


# THE ROAD AHEAD

FY2023-2025



# Executive Summary



Three years ago, we created a strategic plan based on the priorities of Literacy, Access, and Inclusion. We have worked diligently in those areas, and after much research, community discussion, staff input, and data analysis, we recognize there is still work to do.

Our next three-year plan will continue to focus on these strategic priorities. As we continue to emphasize Literacy, Access, and Inclusion, we will strive to connect people to information, experiences, and services to enhance their quality of life.

In the past three years, Cedar Rapids has seen the need to move the needle in the areas of climate sustainability and disaster resilience, a struggling economy, increases in our community members experiencing homelessness and facing debilitating mental health issues, and a growing cultural and political divide among neighbors. These issues will not resolve on their own. In many cases a library would not be seen as “the” solution (or even in some cases “a” solution) to community problems, but at the Cedar Rapids Public Library we believe that public libraries are called to be part of the solution.

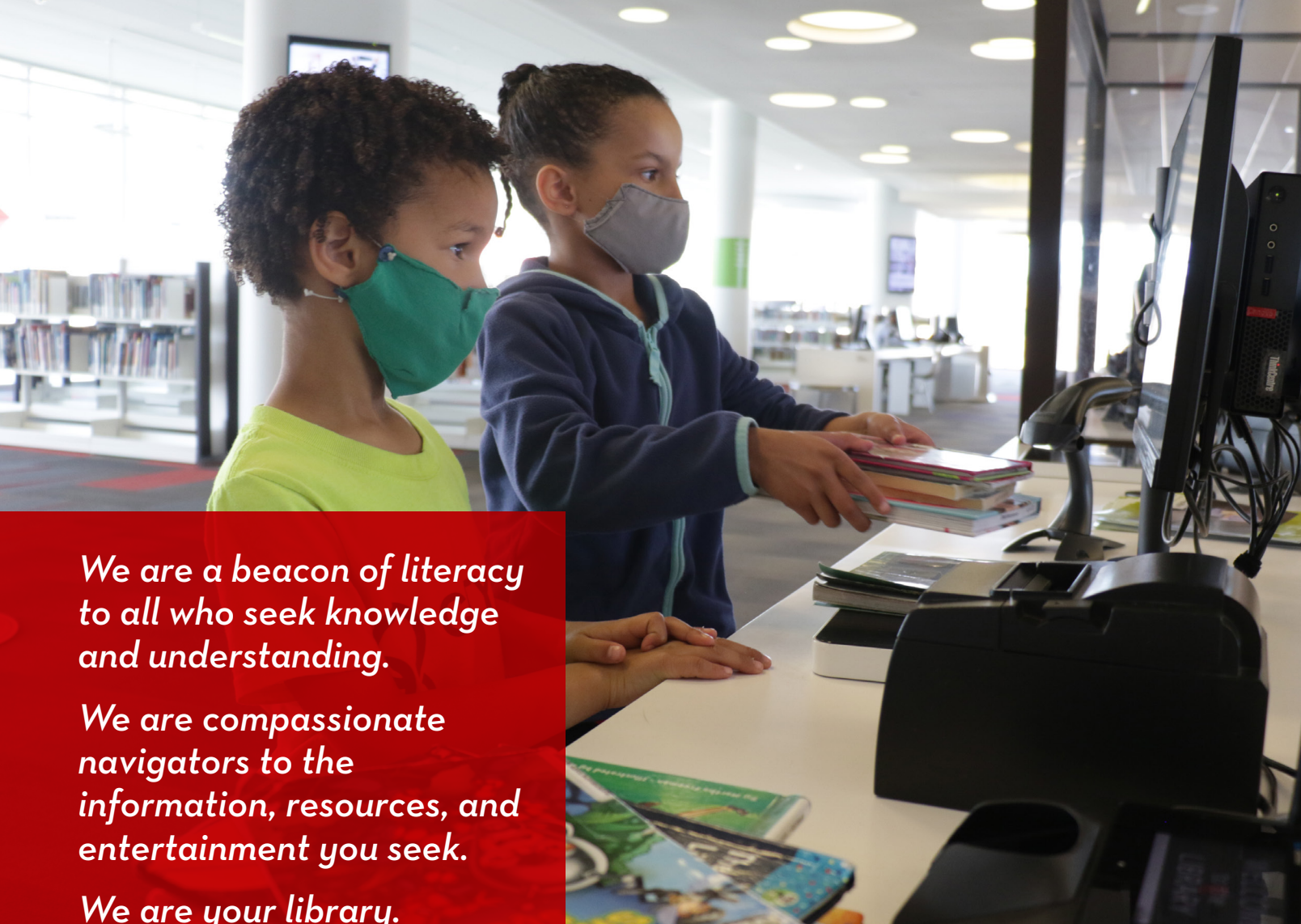


When a library like the Cedar Rapids Public Library achieves the ultimate goal of being a true reflection of its community, as an institution we then have the ethical responsibility to step forward and be a leader in finding ways for our community to learn, enjoy, and thrive. We have heard our community speak, and we are responding with a plan that acknowledges big issues while focusing on solutions within the confines of the mission, vision, and values of the library.

We look forward to working with our community in this FY2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

**"...we will strive to connect people to information, experiences, and services to enhance their quality of life."**



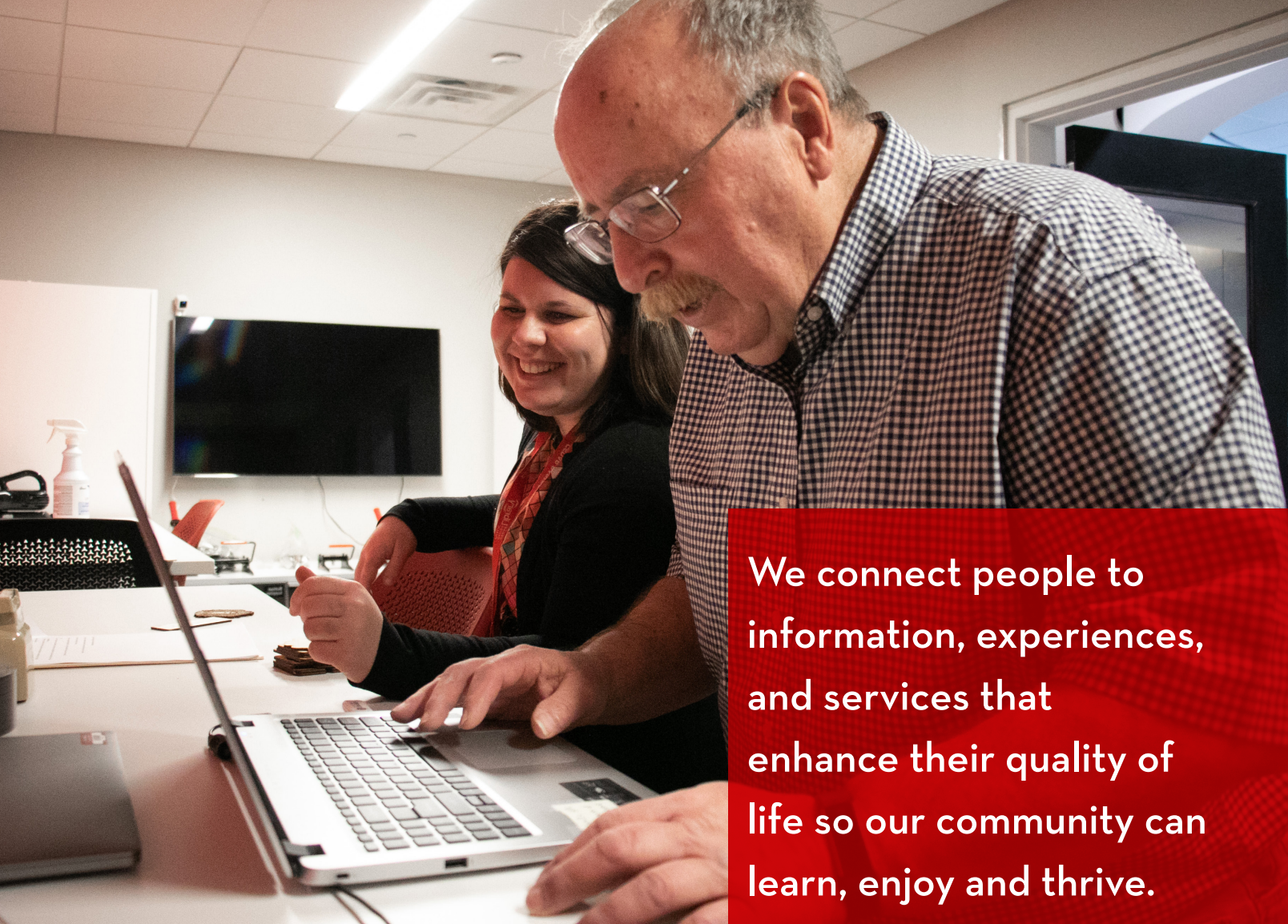
A photograph of two young girls in a library. They are both wearing face masks. The girl on the left is wearing a green mask and a yellow shirt. The girl on the right is wearing a grey mask and a blue hoodie. They are standing at a computer workstation, looking at a monitor. The girl on the right is holding a stack of books. The background shows bookshelves and a bright, modern library interior.

