

T RANSFORMATIVE

R ELEVANT

E QUITABLE

E NGAGED



**ROCK ISLAND**
PUBLIC **LIBRARY**
Begin Here.

STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-2025



Dear Reader,

Creating a strategic plan from scratch is a labor of love. This is the third plan of its kind during my tenure as library director at Rock Island Public Library. Although the other two plans included great strategies, and were extremely successful, this plan has been the most enjoyable to research and write.

The Rock Island Public Library will celebrate 150 years of service to our community in 2022. Because of our longevity and continued positive impact on society, the focus of this plan uses the acronym of TREE – Transformative, Relevant, Equitable, and Engaged. We can think of no greater analogy for a public library than a tree. A long-lived, strong, sturdy, perennial organism, with a main trunk, bearing and supporting branches that reach outwards from the center, and that are always changing.

The trunk of our TREE lives downtown and supports the entire ecosystem of the library. Our tree trunk also includes a branch in southwest, a new branch in midtown, and a mobile library providing outreach to all.

I hope you enjoy reading about our strategic goals, objectives, and tasks for the years of 2022-2025. Flexibility in service will be the key to our success, as technology continues to advance, patron needs change, and our world recovers from the pandemic. We look forward to serving you!

Yours in library love,
Angela Campbell, Library Director



METHODOLOGY

Realizing that COVID rendered many of our previous strategic plan tactics null, we started work on a new plan for a post-pandemic age in January 2021. Over ten months, we gathered more than 600 data points to help us create a new plan that addresses current needs, while also helping us meet the future needs of our community. In other words, we created a plan to allow for flexibility.

We're proud to say that this plan was created using in-house resources, staff expertise, community knowledge, and attention to the voices and needs expressed by our public. Our methods involved gathering data and input from external and internal audiences of users and non-users alike. We employed a variety of tactics, including surveys, responsive design community visioning exercises, and conversations to gather information on emerging community needs, and how the library might support those needs.

EXTERNAL METHODS:

We leveraged the data-analytic resources of our existing Orange Boy/Savannah software as a service (SaaS) vendor for patron marketing, data analysis, and community engagement to create and distribute a public opinion survey. The survey measured a wide range of strategic questions for the library and community, including use/non-use of current services, barriers to library use, comfort/access to digital services, urgent needs, opinions on future needs for the library and the community, and trends affecting library use in a post-COVID age.

Public Surveys (print and online)

- Surveys were sent via email, in homebound packages, and to partners, available in print and electronic formats.
- More than 560 completed surveys were returned, the highest amount of any library survey to date.
- We leaned heavily on our City, school, and non-profit community partners to pull input from their audiences to reach both users and non-users of library services. More than 20% of respondents were not library users and/or library cardholders.

Community Conversations via Zoom

- Community Conversations proved difficult during COVID, but a dozen people attended our online sessions over the course of three weeks.
- Responses were analyzed, with like-comments ranked in order of concern.
- The Staff Strategic Planning Committee used these responses during visioning exercises.



Planning Sessions with Outside Groups

- The Library Director facilitated two group sessions – one with the (Township Recreation Youth) TRYPlay Committee, and another with the Milan-Blackhawk Area Public Library District Board.
- The Board Community & Planning Committee also participated in strategic planning exercises.
- All data and comments gleaned from these sessions was included in the Staff Strategic Planning Committee documents, used for writing the plan.

INTERNAL METHODS:

Staff Strategic Planning Committee

- The Staff Strategic Planning Committee played an integral role in the strategic planning process.
- Full-time and part-time staff representatives from each department were volunteered by their supervisors to serve on the committee.
- The group met monthly to go through a series of planning exercises with the Library Director.
- Information gathered at these meetings, along with the copious amounts of data collected from the public and targeted groups, is what helped us define the TREE (Transformative, Relevant, Equitable, and Engaged) focus.

Staff Survey

- To pull input for the Staff Culture portion of our plan, the Staff Strategic Planning Committee created a survey for their co-workers.
- Staff were surveyed on their opinion of current library vision and values.
- Responses were discussed and ranked in order of need, highest to lowest.

Board Community & Planning Committee

- This Committee includes five members of the Rock Island Public Library board of trustees, and an advisory member from the Milan Blackhawk Area Public Library District. It met as needed to review suggestions and insight from the Staff Strategic Planning Committee.
- Two notable meetings of the group:
 - Deciding on a recommendation of the four key service areas on which to focus in the coming years;
 - Finalizing the plan to recommend for full board approval.

