



Bartholomew County Public Library

"Providing Resources for Lifelong Learning and Enjoyment"

Strategic Plan

2016-2018

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees

January 18, 2016

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Definitions	1
The Process	2
Stimulate Imagination Goals and Objectives	6
Satisfy Curiosity Goals and Objectives	8
Create Young Readers Goals and Objectives	10
Connect and Thrive in the Digital World Goals and Objectives	11
Succeed in School Goals and Objectives	13
Organizational Competencies	14
Evaluation	15
Assessment of Facilities, Services, Technology and Operations	15
Financial Resources and Sustainability	16
Collaboration	17

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide for the Bartholomew County Public Library over the next 3 years as we strive to be intentional about where we direct our resources, skills, and talents in order to have the greatest impact in our community.

This strategic plan was developed using a modified version of *Strategic Planning for Results* written by Sandra Nelson for the Public Library Association. The *Strategic Planning for Results* process is based upon three assumptions.

1. Excellence must be defined locally
 - a. It results when library services match community needs, interests and priorities
2. Excellence is possible for both large and small libraries
 - a. It rests more on commitment than unlimited resources and stresses resource allocation to implement plan
3. Excellence is a moving target
 - a. Even when achieved, excellence must be continually maintained. If you are coasting, the only way you go is downhill

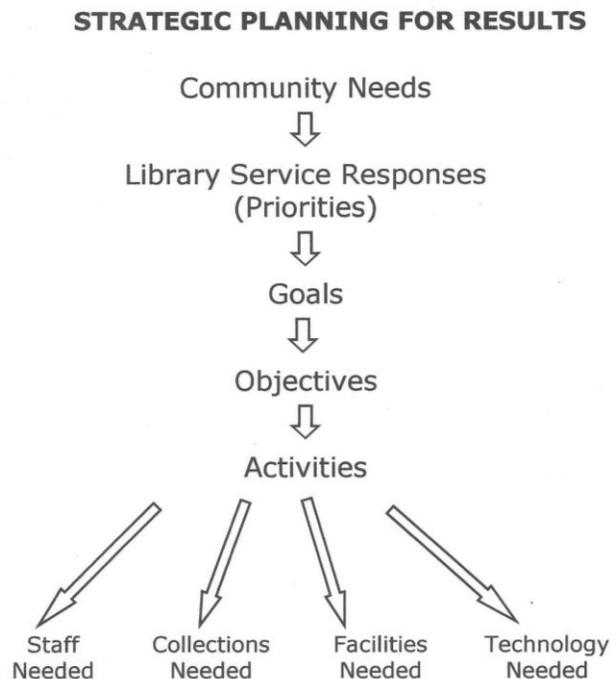
Definitions

Library Service Response: what a library does for, or offers to, the public in an effort to meet a set of well-defined community needs.

Goal: The benefit the community will receive because the library provides a specific service response.

Objective: The way the library will measure progress toward reaching a goal.

Possible Activities: a list of tasks to implement the plan; the possible activities describe the kinds of programs and services the library hopes to do over the life of the strategic plan to meet community needs.



The Process

In August 2015 a community survey was created by the library's management team and distributed throughout the community in both physical and electronic formats. By the end of September 2016, 447 residents of Bartholomew County took the survey to communicate their thoughts and desires for the future of the Bartholomew County Public Library.

Throughout September and October, BCPL staff conducted 25 individual conversations with community leaders and key community partners such as the Columbus Area Arts Council, Columbus Chamber of Commerce, Foundation for Youth, Love Chapel, Lincoln-Central Neighborhood Family Center, Mill Race Center, KidsCommons, and the Community Education Coalition.

On September 3, BCPL closed to the public to offer a staff in-service day to understand the strategic planning process and to contribute their thoughts and ideas regarding the future of BCPL services.

The BCPL Board of Trustees held a public retreat on October 12 to hear the results of the individual and group conversations, the public survey, and the staff in-service as well as to understand the current picture of library services and the community needs assessment from the United Way of Bartholomew County (<http://www.uwbarthco.org/united-way-community-needs-assessment-0>).

From this meeting the Board developed a consensus around 5 service responses or priority areas that the library should be focused on:

- **Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning**
Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.
- **Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing, and Listening for Pleasure**
Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them, and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options.
- **Create Young Readers: Early Literacy**
Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.
- **Connect and Thrive in the Digital World: Public Internet Access and Technology Literacy**
Residents will have high-speed access to the internet and will have programs and services designed to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources available digitally.
- **Succeed in School**
Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.

