



SYLVANIA

WA Alexis
Laskey

Harvest

SYL

Monroe

Sylvania

WT

I-75

PP

King

KR

Central

SAN

I-475

KE

LAG

Summit

TOLEDO

Dorr

Collingwood

MAIN

BRM

OREGON

OS

RC

MO

LOC

Navarre

McCord

US 23

Reynolds

TH

SOU

I-280

Coy

HOL

Airport

Byrne

HED

Detroit

Broadway

MAUMEE

MAU

Anthony Wayne

I-75

WATERVILLE

WV

Michigan

● Toledo Lucas County Public Library locations

A Day in the Life of the Library...



For over 175 years, the Library has built and maintained a collection of resources for customers to borrow, answered questions, provided places for meeting and study, and offered educational and informational programs. Today we proudly serve the City of Toledo and Lucas County with 20 convenient locations (see map, left).

On an average day, over 8,700 people walk through our doors, including nearly 2,000 people at Main Library and 1,100 at Sanger Branch. There are over 25 scheduled events, including storytimes, computer classes, puppet shows, educational presentations, technology training, and STEM and maker activities, to name just a few. Over 20 walk-in activities are available, and a meeting room is in use at every location.

In addition, nearly 18,000 items are checked out, over 1,800 titles are downloaded, and all of our over 700 computers are used, many for the entire day. We also have four unique vehicles that travel throughout Lucas County delivering materials and specialized services.

Beyond these activities, there are many more initiatives, programs and opportunities the Library is proud to provide in partnership with other organizations across Toledo and Lucas County.

In developing this new Strategic Plan, we heard from many, many people who reinforced the value of the Library today and its importance into the future. The priorities identified here attempt to preserve the best of the Library's past, recognize the challenges of the present, and best prepare ourselves, along with the residents of Toledo and Lucas County, for the future.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2016/2020

● **Mission**

Engage all of our communities, inspire lifelong learning, and provide universal access to a broad range of information, ideas, and entertainment.

● **Vision**

To continue evolving Library services to best meet the needs of the many and diverse communities we serve and be a catalyst for positive change in all corners of Toledo and Lucas County.

● **Values**

In all of our efforts we will seek to build an organizational culture that is...

Welcoming - The Library respects and values diversity, equity, and fairness.

Innovative - The Library encourages creativity, experimentation and new ideas to better serve the residents and customers.

Objective - The Library supports the free exchange of information and ideas.

Accountable - The Library takes responsibility for its actions and services.

Collaborative - The Library works with others to strengthen Toledo and Lucas County.

FOCUS AREAS

Over the next five years, the Library will focus its efforts in three key areas:

I. Support essential literacies

The world is changing rapidly – we are constantly introduced to new words, new technologies, new ideas, demographic changes and new relationships that we need to understand to stay connected and relevant. More and more, the success of individuals, organizations and communities is linked directly to their ability to access and learn the information, skills, and knowledge they need, when they need it. The Library is unique in that it often provides people with their first introduction to a range of literacies that can help them live fulfilling lives and be strong contributors to communities across Toledo and Lucas County. This is true, whether people are applying for a job online, raising children, learning how to use the newest device, or creating their first podcast, musical recording, or short film. With virtually boundless access to the world through high speed Internet, the Library is unrivaled in its ability to help people find things that enrich their lives.

Recognizing the importance of multiple literacies will be a key area of focus for the Library over the next five years. Our strategies will focus on enhancing basic literacy; digital literacy; cultural, community, and civic

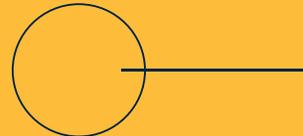


literacy; visual literacy, employment literacy, and health literacy, as well as others. There are many other high-priority literacies the Library will continue to support, including information literacy and financial literacy. Our print and digital collections will be central to this work, as will our excellent Library staff that facilitate access and provide the supports that are critical to connecting people to the wealth of resources the Library has to offer.