Internal Patron Tracking:

- "No" Document – All staff were required to fill out a shared spreadsheet each time we had to say "no" to a patron requesting a service. This allowed us to identify unmet needs and opportunities for improvement from the people who use us the most.
- Anecdote Document – All staff were encouraged to fill out the anecdote document which was designed to capture patron stories of success while using the library. This allowed us to track strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

MISSION:

The Rock Island Public Library makes our community stronger by connecting people to resources, services, events, and each other.

VISION:

Enhancing the livability of our service areas by offering in-person and online resources that cultivate literacy, belonging, and personal growth.

Public Values:

- Offering equitable access to facilities and resources
- Facilitating community engagement opportunities
- Fostering education and lifelong learning
- Offering vibrant spaces where all are welcome



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

This plan is divided into four strategic directions that emerged during the needs-assessment of the planning process. Data was collected via online community conversations, stakeholder interviews, staff committees, and a public survey. After reviewing all responses, the Board's Community and Planning Committee unanimously voted that the Rock Island Public Library would focus on the following themes for the next three years – *Transformative, Relevant, Equitable, and Engaged (TREE)*.

By focusing on these evergreen themes, we have an approach that allows us to nimbly address the evolving needs of our community and patrons.

Literacy Action Plan:

One limb of the tree is literacy. It's such a large limb that the Rock Island Public Library acknowledges many of its human and monetary resources are spent on improving literacy throughout the community. Literacy is such an important part of library operations that a separate "Literacy Action Plan" was developed in concert with this Strategic Plan.

The Literacy Action Plan is found as a supplement, so that both plans can work together to create the biggest impact on the community.

PLAN OVERVIEW

Throughout the following pages, you will learn the goals, objectives, and tasks that will drive the library to success. Our plan is organized in the following way:

- Goals – Broad statements that incorporate the four chosen themes
- Objectives – Measurable statements that complement the goal
- Tasks – Action steps that complement the objectives

When the tasks are completed, and the objective measurements are met, the library achieves the goal. It truly is that simple to be effective.

STAFF CULTURE STATEMENT:

*Planting the seeds of success by nurturing professional growth
through the values of
Transformation, Relevance, Equity, and Engagement.*

Overview:

The Staff Strategic Planning Committee released an anonymous all-staff survey, which measured how staff felt about specific value statements. Progress towards these values is always an opportunity for continuous improvement, with the result making the library a great place for both the staff who work here and the patrons we serve. The following statements are presented in the order staff chose, based on priorities for future action.



STAFF VALUES

Transformational Values:

- We connect with one another and learn from our experiences.
- We maintain open and positive communication with our staff and community.
- We strive to stay connected, valuing all of our patrons and the role we play in their lives.
- We encourage staff to explore new possibilities that can benefit library staff and their relationship with the community.



Relevance Values:

- We strive to go above-and-beyond by utilizing staff experience, education, and job knowledge.
- We are resilient, compassionate, and open-minded as we move through change.
- We support staff development in new trends and technologies.
- We maintain our relevance to our community by highlighting interactions to motivate change in the library.

Equity Values:

- We strive to equitably support one another through pathways of respect, trust, and teamwork.
- We set a goal of clear expectations, procedures, and guidelines for staff.
- We embrace and empower people of all cultures and differing abilities.
- We welcome all voices in asking questions and seeking clarification.

Engagement Values:

- We cooperate between departments to have solution-motivated interactions, and to maintain a teamwork environment by working together and engaging where needed to keep our library thriving.
- We aspire for thorough, consistent communication with staff at all levels of the library.
- We support staff professional development and encourage exploration of different opportunities to better help our community.
- We recognize and celebrate personal and professional achievements, and encourage connecting with one another to support camaraderie and have fun.

TRANSFORMATIVE

"The library is central to our free society. It is a critical element in the free exchange of information at the heart of our democracy." – Vartan Gregorian

WE CHANGE LIVES

Transformative needs identified from survey:

- Increase patron comfort-level with digital services.
- Enhance awareness in breadth of collection and additional items available through existing resources.
- Build reading and education as a community value.

TRANSFORMATIVE GOAL: Our community will experience renewal and achieve personal goals by using library resources, including materials, services, and events.

