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The Next Chapter

Carmel Clay Public Library
Strategic Plan 2020-2022

"In all affairs, it's a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark on the thing you have long taken for granted."

– Bertrand Russell
philosopher, historian

ASPIRATION: How can the Carmel Clay Public Library's locations become hubs of activity in Carmel for individuals and families to enjoy beautiful spaces and welcoming places for learning, leisure, gathering, and working and having virtual access to materials?

Since 1904, the Carmel Library has been an anchor of literacy and learning. From its beginning in the local telephone exchange, the library has had four homes on Main Street, illustrating the importance that the building–and more importantly, what goes on inside it–to the community's quality-of-life. As the community has grown in population and diversity, the library has grown as well. And, now it's time to grow again.

The Carmel Clay Public Library's current iteration is home to award-winning programming, staff, and architecture. For years, some prognosticators have cited the "demise of the book," yet book demand is not lessening as much as it is changing. With mobile access to information, the types of information and stories pursued are changing. There are other many other challenges as well. Among these are:

- Changing delivery methods–virtual, digital, traditional
- Growing number of distinct audiences with diverse preferences
- Shifting population growth as the west side of Clay township builds out
- Moving beyond "the book" to provide access to a mushrooming amount of information
- The library as a safe space for students, residents, and visitors
- Providing information access with a human dimension
- Seeking connections beyond our screens

In response, the library's staff and leaders are again updating its strategic plan. The plan provides a road map to help the library serve its users and the broader community while adapting to their changing needs, wants, and preferences. The library has a track record of excellence, but that is a moving target that we must constantly evaluate, question, and evolve.

We often look to our crafted Mission and Vision Statements to provide direction.

> ***Our Mission:*** *to inspire lifelong discovery, facilitate collaboration, and connect people with resources.*
>
> ***Our Vision:*** *to support a diverse community of people committed to lifelong learning, an enhanced quality of life, and enriching social and cultural experiences.*

Sometimes, these statements don't challenge us enough because they don't ask questions which spur dialogue about our future. Historian and philosopher Bertrand Russell offered this insight, "In all affairs, it's a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark on the thing you have long taken for granted." What if our Mission Question was, "How do we inspire lifelong discovery, facilitate collaboration, and connect people with resources?" In order to move forward we must endeavor to answer this bold question.

This plan is built to address four key questions:
- What can we build upon? Identify our greatest strengths.
- What is our community seeking? Identify our service priorities
- What do we care deeply about? Identify what actions will support our aspirations
- How will we know success? Determine how we will measure our outcomes

To answer these questions, we gathered input from community members, young adults, volunteers, senior managers, and staff. In our process, we addressed some default ideas that need to be reexamined.

First, "the library is a community institution for cardholders and local residents." While true, it is not complete. We've purposefully selected the word "users" because visitors don't need a card to enter, may be from another community, may attend a program or events, or may seek a safe space for leisure or work. Within the walls of the library all are welcome.

Second, we often look to data and statistical measurements to determine success, but again, it's not enough. Measurements and Outcomes need to draw upon statistical data (quantitative) and anecdotal stories and open-ended questions (qualitative) to fully evaluate the entire library experience.

Third, some organizations begin planning from "current state" rather than focusing on their aspirations. In doing so, budgeting and financial limitations immediately limit the possibilities. By focusing on the strategic goals first, the library's leaders and managers can analyze and

adjust library staffing to accomplish strategic goals, develop innovative ideas, and expand programs and services.

In working through the planning process, we identified four areas of focus. Throughout the plan we utilize the word "users" interchangeably with "adults, teens, and children."

Relationships: Adults, teens, and children will encounter welcoming places and helpful and knowledgeable staff in a user-focused, community-supported institution.

