

# STRATEGIC PLAN

---

## Platteville Public Library

2018 - 2022



## Acknowledgements

The Platteville Public Library exists to benefit our community and, thus, a large amount of the information gathered during our strategic planning process came from the area residents we serve. The library staff and Board appreciate those in our community that offered their ideas and time by completing surveys and attending community conversations. Their feedback has been invaluable in developing this strategic plan. Thank you very much!

The library's mission statement, organizational values, and service standards guide the work of the library and are the foundations of this strategic plan. The staff responsible for executing the following activities were instrumental in developing the core elements of the plan. The Library Board and Director sincerely thank the Platteville Public Library Staff for their passion and professionalism in serving our community.

We also would like to thank the Strategic Planning Committee for their time, ideas and commitment to the library. Members of the committee are:

### Strategic Planning Committee

Kelly Podach Francis, Library Board President  
Leanne Holdridge, Circulation Supervisor  
Erin Isabell, Children's Librarian  
Jessie Lee-Jones, Library Director  
Emma Radosevich, Outreach Librarian  
Karina Zidon, Reference and Teen Librarian

Finally, the library would like to thank Melissa McLimans, Stef Morrill, and Bruce Smith from WiLS (Wisconsin Library Services) for providing planning process management and facilitation services to develop our strategic plan.

### Library Board of Trustees

Page Leahy  
Eileen Nickels  
Anne Otto  
Kelly Podach Francis  
Betsy Ralph-Tollefson  
James Swenson  
Danny Xiao

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Background .....	2
Usage and Perceptions.....	2
New Opportunities .....	4
Mission Statement & Values .....	7
Our Mission.....	7
Our Values.....	7
Platteville Public Library Service Standards.....	8
Strategic Goals and Actions.....	9
Strategic Goal I.....	9
Strategic Goal II .....	11
Strategic Goal III.....	12
Strategic Goal IV.....	13
Strategic Goal V.....	14
Implementation, Assessment and Communication.....	15

## Introduction

On June 27, 2017, the Platteville Public Library opened the doors to a new, 22,000 square foot facility, and opened the doors to a new chapter of library service in Southwest Wisconsin. The library board and staff developed this strategic plan to ensure we maximize the promise of the new library building.

Knowing the major undertaking of designing and building a new library was on the horizon, the development of this strategic plan was scheduled over two time periods, one before and one after the library was built. The first stage, with the guidance of the consultant, involved a half-day session with the library staff on November 20, 2015 to develop a mission statement and organizational values. A second session was held on January 15, 2016 to create service standards for staff. These foundations serve as guiding principles to reach the goals of this plan, and to guide the services of the library into the future.

For the second stage of the process, a strategic planning committee consisting of library staff and library board president formed in September 2017. The charge of the committee was to create a five- year plan to identify the goals of the library after careful consideration of the community's needs and aspirations. The committee developed the framework of goals and activities to meet the needs of the current population. We recognized that the plan should allow for flexibility as the staff and community continue to adapt to their new facility. With the consultant also facilitating this stage of the plan's development, the committee used the following sources of information to help determine the goals for the library:

