order to try and draw more people in to use our facility. We will be willing to revise or extend our hours of operation if that is a help to this process.

In order to contribute to the progress of Clay Center, the Library will:

>Collaborate with the Community Club to promote the sustainability of long-standing local festivals

>Encourage progress towards a renovated library but in the meantime work on more programing to meet the needs of young families

>Work to establish a viable and useful Maker Space in our library

## **LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT AND VISION**

### **Mission Statement**

The library will serve as a center for learning and enrichment for all residents of the community.

### **Vision**

Clay Center Public Library will be known as a boundless resource for educational and recreational materials.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Community Need #1:** Sustainability of local projects, festivals and activities.

### **Goal:**

The library will continue to collaborate with the Community Club and other organizations to promote sustainability of long-standing local festivals. This is one of the needs listed by the community on the JEO study. The library will be adding some responsibilities as requested by the community. The three major events are “Old Trust” Days (during which the Library holds its book sale), “Christmas on the square” (the library participates in whatever is decided that year, and “4<sup>th</sup> of July “celebration (the library provides the evening concessions for the fireworks).

### **“Old Trust Days”**

Objectives:

- a. Continue to hold Book sale during the event.
- b. Offer free ice water and a place to sit down to browsers at the sale as most years it is very hot outside.
- c. Continue to hold a bake sale during this event for out of towners desiring baked goods.

The library Board will evaluate these objectives to make sure we are being helpful to the goal.

### **Christmas on the square**

Objectives:

- a. Offer extended hours or be open during the event held in December.
- b. Provide a free snack.
- c. Offer a quick craft for everyone that visits the library.
- d. Give out a free book to each child who attends the event.

The library board will evaluate the extended hours and giveaways based on the number of those attending. The intent is to have 50 or more people attend. The past few years we have had around 75.

### **4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration**

Objectives:

- a. Provide the opportunity for fireworks watchers to purchase a drink or snack.
- b. Be a serving presence in the community during this summer celebration.
- c. Hand out flyers to invite new residents and old to come use the library.

### **Community Need #2**

Offer more programming for young children and young families.

**Goal:**

Our community is beginning to have more young families with young children. In order to get them coming to the library at a young age we will try some new ideas to see if we can draw this group into the library.

Objectives:

- a. Starting in September our County Extension Agent will be coming once a month to put on a program that mirrors 4-H but is specifically for ages K-3 grade who are not old enough

for regular 4-H. This will benefit both organizations.

- b. Our library has applied for the Innovative Studios grant, but didn't get chosen to receive it. During the summer we have had an Electronic Snap Circuit set out for our patrons to enjoy and to test the water to see if there is interest in a new program like this. Since we are not included in the grant, the library board will now look into purchasing some new equipment or programs to interest the public and bring more action to the library. This will take a couple of months to study what we think will be the best options for our library.
- c. Community volunteers have been identified to help move these objectives along as they happen.

### **Community Need #3**

Encourage the continued progress toward the community goal of a renovated library. This is a very long term goal.

#### **Goal:**

Listed in the community survey is the desire for a new or renovated library. Since that survey desire has been expressed to leave the library where it's at but expand it in some way. JEO has offered their opinion of it being too expensive of a quest.

- a. At this time there are no funds being raised to work on the library project. To help further the cause as our city works on higher priority needs we will.
  1. Encourage dialogue with the City Council about proposed ideas to further the reaching of this goal.
  2. Survey and talk to people about what they want to see in a library project.
  3. Work on low level ways of raising awareness and funds for the library.
  4. Investigate ways to get funding (i.e. – grants etc.)

## **EVALUATION**

The Clay Center Public Library Board and staff will work to implement these goals immediately and will evaluate them as stated in the plan above. These evaluations will be used to improve the Library's contribution to the progress of Clay Center and to determine if our efforts have increased knowledge and use of the library.

The Strategic Plan, including the goals and objectives, will be evaluated on an annual basis to determine if each goal has been accomplished or if it needs to be modified to better serve the community's needs.