Using these service priorities, the staff then utilized a brainstorming board to document their thoughts regarding the specific goals and activities that we should be concentrating on.

On November 10 and 12, a large staff committee made up of representatives of every location and department met to take these staff ideas and distill them into concrete goals for each service priority. These draft goals were then sent out to the entire staff for feedback.



From there the Library's management team, started work on the objectives for each goal. On December 8, the draft objectives were written and soon after sent out to the entire staff for feedback.

The draft goals and objectives were presented to the Library Board of Trustees at their December 14 meeting for initial thoughts and comments and finally the Board adopted the plan at their January 18 meeting.

Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing, and Listening for Pleasure

Goal 1: BCPL will expand our presence into the community and outside the walls of our traditional locations to showcase the library's central role in the promotion of the importance of reading.

Objectives:

Each year our circulation and usage of eMaterials (eBooks, eAudio, and databases) will increase by 10%

Each year the library will conduct 10 offsite programs that showcase the library's role in the promotion of the importance of reading

By Dec. 31, 2017 the library will establish 2 mini-locations at offsite locations that have access to physical and digital collections.

Possible Activities

- Create mini-locations
- Host/Facilitate Book discussion groups (physical and virtual), Create discussion kits
- Lend Wi-Fi hotspots, tablets, Kindles, etc...
- Create Wi-Fi zones at offsite locations to access library resources
- Partner with other agencies, including the Literacy Task Force
- Take discarded and donated materials to other locations/agencies
- Dropboxes in other locations of the county

Goal 2: Patrons will have the help and resources needed to find appropriate materials easily and in a timely manner.

Objectives:

Each year at least 85% of patrons surveyed will indicate they were able to discover and find the material they hoped to find.

Each year the usage of our website and mobile app will increase by 5%

Each year staff will receive at least 2 trainings or programs that directly relate to readers' advisory and helping patrons discover new items to read, view, or listen.

Possible Activities

- Obtain a collection evaluation and management tool such as Collection HQ
- Promote and streamline the patron request and Interlibrary loan process
- Make sure resources of all formats are easily discoverable through our catalog
- Make our fiction collections as browseable as possible
- New mobile app/optimized mobile website
- Grow our in-person and virtual readers' advisory services
- Conduct an inventory of our physical collections

Goal 3: BCPL will maintain a high quality, diverse, and entertaining collection of materials and programs.

Objectives:

Each year at least 85% of patrons surveyed will indicate that we have high quality, diverse and entertaining collection of materials and programs.

Each year our circulation and usage of fiction materials in all formats will increase by 5%

Each year our circulation of music and movies in all formats will increase by 5%

Each year our circulation of foreign language materials will increase by 5%

Possible Activities

- Obtain a collection evaluation and management tool such as Collection HQ
- Update and Revise Collection Development Policy
- Host/Facilitate Book discussion groups (physical and virtual), Create discussion kits
- Create more foreign language collections in partnership with other entities
- Make sure resources of all formats are easily discoverable through our catalog

Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning

Goal 1: Patrons will have access to programs that further their learning, literacy and personal enrichment.

Objectives:

Each year the number of finishers among all ages for the Summer Reading Program will increase by 10%

Each year the library will conduct at least 100 programs that further learning, literacy, and/or personal enrichment within the community

Possible Activities

- Partner with other agencies to allow us to conduct or sponsor programming
- Making videos of programs conducted available through the website
- Skype programs
- Partner with Literacy Task Force and schools to conduct more literacy programming

Goal 2: Patrons will have help and resources needed to gain access to a high quality, easily accessible collection of learning resources.

Objective:

Each year the circulation and usage of nonfiction materials in all formats will increase 5%

Each year at least 85% of patrons surveyed will indicate they were able to discover and find the nonfiction material they hoped to find.

Possible Activities

- Obtain a collection evaluation and management tool such as Collection HQ
- Promote and streamline the patron request process
- Promote and streamline the interlibrary loan request process
- Use reference questions to identify and plug holes in our collection
- Make sure resources of all formats are easily discoverable through our catalog
- Conduct an inventory of our physical collections

Goal 3: BCPL will provide a welcoming atmosphere to facilitate learning and education for everyone in the community.

