



Ely Public Library

Long Range Plan 2017

Long Range Plan

In today's climate of public accountability, continual change, and reduced resources, a community-focused strategic plan is essential for effective library service. We used *Strategic Planning for Results*, the most up-to-date planning model for public libraries, developed by the Public Library Association and refined through practical application in libraries nation-wide. The process emphasizes involving the community and setting priorities based on local needs. The plan is prepared by the library director and staff and approved by the library board of trustees, based on structured input from community stakeholders about local needs and priorities. The Ely Public Library started this process in the fall of 2016 and completed our Long Range Plan effective for 2017-2022.

Ely is a progressive community located in the thriving Cedar Rapids/Iowa City corridor. The city has been welcoming new citizens to its neighborhoods in record numbers and has undergone tremendous growth over the last ten years. The current population of Ely is around 2,100, quite a large increase from the official 2010 Census measure of 1776.

Our Mission

*The Ely Public Library is a community hub that **connects** people of all ages, **nurtures** young readers, and **enriches** our community by stimulating imaginations and satisfying curiosity.*

Our Values

- The Library believes quality library and information resources should be readily available and equally accessible to all.
- The Library believes reading is the gateway to knowledge and to life-long learning.
- The Library celebrates creativity and the joy of reading.
- The Library respects the right to privacy and encourages all people to explore new ideas.
- The Library provides a place for the free exchange of ideas and experiences.

Library

The current Ely Public Library building was converted from the Putnam-College Township Fire Department in 2000 and comprises approximately 5,030 square feet. The building is in good condition and complies with all codes and ADA standards. The library is attractive and is in a very desirable location on the main street in town. Library space and parking are issues with the current status. The Ely Public Library has grown exponentially in our services and offerings and the community we serve has grown quite large as well. A Needs Assessment based on library usage in 2015 has found that in order for us to best serve our community, we would need to have a building that is three times larger than our current facility.



We have one meeting room that is used for all of the library's programming and events, and is used by the community when available. The library is open 47 hours a week with evening and Saturday hours. The library provides books, periodicals, visual and audio materials, online databases, downloadable audio books, eBooks, numerous programs including a summer reading program, copy and FAX services as well as 11 public access computers. The library is pleased to provide a current collection and programs that meet the needs of the community. The library is accredited at a Tier 3, the highest level possible, by Iowa Library Services/State Library. The staff appreciates the support of the mayor, city council, and county government as well as the diligent work of the library's trustees.



Our Goals and Objectives

❖ Create Young Readers: Early Literacy

Children aged birth-5 years will have their educational and creative needs met for future success. Caregivers of children aged birth-5 years will have the support and tools necessary to provide creative educational growth opportunities.

When looking at the target audience for early literacy, we identified this to be children ages birth through 5 years of age, or beginning Kindergarten. We also considered all caregivers, whether this be parents, grandparents, babysitters, etc.

While our community group identified this as one of our strengths, they felt it is such an important service for our community that we should continue to focus on this area. The following objectives have been determined, with goals outlined.

- Provide educational and creative programming to set a foundation for future success
 - Provide weekly alphabet awareness program (Fall 2017)
 - Provide a weekly nighttime story time (Spring 2018)
 - Expand current programming to include opportunities like Play and Learn (offered through PEC) and STEM topics (Spring 2019)
 - Introduce baby and toddler movement or yoga sessions (Summer 2019)

- Provide resources available to succeed in life
 - Better advertising of our current and new early literacy programs (Spring 2018)
 - Re-boot 1000 Books Before Kindergarten (Spring 2019)
 - Ongoing educational opportunities/conferences for staff (Fall 2018 and ongoing)
 - Continue and expand on existing partnerships to provide
 - Parent Education Consortium (PEC) –parent workshops (Fall 2019)
 - Look at adding “Play and Learn” available through PEC – need to find a funding source (Spring 2020)
 - Seek out new partnerships with outside organizations to provide additional resources not available through library (Summer 2019)
 - Babysitting classes (Fall 2020)

- Provide a place for socialization and community connectedness
 - Expand physical children’s area to provide a central space for children to play and interact, while providing socialization space for caregivers (Spring 2017)
 - Seek to be involved with downtown business community to provide joint opportunities for community connectedness (Spring 2017)
 - Work with Friends group to implement an annual literacy festival (Summer 2018)

❖ Satisfy Curiosity: Life Long Learning

People of all ages will have the opportunity to explore, learn and share their knowledge through classes at the library.