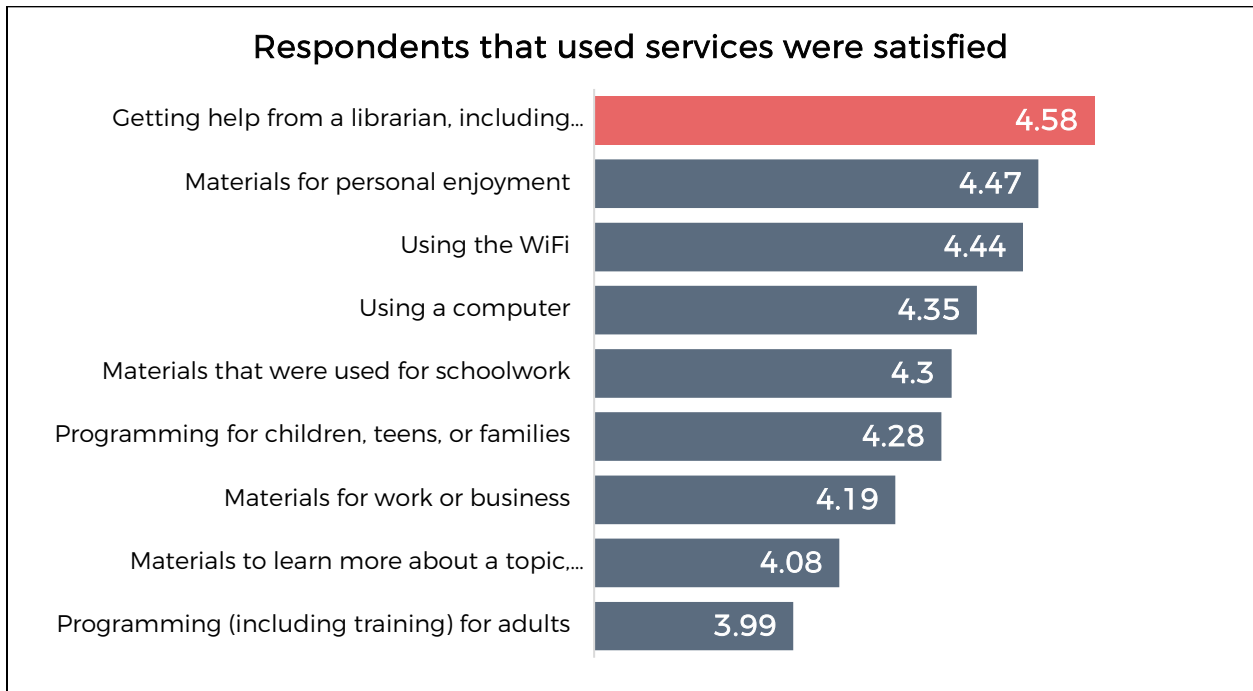
- Annual report data submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for the years 2009-2015.
- Demographics from the 2000 and 2010 Census and the 2015 American Community Survey.
- Issues and Needs Questionnaire, completed by members of the Planning Committee.
- Results of a survey of convenience conducted between 9/25/2017 and 10/23/2017. There were 320 total responses.
- Three Community Conversations held on 10/30/17 with 11 attendees, 11/1/17 with 13 attendees, and 11/7/17 with 11 attendees. These conversations were attended by business and civic leaders, educators, officeholders, citizens and library patrons.

The strategic planning committee met on December 6, 2017 to develop the strategic goals and activities outlined in this plan.