Objectives:

Each year the meeting room usage will increase by 5%

Each year at least 85% of patrons surveyed will indicate that the library provides a welcoming atmosphere

Possible Activities

- Create customer service competencies for all staff
- Make customer service competencies part of annual performance evaluations
- Evaluate current locations to improve space allocation

- Evaluate current locations to improve services to people with disabilities
- Analyze current meeting room policies

Goal 4: BCPL will maintain a strong genealogy and local history department that allows all to further their quest to understand their individual and collective past.

Objectives:

Each year the usage of digital genealogy and local history resources will increase by 5%

Each year the circulation and in-house usage of genealogy and local history resources will increase by 5%

Each year the number of genealogy and local history requests will increase by 5%

Each year the library will conduct or sponsor at least 10 genealogy or local history programs

Possible Activities

- Staff training on genealogy/local history resources
- Analyze genealogy/local history request policy
- Partner with other agencies to allow us to conduct or sponsor programming
- Actively promote genealogy/local history resources and services
- StoryCorp/Oral Histories
- Digitize collections

Create Young Readers: Early Literacy

Goal 1: BCPL will provide a collection that successfully addresses the needs of those patrons aged 0-5 and their parents and caregivers.

Objectives:

Each year the circulation and usage of board books, picture books, and other related collections will increase 5%

Each year the circulation and usage of the special collection materials for parents and caregivers will increase 5%

Possible Activities

- Institute a program such as 1000 Books before Kindergarten or Tots Reading Lots
- Mini-collections at offsite locations
- Actively market collection through speaking engagements
- Partner with Pediatricians offices and the hospital to market

Goal 2: BCPL will promote early literacy among more members of the community by expanding our ability to provide programs and services in a playful and engaging environment.

Objectives:

Each year the number of finishers among this age group for the Summer Reading Program will increase by 10%

Each year the library will conduct or sponsor at least 40 of early literacy programs

Possible Activities

- Remodel children's areas at both locations to be more appealing and inviting
- Institute a Paws-to-Read program
- Purchase more interactive puzzles and activities to be used within the library
- Staff training in the key concepts and importance of early learning

Goal 3: BCPL will specifically target programs and services to community members who don't regularly use the library.

Objectives:

Each year the number of speaking engagements to outside groups will increase by 10%

Each year the number of visits to daycares and preschools will increase by 10%

Each year the number of library cards issued to those ages 0-5 will increase by 5%

Possible Activities

- Offsite story times and other programs
- Partner with other agencies to allow us to conduct or sponsor programming
- Partner with Pediatricians offices and the hospital to market our resources and services

Connect and Thrive in the Digital World

Goal 1: BCPL will strengthen its abilities for providing remote, digitally delivered services.

Objectives:

Each year our circulation and usage of eMaterials (eBooks, eAudio, and databases) will increase by 10%

Each year our internet usage (public computers and wireless internet) will increase by 5%

Each year the circulation of devices (tablets, eReaders, Wi-Fi Hotspots) will hit at least 120

Possible Activities

- Lend Wi-Fi hotspots, tablets, Kindles, etc...
- Create Wi-Fi zones at offsite locations to access library resources
- Installing LibraryBoxes in other locations that store library resources without the need for internet
- Patron surveys asking what specific eMaterials patrons would like

Goal 2: BCPL will maintain a staff that supports, encourages, and understands the ever-changing digital landscape.

Objectives:

Each year staff will receive at least 4 trainings or programs that directly relate to technology and our digital resources

Through an annual staff survey, at least 85% will indicate that they feel more comfortable and knowledgeable with technology than the year before.

Possible Activities

- Create technology competencies for all staff
- Make technology competencies as part of annual performance evaluations
- Offer many opportunities for technology training
- Cross training among various departments

Goal 3: BCPL will teach and support the learning of tools and skills for people to work and enjoy their lives in the digital world.

Objectives:

Each year the library will conduct at least 20 technology related programs at all locations and for all ages

Each year the library will increase the number of one-on-one interactions with patrons regarding technology questions and needs by 10%

Possible Activities

- Lend Wi-Fi hotspots, tablets, Kindles, etc...

- Continued Book-a-Librarian sessions in-house
- Advertising campaign showcasing our technological assistance services
- Partner with other venues and retail outlets to allow a library booth or table to showcase resources and assistance
- Patron surveys asking what programs/assistance they would like

Goal 4: BCPL will support and encourage digital creativity among patrons.

