

Ferndale
AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY



**Strategic Plan
2022-2025**

Adopted by the Ferndale Area District Library Board of Directors on November 17, 2022.

Strategic Plan Facilitators: Pam Seabolt and Lissa Krull
Midwest Collaborative for Library Services

Acknowledgments

The development of the strategic plan took many hours and the dedicated effort of many people. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all those who helped make this plan a reality.

- The Library staff and management for their contributions to the process, and who will ultimately make this plan succeed.
- The members of the Library Board of Directors for their participation and support of the process.

Jenny Marr
Library Director

Strategic Planning Committee

Judeen Bartos, Board President
Adrienne Fazzolara, Board Vice-President
Kevin Yezbick, Board Treasurer
Kelly Farrah, Board Secretary
Meghan Evoy, Board Member
Amanda Hanlin, Board Member
Daniel Hooper, Board Member
Jordan Wright, Assistant Director
Jenny Marr, Director

Operational Retreat Members

Everett Pine, Head of Youth Services
Ed Burns, Retiring Head of Adult Services
Cricket Hoekstra, Incoming Head of Adult Services
Kelly Bennett, Head of Circulation

Jeff Milo, Marketing Coordinator
Jordan Wright, Assistant Director
Jenny Marr, Library Director

Executive Summary

In order to guide this effort, the Board elected to work with consultants at the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services of Lansing, MI, to facilitate a strategic planning process that would help to align library services with the aspirations and needs of the community.

Based on the work of the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, community members were asked “What kind of community do you want?” and “How can the library help?”

The Strategic Planning Committee recommended the adoption of four key strategic priorities for the period 2022-2025. The priorities are:

PRIORITY 1: *Reimagine Outreach*

Foster public engagement, personal connectiveness, and presence in public spaces throughout the City.

PRIORITY 2: *Strengthen Inclusiveness*

Identify, reach, and welcome underrepresented perspectives.

PRIORITY 3: *Enhance Responsiveness*

Re-evaluate and adapt services to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

PRIORITY 4: *Raise Awareness*

Advocate for libraries by championing literacy and defending access, diversity, and equity.

Overview of the Planning Process

1. The Library Board approved working with consultants from the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS) to facilitate the creation of a new strategic plan that would be based on community needs. MCLS, based in Lansing, MI, is a non-profit, member-driven organization whose mission is to facilitate sharing resources and to collaborate with other organizations to benefit Michigan and Indiana libraries. MCLS uses a planning process based on the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation's "Turning Outward" approach. "Turning Outward" is a process that entails taking steps to better understand communities; changing processes and thinking to make conversations more community-focused; being proactive to community issues; and putting community aspirations first.
2. A nine-person Strategic Planning Committee was assembled, which included the Library Board, the Library Director, and the Library Assistant Director.
3. The Strategic Planning Committee met on March 19, 2022, and participated in a SOAR analysis of the library, identifying strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results. The strengths created a summary of what is valued. Aspirations became the basis of the library's vision for the next three years, and opportunities resulted in the identification of four key strategic priorities.
4. On April 26, 2022, the MCLS consultant returned to the Ferndale Area Public Library to work with Library management on the creation of a tactical plan to address the key strategic directions that were identified by the Strategic Planning Committee. The group answered the questions for each priority: "How will the patron benefit?"; "How will the community benefit?"; "What activities might occur?"; "What will success look like?"; and "What organizational issues will need to be addressed including facilities, technology, policies, staffing, etc.?" This work created the basis for the development of goals, objectives, and potential activities that make up the three-year strategic plan.
5. After meeting with the MCLS Consultant, the Director developed targets and timelines for the objectives and develop a method to collect and report the data on the progress of the objectives. An implementation plan to enact the strategies and organizational competencies throughout the 3-year period of the plan was also created.



MISSION

The Ferndale Area District Library strengthens the community by providing access to materials and services that inform, enrich, entertain, and empower.

HOW WE DO IT

As the community's great, big living room: we are a hub of learning and engagement for all ages and interests. Our innovative and creative staff push the boundaries of traditional library service and welcome all into our spaces. We appreciate and acknowledge the support our community, our patrons, and our Friends have for us as we dedicate ourselves to "fit Ferndale".

VISION

The Ferndale Area District Library is a leader in building and sustaining Ferndale as a creative city that attracts and nurtures talent, mobilizes ideas, stimulates innovation, and encourages diversity. The library is a center of cultural vitality and participation that enhances the quality of life for all Ferndale residents.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2022-2025

REIMAGINE OUTREACH

Foster public engagement, personal connectiveness, and presence in public spaces throughout the City.