As we heard during our consultations on the development of this strategic plan, what people read, watch and listen to for leisure and entertainment also play an essential role in their lives. Supporting essential literacies includes recognizing the value of the Library as a “place of possibility” that provides access to resources that provoke joy, adventure, imagination, empathy, insight and discovery.

STRATEGIES:

- 1 Support increased basic literacy by maintaining our focus on early childhood literacy and fostering the reading abilities of children and youth, and broadening similar supports provided to young adults, parents and people of all ages and cultural/linguistic backgrounds.**
- 2 Support increased digital literacy by continuing to introduce new technologies, making it easier to bring technology and the Internet home.**
- 3 Support cultural and civic literacy by celebrating the value of our cultural heritage and genealogical resources that help us understand where we came from, and by facilitating information sharing and knowledge exchange on current community issues and services.**
- 4 Support visual literacy by helping people interpret the visual world and understand stories and messages communicated through images.**
- 5 Support increased employment literacy by providing access to materials, knowledge and the tools required to develop or enhance skills, research potential employers, write a resume and apply for a job.**
- 6 Support increased health literacy by connecting users to multiple credible sources of high quality, easy-to-understand information regarding health and wellness, illnesses, and aging.**



WHAT WE'RE STRIVING TO ACHIEVE:

- Maintain and improve the quality of life for all the communities we serve
- Keep people and jobs in Toledo and Lucas County
- Help people get out of poverty and equalize access to opportunity

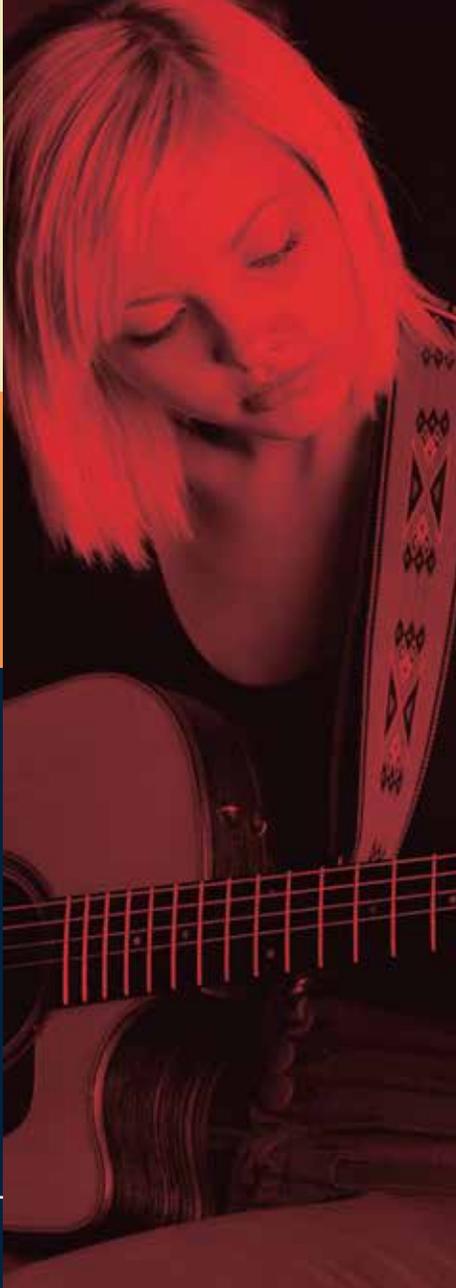
II. FOSTER A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP

The Library is unique in terms of our mandate, our geographic reach and the skills our librarians and staff offer to residents of Toledo and Lucas County.

We are committed to maximizing the impact of the resources we have the privilege of stewarding.

We understand that achieving this goal will require us to foster a culture of innovation and leadership within our organization - which is why this will be one of our key areas of focus during the next five years.

An important part of our approach will involve identifying new and creative ways to respond to the needs of the communities we serve, while at the same time ensuring that the Library remains operationally and financially sustainable over the long term.