OBJECTIVES	TASKS
1. Within one year of opening the new branch, differentiate the library's FIVE locations (Downtown, Watts Midtown, Southwest, Mobile, and Online) to clearly define how each can help transform lives in different ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marketing campaign focusing on how the library transforms lives, and what services can be expected at each location.• Strengthen patron knowledge of the library's impact by requiring all frontline staff to promote at least one library event per transaction and/or share one story of patron library successes.
2. Annually, provide one event each month at each location that includes educational resources for upward mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with outside organizations that specialize in job hunting services and/or teaching technology skills to help offer these events.• Create online web tutorials, or link to vetted web tutorials, that can help people use technology via self-directed learning.• Reintroduce one-on-one technology training sessions at all locations, based on patron requests.
Continued on next page...	

TRANSFORMATIVE GOAL CONTINUED . . .

OBJECTIVES

3. Bridge the digital divide by offering increased access to technology each year of the plan.

TASKS

- Purchase laptops and tablets to circulate.
- Purchase additional hotspots to circulate.
- Market the digital collection and online resources to those who check out the technology, offering help in learning/understanding the resources.



RELEVANT

"Without libraries what have we? We have no past and no future." - Ray Bradbury

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

Relevant needs identified from survey:

- Focus on a browsing collection.
- Answer patron requests for a centralized library, with up-to-date facilities.
 - Increase ease of use of drive-up book returns.
- Bridge digital gaps in community through wider technology access.

RELEVANT GOAL: *Our community will experience resources and facilities in response to community wants and needs.*

OBJECTIVES

1. Rearrange the Downtown Library by 2025 to be more user-friendly by upgrading service points, browsing collections, and technology.

TASKS

- Move the children's library to first floor or mezzanine level.
- Combine the four service points into one which would encompass Circulation, Local History, Reference, and Youth Services.
- Upgrade all desktop PCs, and add mobile devices for in-house use throughout the library.
- Do an ADA audit and develop a plan for addressing any/all concerns found.
- Work in concert with Downtown Steering Committee

Continued on next page...

RELEVANT GOALS CONTINUED. . .

OBJECTIVES	TASKS
<p>2. Keep an open channel for patron and staff suggestions. This can include a perpetual survey to collect information on three categories – customer service experience, resource usefulness, and suggestions for future services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a print and online survey instrument to collect data. • At weekly meetings, management staff will analyze and respond to the submitted feedback, identifying weak service points and creating action plans to improve them. • Positive experiences collected from the survey will be used in marketing materials.
<p>3. When appropriate to the library's mission, fast-track purchasing materials and offering programs that are considered "trending" on social media platforms and via library data, deliberately launching and marketing these resources within a week of learning about them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a method for acting upon these trends. All staff will be encouraged to be "trendspotters," finding emerging topics, materials, and technology that may be relevant to our community. • Make this a discussion topic at the internal programming meetings.

EQUITABLE

"Libraries will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no libraries." -- Anne Herbert

WE WELCOME ALL

Equitable needs identified from survey:

- Focus on underrepresented areas
- Decrease the number of people who do not feel welcomed at the library.
- Review policies, procedures, collections, and programs through an equity lens.
 - Create a "yes" culture.

EQUITABLE GOAL: Our community will experience mutual respect and belonging at all library facilities and events.

OBJECTIVES

1. Complete the American Library Association's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Scorecard for Library and Information Organizations by December 2022.

Continued on next page...

TASKS

- Create an internal DEI Committee to discuss and plan for the future DEI needs of the Library.
- Respond to the scorecard results by aligning items in need of a higher performance level with the American Library Association's Core Values of Librarianship.
- Perform a diversity audit on a sample of library materials, print and digital, in all formats, by December 2023.
- Respond to the audit by reworking the Collection Development Policy to complement the diverse needs of our service population.
- Create a selection plan for all five library locations based on the audit.

EQUITABLE GOALS CONTINUED...

OBJECTIVES	TASKS
2. Increase Library2Go visits by 20% in underrepresented areas by 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach households/individuals by coordinating check-ins with four essential businesses – Grocery stores, Metrolink, Laundromats, and housing associated with Community Home Partners. • Analyze the effectiveness of stops by evaluating WiFi sessions, items checked in/out, onboard visits, and program attendance at stops.
3. Eliminate barriers by analyzing all policies and procedures to be more inclusive by 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue tracking the reasons we have to say "no" to patrons. Analyze these reasons to determine a way to say "yes." • Create a library benefactor card, so that those who do not meet the eligibility requirements for obtaining a library card can still access information.
4. Find a funding source so that the library can become "fine free" by 2024.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Angel Tree giving until fine free becomes a reality. • Solicit donations from individuals/organizations to replace the potential loss of revenue.

