

Pekin Public Library Strategic Plan

FY2014-2019

Mission statement

Pekin Public Library serves as the community's information center and gathering place. People have the opportunity to connect, discover, conduct the business of life, and leave enriched and satisfied.

Vision statement

We want Pekin to be a prosperous community that values civility, knowledge, and connectivity. The community should have a safe, neutral place to interact; take advantage of educational, recreational and cultural opportunities; and discover the resources to achieve personal goals.

(Internal Vision Statement - Programmatic)

Our library provides:

- A wide selection of free high-quality programs, materials, and services in response to the changing trends and needs of the community.
- A welcoming environment with a variety of meeting spaces for community members to conduct the business of life.
- Programming and collaboration with educators to increase literacy levels in the community.

(Internal Vision Statement - Administrative)

Board members and staff are the voice for the library, keep their fingers on the pulse of the community, and engage with one another.

The management team collaborates to provide services.

Working together, we secure sufficient resources to support a safe and welcoming facility, and maintain a technological edge.

We attract and develop sufficient staff and support staff members with fair compensation, support, and a positive work environment.

Board members and staff work together with mutual respect.

Strategy: Implement a formal training program to address safety readiness, core competencies, customer service and communication

Background: Based on customer, Board trustees, and employee feedback from recent surveys, a formal training program would address customer service and safety concerns. Also, surveys show that an updated Board orientation process and ongoing continuing education for trustees will improve satisfaction with their experience on the Board.

Key Goals:

1. Develop core competency training program for staff.
2. Develop and implement a year-round safety education program.
3. Increase customer satisfaction.
4. Increase employee satisfaction.
5. Improve Board of Trustees effectiveness and satisfaction through continuous education and advocacy.

Three-Year Objectives

Develop core competency training program for staff:

- Form staff training team, **May 2013**.
- Establish core competencies for each department, **May 2013**.
- Align staff training to address competencies, **June 2013**.
- Plan monthly training sessions to address core competencies and safety training, **August 2013**.
- Present training program to Board; Board votes to close library for two hours each month, or as needed, for training, **August 2013**.
- Implement plan, **September 2013**.
- Develop self-assessment tool and work into annual review, **May 2014**.
- Evaluate program annually and update as needed.

Develop and implement a year-round safety education program:

- Identify key safety components to operating and working in a public building, **May 2013**.
- Develop a 12-month safety education program to cycle annually for reinforcement, **June 2013**.
- Develop a quarterly “Test Your Knowledge” exams to gauge preparedness, **July 2013**.
- Evaluate program annually and update as needed.

Increase customer satisfaction with library service:

- Develop and administer pre-test for customer services satisfaction, **June 2013**.
- Schedule management team meeting to interpret data and develop training program, **July 2013**.
- Provide needed customer service training, **Fall 2013**.
- Administer post-test for satisfaction, **Spring 2013**.
- Evaluate program annually and update as needed.

Increase employee satisfaction:

- Develop and administer pre-test for staff satisfaction, **August 2013**.
- Schedule management team meeting to interpret data and develop appropriate organizational response, **September 2013**.
- Implement response, **September 2013**.
- Administer post-test for satisfaction, and repeat annually.
- Evaluate program annually and update as needed.

Improve Board of Trustees effectiveness and satisfaction through continuous education and advocacy:

- Update Board orientation packets, **May 2013**.
- Receive monthly library service overviews at Board meetings, **Ongoing**.
- Attend at least one library association learning opportunity during tenure, **Ongoing**.
- Attend City Council appointment and reappointment meetings, **Ongoing**.
- Alert Board members to advocacy opportunities, **Ongoing**.

Strategy: Renovate facility and develop/update library grounds

Background: The current library building was completed in 1974. The library Board and staff have worked with architects since 1998 to develop plans for renovating the library's dated public spaces and failing infrastructure. In 2004 and again in 2008, the library sought support from the Pekin City Council to move forward with the plans. Ultimately, it was the economic downturn of 2007-2008 that put the project off for several more years.

While the main project has been delayed for nearly a decade, some immediate improvements were needed, and so the library invested in refurnishing and remodeling certain public spaces. Infrastructure repairs - such as HVAC upgrades, a new roof, and brick tuck pointing and caulking - were also undertaken.

The library is at a crossroads for how to continue with the extensive improvements that are still required. Recent surveys of community members and staff note many issues that they would like to see resolved soon: Entrance ramp safety, parking, interior and exterior lighting, additional small meeting spaces, cramped Youth Services department, and a need for teen space.

Bond rates still remain low, and as a project of this importance is a 20-year investment, it makes sense that current and future families contribute to its funding. In the long run, bonds sold in 2014 will save the community thousands of dollars in repayment interest if compared to bonds sold in later years.