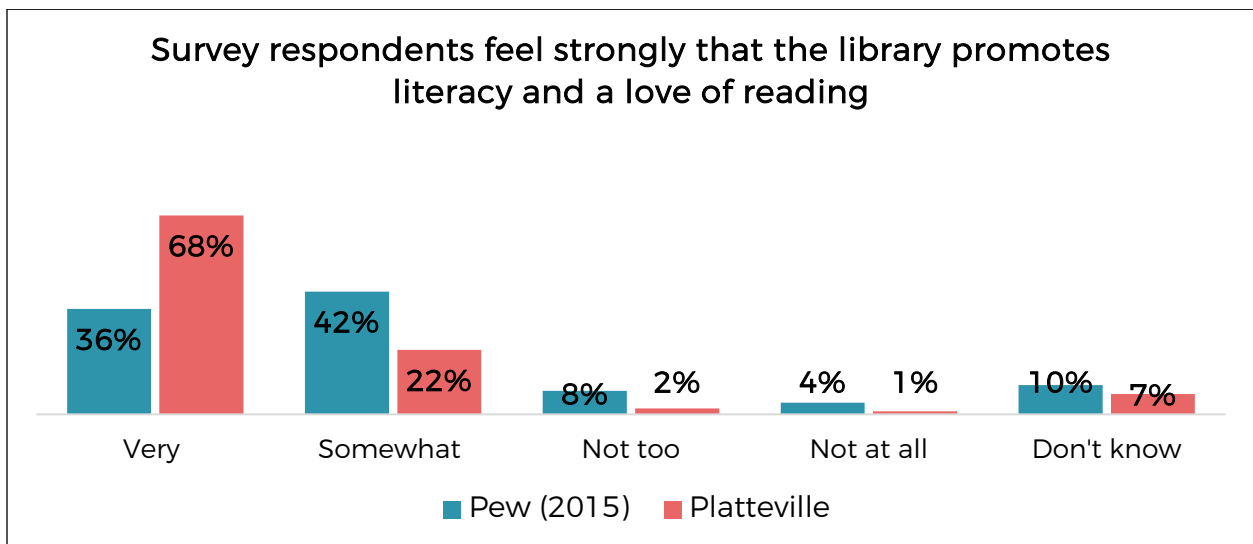
## Background

### *Usage and perceptions*

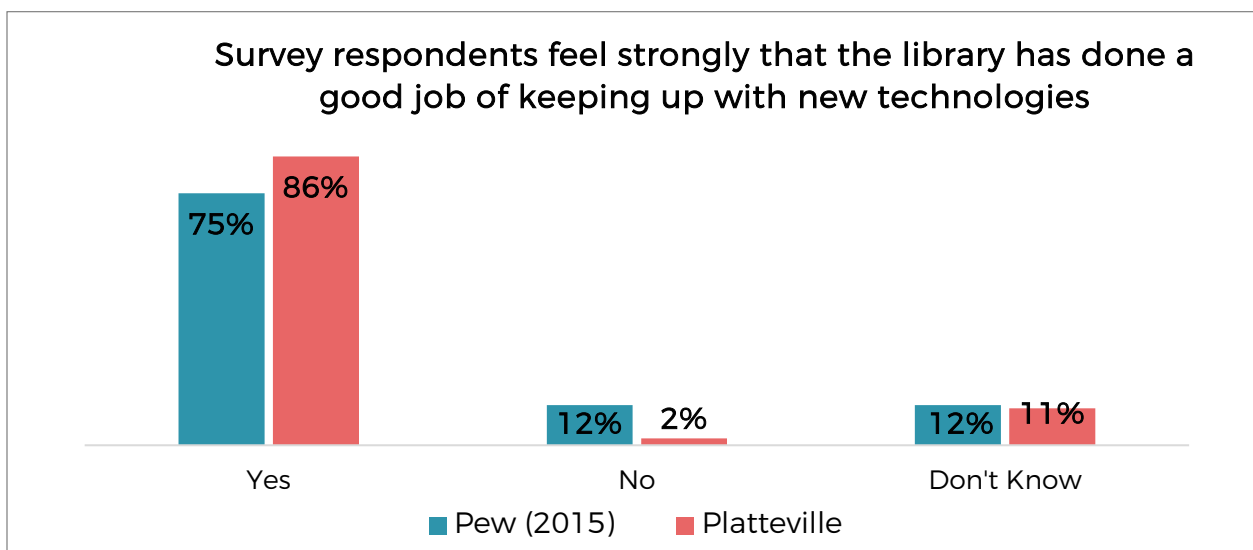
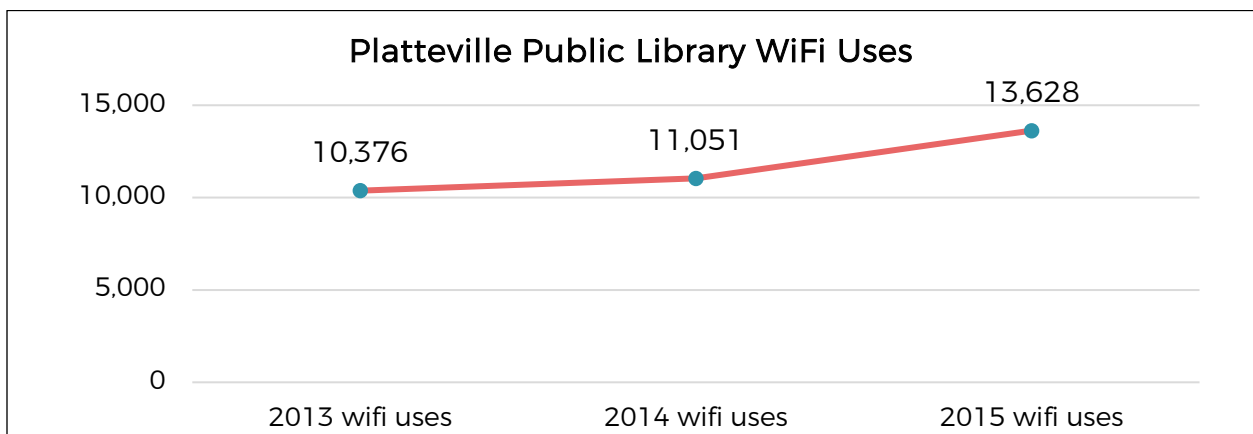
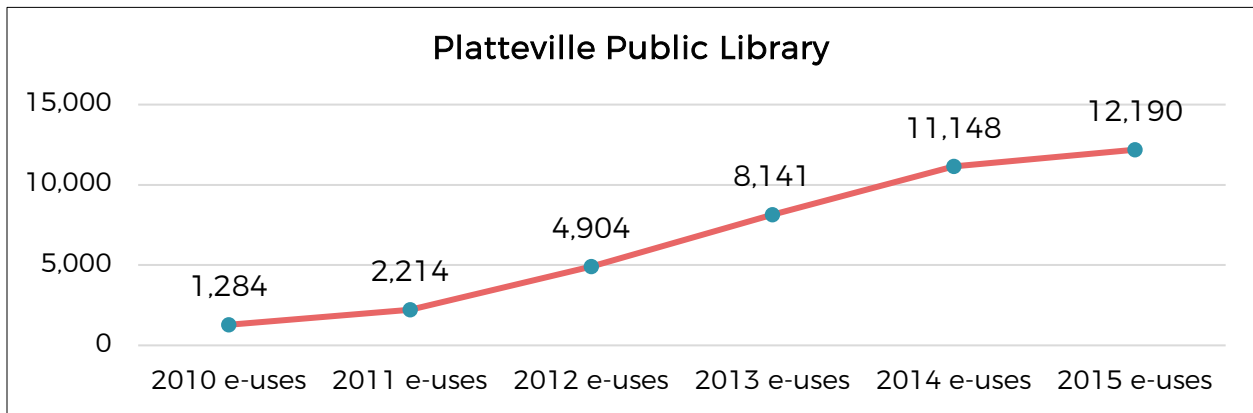
The data and information gathered during the planning process shows that the community is very satisfied with the Platteville Public Library. Above all, patrons value the service and assistance they receive from staff. The following graph displays the service satisfaction responses to the community survey.