STRATEGIES:

- 1 Be a user-centered space that provides opportunities to access tools and resources with which to discover and create new knowledge.**
- 2 Explore other things to lend and share in addition to books, audio-visual resources, and computers.**
- 3 Continue to deliver economic value and return on investment.**
- 4 Continue to pursue revenue sources and business models that maximize efficient and sustainable library operations and customer service.**
- 5 Invest in the ongoing development of our staff through a range of creative professional development opportunities.**
- 6 Make this strategic plan come alive through a culture of responsible experimentation and iteration.**

WHAT WE'RE STRIVING TO ACHIEVE:

- A Library team with a shared set of values, driven by a shared mission and vision
- A responsive organization that is able to adapt to the ever-changing context in which we work and embraces opportunities to respond to community needs in new ways
- An employer that celebrates the contribution of individuals while fostering a strong sense of collaboration and sharing

III. STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In developing this Strategic Plan, we heard time and time again that the Library plays an essential role in communities throughout Toledo and Lucas County. For many, the Library may be their only source not only for books and other materials but also for access to computers and the Internet, specialized help and programs, and a safe place for spending time alone or with others.

People told us that they wished more people knew all that the Library has to offer, and that Library services reached even more broadly to areas and populations not currently well served.

We value the trust people have in us as stewards of this long-standing, essential public institution, and so it is our commitment for the next five years to do even more to strengthen our engagement with the many communities we serve. There are many individuals and organizations working hard to keep Toledo and Lucas County strong, and so our priority is to provide great services in a spirit of support and collaboration with others.





STRATEGIES:

- 1** Communicate more broadly about what the Library has to offer.
- 2** Increase the demographic and geographic reach, and the accessibility of the Library's resources and services.
- 3** Establish creative and mutually supportive partnerships that support our ability to meet community needs.
- 4** Facilitate connections between library customers and other organizations and services.
- 5** Create opportunities for strengthened relationships between staff and customers.
- 6** Design our physical and virtual public spaces to support strengthened relationships in the communities we serve.

WHAT WE'RE STRIVING TO ACHIEVE:

- Ensure citizens from all walks of life and all parts of the County are aware of, use, and appreciate Library services
- Be the "go to" location to find out about community resources, activities and events
- Increase the connectedness between communities, community organizations, the Library and its customers

Our Collaborative Approach

The strength of this new Strategic Plan is a credit to the time, energy, and ideas of the many thoughtful people who participated in its development. The process of developing the Plan took six months, involved over 350 people, and unfolded in three phases:

Phase One (July – August 2015)

focused on developing a Vision for the Future

Phase Two (September – October 2015)

focused on Testing Ideas for the Future

Phase Three (November – December 2015)

focused on drafting and finalizing the new Strategic Plan

Key characteristics of the process included:

Outreach to a wide-ranging and diverse mix of community participants. There are many organizations working to strengthen Toledo and Lucas County, and the Library is keen to ensure the new Strategic Plan is supportive of these efforts. As a result, a long list of over 300 organizations working in Toledo and Lucas County were invited to participate in the process, representing arts, culture, education, transportation, business, housing, community services, and a range of other interests. Representatives of at least 50 organizations participated in the strategic planning process (see list in back) and the results of the process were shared with all.





Hearing directly from users of our libraries and the public was also important. Eight community meetings were held throughout the County and an online feedback form was provided. While participation in the community meetings was light, the quality of the contributions was extremely high. Well over 100 people also participated in the online process.

Extensive information-sharing. Various background materials were available to participants during each phase of the process. Through meetings, at branches, and online, information was provided on the new Strategic Plan's purpose, along with the context in which it was developed, including an overview of the decision-making approach. Key questions and participants' advice were also factors. Discussion Guides and presentation slides were made available on the Strategic Planning website:

www.stratplan.toledolibrary.org

Drawing on best practices and the work of others. There are many organizations across the country that are thinking hard about what it takes to keep our libraries strong into the future. The Aspen Institute's 2014 report "Rising to the Challenge: Re-envisioning Public Libraries" was an important resource throughout development of this Strategic Plan. The strategic plans of other libraries were also extremely helpful to review, including the Columbus Library, Carnegie Library

of Pittsburgh, Multnomah County Library, New York Public Library, Tulsa City-County Library, and the Toronto Public Library.

