

Strategic Plan for 2019-2023

Adopted by the Waverly Public Library Board of Trustees on 1-15-19



Beginning in July 2018 and completed in November 2018, under the guidance of the Waverly Public Library's (WPL) library director and board of trustees, the strategic planning process was completed for the Waverly Public Library for years 2018 – 2023. Library consultants Rob Cullin and Kimberly Bolan of Kimberly Bolan and Associates (KBA) facilitated the process.

The Process

WPL's strategic planning process included the following key areas.

- 1) **Gathering and analyzing community input and data**, which involved benchmarking, demographic analysis, and collection analysis. In addition, WPL staff and Waverly residents were involved in exploring ideas and possibilities for the library as a thriving 21st century library. Stakeholder sessions were conducted by KBA on September 26, 27 and 28, 2018. Participants included the general public, parents and caregivers, educators, community leaders, senior citizens, WPL staff members, and library trustees. Participants included frequent library users and infrequent and non-users and ranged in ages and backgrounds. Overall, 93 stakeholders participated in the discussions regarding the WPL's services and strategic future. In addition to the stakeholder sessions, an online survey was conducted between September 24 and October 22, 2018. 309 surveys were completed. Survey participants included a strong mix of library users (81%) as well as infrequent and non-users (19%). Survey takers ranged from 12 to over 76 years of age; 28% being over 56 years of age and 61% being between 19 and 55 years of age.
- 2) **Developing solutions** during a one-day *Strategic Planning Retreat* held on November 2, 2018. During the *Retreat*, all data and community input was reviewed with a planning team of twelve people, consisting of the library director, staff members, library board members, and a community leader. From the data, the group worked to establish essential strategic areas, specific goals, and related investments required to implement the goals to help the library thrive over the next five years and beyond.
- 3) **Providing a path to results**, as illustrated in this document as well as the companion work plan, to guide WPL staff and board with a plan that can live, breathe, and be readily implemented on a day-to-day and year-to-year basis.

What We Heard

The community focus groups and online survey explored several topics including customer service, youth services, adult services, outreach services, programming, technology and digital services, the facility/building, collections and resources, and overall 21st century public library best practices. Detailed summaries of all stakeholder feedback and online survey results were provided in separate documents to WPL's leadership and reviewed in depth during *the Strategic Planning Retreat*. All stakeholder input, data analysis, and follow-up exploration work led to the strategic focuses, goals, and investments outlined on page 2 of this document.

Evaluation & Collaboration

With the goal of achieving all outlined goals over the next five years, WPL administration, staff, and board of trustees will regularly evaluate their progress and achievements. Objectives set forth in this plan will be accomplished as outlined and will be reviewed on a monthly basis at library board meetings. This balanced and systematic process also emphasizes that the resulting plan will be iterative and evolve substantially over the next several years.

The keys to WPL's implementation, evaluation and, ultimately, the success of its strategic plan will be:

- A thorough understanding of the plan as well as active involvement in implementing the plan by staff and the board of trustees
- Frequent and ongoing communication between administration and staff
- Frequent and ongoing communication between WPL's staff and its community
- Active collaboration between WPL's board of trustees, administration, staff, outside organizations, and the community

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Our Mission: Your Window to Information, Recreation, and Community.

Strategic Focus	Goal	Potential Investments/Initiatives
Inviting Spaces	To review and update WPL's facilities to meet the community's needs today and tomorrow and to provide efficient use of space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current staff space including offices, work space, service desks, and storage. Ensure that all public and staff areas are ADA compatible. Review shelving needs as the library collection evolves, targeting areas of wasted space for new purposes. Explore possible expansion/reconfiguration of space for The Friends of the Waverly Public Library. Focus on creating and maintaining a welcoming space including, but not limited to, incorporating art and color. Consider options for creating both quiet and active spaces that are flexible to adapt to daily needs. Review the possibilities for maximizing utilization of outdoor spaces related to seating and programming.
Beloved Programming	To deliver quality, community-valued, highly attended programs for all ages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a programming strategy plan defining fundamental parameters, focus, and requirements. Review current programming for all age levels to determine successes as well as deficiencies. Explore opportunities for community partnerships and resources related to outreach and programming. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In particular, explore options with Wartburg College. Develop job- and career-based learning partnerships and opportunities. Implement targeted marketing of programs to specific audiences.
Community Valued Resources and Services	To enhance WPL's services and resources to meet the changing needs of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate staffing levels, roles, and efficiencies to streamline workloads and always provide adequate staffing. Develop a staff manual to more clearly define expectations, responsibilities, procedures, and policies. Continually review procedures and policies, modifying and/or eliminating those that are not an efficient use of staff time and/or not conducive to first-rate customer service. Deploy self-serve options to best meet library users' needs, especially related to user convenience and privacy. Evaluate and adjust library materials spending to best meet the increased demand for digital collections. Assess the financial and public relations implications related to the collection of library fines for late materials. Explore options within the community for remote drop-off of library materials. Develop a cost analysis for increasing library hours through "express services" that provide minimal staff interaction while allowing the library to be available to the community. Review computer/printer/laptop usage and develop a plan for ongoing updates of equipment and software that best serves library users. Support the use of technology to enhance marketing (e.g., website, social media, etc.) as well as maximize staff efficiencies based on community needs (e.g., digitizing patron records, ongoing staff training, easy print solutions, etc.). Examine the feasibility and cost effectiveness of RFID tagging of all library materials.
An Engaged and Aware Community	To expand efforts to effectively share information about what the library offers to everyone in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current methods of communication used to promote programs, celebrate milestones, highlight library resources and opportunities, etc. Evaluate the current library website and other digital platforms for ease of use for the public, clear messaging, and accurate representation of WPL's mission. Review the content, focus, intent, and distribution methods of the WPL's newsletter. Provide opportunities for increased promotion and circulation of the WPL's collection through face-forward shelving, browsing bins, clear concise signage, etc. Share library stories from library users and staff as well as national library trends on a consistent and regular basis.