Objectives:

Each year, the usage of the Digital Underground studio and lab will increase 10%

Possible Activities

- Strategically add digital creativity tools to the Digital Underground.
- Technology training and competencies for its Digital Underground staff
- Active marketing/promotion of the space and its resources
- Investigate increasing space available for Digital Underground

Succeed in School

Goal 1: BCPL will strengthen relationships with school leadership in Bartholomew County, including school corporations, homeschools, preschools and daycare providers.

Objectives:

Each year the library will increase the number of contact attempts with school leadership by 10%

Each year the library will increase the number of meetings with school leadership and local meetings regarding educational topics by 5%

Possible Activities

- E-Cards for every student in Bartholomew County
- School newsletters/other school media
- Provide list of programs that homeschools, preschools, and daycare could request us to conduct
- Countywide librarian network/roundtable
- Institutional cards for educational entities

Goal 2: BCPL will assist students at all levels with the appropriate resources, programs, and services.

Objectives:

Each year the usage of our digital learning resources will increase by 10%

Each year the number of programs relating to the educational needs of local students will increase by 5%

Each year the number of school requested library tours/visits will increase by 5%

Possible Activities

- Helping students, parents and caregivers find materials in the Accelerated Reader (AR) program
- Analyze current meeting room policies
- Partner with other entities to provide homework help for students
- Tutor.com- online homework help platform

Goal 3: BCPL will reach out to students, teachers, parents, and caregivers to bring our resources, programs and services to them rather than expecting them to come to the library.

Objectives:

Each year the number of offsite programs geared towards students, teachers, parents and caregivers will increase by 5%

Each year the number of school/daycare visits will increase 10%

Possible Activities

- E-Cards for every student in Bartholomew County
- Partner with other entities to market our resources

Organizational Competencies

By December 31, 2016 BCPL will conduct a salary and compensation study that compares the compensation of all staff with other libraries and community entities. This study will include analyzing vacation and sick leave compensation, insurance premiums/coverage, and paid holidays.

By December 31, 2016, BCPL will thoroughly analyze and revise if needed job descriptions throughout the system. This will be conducted in conjunction with a review of compensation and will include a revision of the library's salary classification system.

By December 31, 2016 BCPL will review the process by which library use data is collected, compiled, and distributed, and revise the process as necessary to provide relevant management data to monitor progress on the objectives in the strategic plan.

By December 31, 2017 BCPL will develop a marketing plan that includes methods for evaluating the effectiveness of marketing and public relations activities.

By December 31, 2017 BCPL will analyze the hours of library operation for all locations to best meet the needs of the community.

By December 31, 2017 BCPL will produce a staff development plan that identifies the competencies and training that will be needed by staff to effectively serve the community through the library's goals and objectives.

Evaluation

Regular and ongoing evaluation of this strategic plan is crucial to success. As part of the continual evaluation, the goals and objectives will form the framework of reports from and to the library board and therefore the community. The director will work closely with the library's management team and other staff to monitor progress and make adjustments to services, programs, and resources as necessary. The director will regularly report on progress towards each objective and recommend changes to the strategic plan as necessary.

Several of the objectives also call for surveys to the public to gauge our progress. These surveys will be done at least annually. Other statistics will be gathered through program attendance, circulation numbers, database usage, etc...

Assessment of Facilities, Services, Technology, and Operations

BCPL is fortunate to have two architecturally significant buildings. The Cleo Rogers Memorial Library in downtown Columbus was designed by I.M. Pei and opened to the public in 1969. The Hope Branch library on the square in Hope was designed by Deborah Berke and completed in 1998.

However with world-class buildings often come world-class issues. Both buildings are starting to show their age and are in need of some improvements.

Main

- Interior light fixtures and bulbs (currently using incandescent bulbs in many places)
- Exterior brickwork on walls
- Exterior lighting on the East side of building
- Children's terrace area (new doors, brick stairs)
- Revamp Children's program and collection areas
- More space needed for Digital Underground
- Revamp of the Red Room
- Revamp Teen areas
- Carpeting throughout the building
- Parking is a perennial issue

Hope

- Carpeting
- Needs a specific long-term plan for maintenance needs (2016)

The plaza at the Main library was completely renovated in 2013/2014 and the landscape at the front of the Hope branch was redesigned and completed in 2015.

BCPL also has a Bookmobile service that has been serving the needs of patrons throughout the county since 1959. A new bookmobile was purchased in 2010 and put into service in 2011. While it currently

serves our needs in regards to bookmobile service, we will need to continually evaluate and plan for the future of this service.