ENGAGED

*"Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities."
-- R. David Lankes*

WE BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Engaged needs identified from survey:

- Provide engagement activities that speak to a changing Rock Island.
 - Increase engagement between library and service areas.
- Provide places to browse and react. • Continue monitoring patron experiences.

ENGAGED GOAL: Our community will experience a connection with the library that is intentional, with measured outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

1. Plan and implement a year-long campaign to celebrate 150 years of public library service in Rock Island.

TASKS

- Use the 2022 Frieze Lectures as the kickoff event, announcing the year-long celebration.
- Pick a date in November 2023 to have the final event of the year-long celebration.
- Create a special Sesquicentennial Library Card and logo.
- Do at least one program per month relating to the history of the RIPL and/or libraries, in general.
- Create a "PALS" (People Advocating for Library Service) volunteer corps from this committee to implement community fundraising and awareness campaigns, such as t-shirt drives, READ posters, and more.

Continued on next page...

ENGAGED GOALS CONTINUED. . .

OBJECTIVES	TASKS
<p>2. Adult Services staff will participate in at least four field trips per year to community agencies/businesses to learn first-hand of local resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an action plan on how to incorporate knowledge of these locations into everyday library tasks, such as reference. • Keep a database of the locations visited, and persons met, to create an in-house partnership/speaker's bureau for future programs.
<p>3. Implement at least 12 library card registration and education efforts outside of library locations per year (or, no less than one per month).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an annual list of local programs/events in service areas that would be conducive to a library card drive. Schedule the Mobile Library and/or library car to attend the chosen events. • Contact local schools to coordinate onsite library introduction and tours with the Mobile Library.
<p>4. All library programs and staff interactions will have an engagement component.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define what "engagement" looks like to the Rock Island Public Library. • Measure engagement levels by offering surveys after all non-recurring programs, and quarterly after recurring programs. • Staff will welcome each and every person who walks through the door of the library, or visits the library offsite. • Scan library cards at each event so we can send an online survey.

LITERACY ACTION PLAN

Rock Island Public Library

2022-2025

In our community, everyone has a right to read and choose what they want to read.

Improving literacy rates reaps huge benefits for individuals, families, and communities. The Rock Island Public Library’s Literacy Action Plan is simple – get the word out. Increasing awareness among parents, caregivers, teachers, and students of library resources is the ultimate goal. We strive to have those responsible for teaching and promoting literacy to think of the Rock Island Public Library *first* when looking for partners.

Goal 1: Promote and support literacy development for children ages 0-5.

Actions:	Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer weekly story time sessions 2. Offer community or site-based, large-scale “Hug-a-Book” events quarterly 3. Visit preschools in the library service area, no less than quarterly 4. Create take-home packets of library information for caregivers of children in preschool 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate current attendance to future attendance for pre-determined programs, via a spreadsheet 2. Increase participation in the “1000 Books before Kindergarten” program 3. Increase program attendance at the library and offsite locations

Goal 2: Promote and support literacy for primary-school children, grades K-6.

Actions:	Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schedule classroom visits, at the public library or in the school library, that teach an introduction to information literacy. 2. Capture the statistics in a way that is detailed and tells a story. 3. Offer quarterly after-school programs and projects that focus on information literacy, making homework fun, and inviting caregivers to learn more about the library. 4. Provide one-on-one help to students/caregivers who want to learn more about the library’s online resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate current attendance to future attendance for pre-determined programs, via a spreadsheet 2. Increase participation in the “Rocket into Reading” large-scale events 3. Increase program attendance at the library and offsite locations

LITERACY ACTION PLAN

Goal 3: Promote and support literacy for young adult students, grades 7-12.

Actions:	Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schedule classroom visits for book talks and information literacy sessions 2. Post select book talks and information literacy sessions online 3. Provide online support for homework help 4. Create zines or bookmarks of library resources, highlighting special events and digital services 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate current attendance to future attendance for pre-determined programs, via a spreadsheet 2. Increase participation during teen-specific events. 3. Vibrant teen space at the Midtown Library, drawing teens after school

Goal 4: Promote and support family literacy in home and in the community.