Important role of Library staff. More than 400 people work at the Library. They are the eyes, ears, hearts and souls that deliver services to communities across Toledo and Lucas County. Several working sessions were held with staff throughout the development of this Plan, and their ideas have been instrumental in shaping it. Building on the processes, implementation of this Plan will also be driven by staff teams.

Connecting feedback to decisions. All feedback and advice received during the process, whether it was received during meetings, posted online, or sent by email, was reviewed, summarized, and considered in the development of this Strategic Plan. Feedback received during Phase One discussions directly informed the ideas shared and tested during Phase Two. The feedback received during Phase Two directly informed the draft Strategic Plan shared during Phase Three. This final Plan has been shaped by the feedback received on the draft during Phase Three.

The direct connection between feedback and decision-making was a priority for the Strategic Planning process. This inclusive, accountable approach was well received by the participants and it has been directly translated into the values articulated in this Strategic Plan.





Process Leaders



The strategic planning process was designed and led by Jason Kucsma, Susan Skitowski, Meg Delaney and Jim Funk with the support of Nicole Swerhun and Ian Malczewski, independent process facilitators from Swerhun Facilitation. Hundreds of people attended meetings and provided feedback either in person, in writing or online throughout the process, including Library Staff, Library Friends, Library Board of Trustees and Library Legacy Foundation members, Community Leaders and the public.

A team of Library Facilitators took a strong leadership role during Phase Two of the process, leading five community meetings in libraries across the County. The team included:

Amber Bertram

Unique Britton

Julie Bursten

Erin Connolly

Lydia Cousino

Jessica Gonzalez

Roberta (Birdy) Gordon

Lisa Green

Hannah Grohowski

Amy Hartman

Sadira Heer

Linda Kerul

Amber Kroggel

Therese (Tess)

Luchsinger

Jeanne McHugh

Carole Malczewski

Patti Meyer

Beth Tuohy

Sierra Webb

Elisha Whitenack

Organizations participating in the process included:

ABLE

Adelante, Inc.

The Andersons, Inc.

The Arts Commission of Greater Toledo

Association of Public Library Employees,
TAAP-UAW-Local 5242

Block Communications, Inc.

