

# Shelton Public Library

## Community Needs Response Plan
## for Shelton Public Library, Shelton, NE
## 2027-2031

P. O. Box 10 / 313 C Street, Shelton, NE 68876

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# Planning Team

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| Tony Crouse, Library Director | Cindy Keslar, Library Substitute | Cliff Keslar, Village Vice-Chair |
| LeAnne Lacey, Library Chair | Debra Remter, Library Board | Jeff Kenton, PK-6 Principal |
| Patricia Wiehn, Library Board | Jennette Meyer, Library Board | Amy Hostetter, 7-12 Principal / Title IX Coordinator |
| Janelle Gegg, Library Board | Chuck Roe, Village Chair | Lisa Smith, Asst. Village Clerk / Treasurer |

# Mission Statement

The Shelton Public Library will provide services for Shelton and Buffalo County, to the best of their abilities, to offer the community with the materials and programs, for information and pleasure and provide the community with facilities as needed.

# Community Profile

Shelton, Nebraska is situated right in the middle of Nebraska's Tri-Cities region, sitting directly between Grand Island (53,131 pop.) and Kearney (33,790 pop.) along U.S. Route 30 and Interstate 80. The Village of Shelton is a rural community in Buffalo County, Nebraska with a population of 1,034 according to the 2020 Decennial Census. Of this, 16% report as Hispanic. The age group breakdown is 25-34 with 247 residents, 45-54 with 199 residents, 35-44 with 128 residents, 15-24 with 149 residents. The median age being 34. The gender being 120 males per 100 females.

The median income is $81,278 which is more than the state median of $76,376. School enrollment is 275 students of which 94 are receiving free/reduced lunches. Shelton has an employment rate of 73%. 12.2% are employed here and 60.8% have an average commute time of 26 minutes. Of the employed - retail trade, educational services and manufacturing are leading industries. The poverty rate in Shelton is 6.8%. This is below the state rate of 10.9%. The home ownership rate is 79% and the median gross rent in Shelton is $1,114.00.

Shelton has four active churches. The denominations being Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran and Pentecostal. Local clubs consist of the Shelton Nebraska Area Lions Club, Shelton American Legion Post No. 297, the Shelton Area Economic and Community Development Board.

There are 2-3 primary daycares with a capacity for 10-12 children. There are about 10 licensed providers within a 10-mile radius. The Shelton Historical Society preserves the community's local history, operates a town museum, and maintains the local Lincoln Highway Visitors Center. Shelton has two local television stations, 6 radio stations and four local newspapers within a 30 mile radius. 31.2% of college age students go to the University of Kearney, Central Community College or Hastings College to continue their higher education. 7.2% get their associate's degree and 15.3% received their bachelor's degree. Shelton has the option to choose from four wireless internet providers for phone, internet, and television programming. 480 Shelton residents have one or more computing devices with broadband service in their home.

# Community Assessment

A 2025-2026 Community Needs Assessment Survey was conducted with the cooperation of Village of Shelton and the Shelton Community. The Planning Team is using the results of this survey to define the following top needs expressed.

**1) BUSINESS GROWTH:** Communication with Economic Development Boards in Shelton and Buffalo County to discuss businesses looking to relocate to the area. Encourage businesses to visit and see what Shelton has to offer, with emphasis on our superb location. The library can facilitate this by sharing information resources, providing meeting space, equipment and internet accessibility.

**2) HOUSING:** Support the Village in applying for Community Development Block Grants to help residents improve their homes. The library can assist the Village Office by bringing awareness to income-based grant availability and informing the public by posting on websites, community notices, mailings, social media and newspapers.

**3) YOUTH AND ADULT PROGRAMS:** The library can collaborate with the Shelton Public School District and other entities to encourage more youth to read during the Summer by developing programs with a common theme that will challenge them intellectually. The library can facilitate this need by providing work/study spaces and programs to meet changing trends and special interests.

# Library Analysis

## LIBRARY STRENGTHS

- Up-to-date technology
- CIPA Compliant
- Centrally located
- Progressive Library Board
- ADA Compliant
- Staff with varied skills, experience and knowledge
- Support from local government
- Willingness to grow and change
- Quality collection - current, relevant, diverse

## EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

- After-school programming
- Changing trends and advancement
- Community Growth & Development
- Partnerships & Collaboration with other entities
- Support from the community
- Connect with special interest groups
- Emerging technology
- Resources to support services

## LIBRARY WEAKNESSES

- Old Library - Renovations & Upkeep
- Not enough staff
- Limited Budget
- Time for training
- Lack of community awareness

## EXTERNAL THREATS

- Economy - cost of living and inflation rates
- State/Federal Budget Cuts that limit or exclude additional funding sources
- Opinions of the library's significance
- Employment opportunities locally

# Goals and Objectives

## Goal 1: Support Economic Development

a. To offer educational programs to include employment search, application, resume building, financial planning and budgeting.

b. Provide a meeting space, information resources, equipment and internet accessibility.

c. Collaborate with businesses, local and abroad, to identify needs.

d. Partner with other entities for educational opportunities and training resources.

## Goal 2: Human Service Needs

a. Connect people with agencies that offer support services for basic needs to include food, housing, employment, education, child care or other.

b. Offer programs that are relevant to world issues and concerns of the general population.

c. Collaborate with county and state agencies for training resources.

## Goal 3: The Library and Services

a. Utilize ILL Services, subscribe to OverDrive, and expand on accessibility.

b. Library website and re-connecting with social media platforms.

c. Allocate time for staff training in subject areas or topics to meet community needs.

d. Community engagement and outreach programs.

# Evaluation

The library can facilitate the needs of the community by providing space, equipment and resources of information to support local economic development. Educational and Informative Programs can bring awareness to sensitive topics, address legitimate concerns and relevant issues affecting people today. Library staff can enhance their skills by allocating time for training in areas of digital learning. The Library Director will provide a status report of library programs at their bi-monthly meetings. The Library Board will review the Community Response Plan annually in the November meeting when they review the Library Policy Handbook and perform a Director Evaluation. The library can utilize ILL Services, collaborate with other organizations in a joint effort, partner with other entities to offer quality programming and focus on community outreach.

# Accomplishments

Shelton Public Library has shown significant growth since the last Library Accreditation in 2021. The library offers up-to-date technology consisting of new computers with current operating systems and software. Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence Kits have been added to the collection. A Circulating Science Kits Collection, to include circuit boards, is available to patrons.

The Friends of the Library have raised funds to install a new floor, handicap parking and ADA lift. They are responsible for getting Shelton (Carnegie) Public Library on the Registry of Historic Places.

More services have been added to accommodate the needs of patrons. With modernization projects, the library infrastructure provides a welcoming atmosphere. There are still areas of improvement such as re-connecting with social media platforms, a library website, and staff training. With support from the local community, Friends, the Library Board of Trustees and the Village Board, the goals set forth are achievable. Shelton Public Library will continue to fulfill its mission of serving the public to the best of our abilities.

Tony Crouse / Library Director
Shelton Public Library