

DOWNTOWN LIBRARY COMPANY PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE 2018-2022

The Downtown Library Company Strategic Plan for 2018-2022 will guide our efforts to create and deliver value to our patrons, donors, volunteers, and community partners.

By working to achieve our goals, we can educate and empower our residents, enrich our community's quality of life and support the growth of a strong and vibrant economy.

Our Vision

The Downtown Library Company is a welcoming center of knowledge, inspiration and opportunity for all residents and contributes to a healthy, safe, and economically vibrant community.

Our Mission

The mission of the Downtown Library Company is to ensure that every resident of our service area has access to exceptional opportunities to read, learn, create, connect and contribute to a better quality of life.

Our Guiding Principles

ACCESS

We deliver fair and open access to all library system resources.

COLLABORATION

We work together in partnership to achieve exceptional results for our library and the community.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

We provide reliable and extraordinary customer service for the public, which includes all of our patrons, donors, volunteers and community partners.

LITERACY

We believe literacy is a fundamental right that enables every person to participate fully and equitably in our community.

RESPECT

We appreciate and strive to respond to the diverse backgrounds, cultures and capabilities of our entire community regardless of ethnic origin, race, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, income, creed and capabilities.

STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2018 – 2022

Goal: KNOWLEDGE AND INSPIRATION

Provide a center of knowledge and inspiration that provides meaningful and relevant opportunities to read, learn and create.

Key Objective # 1 Select and promote relevant content in accordance with evolving usage trends.

Strategic Initiative:

- Monitor and respond to usage data and trends.

Success Measures:

- Monthly usage statistics
- Collection usage and circulation rates
- Amount of funding based on OverDriveⁱ usage
- Responses to patron interests and requests

Key Objective # 2 Build basic, digital literacy skills to help people achieve personal, educational and economic goals.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Continue basic and digital literacy support for groups and individuals.
- Monitor and respond to program interest and attendance.
- Continue to enhance the digital literacy skills of all staff members so they can be competent in assisting patrons.

Success Measures:

- Diverse program offerings
- Quarterly statistics counts for individual assistance

Key Objective # 3 Help children enter school ready to learn in partnership with local schools and learning organizations.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Maintain the activities and programs as initiated by the Family Place Grant.ⁱⁱ
- Continue pre-school readiness programs.
- Maintain relationships with local pre-schools to promote school readiness.

Success Measure:

- Program attendance statistics

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Key Objective # 4 Inspire lifelong learning through education programs for children, youth and adults.

Strategic Initiative:

- Maintain a diversity of program offerings for children, youth and adults.

Success Measure:

- Program attendance statistics

Key Objective # 5 Provide meaningful and relevant opportunities to promote creativity.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Continue to maintain diverse partnerships with cultural and educational groups in order to spur creativity in the arts.
- Continue to provide and maintain spaces that enable individual and collaborative learning experiences for patrons of all ages.
- Monitor the use of library spaces designated for this purpose.
- Elicit and respond to patron requests and feedback.

Success Measures:

- Diverse number of events and participants
- Diverse number of active partnerships with cultural and educational entities
- Room and space utilization data

GOAL: ACCESS

Enhance access to library services, both online and through the elimination of physical barriers.

Key Objective # 1 Improve the promotion of digital resources and library information available through Downingtown Library Company's website.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Continuously enhance the Downingtown Library Company website and continue to update the use of social media tools in order to promote online and physical access to the library.
- Maintain our communication system to educate the public on library services and access.
- Elicit customer satisfaction with online library access.
- Ensure the website is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Success Measures:

- Customer satisfaction with online library access
- Website and social media metrics
- Data from online registration from website

Key Objective # 2 Creatively use our internal and external spaces for reading, working, creating, gathering and community activities.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Ensure library spaces continue to maintain and enhance ADA compliance, while further exploring opportunities to increase accessibility.
- Maintain the interior as a flexible space to accommodate patron reading, working, creating, gathering, and program and community activities.
- Monitor and address excessive noise levels through multiple measures.
- Design and maintain the exterior spaces to be used by the community for learning and gathering.

Success Measures:

- Ratio of library space used for customer experience versus collection storage
- Enhanced ADA accessibility to the front door
- Increased accessibility from all parking areas
- Improved handicapped parking
- Installed drive-by drop box
- Decreased patron concerns regarding excessive noise levels
- Outdoor children's classroom and teaching garden, including placement of honorary Karen Miller bench created
- Additional storage provided

Goal: CUSTOMER VALUE AND EXPERIENCE

Deliver exceptional value and experiences to the public, which includes all patrons, donors, volunteers and community partners

Key Objective # 1 Provide excellent customer service to all library patrons, donors, volunteers and community partners.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Make Chester County Library System workshops available to staff and encourage staff participation.
- Explore and initiate resources for staff to improve their technological and customer service skills.
- Establish in-house resource experts in priority technological skill areas.
- Establish a communication system to increase awareness of in-house and system-wide programs, services and collections. (local collections, special items: hot spots, museum passes and alternative items)

Success Measures:

- Staff self-report improved skills in assisting patrons
- Increased positive feedback from patrons regarding staff interface
- Customer satisfaction survey regarding patron usage of services, collections and programs

Key Objective # 2 Cultivate and engage the next generation of library patrons, donors, staff and volunteers.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Engage in partnership with schools and higher education institutions within the library service area.
- Maintain programming for teenager and young adult patrons of library services.

