

Collection Development Plan

Statement of Purpose

April 2022

The Collection Development Plan serves as a guide for the selection and retention of materials for the County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries. It is the goal of the Library to provide a high quality collection of books and other materials in a variety of formats and languages for all ages that is responsive to the needs and interests of the community. Ultimate responsibility for the selection of all materials rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies and goals established by the County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors and the State Education Code 19146.

About the County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries

San Luis Obispo County is located approximately midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The County is geographically large, covering 3,300 square miles, including collegiate San Luis Obispo to more rural areas that focus on agriculture and tourism. The current population is approximately 270,000.

The Library's 14 branches are located in San Luis Obispo, Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Morro Bay, Los Osos, Nipomo, Cambria, San Miguel, Shandon, Santa Margarita, Cayucos, Oceano, Shell Beach, and Creston. A major university library and a community college library are in the County. The County is also served by a city library in Paso Robles. The library system is primarily funded through property taxes.

County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries

Priorities 2022–2024

The Library's Mission Statement: Connecting the community to knowledge, culture, and creativity through exceptional service.

The Library

- **Provides free access for all**—Programs, material and resources will be made available to County citizens of any age at no charge.
- **Is a trusted guide for learning**—We value our partnerships with educators, community agencies and families. We provide creative tools for digital literacy and lifelong learning.
- **Is a leading advocate for reading**—The Library supports reading for cultural, educational, and recreational enrichment.
- **Reflects and serves a diverse, vibrant community**—We offer resources for a spectrum of ages, abilities, and interests; we offer our services equitably and respectfully.

- **Re-imagines services and spaces**—We look outward to our community for ways to provide relevant services.

Collection Goals

Explore Digital Services—Assess customer demand for 24/7 collections

Adapt the Library Experience—Flex and enhance our collections during changing times

Meet our Users Where They Are—Create discovery zones inside and outside of the library. Showcase diverse works in our collections.

Collection Vision

The Library strives to create a modern, elastic collection—one that is adaptive to the broad interests of the community and that reflects multiple points of view. We view the collection as a service, and we strive to offer materials in an efficient and timely manner, using current technologies.

The Library's goal is to provide a collection that is

- **Accessible**—Browsable stacks, an intuitive online catalog, and useful electronic resources that can be accessed in or outside of the library. Materials available in varying formats. Items consistently labeled for ease of identification at all locations.
- **Flexible**—Rotating, community-driven collections. Refreshed collections at all locations. Hi-tech and low-tech resources. Responsive to changing demographics.
- **Modern**—Popular items mixed with works of lasting value. A collection that is fresh, relevant, and in good condition.

Collection Development

The primary obligation of the Library is to furnish the resources frequently requested by its residents for lifelong learning and recreation. Public libraries in most communities provide resources in general demand. Thus, customer use is the most powerful influence on the Library's collection: Much of the Library's use is from new and popular adult fiction books, children's materials, DVDs, eBooks, and other downloadable/streaming media. Circulation, customer purchase requests and hold (reserve) levels are all closely monitored, triggering the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand items to be included in the collection.

Ultimately, our goals in collection development and management are to:

- Collect materials that help keep the public informed of timely issues and timeless ideas
- Empower citizens to explore diverse opinions and conduct research on topics of interest
- Inspire people to learn, create and discover through lifelong learning
- Entertain all ages seeking recreation and leisure.

Selection

Professional librarians select all materials to be added to the collection either through established vendors and companies or via donations by customers. Librarians select materials for each community based on their knowledge of the diverse needs of their customers and the regional and local branch collections. Materials are selected for youth, audio-visual, adult fiction, and adult nonfiction/reference. Selectors choose electronic content in eBook, magazine, and audio books formats.

Materials are selected mainly from reviews in professional journals and other reliable media; examination of materials from publishers; subject knowledge and expertise of Library staff; and recommendations from the public. The Library applies the latest tools and innovations to our collection development practices to identify current trends in library usage.

The Library strives to provide materials of interest to people of differing ages, backgrounds, and lifestyles. While the majority of the collections are in English, branches with significant demand for foreign language titles may also have small collections in other languages.

The selectors use the **General Selection Criteria** in choosing materials for purchase (not in order of significance):

- Community interest
- Current demand
- Critical reception; award-winning
- Timeliness and significance of subject
- Local interest (author or subject)
- Relationship and importance to the entire collection
- Availability of material elsewhere—online or in other regional institutions and agencies
- Authoritativeness (reputation or qualifications of author, artist, publisher or producer)
- Quality of presentation style appropriate to content and audience, including facility of use, level of difficulty and comprehensiveness
- Suitability in style and subject for the intended audience
- Format available and quality of technical production (binding, margins, typography and quality of paper)
- Date of publication
- Budget, cost and space considerations
- Literary merit

The circulating collection is not archival. It is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis to meet contemporary needs and collection goals.