Boy Scouts of America

Ohio State Senator Edna Brown

CWA Local 4319

Emch Schaffer Schaub & Porcello

Friends of the Library Board of Trustees

Friends of the Library Literati

Huntington Bank

Imagination Station

Office of Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur

Library Legacy Foundation Board
of Trustees

Lucas County Auditor's Office

Lucas County Sheriff's Office

Lucas County Treasurer

Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority

Mental Health and Recovery Services

Metroparks of the Toledo Area

Northwest Ohio Hispanic Chamber
of Commerce

Owens Community College

PNC Bank

ProMedica

Read For Literacy/Claire's Day

Rudolph/Libbe

Savage & Associates

City of Sylvania

TARTA

Toledo Botanical Gardens

Toledo City Council

Toledo Lucas County Public Library
Board of Trustees

Toledo Mud Hens

Toledo Museum of Art

Toledo Opera

Toledo Public Schools

Toledo Zoo

United Way

University of Toledo

Washington Local Schools

WGTE Public Media

WTOL

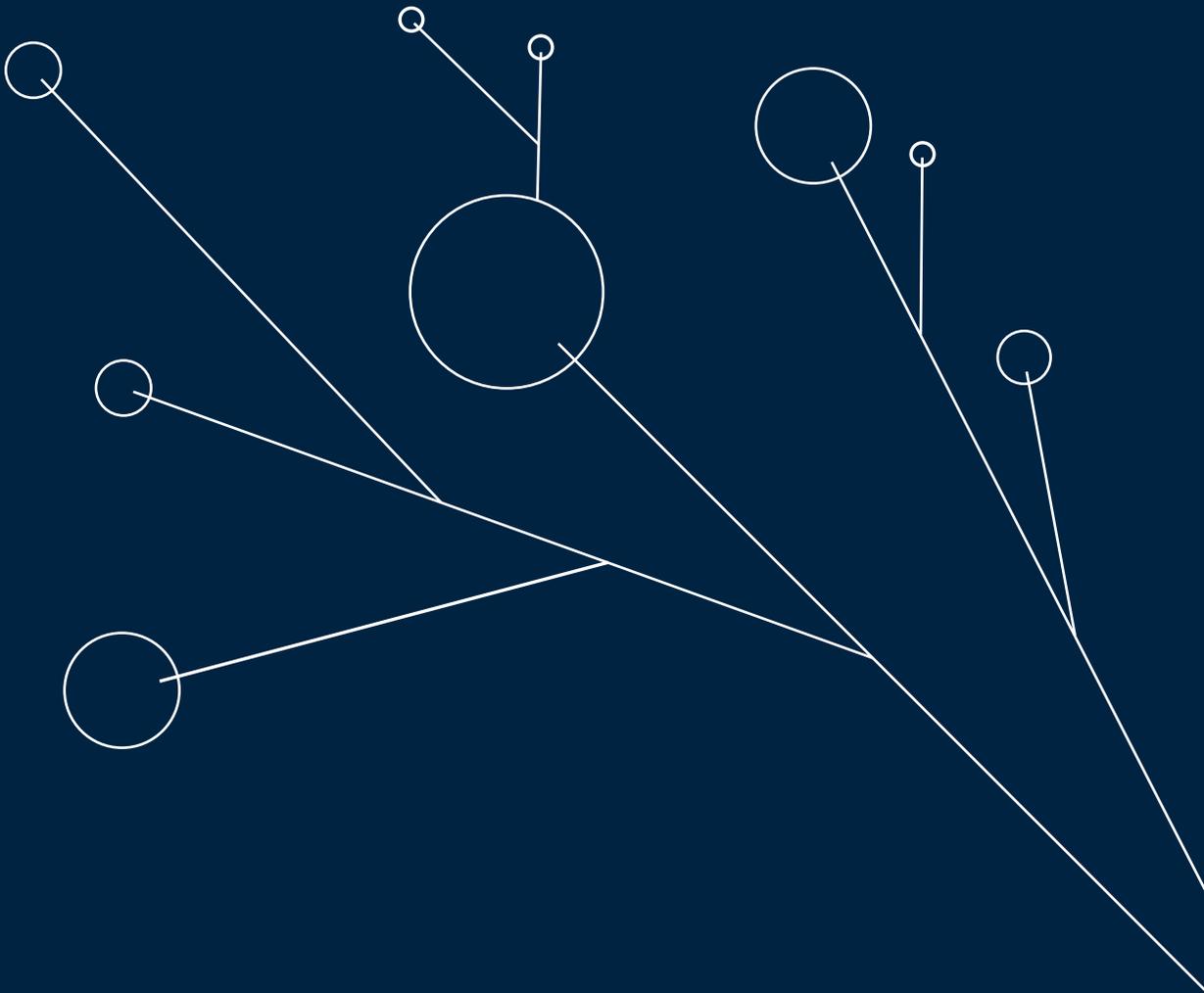


Implementation

Writing of this new Strategic Plan is just the first of many important steps that will guide the Library over the next five years. The Library's task now is to make the Plan come alive through detailed implementation plans and measurable goals that help us understand how we are doing over time. We will be tracking progress in the key areas identified in the Strategic Plan, and reporting on our progress.

Implementation will be led by Library staff teams, and in many cases will continue to involve those who contributed to the development of this Strategic Plan - Library Friends, Library users, community partners, other levels of government and elected officials, and many others. We remain committed to continuing our work together and to collectively strengthen the impact of all of our efforts to ensure a strong future for Toledo and Lucas County.





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