Currently the Main library is open 69 hours per week with 3 hours on Sunday added from September-May. Our Hope branch is open 55 hours per week and our Bookmobile operates on a biweekly route from 8:30-5:00 Monday-Thursday. The Library Board of Trustees will be examining hours of operation in 2016 to determine if the hours are appropriate for the community need.

Through a federal grant, BCPL is proud to serve as a subregional depository of the Talking Books and Braille Library. BCPL serves 16 counties with services from 8:00-5:00 Monday-Friday through mail and electronic delivery as well as walk-in services.

While BCPL has made significant strides in the area of technology, there is still work to be done. Many of our challenges come from a Main library building that was built in the late 1960's and made almost entirely of brick and concrete. Running new data wiring and installing new electrical outlets can be very difficult.

BCPL did complete an upgrade to our wireless network in 2015 and will be working to install new technology as we are able and as the needs arise. In 2016, BCPL will be automating the Bookmobile's circulation process by connecting it to the library's already existing circulation and cataloging system.

Financial Resources and Sustainability

As a local government entity, the library's main source of revenue is derived from property taxes and CAGIT (county adjusted gross income tax). In 2010, property tax caps were placed in the Indiana Constitution which limits the amount of tax taxpayers would pay. While this is great for the taxpayers' wallet, it has put a strain on the abilities of local governmental units to conduct business. Thankfully, Bartholomew County is a growing area and assessed valuation continues to increase thus reducing the effect of property tax caps on BCPL's budget. However, we are not immune. Large TIF (tax increment finance) districts also limit the tax base of the county and thus the library.

Cash flow is another source of concern for the BCPL budget. Property tax dollars come in two main disbursements, late spring and late December. Since the last disbursement is often not until the last week or days of the year, it can be difficult to pay bills with cash on hand. For many years now BCPL has borrowed from our LIRF (Library Improvement Reserve Funds), in order to have cash available when needed. This was not an issue when the balance of the LIRF was high. However due to declining budgets and large capital expenses (roof, HVAC, plaza renovation), the LIRF budget is not what it once was.

BCPL will need to develop a plan that increases the operating budget balance and keep the need to borrow from LIRF at a minimum. This will free up LIRF dollars to be used for facility improvements and needs.

BCPL will also continually evaluate all of its services, programs, and departments in order to maintain the highest level of efficiency possible.

Collaboration

With Community Partners

As noted in the above goals and objectives, BCPL will be putting emphasis on collaboration with community partners over the next three years. While several staff members actively participate with other entities in the community (United Way, Literacy Task Force, Visitors Center, Bartholomew County Historical Society, Bartholomew County Genealogy Society, Family Self Sufficiency, etc...), this was never tied to a greater library initiative.

Over the life of this strategic plan, BCPL will be communicating, collaborating, and actively pursuing partnerships that move the community forward as it relates to the goals and objectives in this plan. We want to be part of the solution and use our resources and talents to truly make an impact in the community. This can only be done in conjunction with other agencies and partners.

With Other Public Libraries

Many staff members are involved in state and national professional associations that give us the opportunity to network and understand what other libraries are doing to handle the unique challenges of the 21st century library.

Jason Hatton, Director, represents all of Indiana libraries on the American Library Association (ALA) governing council. As a result of this he also travels twice a year to the midwinter and annual conferences of the association. He is also on the Indiana Library Federation (ILF) and the Indiana Public Library Association (IPLA) Board of Directors. Several times a year, he is able to formally network with other library directors from the region and throughout the state.

Jennifer Tchida, Youth Services Coordinator, is currently the chair of the Children and Young People's Division of ILF and the ILF District 6 Conference Committee. She is also serving on the Middle Grades Committee to choose the Young Hoosier Book Award (YHBA).

Mary Clare Speckner, Community Services Coordinator, serves on the ILF Annual Conference Committee as the Volunteer Coordinator. She also is very active on the ILF District 6 committee (including several years as Chair) as well as the Reference and Marketing Divisions.

For the past several years, BCPL has closed in order to either host or send all staff to the ILF District 6 conference to allow for professional development in the topics presented and to allow staff at all levels to network with their peers. The library is also able through the Frances Carr Memorial Fund to send staff to the ILF annual conference as well as national conferences such as the Public Library Association (PLA) conference.