Users choose spaces based on their total experiences. Desired places must do more than meet the most basic needs. Users seek beautiful spaces where they feel safe and find themselves at the center of the "customer experience." Users want to engage knowledgeable staff who are excited to help find solutions — getting a new card, finding the next great book or movie, attending an event, or checking out equipment. Users want websites that are easy to use, intuitive, and responsive for the new user and the tech-savvy. Communities that support libraries demonstrate that learning is open to everyone and that there is value in space where we can gather as one community.

Programs & Experiences: Adults, teens, and children will be able to engage in programs developed, hosted, and/or sponsored by the library resulting in memorable and fulfilling experiences.

Beyond materials and services, today's library will develop and deliver programs that transform individuals and community culture. From book clubs to speaker events, game nights to workshops, career assistance to maker spaces, libraries are a catalyst for personal discovery and growth. Expanded cultural awareness and community growth occurs when people learn, share, and experience together. The library seeks to enhance the quality of life for our entire community.

Products & Services: Adults, teens, and children will access information through a diverse collection of materials, variety of delivery methods, and user-focused services.

The amount of information available is growing exponentially. Keeping up with a collection of materials requires an understanding of users' evolving desires and preferences. Meanwhile, library users want access to this expanding collection through an equally expanding range of delivery formats — print, large print, foreign language, audible, digital and more. The library is tasked with keeping up with users' evolving technological preferences. Beyond the collection of works by others, today's users are looking to the library to become spaces where they can create music, art, books, and more.

Environments: Adults, teens, and children will be able to enjoy beautiful indoor and outdoor spaces to meet their evolving needs —learning, leisure, gathering and working.

The traditional library was a building filled with shelves of books and reference materials protected where peace and quiet. Today's library has an opportunity to redesign the environments where transactional products and services and transformational programs and experiences strengthen its relationships with individuals, groups and the broader community. We seek to recreate the central campus inside and out, expand to new locations, leverage mobile services, and fine-tune our virtual space. The next library will be a safe and convenient hub for better learning, more enjoyable self-discovery, valuable community gathering, and supportive of changing work styles.

Foresight
Dreams
Business Climate
Opportunities

Strategic Plan

Areas of Focus
Objectives and Goals
Strategies and Tactics
Governance Structure

Annual Plan

Program Priorities
Tactical Action Plan
Annual Budget
Meeting Agendas

Performance Metrics

Key Performance Indicators
Budget vs. Actual
Program Evaluation
Board Assessment

Operations

Implementation
Management and Leadership
Staffing and Technology Needs

Rinse & Repeat

Three-Year Review
Bold, New Ideas

RELATIONSHIPS

GOAL: Adults, teens, and children will encounter welcoming places and helpful and knowledgeable staff in a user-focused, community-supported institution.

Relationships	2020	2021	2022
Objective R1: ***Community residents and users will be aware*** *of programs, events, new products and services, and other library offerings through multiple channels, including social media, and at locations throughout the community.*			
• Develop and expand ways to multiply messages, passively and actively, throughout community (festivals, Midtown Screen, restaurants, schools, partners, HOAs)			
• Be more active on social media platforms and use specific channels preferred by target audiences			
• Expand the reach of Mobile Library at community events, e.g. festivals, concerts, sporting events			
• Reorient the main library facade to have a visible presence on Main Street			
• Utilize staff as spokespersons; utilize Speakers Bureau to share library with community groups			
• Strengthen existing and seek out partnerships that can enable the library to offer large-scale programs			
• Capture and share stories of how the library has an impact on people's lives			
• Develop new user-focused language and signage to better engage the public			
Measurements: • Survey user awareness of key services • Increase in the number of presentations given by the library staff • Increase the number os events attended by Mobile Library to increase usage and awareness • Survey patron satisfaction with ability to access library resources in-person and electronically • Increase in percentage of residents who have and use their library cards • Collecting and sharing stories of exceptional service provided by library staff members			
Obj. R2: *Users will have virtual access to library services and information about library programs through a **functional, responsive website and social media.***			