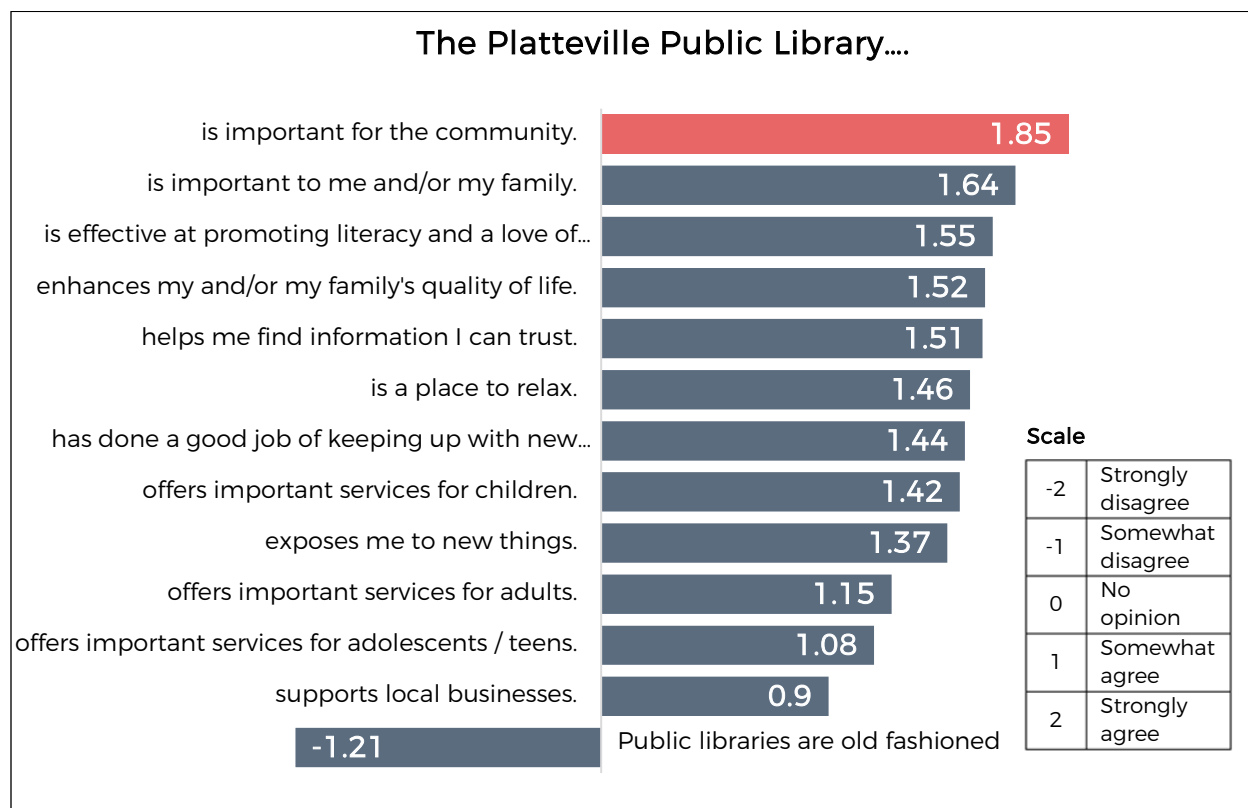
One cornerstone that will never change for the library in the community is its literacy-based mission. Survey respondents feel Platteville Public Library excels in this area.