STRENGTHEN INCLUSIVENESS

Identify, reach, and welcome underrepresented perspectives.

ENHANCE RESPONSIVENESS

Re-evaluate and adapt services to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

RAISE AWARENESS

Advocate for libraries by championing literacy and defending access, diversity, and equity.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS

REIMAGINE OUTREACH

Foster public engagement, personal connectiveness, and presence in public spaces throughout the City.

GOAL 1 Take the Library outside of its walls and meet people where they are.

GOAL 2 Seek out and strengthen diverse community partnerships.

STRENGTHEN INCLUSIVENESS

Identify, reach, and welcome underrepresented perspectives.

GOAL 1 Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion in all we do.

GOAL 2 Create programs, services, and collections in response to, and with our community.

ENHANCE RESPONSIVENESS

Re-evaluate and adapt services to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

GOAL 1 Make it convenient to connect with and use the Library.

GOAL 2 Seek out opportunities to contribute and enrich the community's wellbeing.

RAISE AWARENESS

Advocate for libraries by championing literacy and defending access, diversity, and equity.

GOAL 1 Ignite public consciousness of the value of public libraries and intellectual freedom.

GOAL 2 Amplify our impact through collaborations, partnerships, and leadership roles at local, state, and national levels.

PRIORITIES, GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES

The Ferndale Area District Library’s goals address the strategic priorities and aspirations identified by participants during the planning process. These goals serve as a roadmap for the next few years. Although these goals do not cover all of the Library’s work, they are intended to set a strategic direction for the life of this plan. The objectives are performance measures that indicate “how much” and “by when.” The potential strategies are specific activities that the Library will undertake to achieve the objectives and goals. The goals will remain constant while objectives and potential strategies may evolve.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: Reimagine Outreach

Foster public engagement, personal connectiveness, and presence in public spaces throughout the City.

GOAL 1 Take the Library outside of its walls and meet people where they are.

Objectives

- Increase library card numbers by 5 %.
- Number of cardholders and usage from different geographic areas in the service area will increase.
- People will say the Library was able to meet them where they are.
- People will say they saw the library in the community.
- The number of off-site programs will increase.

Potential Activities

- Develop a Library roadshow and mini collections for checkout to showcase our resources and services.
- Encourage “teams” of staff to participate and represent the Library in the community. (e.g. bowling teams, charity events, etc.).
- Expand the reach of the Library by transporting materials to potential readers (e.g. bookmobile, bike).
- Increase the number of programs hosted off-site by the Library.
- Offer off-site tech help.
- Participate in community festivals and parades. (e.g. tables, sponsored programs, floats, etc.).
- Promote Library cards at offsite locations, programs, and community events.

GOAL 2 Seek out and strengthen diverse community partnerships.

Objectives

- Expand the number of outreach partners in the next fiscal year.
- Community partners report we are willing and active partners.
- Community partners will promote FADL programs, services, and resources.

- More community organizations will enthusiastically seek to partner with the Library to further the Library’s mission.
- Staff involvement in local organizations and groups increases.
- Teachers say “thanks for x/I heard you do x!”.

Potential Activities

- Attend and host community networking events for local groups and organizations.
- Continue communications and collaboration with existing partners.
- Encourage staff involvement in local groups and organizations.
- Establish a Teen Advisory Board.
- Identify potential partners.
- Partner with schools to support teachers, students, and families.
- Reach out to local event organizers for potential collaborative opportunities.
- Transition from “people” based contacts to “position” based school contacts.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: Strengthen Inclusiveness

Identify, reach, and welcome underrepresented perspectives.

GOAL 1 Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion in all we do.

Objectives

- Perform a baseline diversity audit of the collection and determine what improvement looks like.
- Patrons will report being satisfied with the accessibility of Library spaces.
- Patrons will report feeling comfortable visiting the Library.
- The Library’s participation in community diversity, equity and inclusive initiatives will increase.
- There will be an increase in the number of people visiting the Library.

Potential Activities

- Conduct a physical accessibility audit of the Library property.
- Conduct diversity and inclusivity audits of all collections, services, and programs.
- Highlight diverse collections consistently.
- Identify and work with partners doing similar work.
- Investigate hiring an expert to lead diversity, equity, and inclusion training.
- Research and install touch screen devices throughout the library (e.g. tables, tablets, computers, etc.).
- Seek out and participate in diversity and equity initiatives in the community.
- Work toward developing, attracting, and maintaining a diverse workforce and board that reflects the community.

Goal 2 Create programs, services, and collections in response to, and with our community.