Input from our community members indicated a strong desire to express creativity, experience new things, continue life-long learning, and share knowledge. The following have been identified as ways our library can reach these goals within the next five years:

- Provide opportunities for community members to express creativity and to share knowledge and skills
 - Provide quarterly classes led by community members (Fall 2019)
 - “I wish I knew how to...” introductory classes on topics such as how to: sew, cook/bake, change car oil, maintenance schedules for vehicles, set up finances/budgets, gardening, foreign language, etc.
- Identify partnerships to provide new wellness opportunities
 - Non-gym workouts in small spaces (meditation (Fall 2017), resistance training, core exercises, etc.) (Winter 2019)
 - Library to library bike ride (Summer 2020)
 - Nutrition guidance – individual classes or a series of classes (Winter 2019)
 - Mental health resources– good mental health (Winter 2019)
 - Substance abuse resources (Spring 2019)
 - Partner with Curt Wheeler – set up example teen room (depression/drug abuse)
- Provide materials and resources for community members to explore interest and lifelong learning
 - Provide one on one opportunities for assistance with technology (Fall 2017)
 - Have teens help provide assistance with technology (Winter 2020)
 - Provide classes to highlight online educational and research opportunities (Spring 2019)
 - Build collections around local interests (Summer 2018)

❖ **Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing, and Listening for Pleasure**

People of all ages will find opportunities to stimulate imaginations through our collection, media, programming, and social interactions.

Our community input group identified a thriving arts scene and access to live music as a missing piece to our community life in Ely. They task us with providing further opportunities for community entertainment.

- Provide access to visual arts
 - Formulate partnerships with local entities
 - Partner with Legion for display and program around Memorial and/or Veteran's Day (Summer 2017)
 - Contact Kirkwood & College Community to offer to display current student work (Spring 2019)
 - Provide a rotating display for local or highlighting community members' collections, art work, etc. (Winter 2019)
 - Initiate a book to movie reading and viewing club (Summer 2017)
 - Provide opportunities to create own artwork (Summer 2018)

- Provide access to listening opportunities
 - Formulate partnerships with local entities
 - Partner with these groups to provide opportunities for demonstrations, speech/drama practice, etc. – (4-H, boy scouts, girl scouts, Toastmasters, College Community, etc.) (Fall 2019)
 - Partner with Kirkwood & College Community to offer opportunities for students to perform/practice their music with an audience (Winter 2019)
 - Provide an opportunity to highlight community members' musical/speech/drama talents (Winter 2020)
 - Invite local authors to read and speak about their works (Fall 2017)
 - Reading Support –offerings for adults (Winter 2020)

- Access to community entertainment opportunities for families
 - Lunch at the library (Winter 2018)
 - Offer a quarterly evening or weekend event for families at the library (Fall 2017)
 - Friends of EPL Fun Days (Summer 2018)
 - Buskers (West Music/Griggs Music) street performers, Shakespeare in the park (Summer 2020)

❖ Visit a Comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces

People of all ages will feel welcomed, safe and connected in our physical and virtual spaces.

Our community input group charged us with this as our final and most important task. Without adequate physical space, current goals may be met with limited success and future goals will be unachievable. As a staff, we identified the need to upgrade our virtual spaces to be more user friendly and available. These are the goals that were identified:

- Virtual presence
 - Initiate a process where all programs are advertised consistently (Fall 2018)
 - Provide consistent updates of social media, showing program outcomes (Fall 2018)
 - Create a new web presence that is user friendly and has an accessible mobile site (July 2019)
- Physical space
 - Continue weeding collections to provide space for up to date materials (ongoing)
 - Rearrange space as needed to provide better space for socialization, playing, learning, quiet reading, computer/technology use, studying and working opportunities (ongoing)
 - Continue work with city to identify ways to expand or build a new facility (Fall 2017 and ongoing)
 - Work with Friends of EPL to start fundraising for a new library (Fall 2018 and ongoing)

Our Thanks

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Our Consultant/Facilitator

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Iowa Library Services

Our Community Partners

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Greg Slessor
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Kristi Reynolds

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Jim Miller
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Josie Rozum
James Serbousek
Lisa Hinton
Ryan Kiser
Anna Alldredge

Our Library Board

Jim Higdon (current)
Jennifer Norman (current)
Christy Frese (current)
Jaime Allard (current)
Alan Wery (current)
Clary Illian (current)
Carrie Ebel (current)
Dan Whitaker (previous)
Sandra Winterowd (previous)

Our Library Staff

Sarah Sellon, Director
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