Actions:	Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage parent and toddler groups to hold their meetings at the library 2. Create family treasure hunts involving elements of literacy and library resources 3. Create a family component to the Summer Reading Challenge 4. Continue developing take-home kits and promoting the STEAM kits that encourage literacy and numeracy 5. Schedule informational talks with parents and caregivers on how the library can help them excite children about literacy; deal with topics such as exam-stress and anxiety; and how to cope with homework stress 6. Offer a homeschool network reception at the library to share library resources 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a spreadsheet of key community contacts made up of participants in family literacy programs, marketing specific family offerings directly to them 2. Increased attendance at all family literacy events 3. Increased invitations to partner sites, such as Spring Forward

Goal 5: Promote and support education staff.

Actions:	Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide electronic newsletters about topics of interest to teachers 2. Offer an easily accessible communication pathway for educators to request materials to support curriculum 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Track the number of educator requests per month via a spreadsheet, realizing an increase throughout the school year 2. Relationship building with educators at each building.

LITERACY ACTION PLAN

Goal 5: Promote and support education staff (continued).

Actions:	Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Supporting the schools with media literacy training at the high school level, per recent legislation 4. Attend school events, such as kindergarten round-up and school registration days 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increased invitations to school functions

Goal 6: Develop library collections in conjunction with library partners and community initiatives.

Actions:	Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a list of teacher liaisons that will help the public librarians understand the curriculum needs 2. Purchase items for the collection that complement large-scale research projects assigned by the schools 3. Prepare the mobile library with a collection specifically for school visits 4. Create easy-to-use pathfinders for specific topics of interest 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Track use of World Book Online and realize an increase in the number of sessions per month 2. Increased use of library collections specifically curated for school curriculum and public events 3. More attendance on the mobile library

ANNUAL EVALUATION

Actions:

1. Review all statistics at a Programmer's Meeting to discuss.- Analyze all successes and deficiencies to determine what works and revise plan as needed.
2. Continue reviewing to compile into an easy-to-use document that tells a story
3. Report to stakeholders the results of the Literacy Action Plan

REPORTING TO LIBRARY BOARD, SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND THE PUBLIC

Actions:

1. Create an annual report specifically reporting on the outcomes the Literacy Action Plan
2. Attend a school board meeting once per year to present the Literacy Action Plan Annual Report
3. Attend a library board meeting once per year to present the Literacy Action Plan Annual Report
4. Include the Literacy Action Plan Annual Report in the Library's Annual Report to the City
5. Publish the Literacy Action Plan Annual Report online

CONTRIBUTORS:

Rock Island Public Library
Board Members:

Eudell Watts, III – President*
Elizabeth Russell – Vice-president*
Jacki Nelson – Secretary/Treasurer

Debbie Freiburg
Dr. Yolanda Grandberry-Pugh*
Patrick Mahar
Jo Noon*
Karen Phillips*
Jenni Swanson*

Milan-Blackhawk Area Public Library
District Board Members:

Elizabeth Bouslough – President
Phyllis Harvey – Vice-president*
Tari Weeks – Secretary
Donna Abolt-Stone – Treasurer

Joan Aldrian
Bill Favri
Connie Schwab

**Represents a member of the Community & Planning Committee*



LIBRARY STAFF:

RIPL STAFF STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Angela Campbell, Library Director

Monica Bacon, Child's/Branch Aide

Rachel Ippolito, Reference Librarian

Kathy Jones, Technical Services Aide

Lisa Lockheart, Publicity & Outreach Liaison

Rich Moritz, Mobile Library Driver Aide

Paige Shackelford, Child's/Branch Aide

Ranessa Vallejo, Circulation Representative

Taylor Waugh, Child's/Branch Aide

RIPL STAFF:

Vicky Binger, Child's/Branch Aide

LaRea McMillin, Circulation Representative

Kimberly Brozovich, Director of Technical Services

Steven Burns, Library Page

Carol Anne Chouteau, Public Services Coordinator

Danielle Davis-Neville, Child's/Branch Aide

Ranell Dennis, Children's Librarian

Susan Foster, Director of Youth Services

Fred Heffernan, Technical Services Aide

Sonja Kinser, Child's/Branch Aide

Malachi Kohlwey, Director of Business Office & Facilities

Karrah Kuykendall, Reference Librarian

Christina Nobiling, Director of Circulation

James Shearouse, Reference Librarian

Amy Sisul, Director of Reference

Patti Thomas, Technical Services Aide

Emily Tobin, Youth Services Librarian

Claire Trimble, Child's/Branch Aide

Susan Wahlmann, Library Page

Alma Wolmack, Circulation Representative

Sue Young, Child's/Branch Aide