Objectives

- Create opportunities for diverse groups to meet one another, collaborate, share experiences, and learn from each other.
- Library dealing with equity, diversity and inclusion topics will increase.
- Patrons see their authentic selves reflected in library collections.
- Patrons will feel more comfortable requesting items/programming that reflect their reading taste and needs.
- Patrons will say “it's great to see x in the library!”.
- Program registration and/or attendance will increase.
- The number of first-time program attendees will increase.
- The number of returning program attendees will increase.
- Use of services and resources will increase.
- Ways patrons are engaging with the library will increase.

Potential Activities

- Create a community picks shelf and poll/survey for new materials.
- Create opportunities for diverse groups to meet one another, collaborate, share experiences, and learn from each other.
- Expand accessibility by adapting formats and services.
- Highlight diverse collections consistently.
- Learn strategies for discussing hard topics within the community.
- Make collections more diverse and available in a variety of formats.
- Offer programs and experiences that are designed to represent different viewpoints and perspectives by speakers with diverse backgrounds.
- Provide learning opportunities about diversity, equity, and inclusion.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: Enhance Responsiveness

Re-evaluate and adapt services to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

GOAL 1 Make it convenient to connect with and use the Library.

Objectives

- Card holder activity will increase.
- First-time library users will increase.
- Library usage both on-site and off-site will increase.
- Our list of what we “don’t do” will decrease.
- Patrons report it took less effort to get what they need.
- Patrons will report being very satisfied with their interactions with the Library.
- The amount of positive feedback related to library experiences, resources, and services will increase.
- The number of ways patrons engage with the Library will increase.

- There will be an increase in circulation.

Potential Activities

- Continue virtual programming.
- Create buttons and signage to encourage patrons to ask staff for help.
- Develop surveys to ask patrons for their input frequently.
- Enhance digital resources.
- Expand delivery service to include more of the community.
- Install more eye-catching signage.
- Investigate establishing item pickup outside the Library.
- Research and install touch screen devices throughout the library (e.g. tables, tablets, computers, etc.).
- Seek out new avenues of communication with patrons and the community, in general.

GOAL 2 Seek out opportunities to contribute and enrich the community's wellbeing.

Objectives

- Community members will report that they see the Library as an essential part of their lives.
- Community members report that the Library improves their quality of life.
- Community members report the Library helps provide them with a sense of belonging and social connectiveness.
- Patrons report they learned something new at the Library.

Potential Activities

- Design and distribute, or be a part of an already existing, new resident welcome packet.
- Develop technology kits with laptops and hotspots for check-out.
- Expand our Library of Things to include tools and equipment.
- Host opportunities for residents to get to know their neighbors.
- Increase collections, programs and services that encourage self-improvement and personal development.
- Investigate becoming a summer food program partner and/or host.
- Offer support to Little Free Libraries in our Area.
- Promote opportunities within the Library for citizen involvement and volunteering.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: Raise Awareness

Advocate for libraries by championing literacy and defending access, diversity, and equity.

GOAL 1 Ignite public consciousness of the value of public libraries and intellectual freedom.

Objectives

- People view the Library as a reliable trusted organization.
- People will report they have a better understanding of what FADL has to offer, more than just books.
- People will report they have a better understanding of intellectual freedom.
- People will report they have a better understanding of how-to identify credible information.

Potential Activities

- Be open to publicly discussing issues facing libraries today.
- Communicate the Library's philosophy of open access.
- Create a community campaign showing how much money patrons save by using the Library.
- Create templates to help patrons write letters/communications supporting the Library.
- Educate the public on ways to discern information.
- Facilitate opportunities that deepen the understanding of how the Library and its services enriches the community.
- Increase more call-to-action social media content.
- Provide teachers and school media specialists with information and resources on how to handle material challenges.
- Re-evaluate and update book challenge process and be transparent about how it works.
- Reach out to teachers and school boards to inform about and encourage intellectual freedom.
- Rebrand the concept of librarianship to the public.

GOAL 2 Amplify our impact through collaborations, partnerships, and leadership roles at local, state, and national levels.

Objectives

- An increased number of public officials understand the value of libraries and see libraries as essential community services.
- Library Board and staff feel both knowledgeable, and comfortable, advocating for public libraries.
- Local, state, and national decisions reflect support for public libraries.

Potential Activities

- Host networking and educational opportunities for neighboring library boards.
- Increase involvement on local and state library committees.
- Increase staff attendance at national conferences.
- Invite state legislators to visit and learn more about the library.
- Seek out internal and external collaborations with neighboring libraries.