The library continues to be an important place for Platteville and area residents to access technology. Over the past few years, the library has seen an increase in WiFi, computer, and ebook use.

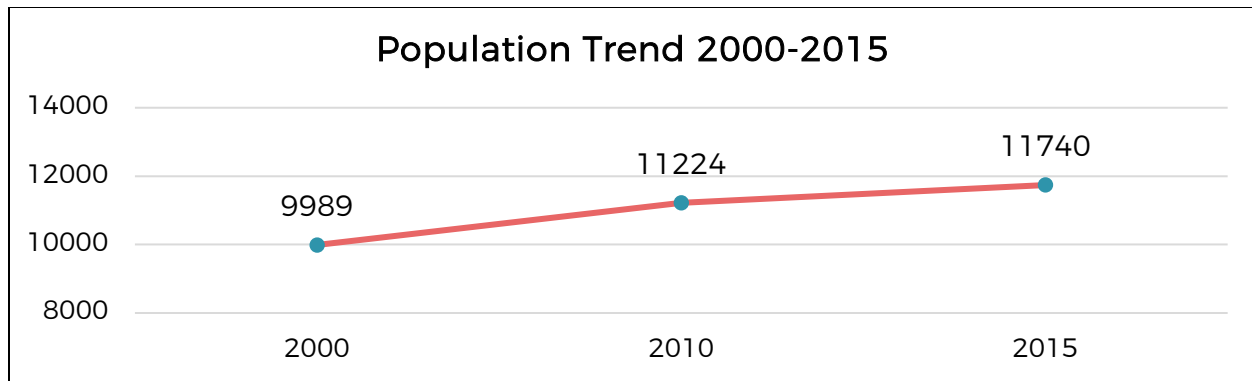


Patrons are satisfied with the new services provided by the library and those they have always relied upon. The community highly values the presence of the library in the community and recognizes its importance.