Relationships	2020	2021	2022
• Expand services available through improved web interface			
• Drive interest and awareness of programs and events through CCPL website			
• Manage social media platforms to inform and interact with users			
Measurements:			
• Survey patron satisfaction with ability to access library resources electronically and determine awareness of programs and services			
Obj. R3: *Adults, teens, and children will be able to find valuable **materials, resources, programs, and staff assistance** that address these diverse needs and desires.*			
• *Cultural* - nationality, heritage, ethnicity, language • *Demographic* - age, gender, gender identity, education, profession, occupation, income level, and marital status • *Psychographic* - personality, values, opinions, attitudes, interests, and lifestyles • *Generational* - perspectives based on seminal events during their lives • *Physical, mental, and emotional abilities*			
Measurements:			
• Conduct a regular survey of community needs and interests			
Obj. R4: *Users will encounter **knowledgeable and welcoming staff** members striving to help them enjoy their library experiences.*			
• Develop well-marked "Ask Me" stations throughout the library to assist users in finding answers			
• Provide hands-on staff training for critical technology skills as well as provide a robust orientation ensuring a shared understanding of the CCPL culture of service			
• Develop and implement a cross-training staff plan to encourage personal job growth, innovative opportunities, and greater collaboration and to meet the changing needs of the library			

Relationships	2020	2021	2022
• Provide communication training for staff to strengthen their customer service skills and better prepare them to share library programs and services			
• Provide opportunities for staff to learn about the work of other departments to enable flexible staffing, improve services to users, and raise organizational awareness			
• Create a team to develop consistent core knowledge training for staff and an on-going assessment tool applicable to job requirements			
• Encourage and reward staff for continuing education achievements and outstanding service			
• Create an expectation that staff will seek out and share news and ideas from other library and non-library sources, including conferences			
• Strengthen the culture of caring between and among library staff while the library continues to evolve			
• Provide on-site assistance for staff members to become mentally, physically, and emotionally healthy			

Measurements:
- Track staff achievement of key technology competencies
- Staff reports a high level of knowledge about library services and strong organizational awareness
- Annual completion of staffing assessment to determine adjustments needed to accomplish strategic goals
- CCPL staff deliver presentations at conferences to share innovative work
- Staff report high satisfaction with CCPL's innovative and creative environment
- Staff report increased comfort level in advocating for the library and increased involvement in community groups

Obj. R5: ***Community Supporters*** *will demonstrate their support for the library, its programs and experiences, and products and services, through taxpayer support and private donations of time and money.*

CCPL Foundation

- Strengthen the relationship between the library and the Foundation in order to help fund the expansion of programs and services

Relationships	2020	2021	2022
• Work with the CCPL Foundation to identify more opportunities for engagement and advocacy within their ranks			
• Continue engaging Friends of Library (as part of the Foundation) as volunteers and support its book recycling efforts through the Used Book Store and Used Book Sales			
• Support the Guild's Visiting Author events			
• Engage with the Foundation's new young professional group to raise awareness about library services, to strengthen advocacy, and to connect with area organizations			
Elected officials and local government			
• Build strong relationships with local government agencies			
• Leverage library events as opportunities to invite and engage with legislators			
• Establish annual face-to-face interactions between Board members and their appointing authorities to communicate library success			
Community groups			
• Encourage and support staff to become involved in community groups in order to promote two-way communication between library and local organizations			
• Conduct periodic surveys to gauge community needs and interests			
• Expand gathering spaces so community groups can use the library for meetings and events			
Measurements: • Annually assess the library's planned programs and services to identify sponsorship needs • Growth in new and existing partnerships • Directors and Board members engage at least once/year with area legislators • Board members arrange in-person meetings with their appointing authorities and the library's Director • Increased participation in CCPL Foundation support, events, and Friends' events • Increase in volunteer participation through the Friends of the Library and the Foundation Guild • Staff report increased comfort level in advocating for the library and increased involvement in community groups • Active involvement of at least one CCPL staff member in young professionals group each year			

PROGRAMS & EXPERIENCES

GOAL: Adults, teens, and children will be able to engage in programs developed, hosted, and/or sponsored by the library resulting in memorable and fulfilling experiences.