Success Measures:

- Maintained number of children, teenagers and young adults who contribute, connect and engage with our library
- Maintained number of programs for teenagers and young adults
- Increased number of library cardholders and active patrons

Goal: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Maintain our public library as a hub for community engagement and transformation.

Key Objective # 1 Empower families and individuals to gain knowledge to improve their health, wellness, financial stability and civic participation.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Partner with health and human services organizations to promote access to library and community-based resources, information and support for basic, information, civic and social, health, and financial literacies.
- Implement and maintain the activities and programs as initiated by the Family Place Grant.

Success Measures:

- Evidence of residents utilizing library services that relate to improved health, wellness, financial stability, civic participation, professional skills and/or entrepreneurial activities
- Strengthened partnerships within the community to enhance basic, information, civic and social, health, and financial literacies.
- Increased patron usage of resource materials in these areas
- Every Downingtown Library Company program is branded to align with at least one of Pennsylvania Library Association's PA Forward 5 Literaciesⁱⁱⁱ to increase public knowledge of the purpose of library services, leading to recognition as a "STAR" Library^{iv}

Key Objective # 2 Maintain visibility within the community to publicize Downingtown Library Company services and serve community members outside of the Library building.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Continue to participate in outreach events like municipality community days, local school events, and other community events.
- Maintain outreach services to local seniors.

Success Measures:

- Continued monthly senior outreach activities to provide services to community members unable to visit the Downingtown Library Company
- Participation in local outreach events like municipality community days

Goal: SUSTAINABILITY

Build the capacity of our public library to ensure its long-term sustainability.

Key Objective # 1 Develop plans to ensure long-term financial stability.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Continue to diversify revenue sources.
- Grow earned income and program revenue.
- Increase visibility of the Downingtown Library Company Annual Giving Campaign.
- Reach Capital Campaign target.

Success Measure:

- Balanced annual budget with establishment of reserve fund for future needs.

Key Objective # 2 Increase fundraising capacity for our library.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Foster relationships with municipalities and business organizations in the Library's service area.
- Use the website and social media tools to promote ongoing fundraising.
- Explore additional funding sources.
- Enhance the branding and marketing of the Downingtown Library Company.

Success Measures:

- Balanced annual budget with establishment of reserve fund for future needs
- Increased income raised from donations, grants and corporate gifts/sponsorships

Key Objective # 3 Strengthen the governance of the Downingtown Public Library.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Maintain up-to-date Library binder of structural documents (corporate notebook.)
- Encourage trustee attendance at Chester County Library System governance workshops and reports to the Board.
- Continue development, review and updating governance policies and documents.
- Utilize the Chester County Library System Trustee Essentials document to strengthen governance.

Success Measures:

- Maintenance of corporate records notebook
- Increased number of trustees attending Chester County Library System governance workshops
- Trustees will have better knowledge and understanding of policies and will function within those guidelines created by the Governance Committee
- New, reviewed and updated policies
- Reviewed and updated governance documents

Key Objective # 4 Create a plan to address future growth.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Analyze and project:
 - * Structural capabilities relative to predicted growth.
 - * Staff capabilities relative to predicted growth.
 - * Service capabilities relative to predicted growth.

Success Measure:

- Developed plans or programs to address future growth
- Staff assessment of their ability to meet community needs within their assigned work hours

Endnotes:

ⁱ OverDrive: The Chester County Library System’s collection of eBooks and eAudiobooks.

ⁱⁱ Family Place Grant: “Family Place builds on the knowledge that good healthy early learning, parental involvement and supportive communities play a critical role in a young child’s growth and development. The overall goal of Family Place Libraries is to develop and institutionalize a family friendly environment by transforming libraries into community centers for literacy, early childhood development, parent education and engagement, family support and community information.”
From <https://www.familyplacelibraries.org/what-family-place-library>

ⁱⁱⁱ PA Forward 5 Literacies: “This initiative redefines the library’s role in our Commonwealth within the context of five essential literacies that Pennsylvanians must attain in order to succeed as citizens, parents, students, employers, employees, and consumers.” The 5 literacies are basic, information, civic and social, health, and financial.
From <http://www.pafoward.org/Portals/0/Docs/The%20Five%20Literacies.pdf>

^{iv} STAR Library: “The PA Forward Star Library Program showcases and recognizes libraries that incorporate PA Forward and the five key literacies into their programming activities, displays and events. The program celebrates the success of PA Forward libraries and their abilities to create new partnerships, develop broader community support, and ultimately establish influence and credibility as a unified, collective, powerful voice for the benefit of all libraries.”
From <https://www.palibraries.org/members/group.aspx?id=117296>