#### *New opportunities*

The information and data reviewed while developing the strategic plan shows that there are many opportunities for the library to more significantly impact the residents of the Platteville area. The people of Platteville enjoy the small town lifestyle and while maintaining convenient access to Madison and Dubuque for big city amenities. Over the last 15 years, Platteville has shown steady population growth. The following data from the U.S. Census and American Community survey shows a population growth trend of roughly 18% over 15 years. In comparison, Grant County only experienced a 3% increase over the same period.



Though there is a strong social network in the community, it can be hard for newcomers to connect with other community members and services. Through the community conversations, we learned that there is a definite desire to increase or enhance community connections. Community members are not always aware of the events and opportunities that exist in Platteville and there is a need for gathering places for people of all ages in the community that are not the typical Wisconsin bars. In addition, a community the size of Platteville is fortunate to be home to one of the UW System's 4-year institutions, yet conversation participants spoke of a divide between city residents and the UW-Platteville campus.

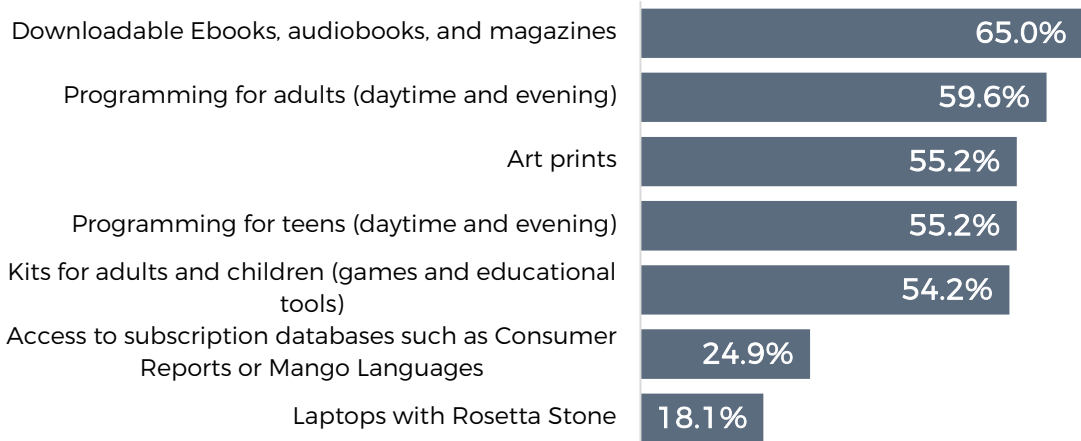
The community conversations also identified the following opportunities for the library to continue or to add more value to the community:

- Creating multi-generational connections, such as adults reading to kids or teens/college kids providing tech assistance to older adults.
- Helping community members overcome barriers to accessing high-speed internet, especially to those on the lower end of income spectrum.
- Connecting with partners to help job seekers learn basic skills and providing entrepreneurship resources for those seeking to start a new business or grow their current business.
- Helping young families by providing free family-friendly social activities and events in the community.

The community conversations and the survey responses revealed a lack of community awareness of all that the library offers. The following graph demonstrates some of the services the library provides and opportunities for the library to increase public awareness.



### Less awareness of the following services



The expanded library facility offers new opportunities, from increasing programming to expanding collections to connecting our community through making better use of our meeting spaces. The visibility of our new location has generated a renewed interest from the community and potential partners. The library board, staff, and library foundation are eager to put this strategic plan into action.

## Our Mission

To empower and connect our diverse community by providing equal access to resources that educate, enrich, and entertain.

## Our Values

*We promote lifelong learning and literacy*

- We encourage personal and professional growth for patrons and staff.

*We provide excellent professional service for everyone*

- We are respectful, patient, tolerant, helpful, welcoming, flexible, and responsive.

*We make meaningful connections*

- We value patrons, service with a sense of enjoyment, keep an open mind, and work to exceed expectations.

*We empower our community*

- We listen to community needs, create partnerships, and enact positive change.

*We are leaders and innovators*

- We anticipate challenges, look for solutions, and try new things.

*We are good stewards*

- We value our communities' investment in their library. We use our resources wisely. We are efficient and productive.

## **Platteville Public Library Service Standards:**

We connect with patrons, look for commonalities, and engage in their interests.