Programs & Experiences	2020	2021	2022
*Obj. PE1: Users will have access to receive personal, professional assistance from library staff with **individual projects**.*			

• Provide Genealogy assistance services
  • Assist users individual search needs
  • Conduct workshops to teach genealogical research			

• Assist users with technical learning for hardware and software issues
  • Tech Drop-In events - tutorials
  • Conducting research in a digital world
  • App Anxiety
  • Tech toy shopping assistance			

• Provide career assistance to individuals to enhance job skills and learn business basics • Partner with outside organizations to offer career skills programs and vocational career information			
• Offer school assistance to aid students • Testing preparation, post-secondary pursuits, promoting online tutoring			
• Offer ESL classes for adults as community diversifies			
Measurements • Survey user feedback on personal assistance experiences • Track participation numbers			
*Obj. PE2: Users will **gather as community** for learning and leisure through events, speakers and workshops.*			
Events			
• Develop a multi-cultural 'festival' with activities for all ages to spur cultural exchange and appreciation			
• Provide a forum for community leaders and government officials to meet with residents and share information			
• Explore ways of streaming and recording library video content to reach new audiences			

Programs & Experiences	2020	2021	2022
• Expand Game Day/Night to attract non-traditional audiences			
• Host a trivia tournament for teams			
• Host after-hours, Second Saturdays, performances or other events for local musicians and artists			
Speakers			
• Host issues-oriented discussion programs, in partnership with community businesses and organizations, utilizing outside experts as speakers and moderators — business, healthcare, arts, culture, travel, community development			
• Host authors and content creatives to share ideas and discuss their works			
Workshops			
• Explore informal learning programs which leverage formal education systems, e.g Citizen Science			
• Partner with other groups to offer interactive training in specialty skills — e.g. culinary, art, gardening, home decorating			
• Offer affordable, innovative, and interactive programs for generational challenges — overcoming college debt, coping with loss, managing retirement, managing jobs and children			
• Sponsor "Overcoming Your Geek Fears" Tech Update in autumn prior to gift-buying seasons			
Measurements • Survey user feedback of programming, utilizing PLA's Project Outcome resources • Increase number of public forums offered • Evaluate existing programs and launch new programming Ideas in response to community needs and interests			
*Obj. PE3: Users will be able to use media and materials to **advance literacy** for personal growth and cultural awareness.*			
• Expand Summer Reading programs for all ages			
• Continue to expand book clubs and related events at the library and at off-site events			
• Sponsor Business Book Conversations, in conjunction with OneZone (chamber of commerce) for trending books in business arena			

Programs & Experiences	2020	2021	2022
- Toddler to Pre-K - Continue to expand upon and improve annual Bounce Early Literacy Fair as well as other large-scale programs (Dr. Seuss, Monarchs, Winter Wonderland, etc.) – utilizing community support and connections - Continue to offer and improve developmentally appropriate story time and self-directed learning programs that focus o the 5 ALSC early literacy practices: Read, Sing, Talk, Write, and Play (Drop in Read Alouds, Imagination Station, regular series programming story-times, etc.)			
- Children's - Continue to expand and improve STEAM offerings at the library and at off-site events (Questers, Questers Jr., Playing with Robots, and other technology-based programs - Continue to expand our partnership with the Carmel Schools and other community groups (tours, e-book visits, literacy nights, Monon Center, etc.)			
- Young Adults - Expand the Young Adult Winter Reading Program - Develop new teen volunteer opportunities that incorporate reading and evaluating YA literature - Use new catalog interface to expand the impact of the Teen Library Council and the Choice Picks Collection			
Measurements • Targeted user satisfaction surveys • Track participation numbers over time to compare and evaluate programs • Initiate at least two major library-wide cross-promotional campaigns each year • Survey patron opinions of CCPL as a lifelong learning provider • Inclusion of patron impact stories in library marketing and reporting			
*Obj. PE4: Users will enjoy a wider range of programs and experiences presented in **indoor and outdoor settings.***			
Explore programming opportunities to utilize outdoor spaces in new ways — remodeled campus, West Clay branch, and other sites			
Explore innovative programming opportunities to rethink the library's indoor spaces			

