



Strategic Plan for Stillwater Public Library

Stillwater, OK

Prepared by Hannah Moore

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A. Name and Location of Library

Stillwater Public Library, 1107 S. Duck, Stillwater, OK 74074

<http://library.stillwater.org>

B. Mission and Vision Statements.

Vision: “As a core community service, the Stillwater Public Library will provide equal access to the best source of information, current technology, quality collections, outstanding programs, and exceptional service.”

Mission: “Transforming lives through the power of information.”

C. Period of Time That This Strategic Plan Will Cover

2018-2020

D. Planning Methodology

This strategic plan was created for the Stillwater Public Library by analyzing industry standards and future trend predictions against what the library is already doing to support its community and Mission Statement by reviewing Stillwater Public Library Board meeting minutes, social media posts, event postings, and website documentations. Regard and considerations were made to include the Public Library Association’s performance measurement system known as “PLA’s Project Outcomes” as a way of analyzing movement towards achieving strategic plan goals.

Over the course of two months during 2016, staff reviewed personal documentation, job performance, and personal goals to give input to the Board and Library Director about historical successes and inadequacies in library performance, as well as emerging trends. Staff analysis was then considered by the Board and Library Director for the next several months to determine priorities and identify potential future obstacles to create a plan that is both directional and flexible to future changes as needed.

Patrons and community members were specifically surveyed at least twice per survey type throughout 2016 based on PLA's Project Outcomes measurement surveys for Civic/Community Engagement, Digital Learning, Early Childhood Literacy, Economic Development, and Education/Lifelong Learning. Surveys were distributed in paper form in-library at events or near targeted, relevant-use areas for at least one week each. These surveys were recorded by Friends of the Library volunteers who worked with professional-level staff and the Library director to identify trends and points of need before bringing the results to the Library Board.

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau was also taken into consideration as a way of bridging gaps that might have occurred from a lack of non-library user input.

E. Assessment of User Needs

The city of Stillwater, OK serves a population of around 48,967 according to July 2015 estimates from the US Census Bureau. This includes a state University (Oklahoma State University), and the Census Bureau estimates 48.7% of Stillwater's population holds a Bachelor's degree or higher. The Bureau also estimates persons in poverty are at 33% of the population served. The majority (79%) of the community is considered white as of 2010, with

the other 21% being made up of significantly smaller increments of Black, American Indian, Asian, and Hispanic, respectively. 5% of the population is estimated to be bi-racial.

The library shares approximately 1% of the city's annual budget, or 3% of the annual budget allocated for Recreation & Culture (which receives 9.12% of the city's overall budget). Recreation & Culture consists of the Library and the Parks and Recreation departments. For 2017, the library received a proposed operating budget of \$1,489,920.

Results of surveys indicated a need to bridge the digital divide with technological training and information access. The library currently offers 23 internet accessible desktop computers with Microsoft Office 2010 and High-speed internet. Computers are available to library card holders, and guests who are not eligible for free library privileges may provide a photo ID to the Help Desk for temporary guest access in limited amounts. The library also currently offers Microfilm/microfiche access, printing & copies for a nominal fee, and free scanning. The building is equipped with free Wi-Fi not requiring a library card. Teleconferencing equipment is available by appointment, and a computer lab offers an additional 10 desktop computers for class or group use. In previous years' pilot projects offering laptops for checkout outside the library proved unsuccessful and detrimentally costly.

Patrons and staff also indicated a strong desire for quality customer service. Despite a limited budget and limited staffing, the Stillwater Public Library continues to offer quality programming (both recurring on monthly or weekly basis, and specialty one-time programming) to users of all ages and often pairs with community partners and groups to assist in the running of programs to create an inclusive, customer-positive space.

A need for better accessibility to library services was determined based on the medium income and poverty data determined by the US Census Bureau, as well as patron feedback which

indicated most library users lived or worked within walking distance of the Public Library. In viewing this information under the context of the high poverty levels, and the un-centralized location of the library in regard to the city proper area, it was determined that library access is limited to nearby users either due to inadequate advertising or inability of many members of the Stillwater population to get to the library with the latter being the likely culprit. The inability of the library to gather adequately sufficient feedback from non-library users was another indicator that the library's reach outside of its nearby community is less than ideal and requires further action for improvement and better visibility. While knowledge of the Oklahoma State University Edmon Low library is common due to the high amount of University students attending the University, and the University's prestigious reputation, visibility of the public library is often overshadowed or ignored by the more centralized location of the University in the community. Feedback from staff interactions with University Students also indicate that most do not have time to read for pleasure on top of their studies, and instead seek out the University library, viewing it a more targeted resource for their education needs and study requirements. The limited Public Library hours only reinforce this mindset.