Library services are not confined to our building. We participate in our community through outreach, social events, and varied programming.

We prioritize communication with the public and fellow workers and respond appropriately.

We can speak knowledgeably about what we do and why we do it.

We will be innovative and work with community partners to create and sustain programs that are fresh and exciting.

We will treat everyone who enters the library in a respectful manner.

We will uphold and communicate the Library Bill of Rights to our patrons.

We will ask questions and listen actively.

We will understand our policies and procedures so that we can stay consistent.

We teach patrons the skills they need to access library materials, services, and other resources.

We utilize staff and system expertise to help us work as a team to solve problems.

We provide individualized services based on patron and institutional needs.

We project a positive attitude and demonstrate enthusiasm for our jobs and the service provided both inside the library and in the community.

We acknowledge everyone who comes in, make eye contact, and create a welcoming environment.

We will assist and support our co-workers to ensure a secure and efficient work environment.

The director and library staff, in consultation with the library board, will prioritize and identify service goals and activities from the following plan on an annual basis. We will consider immediate need, available resources, and staff capacity when determining annual focus.

## Strategic Goal I

Build and enhance targeted partnerships and collaborations to expand the possibilities of library programming, maximize the utilization of the new library spaces, and increase connections throughout the community.

### *Activities*

1. Identify partnership and collaborative opportunities and develop clearly defined expectations and benefits for all parties. Potential partners and collaborators include:
  - a. Area educational institutions
    - i. UW-Platteville including the Continuing Education Program, PACCE, Confucius Institute
    - ii. Southwest Technical College
    - iii. Surrounding K-12 schools including connecting to area home schools and co-curricular activities at the high school such as the technology and robotics clubs
  - b. Community businesses and job seekers
    - i. Platteville Regional Chamber
    - ii. Platteville Main St. Program
    - iii. UW-Extension Small Business Development Center
    - iv. Platteville Business Incubator
    - v. Southwest Job Center
  - c. Civic organizations
  - d. Municipal departments
  - e. Social service agencies and organizations
2. Reach new and infrequent users and build stronger connections among area residents by providing learning opportunities and use of the library as the community gathering place. This includes:
  - a. Developing family friendly events and programs that allow families to learn together through activities and dual programming (one for kids and one for adults offered simultaneously).
  - b. Growing YA/teen programming and positive use of the library. This can be accomplished by:
    - i. Creating a teen advisory board and holding a teen community conversation
    - ii. Using the community room or children's space for dedicated teen time
    - iii. Providing passive programming opportunities
    - iv. Intentional interaction with teen patrons to foster positive use of the library and build teen ownership of their dedicated space
  - c. Increasing adult-focused programming and events to provide alternative opportunities for adults to connect and gather at the library as a third place outside of home and work.

- d. Connecting new residents to community resources to help them make Platteville home.
  - e. Offering skill-building and outside-the-box learning programs and resources including:
    - i. Offering Makerspace and STEAM programs and resources by determining space and equipment needs and utilizing kits provided by the Southwest Wisconsin Library System
    - ii. Collaborating with community experts to teach various skills through classes at the library
    - iii. Continuing to enhance and expand technology learning opportunities for patrons of all ages through partnerships
    - iv. Bringing in local “celebrity” guests to teach a class or promote library resources
3. Develop a volunteer program to assist staff, help with library needs, and foster community ownership. This includes identifying and organizing:
- a. Scheduled volunteer opportunities for those that would like to help on a regular basis
  - b. An inventory of one-time projects that can be done on a pop-in basis
  - c. Community outreach opportunities (book/poster delivery)
  - d. Collaborate with Platteville School District to encourage student engagement.

## Strategic Goal II

Increase community awareness of the library's resources, services and policies and define the library's communication role in promoting other entities' events and offerings.