Key Goals:

1. Select a new architect for the building project.
2. Secure funding approval from City Council.
3. Seek supplemental funding from grant and private sources.
4. Initiate building project.

Two-Year Objectives

Select a new architect for the building project:

- Collect Requests for Qualifications, **June 2013**.
- Select top firms for presentations, **August 2013**.
- Choose firm, **August 27, 2013**.

Secure funding approval from City Council:

- Present Strategic Plan to new Council, **May 13, 2013**.
- Keep Council abreast of architectural firm selection process, **Summer 2013**.
- Request for project funding, **September 2013**.
- Levy for bond repayment if Council agrees, **December 2013**.

Seek supplemental funding from grant and private sources:

- Pursue Illinois State Library Construction Grants, **2014-2015**.
- Pursue capital fundraising for outstanding design features, **2014-2015**.

Initiate Building Project, 2014-2015

Contingency Plan

Non-Binding Referendum

Should *Key Goal #2* fail to become realized, or should City Council request it, the library Board will need to vote to place the question to the voters for the next local election. If the next election is not for at least six months, then adjustment for construction inflation should be built into referendum language. If a referendum takes place, then a Campaign Committee which would have to be officially unassociated with the library needs to be formed. No library funds may be used for campaign. Should the referendum pass, then the library should ask the Council for the full amount approved by the community.

Library referendums frequently fail on the first attempt because the community is just becoming aware of the need. If this happens, the Board should consider a second attempt at the very next election.

Should the second referendum fail, then the library should consider various options for funding the project in phases, which may involve saving \$100,000 in “Building Repair” funds each year until a first phase can be funded. Turner Trust funds become available in 2014 and may amount to \$400,000.

Strategy: Raise early literacy levels in the community

Background: The public library plays an important role in the reading achievement of children who lack access to books and other reading materials in their daily lives. Research has shown that the amount of time children spend with books is crucial to reading achievement, and ultimately, to school achievement in general.

The Pekin Public Library offers a wide variety of programming for all ages, and in recent years, the library has seen an explosion in technology training. While we recognize the value of such programs in serving the needs of all citizens and all ages, and while we will continue to offer such programs, we must continue to remain true and focused on promoting early literacy.

As a core strategy for this strategic plan, the library affirms promoting early literacy in Pekin as a major programming focus for the next five years.

Key Goals:

1. Increase early literacy learning opportunities in our library.
2. Increase early literacy learning opportunities in the community.
3. Create fiscal support for expanded in library and off site activities.

Five-Year Objectives

Increase early literacy learning opportunities in our library:

- Provide developmentally appropriate toys necessary for pre-reading skills developed through play, **October 2013**.
- Implement 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program, **May 2014**.
- Develop music/movement programs for preschoolers, which also develops pre-reading skills, **August 2015**.
- Collection Development supporting the New Illinois State Learning Standards Incorporating The Common Core, **May 2013 - May 2016**.
- Implement year-round reading tutors program, **August 2014**.

Increase early literacy learning opportunities in the community:

- Leverage partnership with District 108 to offer bimonthly programs at the preschool (PFEC) and Head Start Center and at kindergarten classes in all elementary schools. (Storytime with activity and family literacy activity take-home sheet with recommending readings), **August 2016**.
- Every child in third grade has a library card, **April 2018**.

*Create fiscal support for expanded in library and off site activities, **May 2015-May 2016**.*

Strategy: Develop a marketing plan for traditional, social, and alternative outlets

Background: The library has had a public relations position for the past 15 years; however, no formal marketing plan has ever been created to target the library's services. Now with rise in social media and based on customer feedback, the library should have a targeted marketing plan to change the outdated perception of the library and increase service use and program attendance.

Key Goals:

1. Hire a library marketing consultant or marketing intern to help staff write a comprehensive marketing plan incorporating both new and traditional media.
2. Support marketing efforts by developing budget line for paid advertising.

Three-Year Objectives

Hire a library marketing consultant or marketing intern to help staff write a comprehensive marketing plan incorporating both new and traditional media:

- Research available library marketing consultants, fees, availability, and references and decide between hiring a consultant or intern, **June 2013**.
- Enter into contract with consultant or advertise for and hire intern for the term of August through December 2013.
- Write plan, **Fall 2013**.
- Implement plan, **January 2014**.
- Evaluate annually and update plan as needed.

Create fiscal support for marketing activities:

- Increase public relations staff to 20-25 hours per week, **May 2014-May 2015**.
- Develop budget line for paid advertising if executing marketing plan requires such expenses, **May 2015**.