Formats Collected

The Library purchases:

- Books
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Large print
- Books on CD
- DVDs/Blu-Rays
- Microforms (such as newspapers)
- Book/audio kits
- Online learning and database services
- Ebooks/digital magazines
- Downloadable audio books
- Downloadable/streaming media
- Learning tablets
- Foreign language materials

Materials not considered for the collection include:

- Textbooks and curriculum-related works unless they are considered useful to the general reader as an introduction to a subject and their presentation is superior to other sources
- Scholarly and technical materials that are carried by academic or special libraries
- Items having removable media such as memorabilia, patterns, stickers, or toys unless the book is usable without these items
- Puzzle or workbooks that encourage filling in blanks
- Materials that are publicized solely through infomercials or personal websites and authoritative and evaluative information about them is lacking
- Items that will not withstand regular library use.

Collection Maintenance

Maintenance of the Library's collection through continual re-evaluation by professional librarians ensures its usefulness and relevancy to the community. This evaluation depends heavily on the staff's professional expertise in assessing the needs of the community and the overall content and condition of the collection.

Materials determined to no longer be of value are withdrawn from the collection. Circulation statistics are also heavily relied upon when assessing items for withdrawal. Library materials may be discarded (weeded) for any of the following reasons:

- obsolescence: the material is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- damage or poor condition
- space limitations
- number of copies in the collection
- insufficient use or lack of customer demand

- availability in other collections
- superseded editions

Replacement of specific missing or discarded worn copies is sought, if possible, if the item is a landmark work of non-fiction, a literary classic, a literary work by an important contemporary author, or an item in consistent demand by the public.

Items that are historically significant or have lasting value may be placed in one of the special collections for long-term protection and preservation.

Donating Items to the Library

The Library accepts gifts of new or gently used books, recent magazines, audio-visual and other Library materials that meet the same standards as other materials selected for inclusion in the Library's collection. Items in less than excellent condition (broken spines; mold; odor; damaged, yellow or missing pages; highlighted or written in; missing volumes, etc.) will not be accepted.

In accepting donations, the Library reserves the right to decide which items will be added to the Library collection and which will be given to our Friends groups for possible inclusion in their book sales. Receipts for donations indicate the type and number of items donated. The donor is responsible for determining the monetary value of donated items. Materials that are donated become the property of the County of SLO Public Libraries and as such cannot be returned to the donor.

Acceptable donated items:

- Popular fiction
- SLO County history
- Newer nonfiction (in most cases, published within the last 2–3 years)
- Award winners and classics in excellent condition
- Recent magazines (subscriptions must be approved by a librarian)
- Children's/teen books in excellent condition
- Newer DVDs, Blu-Rays, CDs, video games and books-on-CD in excellent condition

Items not considered for donation to the Library:

- Encyclopedias and textbooks
- Software
- Books on cassette
- VHS
- Items containing outdated information
- Old magazines
- Items in less than excellent condition (broken spines; mold; odor; damaged, yellow or missing pages; highlighted or written in; missing volumes, etc.)
- Items of value, such as collector's items or sets (contact the Friends for these items)

Requests for Reconsideration

Library users occasionally question titles that have been selected for the collection. Persons seeking the reconsideration of a book, DVD, compact disc, or other item may complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials - Book" form or "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials – A.V." form. Upon receipt of a completed form, Library staff reviews the item for inclusion in the collection in light of the Library's overall objectives, Collection Development Policy, Library Bill of Rights, and American Library Association guidelines on intellectual freedom.

Suggestions for Purchase

The Library acknowledges the important role of the community in collection development by inviting suggestions for purchase from customers. A suggestion form is available [online](#) and in the Library.

Local Authors/Self-publishing

Local and/or independently published authors may donate books with local interest to be reviewed for addition to the collection. The County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries will establish a Local Authors shelf in one or more branches. Books will be accepted according to the following guidelines:

- Authors must be County of SLO residents, or the book must take place in the County of SLO (or otherwise demonstrate a strong local interest) and be appropriate for a popular collection.
- Books for the Local Authors collection may be accepted as donations from the author or publisher; however, at the discretion of the Collection Development Coordinator, a book may be considered for purchase if published reviews in standard sources are available or there is strong evidence of appropriateness.
- A brief listing for books will be created in the Library Catalog, so that borrowers may access them by title or author.
- Loose leaf or spiral bounds books will not be accepted for the collection.
- Items will rotate out of the collection and may be withdrawn after one year, unless they have circulated regularly.
- Materials that are donated become the property of the County of SLO Public Libraries and as such cannot be returned to the donor.

Reviewed and Updated 04/13/22--et