### *Activities*

1. Organize a coordinated and consistent approach to marketing the library through creating communications, informational displays and marketing pieces to better promote what the library already provides. This includes learning how to best reach people by:
  - a. Promoting library events in-house with increased internal communication among staff and clear displays to the public about what is happening in the library each day
  - b. Boosting more social media posts
  - c. Exploring other communication channels (Instagram, Snapchat)
  - d. Developing best practice documentation of communication channels for staff to promote events, programs and services to the public
  - e. Identifying how to communicate services in a way that appeals to the public and is easily understood using more universally understood language rather than "library speak" such promoting programs as classes
2. Develop policies and best practices for sharing and communicating community events and offerings provided by other community organizations, businesses and others.
3. Work to create consistency among staff when communicating library policies to patrons.
4. Develop a plan to educate the public about how to use the new library space and what it offers (Wayfinding – Your New Library 101).

## Strategic Goal III

Thoughtfully manage the new library building so it can best meet the needs of patrons and staff now and into the future.

### *Activities*

1. Assess existing and potential needs for additional signage.
2. Be good stewards of the new library by developing a building maintenance plan and assess the need for a dedicated staff maintenance position.
3. Continually assess workflows, scheduling and staffing needs to help staff grow into the new building including defining the staff's role monitoring minors in the library and their capacity to do so.
4. Identify what information needs to be gathered to guide future decisions about facility needs providing the best user experience possible. This includes:
  - a. Monitoring the use and arrangement of furniture
  - b. Exploring self-service options including self-checkout stations, patron hold pick-up, and other ways to increase patron convenience and staff efficiency
  - c. Assessing the hours of operation of the full library and public access to the community room

## Strategic Goal IV

Foster accessibility to library spaces and services for all community members inside and outside the building.

### *Activities*

1. Evaluate transportation and physical access to the building including:
  - a. New bike racks – consider promoting and rewarding alternate methods of transportation
  - b. Post the bus route in the library
  - c. Explore the need for crosswalks by the library
  - d. Analyze parking challenges and explore designated library only parking spots on the street or in the parking lot
2. Provide and promote library outreach and services outside of the building. Ideas for this include:
  - a. Investigating acquiring a book bike to serve as a mobile pop-up library around the city
  - b. Utilizing volunteers to deliver to homebound patrons
  - c. Visiting local daycares
  - d. Working with other organizations to schedule visits by library staff, such as at the senior center
  - e. Setting up a pop-up library at community events (farmer's market, parades, school events)
  - f. Exploring opportunities where the library could be present on the UW-Platteville campus
3. Examine potential barriers that exist to community members using the library. These could be:
  - a. Requiring registration for events
  - b. Existing policies including issuing fines and fees for late materials, restricting computer use due to fines and fees, meeting room hours and policies
  - c. Difficulty using the library by non-English speakers or English as a Second Language patrons
  - d. Explore how to increase the number library cardholders at the grade school level including potential different methods for getting cards



## Strategic Goal V

Invest in staff development and the organization's culture to create a positive workplace and excellent service for all that use the library.

### *Activities*

1. Develop internal procedural documentation and consistent internal communication processes.
2. Use service standards and the values of the library to clarify expectations and help support staff to provide the best customer service possible.
3. Establish standards for technology competencies and provide educational opportunities for staff to learn what they need to best support the technology available to the public at the library.
4. Coordinate staff activities to create a culture that builds teamwork and values staff job satisfaction.

## Plan Implementation, Assessment and Communication

The goals and activities in this document will guide the library's annual budgeting decisions. We will prioritize activities that will have the most impact for the community or those that will create the scaffolding to build towards longer-term goals.

The library director, staff, and library board will conduct an annual plan assessment. The assessment will determine if service goals need any adjustments based on new challenges and opportunities. The library will develop action plans for the activities it prioritizes for a given year. Action plans may include:

- staff responsibilities and timelines
- necessary resources
- supporting data and information
- an assessment framework for measuring progress and success
- stakeholder communication plan

The Platteville Library Foundation is a valued stakeholder group whose priorities and activities align with this plan. The library director will provide an annual progress report to the Foundation, and will submit funding requests to support activities identified in the plan.

The library board and library director will review progress on a quarterly basis. The annual review of service goals and prioritization of activities will be determined by the director and board based on the library budget development timeline.