Programs & Experiences	2020	2021	2022
Measurements • Conduct user satisfaction surveys to evaluate spaces and programs			

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

GOAL: Adults, teens, and children will access information through a diverse collection of materials, variety of delivery methods, and user-focused services.

Products & Services	2020	2021	2022
*Obj. PS1: Users will be able to access **community services** that are extensions of the library experience.*			
• Expand services available from community providers including healthcare, social services, government services			
• Explore offering additional on-site personal services, including but not limited to, copy services, scanners, Notary Public, and fax machine			
• Expand art exhibitions and purchase options to support local artists			
Measurements: • Survey patron satisfaction with services accessible at the library by third-party providers			
*Obj. PS2: Users will encounter staff **'information specialists'** who can guide library users to materials, services, programs.*			
• Adopt mobile tools that will enable staff to help patrons more efficiently and at the time and place where they need assistance			
• Explore touch screens to enable users and staff to improve accessibility in the library			
• Develop "Ask Me" desks for specialized assistance			
Measurements: • Survey patron satisfaction with staff assistance			
*Obj. PS3: Users will access an **expanding collection** of materials in new and traditional format options.*			
• Utilize the collection development team to explore collection analysis tools, find selection efficiencies, and improve budgeting			
• Analyze usage of e-books, audiobooks, and other electronic materials and adjust budgets to address changing demand			
• Evaluate databases, formats, and technologies to meet users' needs and optimize staff, space, and budget resources			

Products & Services	2020	2021	2022
*Obj. PS4: Users will be able to **access materials (physical and digital)** through innovative delivery formats and access equipment to ensure positive experiences.*			
• Print (large-print, foreign language) • Video • Audio • Digital • Mobile • Explore ways to provide greater access to high-demand materials • In-library equipment use • Borrow equipment and/or portable devices for personal use			
Measurements: • Survey patron satisfaction with materials (print, digital, electronic), equipment, and assistance provided by the library and its staff • Increase in library materials turnover rates (circulation divided by materials in collection)			

ENVIRONMENTS

GOAL: Adults, teens, and children will be able to enjoy beautiful indoor and outdoor spaces to meet their evolving needs —learning, leisure, gathering and working.

Environments	2020	2021	2022
*Obj. E1: Users and staff will access **comfortable, functional, and ergonomic furnishings** in use-appropriate spaces.*			
• Work with a consultant to assess, design, and implement a space and furnishings plans to better serve patrons and staff needs			
• Explore the use of digital signage within the library			
• Reorient the Main Library facade to have a visible presence on Main Street			
Measurements • Survey user satisfaction with improved spaces created by the library's remodeling			
*Obj. E2: Users and community groups will be able to use flexible **gathering spaces** for meetings and other events.*			
• Expand flexible community spaces to meet demand for library programs and other events offered by community service providers			
• Explore new program spaces, both indoors and outdoors, for events and activities			
Measurements • Survey user satisfaction with improved gathering spaces and events created by the library's remodeling			
*Obj. E3: Users will access expanded facilities that enable individual and collaborative **learning spaces.***			
• Optimize collaborative/group learning spaces to meet the needs of diverse learning communities			
• Provide and encourage the library as a center for personal learning			
• Increase individual study spaces in a variety of settings			

