



## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022**

### **Mission Statement & Vision**

#### **Mission**

Citizens for Maryland Libraries advocates for strong Maryland libraries.

#### **Vision**

Citizens for Maryland Libraries is the foremost resource for citizen supporters of Maryland's diverse libraries.

#### **CML is:**

Citizens for Maryland Libraries is a 501c3 volunteer organization that supports libraries in Maryland through advocacy, education, and recognition of excellence. CML was established as a result of recommendations from the Maryland Governor's Conference on Libraries (1978) and the White House Conference on Library and Information Services (1979.)

CML is run by a volunteer board and staffed by a professional, part-time executive director.

**Key audiences and stakeholders include:**

- CML Members
- Elected officials
- Friends, Foundation, and Board members
- Library staff and volunteers
- State librarian and staff
- School librarians
- Library directors
- University of Maryland Libraries / other academic libraries
- Public librarians
- Special librarians
- United for Libraries, a division of the American Library Association

## **Core Values**

These core values, articulated and approved by the CML Board, guide our daily work and strategic planning. These exemplify the standards to which each of us continually strives. We use our Core Values to guide us in all areas of the work we perform. They are:

- We value the positive contributions Maryland libraries make to the quality of life for the residents of Maryland.
- We stand on the values of treating everyone equally and with respect through championing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- We embrace a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.
- We demonstrate collegiality and civility in our work.
- We respect the work of libraries of all types.
- We value the contributions of all partners and advocates.
- We are committed to transparent and ethical business practices.
- We serve as a hub to connect with organizations, people, and communities in support of Maryland libraries.

## Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives provide an overarching roadmap and direction for Citizens for Maryland Libraries. CML will continue to build upon the plan and its successes over the coming years.

**Goal 1.** CML will promote the growth of Maryland's broad base of library advocates.

Objective 1. Build, cultivate, and educate a network of informed advocates.

Action: Focus on advocacy in support of Maryland libraries.

- Actively participate in the Maryland Library Association Legislative Panel.
- Advocate for libraries and provide testimony.
- Promote existing library awareness campaigns.
- Expand membership.

Objective 2. Increase awareness of programs and initiatives through marketing and public relations that reflect CML core values.

Action: Create/update effective marketing tools for CML.

- Create membership and marketing tools online to strongly encourage better service to the diverse people within the State.
- Develop a standard set of talking points for CML board members for introductions to various groups, elected officials, and the public.
- Evaluate and refine existing communications tools.

Action: Develop and execute educational programs.

- Hold annual meeting with the Maryland State Library.
- Partner with MLA and other organizations for conference participation and presentations.

Action: Recognize programs, people, contributions, and advocacy.

- Serve as lead or partner to designate Literary Landmarks.
- Recognize outstanding contributions via the award and grant programs.

**Goal 2.** Continue strong and effective governance and best practices.

Objective 1. Serve as a resource to library boards, friends, and foundation members.

Action:

- Maintain relationship with Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators and Trustees.
- Meet with key partners to further define the relationship and plan for the future.
- Present awards at county board meetings.

Objective 2. Ensure resource development and explore funding options.

Action:

- Analyze donor information and history more effectively through an online membership database tool known as Wild Apricot.
- Explore grant opportunities available through professional associations and corporations.
- Use reserves in a financially prudent way.

Objective 3. Adhere to vigorous internal controls and governance.

Action:

- Recruit skilled and knowledgeable volunteer board members who are representative of the communities served.
- Develop an orientation program for new board members.
- Document procedures and ensure consistent execution.
- Review bylaws and strategic plan and goals as needed.
- Maintain accurate records, including financial and membership.
- Conduct business ethically and transparently.
- Update the CML website with governance documents and policy information.
- Focus on CML leadership and transition.
- Evaluate the role of and performance of the executive director on an annual basis.

### **Background**

On 6 April 2019, members of the Citizens for Maryland Libraries board met and discussed the following updates, challenges, and goals to inform its Strategic Plan through 2022. It was reviewed at the 6 July 2019 Citizens for Maryland Libraries board meeting, discussed during the year, and voted on after discussion at the June 2020 board meeting.

## **Addendum: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)**

### **Analysis**

The board of Citizens for Maryland Libraries identified the following:

#### **Strengths**

- Clear vision/mission and positive history associated with the CML and members
- Partnerships with Maryland and national organizations
- Long history of collaboration with affiliate organizations
- Viewed as a respected and credible organization
- Focus on citizens
- Passionate and energetic volunteer/board base (albeit small)
- Knowledgeable about libraries
- Expertise in advocacy
- Governance and internal controls (formerly a weakness)

#### **Weaknesses**

- Invisible when doing our best work (a strength, too)
- Current members who do not KNOW they are members
- Library Directors do not know how CML can help them and their board members/trustees
- Need for more citizen involvement in taking CML messages to their local libraries
- Lack of external marketing focus
- Membership database (with work, could be a strength)
- Limited membership numbers
- Lack of board diversity

#### **Opportunities**

- Changing role of libraries (a threat, too)
- To tell the story of how libraries transform their users and their communities
- Further leverage awards and grants
- Help libraries/librarians tell their stories.

#### **Threats**

- Lack of diversification of revenue streams/opportunities

- Recruiting informed citizens as members
- Public perception of libraries
- Changing role of libraries
- People may take libraries for granted (difficult when discussing funding)
- Narrowing funding sources/threat to sustainability
- Competition for private funding and grants
- Advocates for/users of libraries come out when threatened, but can be complacent at other times.