*We are a beacon of literacy  
to all who seek knowledge  
and understanding.*

*We are passionate  
navigators to the  
information, resources, and  
entertainment you seek.*

*We are your library.*





We connect people to information, experiences, and services that enhance their quality of life so our community can learn, enjoy and thrive.





# LITERACY

## Where we support elementary age learning and literacy.

- Embed literacy with summer and out of school time partners.
- Ensure our spaces have literacy rich environments.
- Develop and promote supports for parents/caregivers as educators in the home.

## Where we reinforce Information Literacy and support community education.

- Implement staff training options to support information literacy and patron interactions.
- Utilize existing library platforms to promote educational opportunities.
- Examine products and trends to address content gaps.

## Where we become a city of literacy.

- Incorporate literacy into the Sustainable Cities Initiative.
- Investigate and implement adult literacy programs.
- Examine the library's role in community literacy and engagement.



## ACCESS

**Where we embrace big dreams in our community through investment in a permanent westside facility.**

- Align funding feasibility with design.
- Engage community in creating a welcoming, culturally conscious plan.
- Support Foundation Capital Campaign.

**Where we expand access to technology upholding our guiding principle of equity.**

- Partner with CRCSD to infuse technology outside of existing STEM curriculum.
- Increase access to circulating technology offerings.
- Hone Maker Room procedures and technology.

**Where we move from 'everything to everyone' to 'right patron right time connections.'**

- Use library data to identify target audiences.
- Utilize grassroots marketing and partners to engage focused audiences.



# INCLUSION

**Where we move from tolerance toward welcoming so that all in our community know we are their library.**

- Refresh Downtown furniture to reinforce welcoming atmosphere.
- Review procedures and practices to be inclusive of our diverse community.
- Reinvigorate active service to ensure a welcoming environment.
- Evaluate current collection, locations, and usage to make recommendations to future change.

**Where we reemphasize and formalize Inclusive Collection Practices.**

- Develop standard process for evaluating collections.
- Create long-term schedule.

**Where we become the community hub for civic engagement.**

- Ensure basic understanding of government and community infrastructure.
- Welcome new community members and provide access to community resources.
- Build cultural literacy and understanding.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

*Many people participated in the development of this this strategic plan. We are grateful especially to the nearly 80 staff members who listened, shared, and gave ideas and recommendations, as well as the community members who participated in surveys and input sessions. Additional thanks to the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library and the Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation.*



June 2022

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## Cedar Rapids Public Library

### **DOWNTOWN**

*450 5th Avenue SE  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401*

### **LADD LIBRARY**

*3750 Williams Blvd SW  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404*

**CRLIBRARY.ORG**  
**319.261.READ**