Environments	2020	2021	2022
• Expand creative spaces in the Main Library by moving the Digital Media Lab there and creating new spaces for specialty uses, such as 3D printing, virtual reality, sound and video recording, and art crreation			
Measurements • Survey user satisfaction with improved learning spaces created by the library's remodeling			
*Obj. E4: Users will enjoy comfortable **leisure spaces** (third places) that are in line with market-competitive services.*			
• Contract for a safe, affordable, high-quality cafe with a variety of food options			
• Continue supporting and providing space for the Used Book Store operated by the Foundation Friends			
• Explore innovative indoor and outdoor spaces for personal enjoyment and events			
• Provide a variety of spaces – passive and active, quiet and interactive – for enjoying library materials and the library environment			
• Offer space for patrons to display and share their creative work			
Measurements • Survey user satisfaction with improved leisure spaces created by the library's remodeling			
*Obj. E5: Users seeking exceptional **work spaces** will find a variety of choices to meet their needs.*			
• Offer high-quality wi-fi, access to key equipment, and staff assistance			
• Provide spaces for collaborative work environments			
• Keep up-to-date on changing technology to meet the needs of users and library staff			
Measurements • Survey user satisfaction with improved work spaces and created by the library's remodeling			

Environments	2020	2021	2022
*Obj. E6: Redesign and build architecturally-pleasing spaces that are **environmentally-friendly, safe, accessible, and user-focused.***			
• Take steps to become a community leader in building design that reduces energy use, takes advantage of green technologies, encourages recycling, and assists the community in more earth-friendly practices			
• Install a water bottle refilling station(s) to reduce plastic waste			
• Create and provide safe and secure environments for users and staff, including in crisis situations			
• Ensure that materials are easily accessible and convenient for all users			
• Continue taking steps to provide well-marked, ample parking with safe crosswalks for pedestrians			
• Work with the City of Carmel to redesign the Main Street intersection to safely accommodate increased student traffic from the high school campus			
Measurements • Survey user satisfaction with eco-friendly spaces created by the library's remodeling • Develop a crisis plan in conjunction with law enforcement officials • Increase the number of recycling and other 'green stations' throughout the library • Increase the number of green community events offered at the library			
Obj. E7: *Users will have access to library materials and services through **additional locations and satellite services.***			

• Elevate the library's offerings to extend the "library experience" to those without access to the Main Library or the West Branch.
  • Mobile Library
  • Explore additional opportunities in other spaces			

• Continue to fine-tune the West Branch to provide materials, services, and programs for traditional and new users			
Measurements • Survey user satisfaction with spaces, programs, and services at the West Branch •			

Environments	2020	2021	2022
Obj. E8: *Users will have **virtual access to library services** and information about library programs through a functional, responsive website.*			
• Redesign the library's website to be safe, secure, responsive, and more informative			
• Expand users' ability to use personal devices to access services			
Measurements: • Survey user satisfaction with the library's virtual environment			

Carmel Clay Public Library
2020-2022 Strategic Plan

This mind map provides a visual representation of the 2020-2022 strategic plan. A much more detailed map was developed during the planning process which showed each program presented, service offered, numerous relationships, and description of spaces. Each of these "bubbles" can be expanded with the strategies and tactics within the represented objectives.

Carmel Clay Public Library

Products & Services
- Community Services
- Information Specialists
- Expanding Collection
- Physical & Digital Materials

Programs & Experiences
- Individual Assistance
- Community Gathering
- Advancing Literacy
- Indoor & Outdoor Programming

Relationships
- Community Supporters
- Knowledgeable & Welcoming Staff
- Users: Adults, Teens, and Children
- Awareness, Website, & Social Media

Environments
- Virtual Access
- Satellite Locations & Services
- Environmentally-friendly, Safe & Accessible
- Comfortable Furnishings
- Work Spaces
- Leisure Spaces
- Learning Spaces
- Gathering Spaces