Providing ongoing updates through use of active social media accounts with current updates of changes or obstacles to the library's services or functions to give stakeholders a sense of comradery and investment in library progress over the entirety of the next five years. Announcements to the community with dedicated icons or images of red, green, or yellow traffic lights will inform the community in a clear, universal way about the library's progress and invite community engagement in dealing with obstacles such as decreased funding. Such methods also support the libraries smaller goals of encouraging literacy by using simple symbolism and easy-to-understand concepts to portray an overall message, regardless of details.

F. Multi-year Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Information: Provide a dynamic, current collection of resources designed to meet community needs both now and in the future.

- Promote and impart the importance of Information Literacy through eye-catching signage near study & computer areas, and by offering informational programming in conjunction with Oklahoma State University Faculty and Library staff

Information Literacy is the ability to identify what information is needed, understand how the information is organized, identify the best sources of information for a given need, locate those sources, evaluate the sources critically, and share that information

- Create a system for one-on-one appointments between library users and staff for targeted learning of new technologies based on individual abilities and needs
- Be a leading advocate for the importance of Early Literacy by promoting and offering regular story times and gathering patron feedback through PLA's Project Outcome Surveys at regular intervals throughout the calendar year
- Manage information resources to meet identified user needs, targeting priority resources in conjunction with publicly-available offerings from the Oklahoma State University Edmon Low Library

Service: Create a customer-focused environment in all aspects of library services.

- Utilize technology to enhance the customer experience and increase digital literacy through computers classes for children and adults
- Create customer service standards that will be communicated throughout organization

- Decrease points of contact required for patrons to get needs met by offering current and easy to use self-service options for routine transactions
- Provide focused staff training to enhance customer service

Accessibility: Create welcoming and diverse environments to meet the library needs of all community members.

- Expand library services into the community through increased outreaches at local schools and participation in community events
- Strengthen services to patrons with disabilities and create a staff aware of potential difficulties patrons may have in navigating library grounds or resources to better anticipate needs for users with disabilities
- Provide an atmosphere that is welcoming to all users by increasing visibility of diverse materials and programming
- Provide an atmosphere that is welcoming by greeting and treating all users with respect and exemplary customer service
- Develop programming to meet community interests using social media, in-person interactions, and survey feedback to continue to adapt to user needs and interests as they change

Technology: Implement cutting-edge strategies that increase efficiency and service to meet community needs.

- Monitor emerging technology and modify resources as need arises and funding allows, reaching out to community partners for collaborations, and investing in durable, quality technology with staying power

- Support community innovation and creation focused on technology, by providing instruction, opportunities, resources and space
- Improve 24/7 library services through website and mobile applications, as well as continually updated social media to inform library users of new and existing services
- Identify and utilize Edge Benchmarks to meet the technology needs of the community

Edge is a management and leadership tool, helping libraries create a path for the continuous growth and development of their public technology services

Visibility: Establish an easy-to-understand system for communicating goal success & needs to library stakeholders

- Use a “Traffic Light” system to communicate with the community about where the library stands in its current Strategic Plan goals with regular social media updates to keep the community and library stakeholders informed

G. Authorized Party to Approve the Strategic Plan

The Director of the Stillwater Public Library is Lynda Reynolds

List of Resources Consulted

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Appendix

1. Stillwater Public Library Long Range Plan 2016-2019



2016-2019 Long Range Plan

Your library is an essential source of knowledge and offers equal **access** for everyone in the community, providing educational resources for all ages and pursuits. It **serves** this community as a reliable **technology** and **information** center. The library is vitally important and can open doors as well as expand horizons throughout our lives. Your library is committed to the support of literacy and lifelong learning.

The Stillwater Public Library is...

A Community of Information

- We foster the open exchange of ideas through a variety of formats
- We select and make accessible materials that support our patrons and their needs
- We equip our patrons with the tools necessary to seek out, process, and evaluate information

A Community of Service

- We provide a professional and well trained staff
- We value staff members who are friendly, approachable, and provide quality customer service
- We are passionate about meeting all people at their point of need and serving them

A Community of Accessibility

- We strive to be a gathering place that is welcome to all
- We provide services to people of varied backgrounds and needs
- We offer convenient and equal access to all materials, computers, programs, and information

A Community of Technology

- We offer cutting edge technology to give our patrons every opportunity to succeed
- We are investigating new technologies with an eye toward the future of libraries and how we can continue to improve our services
- We are committed to the expansion of virtual service that brings the library to the patron 24/7

...your community library.